

Malawi Visions Newsletter July 2021



Sitting outside the Matapila library

Happy July!

Our last newsletter was in April, so we have some catching up to do! Here in New Jersey it's been a busy time constructing and packing crates for our 10th shipment to Lilongwe: 3 tons worth! And we produced 5 videos to communicate Malawi Visions programs to our congregation and community. COVID19 prevented travelling to Malawi in 2020, and the recent uptick in infection now threatens this year's trip as well. But a lot has been happening! Daniel and Milca have kept our programs alive, particularly TLIP, as well as our awareness of progress and activities through their correspondence and reports.

Paul

TLIP and Library News

Overview from Milca: *“TLIP activities continued at Khwamba with emphasis on mentorship, academics and spiritual development. Primary school children from standards 5, 6, and 7 continued their classes with all 120 children attending every day. Teachers’ guidebooks are helping a lot in developing the lesson plans such that the teen mentors are now following the syllabus with the guide of the books. Leaders continued helping teen mentors with their schoolwork as well as coaching sessions.*

Teen mentors and leaders continued with Bible studies and personal devotions. Every day of the programs starts with assembly for prayers, reading of the Word and a short devotion and announcements. Adherence to COVID-19 preventive measures is being maintained in all the programs.”

Bicycles : Because the Khwamba secondary school is a 30 minute walk to the center whereas the elementary school is only 5 minutes, we have purchased 13 bicycles so that the teen mentors can arrive on time.



Matapila Laptop Classes: Our second laptop program has begun at Matapila. Following the agenda Milca established at Khwamba, our new intern Innocent Chaona is an enthusiastic instructor. There are two groups totaling 15 students at Matapila. It is such fun to see the chairs we shipped last year being used !



TLIP and Library News, page 2

Making COVID Masks

From Milca: *“Falesi Sikelo, one of MoH sponsored students studying Textile and Designing, helped in making masks using the cloth material that we received as part of the shipment from Liberty Corner Church. She has made some 76 masks and these were distributed to the children in the program. More masks will be made in the next month.”*

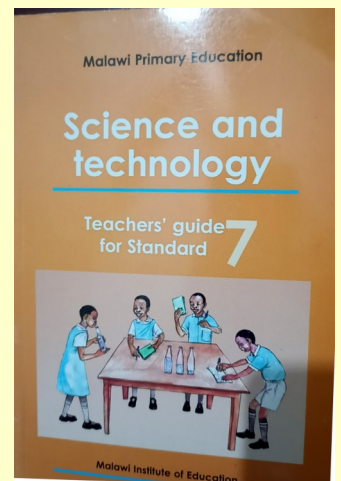


Library Inventories

One of the “growing pains” of our expanding libraries is the need to best distribute our annual book shipments. At this point, we have 25,000 books among the 6 MV libraries! The “Gap Kids” have begun a program of cataloging the holdings at Khwamba, utilizing their new computer skills learned in the laptop program. This will continue to the other centers. In addition to “balancing” the holdings of our 6 libraries by category, we hope to facilitate the sharing of books among the centers.



Textbooks: We were finally able to acquire teacher versions of the standard textbooks in English, math, and science, greatly helpful for the teen mentors in providing academic enrichment to the younger ones. The teacher versions are 4 times the size of the student books we have provided to the students, and contain the actual subject material. School curricula are standardized throughout all of Malawi. The Student versions are very simple outlines only.



TLIP and Library News, page 3

Khwamba Learning Center Expansion

The addition of a large 3rd classroom of the Khwamba Learning Center is underway to free up the library from its use as a classroom during TLIP operations for kids not in that program. Construction should be completed in another month.



Guidance Counseling

From Milca: *"A one-on-one session with Secondary School Graduates was conducted, enlightening them on opportunities for further studies they might have based upon their test results. This focused on how they can apply for colleges and universities for those who have done well and for those that have not done well, to go back to Secondary School. Another element was a challenge to utilize the long holidays by engaging in some businesses and not staying idle."*

Drum Sets: Our 2021 shipment contains two donated drum kits which will be a significant step up from the Home Depot buckets the kids are currently using in the music components.



TLIP and Library News, page 4

Treadle Sewing Machines

This year we shipped 6 Singer machines our team restored, adding to the 2 sent last year. In several cases we found spare parts in the U.K. when they couldn't be located at home. We have refinished cases, replaced veneer, and made new cabinet drawers! We intend each of our learning centers to have a vocational training class in sewing, 3 machines each, beginning with Khwamba, Matapila, and Selengo. We have since received 5 more Singer treadles currently awaiting restoration. It is exciting to consider how these non-electric machines can provide skills and career possibilities for young men and women in the villages.



