

Growth in Bible Studies

We recently completed another school year at our Village Bible Centers throughout Malawi and at the Bible School on the Namikango Campus. From April to October, there were 23 Village Bible Centers teaching courses this year. That equals the number of Centers in operation last year. One of the greatest challenges the schools faced this year had to do with the floods that came last January. The effect on this year's harvest made it difficult for churches to provide enough food to host students and the Bible teacher. The fact that many went ahead and held class required these committees and churches to dig deep, and it shows the commitment they have to seeing God's Word taught in their regions. As a result of their perseverance, the number of students participating in these Village Centers increased from 1,386 to 1,576. This is very encouraging to see. Of these students, most are male, though a number of female students are also attending.

Each Village Center has a committee that manages their studies and at the close of every school year, we call in representatives from each committee to give us a report of how operations went for the year. 48 men and women came to the Namikango campus for this meeting. These people have a large role to play in ensuring that the Bible Schools move ahead each year. We had the opportunity to hear many positive elements, as well as problems faced by our Bible Schools. This year saw growth in the Bible School Centers at Maoni and Lingale who doubled their enrollment this year. Maoni had 151 students this year. Nchisi, a brand new school in the Central region, persevered through some of the start-up challenges new schools face, especially with the current food shortage and hunger situation, and are ready to move ahead next year.

We also received word from these committee members that there are other churches that are prepared to host a

Bible School next year. This is encouraging to hear! This kind of initiative is not easy and takes much preparation and prayer.

It takes approximately \$6,300 for Namikango to operate these Bible Schools for one year. This number has continued to rise over the years due to the increase in centers, students, and inflation. Though none of the Bible teachers are on staff, we do provide transport for the teachers to travel to these Village Centers to teach, plus we provide a small stipend to accommodate them for the three weeks at a time. This stipend is paid by the Mission for only three out of the six months with the Bible Centers taking on this responsibility the other three months. We showed these figures to the committee members so they could appreciate what it takes on our end to keep these schools operational. I believe this was revealing to these representatives. They expressed gratitude towards those who support the Mission to make these studies possible, but they also saw that if we continue to grow, the local churches will need to take on more responsibility to ensure the Bible Schools continue to operate. Some members said that they need to be preparing now in the event that for any reason support from the Mission was not possible, at least these schools would not have to cease to operate.

The sharing of costs and responsibilities between the village churches and the Mission has been an excellent partnership.

We pray that this spirit continues to spread. It is encouraging to see these wonderful leaders pressing to own their schools more and more. Support is still needed, and will be needed for years to come, but you can be encouraged to see that the funds you contribute are appreciated, and provide motivation for increased involvement by our brothers and sisters in God's mission here.

Ben Hayes



Village Bible School Representatives Meet

Repairs, Rebuilding, and Supplies

For the greater part of this year we have been looking at purchasing new classroom chairs/desks. We obtained several quotations and found the best option was one who gave us a discount for bulk purchase. In fact, we intended to look at this at the beginning of the last year, but as time went on we did not get to it. With the continued devaluation of the kwacha, I felt the price would continue to rise until the start of the school next year. So, the best time to order these seems to be now.

The quote came through recently at approx \$3,200. This is for 50 chair/desk combinations. This may seem high, but we have gone with a reputable company and these items will be of good quality. It will be very beneficial to have them ready and in place when we begin studies next term . . . and . . . will be helpful if we begin the future English school studies, which we are hoping to do . . .

Incidentally, the current desks have served us well, being in use since early in the Mission's beginning. Thanks as always for looking at these requests. **Ben Hayes**

For some time, we have been trying to replace or repair some of the smaller needs around the Mission, and, with the passing of time, those needs are many – such as repairing the damage to the Guardian house and replacing Medical equipment, which was done last month.

This month the Mission staff has been working toward replacing the very old classroom desks and chairs. We have given Ben the okay to order some "good quality" replacements -- and if you want to help with the cost of this \$3,142, it will be a blessing and much appreciated.

In times past we had to wait for months until the money was raised for various projects, but by God's grace, we have some funds on hand and can now proceed immediately with the purchase and the funds

you contribute toward this will replace our supply. Your faithful support for all our needs through the years has been a rich blessing. **Sidney Vaughn**



After the Raging Flood

Many were affected by the floods the first of the year; among them was our brother in Christ, Bro. Nazombe. He and his family saw their house heavily damaged by the raging waters. Bro. Nazombe is a kind, old, gentlemen who worked part-time at the Mission as a casual laborer.

He would walk an hour and half each day from his home to the Namikango campus to work, and back again in the evening just to gain a little income to support his family. Recently, we requested that he retire due to his age and the toll being taken on his body from the daily travel.

Thus, when the floods occurred and his house was affected (among many others) we wanted to help him through this disaster. The staff at Namikango agreed that we should help in a very comprehensive way and rebuild his home. Last week we arrived with a team

from Namikango to "open" his new home. Though the house had been ready for almost a week, Bro. Nazombe would not sleep inside it until we came and officially "opened and blessed" it.

Three other staff members and I arrived and were welcomed with great exuberance. We cut the ribbon, and speeches were made by Nazombe's family and the local village headman, expressing their deep gratitude.

As another rainy season approaches, this man and his family will have peace knowing they have a secure home to rest in. It has been a blessing to share in this confidence with him. **Ben Hayes**





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Peace and Love to you from the Hayes Families in Malawi

Praise God! The rains have begun!

It is time to begin planting maize (corn) for next season's harvest. And these early rains give a ray of hope to some hungry people. They are hoping that there will be a good crop this year and that it might come a little early because last year's crops were washed out by the floods. Many households and farms were washed away, food and livelihoods for a year -- gone!

More than this, the supply of maize from last year's harvest was so poor that the price for maize has steadily risen as the supply has reduced, leaving the current price at about 40% higher than normal. It has helped that Zambia had a decent crop last year which allowed them to export some to Malawi

for those who could afford it. All this has created a difficult situation for many Malawians.

The next few months will be dire as people wait and hope for another harvest. But in the meantime, help is needed; people in our area are starving. We have been praying and planning for the best way for Namikango to help during the difficult months ahead and we have

decided that we should purchase a load of maize, store it in our medical warehouse, and distribute it directly to people in need. This won't solve all the problems but it will help. If you want to make a special donation toward feeding the hungry it will be greatly appreciated.



Ryan Hayes



The Flood Waters came and went . . . but Hunger Remains !

The devastating floods came 11 months ago, but people in Malawi are still feeling the results of it.

For many, crops were destroyed, and what food there was has been portioned out just a little each day . . . and now even that is gone.

- The grain bins are empty,
- supplies are depleted and
- severe hunger remains.

To help the hungry we will be purchasing bags of maize (corn) to be distributed. We will temporarily store the maize in the warehouse and distribution will take place very soon. We hope to have a more detailed report next month, but if you would like to share in this need, it would be greatly appreciated. Indicate "hunger" on your check and it will be used in this effort.

Blessings, Sidney

