

# Ramsey's News in Zambia

Dear friends,

Greetings from steaming Ndola once again!

LAST DAYS IN UK – We made full use of our bus passes to the end, even managing a day trip up to the Lake District to visit friends (3 buses each way, all free!) On the last Saturday (20 Mar), I attended the EVE Ladies' Conference put on by our Preston church. It was totally different from the Bible-teaching conferences I'm used to here. An outreach event, we had a catwalk, pampering sessions with manicure, hairdos, makeup, etc, as well as live music and testimonies. It was very well organised and welcoming and some ladies decided to become Christians. On Sunday, 21st, we had our final full family reunion and even managed a photo with all nine grandchildren awake and none screaming! Before leaving UK, we packed all our goods for storage away in the loft and under the stairs, leaving the house ready for Sarah to occupy – an ideal tenant, being both family member (Hazel's sister-in-law) and active youth worker at our church. She has apparently settled in happily and had her parents stay over Easter.

RETURN TO ZAMBIA – Our journey back was fine, apart from a 3-hour delay in Nairobi. We were met at Ndola airport by Ziso and Nicki. Earlier on, they had opened up our house for Mrs Nyirenda to clean through and all seemed to be in order there. A slight hiccup: Andrew suddenly noticed through the window that our day-guard Jeston was lying face-down in the gravel on the drive - always some saga with our workers! He'd fainted and was confused. Andrew drove him to the hospital. It appeared to be due to low blood sugar, probably compounded by Jeston spending his weekly food allowance on alcohol. (He has now been sacked and we have another guard.)

CHURCH NEWS – We had good news - the fruitful outreach work that Ziso and his youth team have been doing around Ndola – and also bad news - the church toilets got stolen! Well, 2-3 weeks ago, thieves broke into the church at night and removed the five toilet cisterns, breaking some pipes in the process. It was foolish not to have ensured good security for the church toilet block – some doors didn't lock properly. People rallied round to give to the



special 'toilet offerings' so that things could be fixed before Easter, with its full programme and visitors expected. Lockable grill doors were put in place - a church member did all the welding free. As the cisterns were not replaced in time, drums of water and buckets were supplied for DIY flushing – quite acceptable in Africa!

GOOD FRIDAY – Our busy Easter weekend began at the EXPAT CHURCH (Ndola Christian Fellowship - NCF) for their 9am service. Andrew spoke on Jesus' cry from the cross, 'It is finished!' At the front of the meeting hall there was a beautifully arranged focal point – a large wooden cross lying on its side, draped in a red cloth, with a crown of thorns. Andrew led Communion a little differently - people came out to receive the emblems 'at the foot of the cross.' It was a lovely, meaningful time.



Straight after this, we joined our church's MARCH OF WITNESS in the neighbouring compounds, organised by two young pastors, Ziso and Danny. One of the young men was dressed up as Jesus, with bloodstained robes,

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thorny crown and long matted hair. He staggered along, carrying his cross and being whipped by 'soldiers'. Our church banner was carried in front. Church members followed behind singing. Using a generator on a lorry, we had amplified preaching about the crucifixion and a hearty invitation to our Easter church meetings; drums and a keyboard were also played as the procession moved slowly along. Andrew and I followed in the car, taking turns to get out, join the march and take photos. At several busy places near markets etc, the procession stopped for short open airs, gathered round the dramatic cross scene. Arriving at our church around 1pm, there was a short service, with the Jesus group now on centre stage. Ziso spoke briefly on the power of the cross and about eight young men responded to the appeal. It was lovely to see the young folk caught up in a celebration dance at the end of the meeting.

EASTER SATURDAY – Next day, when we went to church at 9.30am, as well as the usual Bibles, cold drinks, etc, we also took our large collection of plastic plates and cups which we loan out for church catering. Then we had to take a towel and change of clothes for Andrew for the afternoon baptismal event. Our church meeting was well-attended, but not by longstanding members. These were mainly young people brought in by the youth evangelism. We had a stirring meeting with two speakers.



We were due at Misaka village, near Luanshya (30-min drive), around 1pm. We thought the lunch being cooked at our church might not be ready before we left, but they managed to serve us an early meal before we went. Arriving at Misaka, we were promptly served another lunch! The church meets in a classroom. Other

churches had joined for the Easter weekend and we all squeezed into the classroom for a short service at which Andrew explained the meaning of baptism. Then came the '5-minute' walk to the large fish pond where the baptising was to be done. This seemed more like 30 mins to us and it was very hot and tiring – but worth it! Andrew and a local pastor had the joy of baptising 19 young people. It was a very fitting time to do this, during the Easter celebration of Christ's death and resurrection. By the time we had toiled back up the hill and driven home, it was late afternoon. Another great day of blessing!

EASTER SUNDAY – Our day started at 5am! We were up early to go to the 6am Easter Sunrise service out on a farm belonging to a member of NCF. We were so keen (I had never been to such a service) that we were the first to arrive, at 5.45am! About 25 gathered for the celebration, standing round a log fire, singing praise songs and watching the sun's first rays lighting up the trees around the lake. 'He is risen!' From here, we went to the nearby Mechanics For Africa College, where NCF meets. A full breakfast was served around 7am. We went home to change and then on to our own church for a whole day's Easter celebration. It was a Ndola District event and the church was packed out. Ziso was the main morning speaker; his wife Nicki had prepared some special Sunday school items. They did some very good sign-language actions to accompany a song. Lunchtime brought a crisis: numbers had exceeded expectations. Around 2pm I was asked to drive to the market so that the cooks could buy more charcoal, but still not everyone got fed. The belated afternoon session, went on till about 4.30pm and we were all steaming in the heat. When we got home, we were utterly shattered! But it had been a great weekend.

We're now trying to come 'down to earth', back into some sort of routine. I have June CONTACT to work on, and we both need to resume our preparation of Bible courses for the Distance Learning programme. Andrew has practical jobs to do, connected with the building projects, etc. Keeping up-to-date with the finances is quite a headache for him! At the end of April we should be going to Lubumbashi for the Congo audit.

We send our loving wishes,

Andrew & Lyn