Laptop Charging

College students are able to charge their laptops at the centers using the solar power. This is the case as some students are learning online, particularly at Chimwang'ombe, and their only source of power is at the center.

Chairs from New Jersey

Thanks to Dave Hartman, when Newark Christian Academy closed two years ago Malawi Visions was given thousands of books. We also were able to take 50 or so children and youth chairs, which have been a tremendous hit in our libraries and classrooms. Who knew they would be so popular? They are pictured several places in this newsletter!



Classroom Needs

As 3 classrooms are added to each of our one-room libraries to create learning centers, there is an ongoing need for classroom equipment, specifically



Large library tables
at which groups of children can work



Sturdy steel library shelving
to hold our increasing collections of books



Blackboards
classroom size (4 foot x 6 foot)

In the past, we have obtained these items as donations from schools and companies, but we may have to explore purchasing them as our needs grow.

If anyone is aware of surplus school or office items please let us know.

Building Shipping Crates



Our team constructed 3 large crates again this year, to house and protect our shipment for its 8,000 mile journey overseas to Durban, South Africa, and then 1,200 miles over-land to Lilongwe. The crates, each 4 feet wide x 7 feet long x 5 ½ feet high, were built by Jack, Michael and Paul, to ISPM shipping specifications. Each crate was packed with 2000 pounds of items.



All cargo leaving the U.S. must comply with ISPM 15 international standards, including heat treating all raw wood components and bear the official stamp



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YY**

Building Shipping Crates, con't



We haul our loaded crates 10 miles to our friends at Farren International, who generously store them overnight in their warehouse until a truck arrives to haul them the much longer distance to a consolidator in Elizabeth, NJ. Finally loaded onto the MSC LILOU, they left for Africa on July 7, scheduled to arrive August 10.



Happiness = Empty Trailers



This year's ship: MSC LILOU

Our 2021 Shipment

This year marked our 10th shipment of items to Malawi! The challenges of labelling, packing, and efficiently loading sometimes seem overwhelming. Book boxes are wrapped in plastic to protect against humidity and leakage. Because container shipping is charged on volume, not weight, efficient utilization of space saves cost. Each item must be labelled, and correlated to a Packing List and Commercial Invoice to satisfy Malawi Revenue Administration requirements and inspection upon arrival. The efforts of many are what make it work, and are greatly appreciated!

Shipment 2021

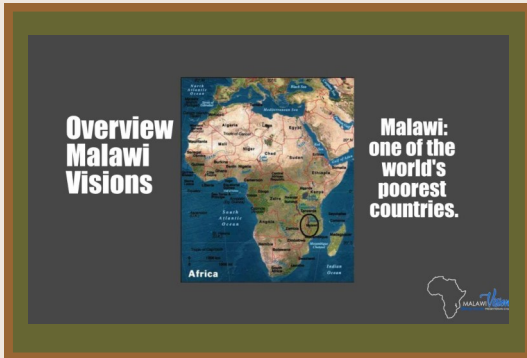
Solar Panels and panel frames
Treadle sewing Machines (6)
4,000 Books
500 Bibles
Children's chairs
Steel book shelves
Skirts & shorts
Light Fixtures & LED Bulbs
Drum Kits (2)
Baby clothes (Valley Pres, AZ)
2 Skeletons and science kits



Malawi Visions Videos

May was “Malawi Visions Month” at Liberty Corner Church. We were given the opportunity on the 5 Sunday services during the month to present our many activities. Five short videos were produced, each narrated by a different team member.

They can be watched by clicking on any of the photos below:



I. Malawi Visions Overview

Paul Sigmund



II. Transforming Villages Through Solar Power

Bob Gamble



III. Creating Communities Around Libraries

Carolyn Stewart



IV. Empowering Teens Through Education in Leadership

Chris DeVito



V. Malawi Visions: A Year Round Project

Glenn and Diane Taylor

Our Bible Drive

In our April newsletter we communicated Daniel's appeal for Bibles to answer the great need in village churches, and the MV libraries. We have so far received donations (some through this newsletter) of over \$5,500 to purchase Chichewa Bibles in Lilongwe, which is equivalent to 370 Bibles! We have also received donations of 500 new, and used English Bibles.



