



Today is September 2nd and marks our 5th Anniversary in Zimbabwe and at the Village of Hope. What a remarkable day! And so it is time to reflect again on what God has done in our lives and the Village of Hope over the years.

REFLECTIONS



2005

We came innocently and with an excitement in 2005 to 'simply care for and better the lives of children'. Sounds simple enough ☺ eh? (Sometimes it is good that God doesn't tell us our future or we might turn tail and run.)

Who could have predicted the many zeros that accumulated on our money; the millions of percent inflation we lived through; the times we prayed for food AND IT CAME - when meat, and staple foods like flour, sugar, mealie meal and bread all but disappeared and grocery shelves were



empty for months; the political sways that stressed the lives of so many around us and kept our movements within country to a minimum; and the adjustments that we would undergo in our own family - school challenges, electricity & water cuts, dealing with family losses from so far away.

AND YET, God did the impossible! He created, quite literally, 'a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland'. (Isaiah 43:19)

From 20 acres of field with only a few buildings and a vision for more (pictured above left), God declared 'open heavens' and we harvested many tons of sweet potatoes and maize, and revived a dieing community feeding program in our first year, while we pursued Registration of an orphanage on the grounds. God opened that door finally in 2007 and in that year, we established the Village of Hope Children's Homes with 7 residents, and a Primary School called 'Cornelius Hope Academy' with 19 children. A drop in the bucket compared to today.



2010

Over the next 3 years, we have literally been 'running to keep up with the grace of God', as one local Pastor puts it. People here and in Canada caught the vision and a marathon started! 17 classrooms and a double story school block with computer lab and library was built, and our student body expanded to 427 pupils. 2 Children's Homes were funded and then built. Then another 2, then another 2. And God opened their doors for registration so we could welcome into our arms one by one, 40 lives - neglected, abandoned, orphaned, and the Village of Hope became a place of healing. There were suddenly 246 children cared for through sponsorship. Along with the growth came staffing needs and from 5 employees in 2005, we have grown to 79 staff today.



In a country with a depressed economy and people in desperate need, the Village of Hope slowly became an oasis of hope and an amazing link to the community, a home to the needy. You've gotta understand that in human eyes, this SHOULD HAVE NEVER HAPPENED. But God made a way, made a stream in the

desert! Our budget has grown, and our needs and faith have swollen with it! The Vision? We are almost there!

PROJECTIONS

It's time to take a deep breath, reflect and then put our heads up and run again. It's that last stretch of the marathon that can seem the most painful as legs cramp and tiredness sets in, and though that yellow ribbon waving in the wind is in sight, we can't slow down.



God has opened a door for a Secondary School - to see our children right through their education and the first building is going up (pictured right).

But more buildings are needed! We are on the verge of **at last building Hope Community Medical Clinic. More Children's Homes** are yet to be completed to help the neediest little ones.

PROJECT LIST 2010/11

Beyond the buildings, maintaining our national staff, the buildings and caring for the day to day needs of so many children have stretched us. And so, some of our biggest needs over this next and 6th year in Zimbabwe have been presented in an attachment – **'Project List August 2010'. Can you catch the vision with us?**

It is the vision of creating HOPE... FOR THEIR FUTURE, that drives us! To see a child grow in Jesus, in self-confidence, in stature, in social and emotional maturity. The miracles have names like Lisa (*pictured right*), Tinashe, Kudakwashe, Joseph, Prosper, Blessing, Tinashe, Malcolm, Crispin, Pam, Takudzwa, Zviko & Cryless.



TODAY?

For today, we welcomed our 41st resident child by the name of Kudakwashe, a 3 1/2 yr. old into Shamwari House. He is a delight, very social, smiling and gentle in his ways. (*pictured right*)

For today, we are rejoicing that Lisa again has gained 200 gm.!

For today, we just finished 3 days of Child Protection Training for several new employees, and age appropriate Child Protection Training for our teachers, to keep our children aged 3-10 safe!

For today, we are preparing to open a 6th Children's Home in the next 2 weeks. Rehoboth will become home to newly trained House Mom 'Winnie', as we begin to build a family under her care.



PRAYERS FOR TODAY

- For our babes listed above – Kuda and Lisa, and new mom 'Winnie'.
- For God to 'supply all our needs (at the Village of Hope), according to His riches in glory'.
- For you, and the part God is asking you to play in the vision.
- For our son Nathan, as he begins College Sept. 7th and so far from family.
- For our Cooledge family budget looking into 2011, that we might continue the work.

Thank you again for being a part of what God is doing at the Village of Hope! Thank you for helping to keep us here, caring for children.

Greetings on behalf of the Village of Hope staff, Administration, children and our own family!

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