

## WHPC Mbala Mission Trip 2009 September 20, 2009

This past summer I was honored to return to Zambia as a member of our second short term mission team.



As the Preschool Director here at Westlake, I'm seeking God's direction in how we can help those who want to provide a basic education to African children living in extreme poverty.



We spent the first week in the capitol city of Lusaka before moving on to the rural area of Mbala.



The town is actually just a single "main drag" lined with a few buildings.



But the country side, to an American eye, is an idyllic place with clay huts topped by thatched roofs and rolling hills covered in tall grass.



This region lacks the trash and congestion of the big city, however, hunger, unemployment and the devastating impact of AIDS/HIV are present.



Our World Vision hosts took us to their office on the outskirts of town where we joined in meetings to learn about their work and to pray together.



The mission is to positively change the community, so their efforts go primarily to developing new ways to address the continuing need for clean water, sustained food sources, health care and education.



The project has committed to the region for 15 years which they believe is enough time to produce a systemic change.



They took us to a new Medical Clinic,



we saw new water wells



and we met people involved in an AIDS/HIV Caregiver Project which gives comfort and food to those who test positive for the disease.



We were introduced to a group of women who had been provided a “micro loan” to buy sewing machines to so they could work making custom clothing and school uniforms.



We saw schools throughout the region; and in fact, the first place we visited was a school expanded through the kind gifts received from Westlake Pres.



The children and teachers came bounding outside to welcome us with songs, dancing and prayer. Our team was impressed with the perseverance of the staff and the dedication of the students.



In each of three classrooms, 40-60 kids sat shoulder to shoulder at their group desks. It got quite a laugh when I said we had student/teacher ratios of about 22 children per teacher!



The gracious Head Mistress showed us construction in process on new VIP latrines (Ventilation Improved Pit), staff houses,



and a new school building which were all nearing completion.



Two things were clear; first, as these children grow up, their ability to contribute to this community will be greatly enhanced through the education they are getting today.



Second, even with the large classes and children attending in shifts throughout the day, there still isn't enough room for all the kids who want to attend school.



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The other huge part of our visit to Mbala was getting to meet and visit with our sponsored children. Over 230 families from our church have answered a call to sponsor a child in the Mbala area.



*[Quickly go thru all five pictures.]*



On a personal note, a couple of years ago in the parlor, I was thumbing through a list of kids to sponsor. One girl, Beauty Nakazwe kind of “jumped out” at me, because her birth date was the same as my wedding anniversary.



Sponsoring is blessing enough, but believe me, the opportunity to actually meet Beauty and her family, was emotionally overwhelming.



This child of God, who I have been praying for and corresponding with for two years, stole my heart.



I can only imagine what it must have been like for Beauty to know that these strange looking people from America came just to greet her in the name of our Lord.



The time I spent in Mbala truly was a gift.

I appreciate the opportunity to have represented you, the members of WHPC, who have generously supported this ministry through Christmas Eve offerings and child sponsorships. I was deeply touched by the children...there are so many children!



Please know, you are making a profound difference in their lives. Thank you for heeding God’s call to be a blessing in His world.

