



SaltMalawi

Newsletter

A Christian project saving lives in Malawi

Supporting the work of Julian & Caroline Lott

August 2015

On behalf of the trustees of SaltMalawi, welcome to our August 2015 newsletter, bringing you up to speed with the latest news from Julian and Caroline Lott and their teams in Malawi.

Much has transpired since the last issue in mid-May. More teaching conferences have been held with large attendances giving rise to remarkable testimonies of which this is just one; *“Two children deaf and mute since birth now can hear and the boy can utter some sounds as he tries to speak for the first time in his 11 years. Praise God!”* We hear of instances of others being drawn to church because of these testimonies and the changed lives that have been seen as a result. The next conference (for the Lilongwe churches) is planned for the 29th & 30th August.

A shipping container from the Birmingham Diocese arrived in Malawi late May/early June into which we had loaded around 800 pairs of children’s shoes back in March – donated by churches and a couple of schools here – which the team are now distributing. And, of course, the signs of looming famine grew even greater as each month passed.

The team has been busy preparing for the anticipated (and in some cases, already apparent) effects of this famine and Julian’s report today leaves us in no doubt as to what it means for Malawians, including those living in the bush villages where our churches are located.

In addition to all that has been happening, some of our village churches have faced on-going and heavy spiritual, and sometimes physical, opposition – including those churches that have been set up close to the Village of Light. These are challenging situations to manage, but with much prayerful action by our leadership team, together with prayerful support from many in the UK, they are standing firm. Please persist in prayer for these churches and the people they serve.

The church at Mpalale is a good example – see Andy and Jennie’s snapshot of how that church continues to demonstrate Love in Action through their small team.

The fledgling church at Bisketi is another example and I couldn’t resist including this recent photo of some of the members. The faces say a great deal but, for me, the pile of bricks behind them says more. Church members have moulded those bricks themselves, baked them overnight in a self-built kiln and, from their small Sunday offerings, managed to purchase the corrugated roof sheets – an act of sacrificial giving says Julian. They are now ready to start their new church building. Please pray



for Samwell, their church leader (tall man 2nd from left on back row), who was recently taken to hospital with serious health concerns.

It's perhaps also good to remind ourselves that the leaders of our village churches are volunteer church members (not employees of the church), trained up by Julian and the team - all working their small allotments (dimbas) in order to grow food. Some may run a small village business (a grocery or charcoal sales) but it's a tough environment in which to survive, even with the support Julian provides, through SaltMalawi, for their work with the churches.

Let's make them a focus for our prayers too. *Brian*

Julian writes - At this time our thoughts are focussed on impending famine. We hear that 20 of the 27 districts of Malawi are officially considered to have been badly affected by the poor rain this year. Our home area of Dedza is not one of those areas even though it is obvious to all that even here the harvest is probably 30% down on last year. August is normally a time of relative plenty, just 8 weeks after the maize harvest has been brought in; a time when people can be carefree about food. A time when there is no immediate need for most to worry about where they can find food. Not so this year.



A villager checking the weight of the maize she is selling

means of getting money in the year. So although it is unlikely that they will find food later on this year people are still anxious to sell some of what they have in order to buy clothes, sugar, salt, cooking oil, blankets etc. We have agonized over the situation and concluded that since the maize will be sold regardless of what we say or do, it is better for us to buy the maize ourselves and offer a fair price for what we take. We have therefore paid a price that is nearly 40% higher than some of the local traders, and have thereby been able to buy well over 30 tons of maize in the process which we have stored in 4 different villages within the Dedza district.



Women winnowing maize

Some of our readers will have gathered that we have started a blog in which we record some of the more noteworthy situations that we face, mixed with some of Caroline's wonderful poems to provide a different take on life. We add too a few relevant photos to give an idea of Malawian life and the harsh beauty of its country. If you are interested in reading this yourselves then follow this link:

<https://saltmalawi.wordpress.com>

The pressure on the rural Malawians is huge. For many, selling their maize is their only



Team of workers with treated bags of maize in front of store

Our plans are to use this maize later this year to help the local people in those areas when they are unable to buy food anywhere else. Inevitably some will have no money to buy what will become a very expensive commodity. We are going to need your prayers for protection both for us personally but also for the foodstuffs we are storing, as well as great wisdom as to how to help people best. We plan also to help the people in some of our churches in the Lilongwe area where the hunger is worse. One church leader told me last month that in his village only 3 families had maize - the others had failed to harvest anything.



