

This is a time when Malawi and Mozambique are in the news for the wrong reasons. Our hearts go out to the thousands of people who are suffering. The magnitude of their pain will be too great for us to truly comprehend. As I write this newsletter I can't help but feel that the personal concerns I have are as nothing compared to the problems faced by so many at present. What can I do but pray?

It's a great thing that the world rallies round to offer such material help it can. We imagine that many good people will be working in a sacrificial manner to relieve suffering. This is wonderful. We need those who have big hearts and who are empowered to meet need.

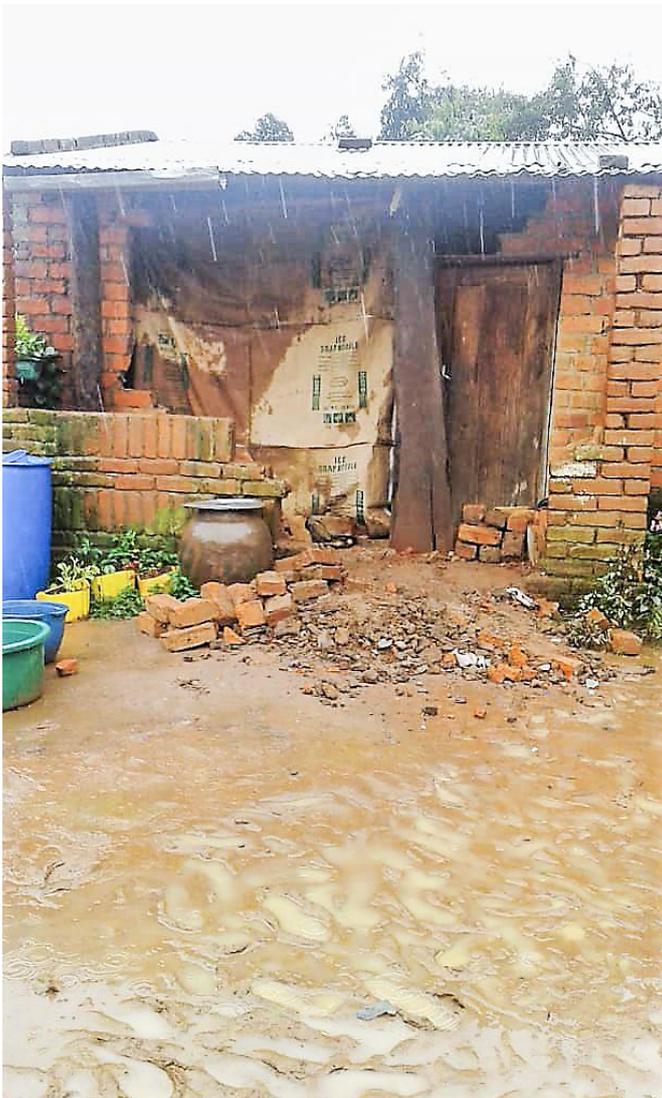
Over the past nearly 17 years we have been working in Malawi to proclaim a message of reconciliation with God, and train up men and women who can continue to do such work in our absence. We have been privileged to see the Lord raise many churches in places where there was no active proclamation of the good news and where there was no active work of making disciples. We believe that the time has arrived when the ongoing work on the ground is best undertaken by Malawians themselves. This is the goal towards which we have been working for all these years.

Last year it suddenly and surprisingly became impossible to renew our work permit in Malawi. As a result over the past few months we have been back in the UK. We have enjoyed being amongst family and friends, and the experience of settling into our former family home once again. However, our thoughts continually turn to our friends and fellow workers in Malawi. Together with the trustees of SaltMalawi we recognise that our role within the work in Malawi should continue, but in a different manner.

We have been able to hand over the leadership of the work to 4 key Malawian men. Aaron, Biliati, John and Joseph have all accepted appointment as trustees of the Church. Please pray for them in this important role. We believe they are doing a fine job and that they will be able to lead the church in a way which would have been impossible for us as foreigners. However, many of the churches are very young and the responsibility for caring for them is great. There are now in excess of 40 churches of which nearly a half have been in place for no more than a year. Moreover there remains a tremendous level of opportunity to start yet more new churches in areas where even today there are no active churches. We have therefore concluded that it is time to return to Malawi in order to meet with our church leaders. We wish to encourage them and to continue to train them. We feel that it is necessary to hear from them what has been happening since we have been away, and to help them to plan both for the work of the next few months and also to explore how best we might continue to equip them for the longer term work.

This photo shows a recent meeting of the 3 churches of Tsumba, Chabwanda and M'bozi - a sign that despite Julian and Caroline's absence the churches continue to thrive and develop under the leadership of John and his local team of leaders.





For these reasons we are returning to Malawi on 9th April for a short visit of one month, in order to meet with our leaders and some of the churches. It is likely that we will be speaking at two conferences - one in the south and the other in the north. These plans are contingent upon what we find out about the possibility of travelling in areas which have been affected by flooding. We do not yet know how achievable this will be. God-willing we expect to return to Malawi later in the year for a much longer visit to continue such work. This could form the basis of the future work with our seeking to have a more strategic role rather than being on the ground on a permanent basis. The handover of the responsibility for the work appears to have started well - we hesitate to do anything which might interrupt what has begun.

We hear that throughout the country many of our church families have lost their homes due to the rains. Many houses have collapsed. The picture (left) shows the damage to the house of Chiyembekezo's widow. (The mud holding the bricks together washes away in the heavy rain). Even church buildings have been destroyed. The reports we have been receiving warn us that the exceptionally heavy rains have led to crops within the fields being destroyed. The flooding made things very much worse. We will seek clarification as to what material help SaltMalawi can give to our churches in what looks as if it could be a very difficult year ahead.

#### Matters for prayer:

1. That God will provide for those who have lost homes, and for those whose crops have been destroyed.
2. That our visit will bring encouragement and comfort to many who are struggling.
3. For our safety and ability to travel even into the less accessible areas.
4. For protection against Malaria and cholera.
5. That we will leave our leaders in a stronger position to continue to lead the churches forward.

### *Julian & Caroline*

You can contact Julian & Caroline by email at - [lottsinmalawi@gmail.com](mailto:lottsinmalawi@gmail.com)

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Recent photos of some of the children in the Village of Light  
and their approximate ages



**Brenda 14**



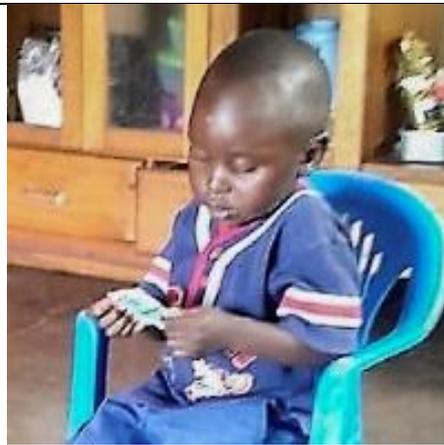
**Chimwemwe 10**



**Dan Seda 20**



**Gift 16**



**Joy Seda 2**



**Martha Seda 23**



**Matthews 18**



**Miyamiko 7**



**Naomi Seda 18**