MV Team Member Patti Williamson has become our spokesperson at the PC-USA Presbyterian Women Synod of the Northeast . While sadly quite a few Presbyterian churches are closing their doors, thanks to Patti we have been the recipients of over 300 “pew Bibles” in very good condition left behind at several of these closed churches. We have collected and boxed them to be included in our annual shipments. It is exciting to be giving God's word a 2nd life in Malawi!



The thought of churches, and Bible studies, without Bibles grabbed our attention. We will continue to provide the facility for our newsletter readers to make donations toward the purchase of Chichewa Bibles.

If you would like to support the purchase of Chichewa Bibles,
please go to the last page of this newsletter, and do 2 things:

1. Click on **DONATE** to donate;
2. Click on **CONTACT US** to tell us your donation is to purchase Bibles.

Thank You !

Collaboration is Powerful !



We were excited to partner with **Valley Presbyterian Church, Paradise Valley, AZ** in this year's shipment.

Carmel Courtright, of Ministry of Hope-U.S. Board's Executive Team, was concerned that the crisis nursery was dangerously low on baby clothes with traveling to Malawi curtailed due to COVID. Carmel obtained generous donations from her church and purchased hundreds of outfits, shipping 4 large boxes across country to us. As Denise, Sue, and Carolyn repacked them in vacuum bags to more easily slide into our almost-filled crates, it was such fun to hear their exclamations of "oh how cute" as they held up almost every item!

What a good feeling to work together!



Re-packing the baby clothes!



The baby clothes all fit in the crate!

Update on the Selengo Irrigation Project

The Selengo irrigation program began in 2019 with the drilling of a borehole by Dresses For Africa. MOH's priority for the well's water was irrigation to establish a large garden.

Powered irrigation facilitates multiple growing seasons and much greater vegetable production.

With solar powered irrigation installations operating at Matapila and Chimwang'ombe, we undertook this project. Learning a ½ acre plot of land neighboring the Selengo center was for sale, it was purchased immediately! We had previously evaluated the potential for irrigation at the existing Selengo garden, and determined it to be infeasible :

1. it was rented, and only available to MOH during the dry season, and
2. It was sloped, considerably more distant from the center, would require crossing a stream with pipe and wiring, and flooded frequently causing loss of crops.



The new Selengo garden plot

Click for more
information in
the
August 2020
newsletter



Chimwang'ombe Tanks



Panels at Selengo

Our Selengo design is similar to the others: a downwell electric pump brings water uphill to a pair of 5,000 liter tanks. The tanks sit on a brick foundation sufficiently high to provide the correct pressure for water to flow through irrigation manifolds.

Solar panels generate the required power, mounted atop of the main building, along with other panels that power lighting.



The tank foundation has been completed.

Update on the Selengo Irrigation Project

Timing: The tank foundation has been completed, and the pump purchased. Remaining is to contract a local well engineer to performance test the well, indentify the appropriate pump depth, and install the pump. That cost is about 15% of the total project. A pump house will be constructed for security and protection, and wiring and piping installed underground. While much can be accomplished

by Daniel and our regular Malawi team of Lamech, Frank and Peter, final control set-up will have to wait until MV can travel to Malawi. The pandemic has delayed this so far.

Capacity: Pump flow is a function of connected power. Present capacity can be doubled, should more land be obtained, by adding solar panels. The first stage supplies water within the garden with hoses: a huge improvement over carrying water cans long distances. The second stage sets up manifolds to feed drip irrigation lines, providing water directly to each plant, and cutting water demand even further.



**Chimwang'ombe Well Testing
2018**



Cost: Constructing a solar powered irrigation system is expensive. We are so thankful for the financial support we received this year from **Christ Community Church of Montreat, NC**. We welcome other churches and groups to join in supporting this project that will make a tremendous difference in improving the diet and food stability of the children in the Selengo area.



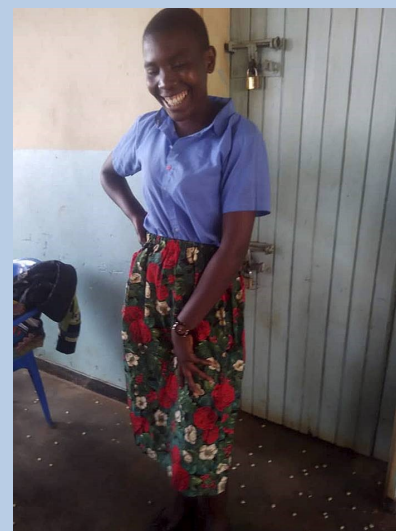
Matapila garden

Selengo Irrigation Program			
		MK	USD
Borehole Pump			2,100
Well Pump Controls			500
Tank Fittings			120
Land			400
Pump Installation	1,686,920		2,249
Tanks			1,800
Pump House			1,000
Tank Platform			333
Labor	250,000		1,030
Materials			400
Fuel			
Solar Panels	4	220	880
Frames	2	40	80
Wire			600
Piping			200
Contingency	15%		1,754
Total Projected			13,446


