



Jackie in Malawi

October 2016

Dear Friends,

Our very short "winter" season has been and gone and we're now back up to sweltering temperatures of 42 degrees! It is very dry and dusty and we are praying that we will have good rainfall this year. The effects of crop failure for the past two years is now having a devastating effect and daily we have people coming to us hungry and in search of food. Thanks to donations we have been able to distribute food to those in need. You can see the difference food has made to the lady pictured here who was very sick and unable to produce enough milk for her baby because she herself was eating so little. We are now able to provide regular food for her and milk for her baby and I hardly recognised her when she came in a few weeks later.



In an attempt to help the wider community with food, discussions were made with the Big Chief who agreed to give us, free of charge, a large piece of land close to the Shire River where another organisation has already set up an irrigation system which we can use. The Chief arranged for the ground to be ploughed and so what is left for us to do is plant the seeds and wait for the crops to grow so that we can provide more food to those in need.



The past few months I have been taking various people to hospital for various kinds of help. Stephen is one that we have been helping to get a new prosthetic leg, thanks to donors who made this possible. A couple of trips were made to Blantyre to get measured and fitted and also to undergo physiotherapy. Stephen was delighted with his new prosthetic as it is so much lighter than the previous one and much easier for him to play football which he loves. He was also in much need of a new bicycle to enable him to get to and from school. The look of joy on his face when we turned up at his home with his new bike was a delight to see.



Chida is a 16 year old boy who has hydrocephalus and was in need of a new wheelchair. They live in a remote village which takes about 20 minutes to get to in the car, but his Mum, who is a small woman in stature, walks to Hope Village pushing the chair which takes her at least 2 hours AND in this heat! I then take them to a clinic on the Ilova Sugar estate where physiotherapists come from Blantyre. They made a new chair specifically fitted for Chida which makes life just a little easier for Chida and his Mum.



PRESCHOOL

At the end of August we said goodbye to 10 of our preschool children who 'graduated' and went to Primary School. Not all children attend a preschool, but for those who do, they get a really good start in education as they know their letters, numbers and how to write their name. They were soon replaced with a new batch of children, giving us 36 children in our Preschool.



KIDS ON THE KHONDE

Up to 20 children regularly visit me in the afternoons. They love playing card games or 'house' or 'school' or 'church' and will improvise with anything they can find to meet their requirements. I try to teach them English and will only respond to certain requests if they are spoken in English. We recently had two birthdays in the same month so we held a birthday party which was a source of great excitement as there was cake involved!



Zimbabwe

At the end of August I had the privilege of attending the Elim Global Conference in Zimbabwe where missionaries and national leaders from central and southern Africa met for a two day conference. It was a very significant time and also great to meet up with old and new friends. It was also good to stay on for some extra days with David and Bobbie Tinnion and John and Debbie Bullock and spend time wandering around a shopping mall and eating out and enjoying lots of fun and laughter around the pool at our guest house!



Lack of Power

Over the past few months, the power supply has been off more than it's been on across the whole of Malawi. Whilst on a personal level this is inconvenient, uncomfortable and frustrating, on a wider level it is quite devastating for the country. With power being off, on average around 18 hours every day, with power generally only being on at night, businesses are losing business, hospitals are unable to operate (literally!), maize is unable to be milled. The Electric Company blame the poor rainfall for the last 2 years, as well as them carrying out much needed maintenance work. And sadly they say it could be like this for at least the next 2 years! Thankfully I have a gas cooker so I can still make a cup of tea, though most of my evenings are spent lying in the bath trying to keep cool!



One of our recent baby graduates

As always, I so appreciate your interest and support and trust this finds you well.

God bless,
Jackie

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or, as appropriate, to the Irish Missions Director at 1-3 Old Cross St, Newtownards, BT23 7NW.
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