



SaltMalawi

A Christian project saving lives in Malawi
Supporting the work of Julian & Caroline Lott

Newsletter

February 2016

Welcome to this our first 2016 issue of the SaltMalawi Newsletter. In his letter Julian outlines the very real challenges of being about God's work in a nation that is not only one of the world's poorest but is also, once again, in the grip of life-threatening famine. You will have seen BBC reports on this, and the following is an extract from a recent International Business Times report:

"Malawi's food crisis has led to chronic malnutrition, or stunting, in children. Dollar signs can't reverse the permanent damage done to a child's body and brain by stunting, which can impact future economic productivity. Four out of every 10 children in Malawi suffer from the condition, according to the United Nations World Food Program. Stunting drags down performance at school and later in life at work. It also puts children at higher risk of dying from infectious diseases, which results in a loss of human capital."

The seriousness of the developing situation cannot be exaggerated and, if you subscribe to our prayer network, you will have received regular updates based on the weekly meetings that Julian and Caroline hold on the remote farm (where they and the local team live) most Mondays with the key leadership team bringing their progress reports and prayer needs from the churches now established in the various outlying villages. You will have also seen the encouraging reports of answers to some of the issues raised for prayer.

We are so grateful for this invaluable prayer support which represents a lifeline to Julian, Caroline and the teams in Malawi. Also, I continue to be amazed at the way our awesome God provides financial support for this work through the prayerful and often sacrificial giving of so many of you. On behalf of our trustees and the teams facing the challenges of the front line, a huge thank you for all your love.

Do check out our website for updates and SaltMalawi blogs: <https://saltmalawi.wordpress.com/> and, for the latest on Andy & Jennie now they are back in the UK, <https://hollowaysinmalawi.wordpress.com/>

Brian – Chair of trustees

Andy & Jennie write in their blog, "We left Malawi and we are back in chilly England. Our last few days in Malawi were full of goodbyes. We had the privilege of working with all these lovely leaders. We will miss spending time with them and living alongside them. We will particularly miss many of the elderly people we met during Mercy Group visits. One of our favourite parts of Malawi was spending time with the children on the farm and in the village. The work with the children will continue with the help of Amai Edward and Amai Millis. Please pray for them.

Favour and Mia, two boys that always hung around outside our house. They loved being dressed up in Cocopops boxes!



Julian writes - Welcome to our latest report on life in Malawi. This is our February newsletter. It comes at a time of crisis for the nation. Without God we would be lost. In Him alone is our hope.

As you will recall, last year was a year of drought for Malawi. We had just 2 months of rain. For many their harvest failed completely, while others harvested only a very little. We need 4 months of rain which is what we normally would receive. The inevitable result of the much-reduced rainfall is that there is great hunger this year. In this letter we report on that and our response to the plight of the villagers around us and those in the Lilongwe district. This year too the rainfall has been very poor. Even as I write the clouds have vanished and the weather pattern has reverted to that of the dry season once again. A desperate situation is developing.



Despite the general gloomy news we have had some encouragements too. 2 weeks ago in our church at the village of Tsumba we baptised 16 adults. (photo above). Some of them have given up lives of great drunkenness, others have turned away from idolatry and witchcraft, whilst others testify to having become changed characters – once famed for being harsh (true even in our short time of knowing them) some of the women in the church are now so changed that you can see peace and joy has replaced manifest hardness. Transformation is at work in their lives. The time of baptism in a local watering hole was one of great joy for everyone involved.



Let us return to the key issue of hunger. I have recently published a short report as a blog on our time of delivering food aid to one of our village churches about an hours drive from our home, at a village named Nyombe. The site if you should wish to read our short blogs for yourselves is <https://saltmalawi.wordpress.com>. I included a brief report of our interviews with 3 women in our church in that village so that we might understand better their situation. The following is taken from that blog:



“Nalizyera (above) is a married woman in her 20s. She has 3 surviving children and also cares for her elderly mother. Her husband has been gone for several months ostensibly to look for work to help support the family, but his absence just means that the entire family depends upon Nalizyera. Last year the poor rains meant that she harvested only a little food. Now the family eat when she finds piece work in the fields, and do not when she fails to find work. A days piece work would provide food enough for

2 days if she is careful. There has been no work for some time because the rains have failed for much of the current rainy season. Indeed, our own investigation showed that there is clearly no work to be done in the fields now and has probably been none for a week or two. Naliziya has no food whatsoever in her home and had been 3 days without food when we met her. She is obviously getting a lot thinner. It is doubtful that the baby on her breast is getting much nourishment.”



With your help during December, January and February I have bought maize flour in Lilongwe from a trading company who in turn had imported maize from Zambia. It is relatively expensive but as the company then delivered the flour to our churches in the villages of Lilongwe it meant that we have been able to help over 400 families survive a terrible time of famine. (photo above). I have agreed with the company that they will deliver a further 2 tonnes of flour to Nyombe later this month.

We have set up groups in each of 7 different villages in our area who visit the sick and elderly within their communities. They share the scriptures with those they visit, pray with them, and help in whatever practical ways they can. During the early part of last year they left gifts of soap, body oil, food etc. Now we give bags of food to those who are too weak or infirm to help themselves. This has led to some wonderful conversations and conversions among the people visited. Inevitably several of

those people have already passed on, but the scale of help and love shown is quite glorious to see. It is sobering to witness the suffering of so many. We have to remind ourselves that our Lord taught that whatever we do for one of the least of these brothers of his, we do for him. Sometimes you get the real sense that as you sit on the dirt floor of a poor shack of a house, amongst the flies, dust and smells, you really do experience the love that He has for the poor.



An old woman from Chisemphere

Finally, some personal news: In September, Tom and Naomi were blessed with the gift of a son, Jesse. We were delighted to share in the excitement of being with our grandson for those short weeks that we were back in England. Now we are delighted to announce that Nicky has just got engaged and will get married to Rich next year. Once again we can look forward to a celebration within the family for which we are truly grateful.

Last year we met many of you who were praying with us that we would be given a new employment permit allowing us to continue our work. Thank you. That permit was finally posted in our passports last week. Unfortunately, the process is a slow one, and this permit expires in April. So we have begun the process now of applying for yet another permit!

Julian & Caroline

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

Financial gifts can be made via - SaltMalawi Ltd Charitable Trust, 23 Doddington Road, Whisby, Lincoln LN6 9BX

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