

## NEWS UPDATE FROM DEBBIE HOWARD DR CONGO, JANUARY 2011

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! I trust you have had a blessed Christmas, a good start to the New Year and have managed to survive the snow – I am so glad that I'm in Congo!

The Christmas & New Year period is always a busy time of year for me but as usual – I've loved it!

### STREET BOYS



As a Christmas treat we went with the street boys to the zoo and had an amazing time. They were so good and I was so proud of them. They loved every moment of it - greeting each animal - and were completely captivated by everything. On New Year's Day they came to my house where the time was spent playing various card games, the obligatory football match as well as watching a video and eating lots.

Sadly they have been unable to move into the new house yet as we are still waiting for reluctant tenants to move out.

### CHRISTMAS DAY AND PARTIES



The Christmas day church service was led by the Sunday school children who did a fantastic job showing that they are not just the church of tomorrow but an important part of today's church. They were responsible for leading, preaching, interpreting, choirs, drama – everything! Following the service, the children remained for their Christmas party where they enjoyed a rice and bean feast before being given a small bag of goodies to take home.



Unfortunately we were unable to hold a holiday club for the adolescents as we did last year and are hoping to do this later in the year. Instead, the adolescents had a Christmas party on the 26<sup>th</sup> which as well as including games and lots to eat was an opportunity for them to do some craft and watch a Christmas film.

### YOUTH DRAMA AND RETREAT

As the Sunday school was responsible for the Christmas day service, this year, the young people did not perform a long theatre production. Instead, on the following day, they performed a shortened drama of part of the Christmas story combined with looking at Christmas today and sang a Christmas song. All this, they managed to get ready in just three rehearsals and did really well.

20 young people started the New Year with a three day residential retreat which was a mixture of prayer, praise and worship, Bible teaching, group work, sports and films. This is the first time that we did this and it was a great success with young people having the opportunity to get to know each other and God in a greater way. They enjoyed it so much that they have already started planning for next year's retreat!



## TRAINING COURSES



Last month I mentioned a training course for trainers of youth and children's workers that I held with Scripture Union. Well, this month, the group at Likasi held a training course for children's workers and the Lubumbashi group held one for youth workers. Both courses were well attended, went well and left the trainers encouraged and ready for more!

## DAD'S VISIT

It's been great having my dad visiting over the holiday period. This is his third visit and, as usual, he's been incredibly busy. He's visited and preached in two prisons, spoke in a Bible school, preached and held seminars in eight different churches, held a training day for pastors and church leaders, participated in the various street boys activities and was also the main speaker at the youth retreat. He returns to the UK on the 9<sup>th</sup> January where I guess he may be in need of a rest!



## IMMEDIATE PLANS

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of this month I will be travelling to Mbuji-Maji, Kabinda and Kipushya in the Kasai province where I will be involved in various activities. I will be away for a month so my next newsletter will be a little late.

I'll close with some items for prayer and praise. Thank you for all your interest, prayer and support over the past year.

God bless you,

Debbie Howard

## Points for prayer and praise:

- Praise God for the provision of a house for the street boys, pray that it will be vacated quickly, that all the necessary registering with the state will go smoothly so that the boys can move in soon.
- Praise God for the success of the various children and youth activities over the holiday period. Pray that these children and young people will continue to grow in their relationship with God in 2011.
- Praise God for the training courses that took place. Pray that all those who participated will put into practice all they have learnt.
- Praise God for my dad's visit and the input he has made. Pray for him as he travels back to the UK.

All gifts for my ministry in Congo should be sent to Elim International Missions or as appropriate to the Irish Missions Director. Cheques payable to Elim International Missions. Thank you.

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