

OUTREACH REPORTS: Malawi

REPORT: Malawi 2005

Dear Friends in Christ,

Well, all good things come to an end and so it was with the Malawi '05 outreach! The team is back home safely and in Malawi there are several hundred people who came from Darkness to Light by accepting Christ as their Saviour and Lord during the past couple of weeks! At the same time, many church leaders are better equipped for their task, and I believe that we will still see the fruit of this extremely blessed outreach in many decades to come.



ABOVE: Members of the Malawi '05 in our colourfull "battle dress".

Of course God gets all the glory for what has been achieved, but it was only possible through the unique contribution of each one that filed his or her calling as part of the Body! Thank you for your intercession and support, and for everyone who contributed in other ways (e.g. finances, equipment or of course as TEAM MEMBERS) to make this outreach possible. Thanks to the involvement of people like you, the willingness and sacrifices of the team, and the Lord's blessings and love for people who do not know Him, it was a HUGE success!

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES:

1. Working methods

As usual, the team travelled by road through Zimbabwe (in a precarious condition without ANY fuel), Mozambique and Malawi to the VIBITAC Bible School at Kande (in the north of Malawi on the lakeshore). The bible school is a joint venture by Philadelphia and three other partner-organisations and the purpose of the outreach was to support the full-time work there. Most of the activities were in the immediate vicinity of Kande, but we also worked in and around Nkatha Bay (approximately 40 km further north).

The team consisted of 13 South Africans, 1 Zimbabwean (Norman Kalilombe – Philadelphia Project manager in Zimbabwe), Bruno Spoko (Phil's Project manager in Malawi), Aubrey Maunda, Bjorn Witstock (a German student and brother who did some voluntary work at Vibitac) and some of their local co-workers. Several students and even ex-students also joined us as part of the team.

The Gospel was conveyed by means of preaching, mimes, puppet shows and tracts (about 7 000 were distributed!). A leadership seminar was presented and a consignment of New Testaments were left for new converts.

2. School visit:

This year the team reached out to two schools on only one occasion. With Louise who took the lead as "director", two mimes were performed. To the immense delight of the children, both portrayed how a person can be caught up in sin by starting with only a "small" sin and how Jesus offers redemption.

At the end of the performances Bruno explained the Gospel again and many children reacted on the invitation to accept Christ as Saviour. (Juan and Johan share the Oscar for their moving performance in the Chair and Rope scene...)



ABOVE: Juan (left) with some helpers trying in vain to free Johan from the chair of sin ...

3. Leadership seminar:

As in other years, the seminar for existing church leaders was held at the Bible School. Norman and shared teaching on, amongst other subjects, Gift-orientated ministry in local congregations and aspects of Christian Leadership. On the last day Juan used his background in project management to present a workshop on the planning, execution and monitoring of projects.

The seminar was attended by approximately 60 church leaders and was probably the best thus far. We experienced that the Lord highlighted focus points and guided us to talk about them. At the end several church leaders brimmed with excitement on what they have learnt and said that they could not wait to implement it in their ministries and congregations. Please pray that it will have long-term fruit in store!



ABOVE: Pray for these leaders who attended the seminar.

4. Gospel Volleyball Tournament:

The “Gospel Volleyball Tournament” was again held to reach out to the youth in an enjoyable way, and as always turned out to be one of the highlights of the outreach. In the past the tournament was held at the Bible School in Kande, but this year we decided to have a two day tournament in one of the bigger harbour towns, Nkatha Bay. Our previous tournament organiser, Dylanj, could not go with to Malawi this year and two new team members, Johan and Madelein van Staden, was thrown in at the proverbial deep end to drive it.

With the help of Aubrey (ex-student who is on his way to Petra College in South Africa for further training) and Bjorn (a young German missionary who helps at Vibitac) they did a first-rate job. Twelve teams participated in the tournament and in between games Johan, Norman and I shared short gospel messages or invited students to share their testimonies. Many of the youngsters reacted on the invitation to convert to Christ. Please also pray for their spiritual growth and for the team who must handle the follow up and discipleship work!