**CLICK to see
Selengo Project Cost Estimate**


The Sewing Corner

Milca has been busy distributing the girls skirts, and boy's shorts that Diane and Elizabeth's team produced, to hundreds of happy kids! The personal notes they find in the pockets are always the cause for laughter and joy! The curtains that were also made are already being used in temporary, but needed, use!



COMING SOON



 **BENEFIT CONCERT FOR MALAWI** *Visions*
hope for orphan children in Malawi

the 2nd
AN EVENING OF
Fazz
photo: Jason Michalski

FEATURING
Chris DeVito
Quartet

**LIBERTY CORNER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**
45 Church Street, Liberty Corner, NJ

TICKETS
\$25 advance; \$35 door

.... More information to follow

Milca's Report



Activities continued in all the centers with children coming to read the books in the libraries. Khwamba library is particularly active in all the days of the week due to the continuous programs there. Gap students continue to help in all the library activities. Chimwang'ombe center has also continued systematic library usage where older students help younger children.

All centers follow strict COVID-19 preventive measures like observing social distance in the placement of the desks during studies as well as classes. The libraries in all the centers are really helpful as they keep children engaged with positive things as opposed to staying idle and thus not only building their reading culture, and also preventing them from engaging in bad behaviors.

Standard Exam Results

The impact of the library activities on Education performance in general is great. The outcome of the 2020 Malawi School Certification of Education (MSCE) Examinations showed that MOH students performed very well compared to the national pass rate. Out of the 52 MOH sponsored secondary students who sat for the MSCE Examinations, 36 students (31 boys and 5 girls) have passed, representing a 69% pass rate. This is well above the national pass rate of 50%. The school life of all students were very much disturbed during the past year due to the 6 month closure of schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Being able to come to the libraries to read encouraged the children to maintain their interest in learning.

Furthermore, out of the 36 students who have passed the MSCE Examinations, ten students have qualified for University entrance. The best student was from Matapila and scored 10 points, up from 12 points in the past year. The highest score for MSCE Examinations in Malawi is 6 points and the lowest is 48 points. These will be great leaders in the near future after completing their University studies.

Milca

Meet Dominic Gomani

Matapila Center Supervisor



Dominic Gomani was born on November 3, 1965 and comes from Blantyre. He is the first born in a family of 8 children, 5 boys and 3 girls. He went to Soche Hill Secondary School for his High School education before joining Blantyre Business College where he obtained a Diploma in Marketing and then went on to study with the University of South Africa for a Certificate in Development in 2006.

Dominic worked with World Vision International from 1989 to 2013. He joined Ministry of Hope in 2013 and has been Center Supervisor for Matapila for 8 years. He is a Roman Catholic faithful and a Finance Chairperson in the Lilongwe Archdiocese.

Dominic enjoys working with children and for children, seeing them being transformed. He is very famous in the villages around Matapila where he is well known among children and elderly alike.

His plans for Matapila Center is that it should transform into a big irrigation farm. He has managed to harvest 215 (50kg) bags of maize at Matapila this year, which has never happened before in the history of the center.



Dominic Gomani, con't.



Dominic is married to Esther who was born on August 12, 1966. Together they have 7 children; 2 boys and 5 girls and 3 grandchildren.

His 7 Children are: Gloria who lives in South Africa; Christine who is doing driving lessons; Esnath who graduated from university and is a High School Teacher; Lucius who is studying for a university degree at Nkhoma University; Anna who is studying Pharmacy; Florence who is studying Shipping and Logistics; and Chikondi who is in Form Four at Matapila Community Day Secondary School.





Luka Chimangeni

Matapila's young artist

Luka Chimangeni was born in 2000 but does not remember the day or the month. He comes from a family of four children where 3 are boys and 1 is a girl. The first born is Kalekeni who is married, second is Oswald who dropped off school in grade 3, Luka dropped out of school in grade 6, and Hadasa is a girl and still in school in grade 3. The family comes from Matapila Village.

