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*No eye has seen any God besides you, who acts on behalf of those who wait for Him.  
 Isaiah 64:4*

Newsletter  
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Dear friends and family,

We often sing a familiar chorus of faith in our Monday night Bible study group, “...and step by step You’ll lead me..” This idea of moving on, one step at a time is expressed in the Shona proverb “*kumhanya hakusi kusvika*”- you won’t necessarily arrive at the goal by running! It’s the kind of expression you might use if you were building a house, trusting that each end-of-the-month salary might add some more bricks or a doorframe or bag of cement to the foundation already laid.

We were reminded this Easter of the ‘step by step’ approach it takes for a pastor to establish a new rural church in an area where resources are limited, and people distracted by the needs of daily living. We met with a lively group in the sitting room of a house on a former tobacco farm.

The pastor (a graduating student at Africa University), a group of Congolese students in the English program, ourselves and a smattering of men, women and children from the community sang, danced, shared testimonies (in a variety of languages) and enjoyed the joyful, intimate time of worship together.

Later that day, eating our *sadza* and chicken as we sat on benches on the veranda overlooking a stunning view of hills and fields full of grass, corn stalks and wild flowers, we heard of plans afoot to build a small church of their own. There was the excitement of seeing what

God can do through the faithful people willing to give a window frame or bag of cement bought from the profit of their sales.



*Guess which one is Jane*

Perhaps some of you are finding it difficult, waiting and walking by faith, step by step- praying for a change in a relationship, undergoing numerous medical exams, or waiting for some kind of new direction in life. If so, take courage, as we have, from the verse in Isaiah 64:4 above.

We have had since January our own share of waiting and wondering if we were going to be permitted to stay in Zimbabwe– and the reason we have not written to you sooner is that we wanted to be able to tell you the outcome of our application to extend our work permit. Praise the Lord last week we were finally granted an additional year.

Zimbabwe’s immigration department is not unique in restricting jobs for non-citizens in order to protect employment opportunities for its citizens. Our application for renewal of our temporary employment permit took longer than usual perhaps because some of the immigration officials were asking ‘Is 17 years temporary???’ We are extremely thankful for the chance to continue living and serving here at AU.

### *Africa University News*

There is the feeling of joyful anticipation on campus at the moment as students wait for the annual graduation ceremony on June 11<sup>th</sup>. Every year at this time we take



special joy in watching those students who succeeded in their struggles only with help, often step-by-step, from the scholarship fund. As we

watch them marching up to receive their diplomas,

some of them teary-eyed, we always say a prayer of thanks for them *and* those who helped and continue to do so.

### ***Farm news***

We are so thankful to finally have a back-up generator at the dairy. After repeated incidences of precious milk going sour due to interrupted electricity supply it is



wonderful to have the generator in place and awaiting connection. This new development will be instrumental in our long-term plans for processing and marketing of yoghurt and other dairy products.

The AU farm corn (maize) crop is the best ever since we have been here in Mutare. Each small (and not-so-small) step taken on the farm over the years has helped us to trust God for the harvest!

### ***Home to the USA in 2012***

We are working on a rough outline of our itinerary for May-October of 2012. The time will be very full for us as we visit as many of the supporting churches as we can. Please let us know if there are any special events we can try to include. We will be visiting over 120 churches in 13 states, so have a lot of juggling to do and cannot promise to be with you on a specific date but we will try.

### ***Zimbabwe news***

Life in Zimbabwe continues for most to stabilize with the availability of goods and opportunities. Elections are still a big question mark, especially with speculations about the health of 87-year old President Mugabe. We pray that the numerous politicians vowing 'no violence' stick to their public statements.

Several years ago a huge alluvial diamond field was found not far from Mutare. The wild-west situation that prevailed at first has been tamed somewhat, but there are still fortunes being made. Not long ago a young man approached me, mumbling like Demosthenes shouting into the surf with his mouth full of pebbles.

Turned out he was caching his illegal diamonds in his mouth. I politely declined to buy any- I have no desire to spend nights in the 'Mutare Free Hotel' (local jail).

### ***Family news***

We are all excited about August! All four of our kids will be with us here for the first time since 2005. Ben and Pule are flying out with Larry's sister Mona and her husband Rick. R&M's visit will be the first from the Iowa clan in the 17 years we have been in Zimbabwe. We are thankful that the political situation here is stable enough that the trip is not classified as 'Adrenalin tourism'.

Ben- After spending several months in Taiwan improving his Chinese at a university there, Ben is back in Boston helping two professors at MIT with their research project. In September he will stay in Boston to begin his first full-time 'permanent' job with a consultancy firm.

Pule, 21, is enjoying his last summer 'vacation' in North Dakota with an internship with Microsoft. We are looking forward to attending his graduation from Iowa State before we start our church visits in May 2012.

A highlight for Carly, 16, was running in the 4 x 100m relays at the National Finals. Her life continues to be full of activities, and she is also focused on her major 'O-level' exams in October.

Michael, 11, enjoyed competing in the backstroke in the junior national finals in March. Whenever we are out for a day or more, the first thing he does when we arrive home is to check on his guinea pigs, rabbit, bantam chickens and tropical fish. He is a bit nervous about writing his Grade 7 exams, but we are confident he will do well.

### ***Please join us in prayer for:***

- The small steps taken that build God's kingdom here in Zimbabwe
- The new graduates (yours and ours), that they may find meaningful uses for their skills and knowledge
- The people in Japan, the South and Joplin, and those in countries experiencing an 'Arab Spring', all of which make us thankful for Zimbabwe's relative stability which keeps it out of the headlines

Yours and His,

Larry and Jane Kies

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