



SaltMalawi

A Christian project saving lives in Malawi

Newsletter

May 2017

On behalf of the SaltMalawi trustees, welcome to our May 2017 Newsletter bringing you up to date with the latest news and action from Julian and Caroline Lott and Roger and Helen Jacobs with our church teams in Malawi. Most will know that the Lotts are taking a much needed and overdue furlough of 6 months in the UK from March to September this year, intended to be primarily a time of rest and recuperation. Of course, they have made space available to meet with various supporting churches on a number of Sundays and weekdays and their schedule is attached for the benefit of any who would like to know where and when they might see and hear them in the flesh.

Brian

Julian writes:- I begin this newsletter with an apology for having taken so long since our last report in January. I am writing now from Gloucester. As many of you know Caroline and I returned to England in the last week of March in preparation for our daughter Nicky's wedding to Rich Stephens.

I'll begin by thanking everyone for their prayers and financial support for the work of Salt Malawi. You may remember that this time last year we spent a lot of time and energy finding and buying maize in preparation for what threatened to be a very long and difficult time of hunger in Malawi in the beginning of this year. We bought a lot of food and extended our storage capacity greatly, and thereby created a lot of paid work for people in our surrounding villages. I feel that there are times of crisis when it is necessary to simply give help to people in order to enable them to survive. However, this is rarely the best strategy since it can create a dependency among the people we try to help; a preference to survive on hand outs rather than having to rely upon their own efforts. Wherever possible we prefer to give people work rather than giving them food - provided that there is food available to buy. During this hunger season of five months duration we adopted several approaches:

1. We continue to farm the land the church owns, and employ local people in this work. The management of the great majority of this work is now also in the hands of the locals. We created farming opportunities among another two of our church communities within the Dedza district. The only problem we faced here was the overwhelming numbers of people who wanted work from within the church. Frankly we had nowhere near enough work to give them.



2. We lent maize to the local churches so that their members could eat (see photo above). It was a humbling experience to visit these churches during February and March and witness just how much the people were visibly shrinking before our eyes. Thankfully with our help none of our church members died during this period..

3. We sent trucks loaded with maize to our churches in Lilongwe and Nsanje. Again the maize was "given" on the basis that those who can would repay from this year's harvest some or all of what they took. The idea is that the repayment will be made to the local church (and not us) in order that this year they will be enabled to offer help to those in need. It will take some years for the subsistence farmers of Malawi to recover to the position they were in before the two year drought brought on by climate change began. Many may need continuing assistance to make that recovery.

4. When the hunger was at its worst we released maize into the community for sale so that everyone could get something. Since almost no one had the money to buy maize we "gave" it

against promises to repay after this year's harvest. We shall see what happens!

5. Finally, to help those most in need we continued our church-based programmes in our Dedza churches of giving aid to the elderly, the widowed and the orphaned.

In conclusion, we saw far fewer deaths this year than in the previous year. This excellent news is somewhat tempered by the shocking fact that within the first 10 days of our leaving Malawi two young (and seemingly strong) men in the church died after very brief illnesses. The church called for a day's fasting and prayer and there have been no more reported deaths of that nature since then. We have had good rain this year so we hope that there will be a much easier time in this year's hunger season.



Before returning we held a conference for our church leaders from around the country (see photo above). 52 leaders came to the farm and slept in our now empty store! They washed in cold water for each of the 5 days of training and prayer, and had a great time of fellowship. The store has proved to be an excellent lecture hall too. Some of the men were new to us as several new churches have begun, especially in the south. The leaders represented 23 churches. (We had just 13 churches in our group this time last year). Of interest and challenge to us is the fact that 4 or 5 men declared that this was the first time that they had really understood the fullness of what Jesus had achieved for them through His death and resurrection from the dead. They were so convicted by what they had been taught that they are now giving themselves to reach out into their districts to spread the good news of all they had learned. This is wonderful and we invite you to pray for this work in the areas of Mchinji (to the west of Lilongwe), Chikwawa and Nsanje (the south), Kasungu (to the north of Lilongwe) and in the lakeshore area of Golimoti (to the east of Dedza).

Helped by the arrival of Roger and Helen in Dedza, Caroline and I are now planning how we should better assist these churches in their work of spreading this good news in the regions that are not so well known to us.

Other news in brief:

Cameron's mother passed away last week. Please pray for him and all the family in this sad time. Cameron is so thankful that he had the time in recent years to share with his mother the reason for the invaluable and real hope that he, and we all, have in the resurrection of the dead because of the fact that Jesus has himself been raised from the dead by the power of God. A favourite saying of Jesus comes to mind as I record this: "I tell you the truth, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned: he has crossed over from death to life" John 5: 24. This scripture neatly summarises much of what is reported in the first part of this newsletter.

Nicky's wedding.



I attach two photos of the happy couple and wider family. We are thrilled to welcome Rich



into our family. Even the rain didn't dampen the joy and love that covered the day at St Ives, Cornwall. We thank everyone who had a part in making this a most memorable day. Nicky had several friends present from her school days in Malawi including Faith from Lilongwe, and Rozzie who now lives in South Africa.

We end by thanking you all again for helping us get through two challenging years in Malawi in which we believe that we all have made a real difference to the lives of thousands of people.

We look forward to seeing many of you over the next two months as we visit a number of church communities as listed in the schedule at the end of this newsletter.

Julian & Caroline

Roger & Helen invite prayer for the granting of their TEP (Temporary Employment Permit) which has yet to be formally issued. The building work on their house goes well. Foundations have been laid and foundation walls are being built. The builders seem keen and are working hard.



Helen has started a health programme in the local churches and is treating all of the church children with medication to eradicate intestinal worms. Alexander is seen here encouraging the children to take their medicine!



They are looking forward to a visit soon from Dr Chris Sansom (right) & Mary Scudamore (left) from their home church in the UK.



Chris writes: - On 14th June Mary and I will travel to Malawi to visit Roger and Helen.

Mary is a retired midwife and I am a retired GP. We visited Roger and Helen in 2007 and 2010 when they were working in Mzuzu in Northern Malawi, and on both visits we did some medical clinics.

This time it is planned that in our first week we will visit some of the churches in and around Dedza and do one or two clinics. Whilst Mary and I see patients and Helen supervises the medicines, Roger, Cameron and John will have opportunity to preach to the waiting crowds.

In our second week we will be visiting Lake Malawi and going on a short safari with Roger and Helen. We return on 29th June and would very much value your prayers.

You can email Julian & Caroline at - lottsinmalawi@gmail.com

Financial gifts can be made via - SaltMalawi Ltd Charitable Trust, Featherbridge, Ford Lane, Langley, Stratford upon Avon CV37 0HN Email – treasurer@saltmalawi.org

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Caroline & Julian Lott UK Visit 2017 - Public Engagements

Tue 23 May - The Mustard Tree, Longwell Green - Joint Housegroup in church (evening)

Sun 28 May - Gloucester Community Church morning service

Sun 4 June - Claverdon Church morning service

Sun 11 June - Oakham Baptist Church morning service

Sun 18 June - Saltisford Church (Warwick) morning and evening services

Sun 9 July - All Saints Church Denstone (Staffs) morning service

Tue 11 July - The Longcroft Christian Fellowship (Wirral) evening joint housegroup

Sun 23 July - Myton Church (Warwick) morning and evening services

Thurs 21 Sept - Julian and Caroline depart from Heathrow