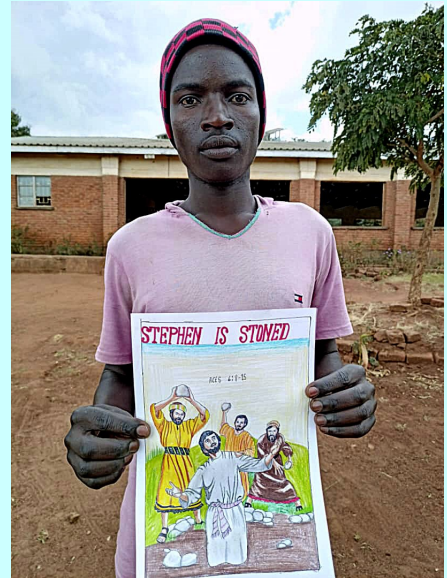
Luka stays with his mother. His father died when Luka was only 6 years old. The family survives on subsistence farming and casual labor. They live in a two-bedroom grass thatched house.



Luka started drawing pictures while in school. One time he got sick and stopped going to school. But he always loved drawing and after he recovered and returned to school, he attributes being inspired by two Ministry of Hope sponsored students, twin brothers actually, named Bazilio and Mustafa who also were coming to Matapila Center for lunch. These twins were very good at drawing and sign writing and their friendship inspired him a lot. He went on to polish up his skills which he is still perfecting to date.

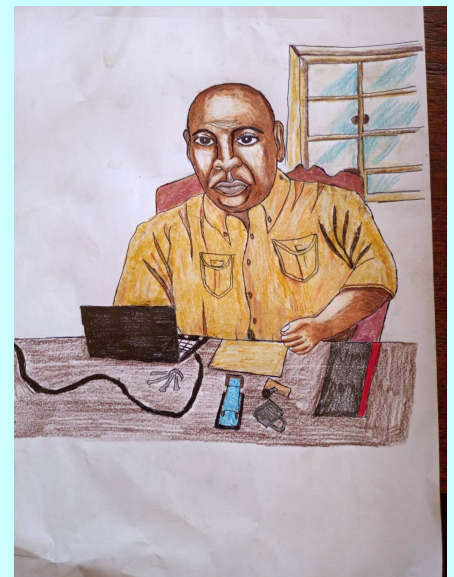
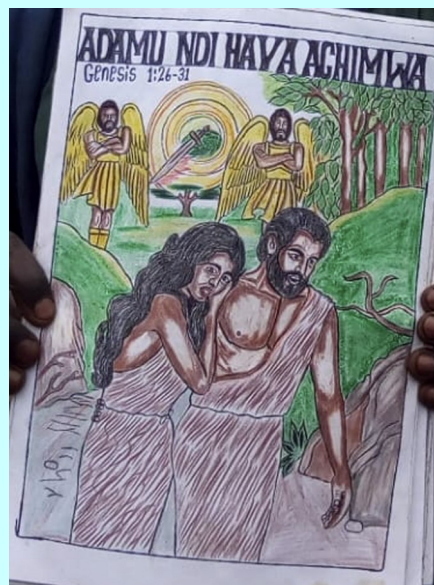
Luka Chimangeni

Matapila's young artist



Luka stated that he gets inspiration for his art work through Bible stories, thinking, as well as nature. He sells his artworks at K200 (25¢) each. He hopes to find a breakthrough and make more sales so that he can support his mother better. His main challenges are resources which include papers, used cartons (cardboards), tape, color pencils, flip charts and clothing.

Luka likes to draw pictures of nature including animals, the mountains and forests, birds as well as lots of Bible story pictures both original and some from what he has seen elsewhere. He also draws pictures of real people.



Operation Christmas Child in Malawi



For a number of years Daniel Moyo has served as a district distribution director for Samaritan Purse Operation Christmas Child in Malawi. This is a massive undertaking with 28 containers of boxes to distribute to the remotest of villages.



Delivering the Christmas boxes in Malawi



Operation Christmas Child in Malawi, cont



We learned that for a village to be eligible to receive the shoebox gifts, they must first allow a Samaritan's Purse representative to tell the children about Jesus and present the Gospel message.

This year Daniel shared an amazing story of how they visited an Islamic community and actually presented the Gospel at a mosque! His story is told through photos!

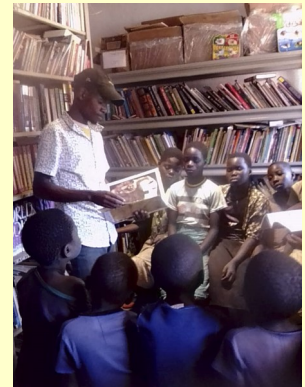


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