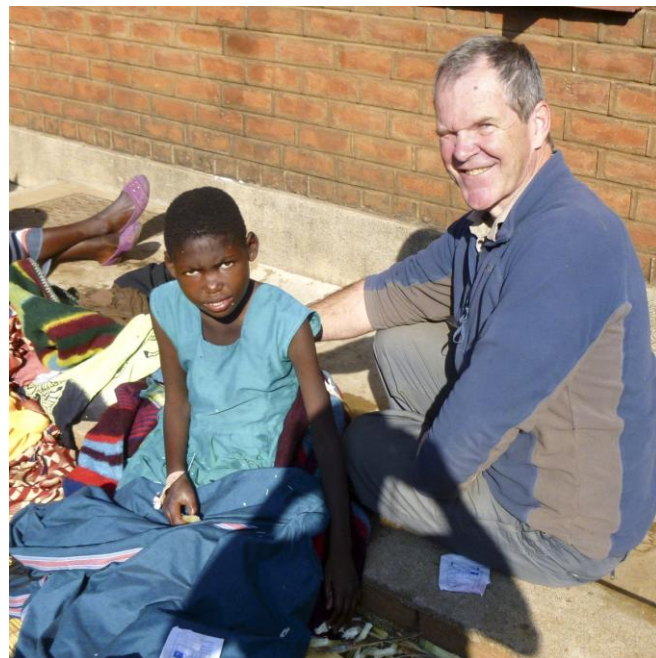
Maize stored on the farm

August is not considered to be a month when people are struggling to find food. Yet even as I write this newsletter Caroline and John are at a hospital one and a half hours drive away, where they have taken 5 children from the local village all of whom are suffering from malnutrition.



We had taken 2 of these children there 2 weeks ago and today represents a check up for them, since both had been released from the hospital after several days treatment as in

patients. Our concern has been that the children had obviously gone home once discharged, but had gone back into the situation that had led them to suffer malnutrition in the first place. The elder, a 15 year old girl, weighed only 26 kgs when admitted to the hospital.



15 year old Nastanje just discharged from hospital

Our response has been to set up a station where these 2, together with 3 other teenagers from the village, can receive 2 nutritious meals a day. We are so worried about 2 of the older girls that we felt the need to get them some medical attention now in addition to the food help. One of them who is well known to us is a mere shadow of herself today. You'll be able to follow their progress on our blog.

As always we want to say thank you to so many of our readers who have given so generously to the Joseph Project in the past through SaltMalawi or through The George Muller Foundation. The help we are giving today and that which we are ready to give this year, has been made possible by the love you have shown to people whom you have never met. I am reminded of one of Jesus' parables in which he gave this memorable reply to the people he had chosen to come and share His Kingdom. He said, "When I was hungry you gave me something to eat . . . ". They of course did not understand, having never seen

Jesus in a state of hunger. His explanation should be in our hearts and minds at this time: He declared that "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did to me". Wow!

Caroline:

"Caroline adds that she is returning to England on 4th September. Tom and Naomi are expecting their first child in September so she is planning to stay with them to lend them

a hand! Please pray for them all and for the safe arrival of our first grandchild! Julian will arrive in October. Obviously this will be a family occasion and not primarily a visit to see the church family. We know that you will understand the reason for this. Thank you."

Editor's note:

We hold the whole family in prayer and wish them well at this exciting time but especially Naomi and Tom

Andy & Jennie write - Over the last few weeks the Mercy Group in Mpalale has started up again. It has been put on hold for a few weeks due to various unforeseen events, including a trip to South Africa and a succession of funerals – six in four weeks in Mpalale village alone!

The team at Mpalale is small this year, but they have a list of more than 80 old people that need visiting in the village. At the moment we are trying to establish who are the most vulnerable and needy, and get the number down to a more manageable amount! We are visiting in pairs, sharing



The Mercy Group in action

the gospel and building relationships with the old people. Later in the year we will be supplying these people with much needed food and other practical aid. It is going to be a difficult year for all of them.

Yesterday we visited six people altogether in two teams. The first two women were not very responsive, and the second has a drink problem. The last two people we visited were very enthusiastic, and one old man insisted that we return, informing us he tries to read his Bible, but rarely understands it.

Please pray for the team at Mpalale, and for wisdom as we help them to decide who we should visit each month.

There is a lot more information about our time here on our blog at:

<https://hollowaysinmalawi.wordpress.com/>

You can email Julian & Caroline at - lottsinmalawi@gmail.com

Financial gifts can be made via - SaltMalawi Ltd Charitable Trust, WestWinds, Hoo Lane, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire GL55 6AZ Email – treasurer@saltmalawi.org

Website - www.saltmalawi.org

This newsletter is circulated by Steve Dorey - stephen.dorey@saltmalawi.org

SaltMalawi Ltd is a company limited by guarantee - registered number 06972024
and registered with the Charities Commission - registered number 1139160