ABOVE: Johan (left) giving the winning team – the “Magpies” their medals. A team taught by South Africans and perfected by Australians ...

5. Puppet shows:

Puppet shows are an effective way to explain spiritual aspects of the Gospel to young children. Quintus built a collapsible box and Louise and Corné told the stories while Margit and Louise gave life to the puppets behind the curtains.

The puppet show was staged at various occasions during the Volleyball tournament at Nkatha Bay as well as at Vibitac, and especially the younger children were encaptured.

6. PASSION film:

Due to a logistical “glitch”, our video projector was left behind in South Africa and it had to be sent to Malawi by DHL (what a struggle ...!). Notwithstanding this set-back, we received it in time and the “Passion of the Christ” film could be shown on three occasions. As always, before the film started, I explained the Gospel in context to help the people understand where Jesus fits into God’s plan for man. After the film, the Gospel was again explained briefly and people who wanted to accept Jesus as Saviour were invited to stay behind.



ABOVE: Fanie and Corne praying with one of several groups of people who committed their lives to Christ after the film.

The first two evenings many people reacted to this, but the reaction on the third evening in Chinteche was overwhelming. A large part of the audience stood standing as if at a loss and was divided into groups where team members and local co-workers could lead them in prayer to surrender. As always, the names of all new converts were taken down so that they could be followed up and disciplined in the following weeks and months. Please pray for their spiritual growth as well as for Bruno and his team who will do the after care.

7. New Developments to the North:

After months of prayers and discussions we came to the point where we believe the time has come that Philadelphia has to expand our work further north in Malawi. The idea is to obtain a suitable piece of land next to the lake and to establish a smaller base than Vibitac from where training can take place through the Mobile Training System (lecturers who visit students in stead of students who have to stay at huge costs at the Bible School). The plan is to set up basic amenities so that the terrain can be used as a campsite which can generate funds to help finance the work.

This will not influence our commitment or work at Vibitac, but simply expand Philadelphia's current ministry in Malawi.

At this stage, please pray at this that the Lord will lead us in this. In particular pray that we will find a suitable piece of land next to the lake and that this project will bear fruit that will glorify Him in the long-term.

I want to conclude by thanking the team – an absolute SUPERB, SUPERB group of people – for each one's commitment, adaptability and unanimity. May the Lord make it possible for each of you to go with next year and bless you in abundance in your life and ministry!

Then I want to again thank you and all those made this outreach possible. I don't know the names of everyone who contributed in various ways to this outreach (some "behind the scenes" and especially those who supported team members financially), but I want to say a special thanks to the following individuals, groups and institutions: Ronnie (Skywalk Printing); Herb S; Herman M; Joke (rusks and prayer co-coordinator); Jan B; René (my girl), Piet and Marietta (for the Condor); leaders and members of Doxa Deo North campus; my personal group of intercessors (your prayers have been answered); Clinton M; Ruveix V; Wesa and members of Wonderboom EGK; Clarion Call; Louise and Leon N; Evert and Frieda P; and all the management members of the Philadelphia Project.



ABOVE: The team during morning-devotions at VIBITAC.

Finally I want to ask that you continue to pray for the work in Malawi (but also for Philadelphia's work in Zimbabwe and Madagascar). Pray for the new converts, but also pray for Bruno and his team who will have to handle all the follow up work over the next couple of months. Also urgently pray with us that the Lord will lead us how to go about the envisaged new developments in Malawi and that He would provide in all the needs for it.

(PS: One of the team members - Quintus Fourie - has been sick since yesterday and it seems that he may have malaria (blood tests will be done today). Please pray for his full recovery as well as the health and protection of our fulltime workers in Malawi.)

Bless you and again, thank you for your involvement!

Yours in Christ

- Manie

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NOTE: You can view more outreach photo's on the Photo Album page!