

Dear Friends and Partners,

I want to thank you for your support of our efforts to ease suffering and provide hope for the grieving children of Zambia.

It's hard to believe that we have reached the point where we can say with confidence that we are making very significant progress in meeting the original challenge of the Zambian students and pastors: "You must teach this to all of the people of Zambia."

We're certainly not there yet; however, as a result of our efforts, almost 300 pastors have been trained to counsel orphans and their guardians.

Danette Johnson conducted our advanced training seminars in June. Twenty pastors were present for this event. Participants came from Lusaka, Copperbelt Central, and Southern Provinces. They included a variety of denominations: African Methodist Episcopal, Pilgrim Wesleyan, Brethren in Christ, Anglican Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zambia, New Divine Christian Church, Future Hope Church, Greater Works Assembly, Roman Catholic Church, and Christian Assembly.

As a result we now have 38 Zambians who are equipped to train other pastors.



Danette Johnson



Advanced Class, June, 2008

Meanwhile we have surveyed a sample of 16 pastors to determine what is being done with the training we are doing.

In the past six months these pastors have provided

- Individual counseling for **259 orphans**
- Individual counseling for **142 caregivers**
- Group counseling for **581 guardians**
- Group counseling for **950 orphans**

In addition, they shared what they learned in our training seminars with **131 pastors**.

I was extremely pleased by these results. What most impresses me is that all of the pastors are laboring under extremely difficult circumstances. It's amazing how much they accomplish with a minimum of resources. God bless them for all they do for their people.

We are launching a research effort in September that will help us to more fully gauge the impact of our efforts. It will include interviews with at least 100 pastors. Lameck Siamalambo will do the interviewing.

The research is designed to tell us what the pastors and laypersons are doing in their local churches with the training they have received. We want to know such things as: How many orphans are they counseling? How many guardians are they counseling? How much teaching are they doing? What results are they seeing? Are they sharing their knowledge with other pastors? Also, we want to know if they are sharing their knowledge with school teachers and with the police officials. It will require several weeks to complete the study.

We have uncovered indications that some pastors are doing very creative work with their training. We will learn more about these efforts.

The information we are seeking is vital. It will tell us whether we are accomplishing our goals and whether we should modify our program. Also, it will help us to make our case with individuals, foundations and government sources. I'll definitely share the results with you.

The information we have gathered thus far strongly suggests that orphans are receiving much better care as a result of the training we have provided. Better care means a more hopeful future for each of them.

Here are some specific examples of how grieving children and their guardians are being helped by pastors who are better informed as a result of *How to Love a Grieving Child* training.

**Pastor Mutupa** tells of Angel, a 9 year old girl who often packs all of her belongings and goes to an unfinished building next to where she had lived with her mother before her mother died. Angel then spends several hours in that building. She returns to the home of her guardian early in the evening. Her caregiver was very much confused by this. She was fearful that one day the child wouldn't return at all. She didn't know whether she should prevent the child from doing this, discipline her in some way, or pay no attention to this at all. Also, she entertained the possibility that Angel is just unhappy living with her and should be sent to live with someone else. Pastor Mutupa explained that Angel is in a phase of grief in which a child "searches" for the deceased parent. He suggested patience. He advised that she spend more time with Angel and when it seems appropriate to talk to her about this pattern. He assured the guardian that eventually Angel will stop this behavior. It took several weeks but eventually the child did stop. Because the caregiver handled the matter in this fashion, she and her Angel are much closer. Problems remain but the guardian is much more hopeful now.

**Pastor Moses Munsaka** tells of a situation in which 2 orphaned boys (8 and 10 years old) were fighting with one another, and with other children in the community. Also, "they were smoking, using bad language, and displaying many other symptoms of grief." The guardian couldn't control the situation and was ready to give up. Pastor Moses explained to her the special problems experienced by orphans and the patience required to help them. The guardian understood, changed the way she approached the problem -- by imposing certain restrictions but also by discussing with the boys their anger and trying to help them understand the connection between the death of their parents and their behavior. She also found a man in the church who agreed to spend time with them. The behavior of the boys has improved significantly and their guardian is more hopeful that she can keep them.

**Pastor Bernard Sikabbenu** relates his experience counseling a guardian who complained about Missy, an 8 year old orphan she dearly loves. Missy has been biting other children, including her friends. Nearly every day the parents or guardians of other children came to her home to complain. Many of them were extremely insulting. She tearfully decided that she would send the girl to stay with her uncle -- despite the fact that he had refused to take care of her in the past. The guardian saw no alternative. Pastor Bernard counseled her about the special problems of grieving children. He told her that all grieving children are deeply angry and that some display their anger in unusual ways, and that biting is a very common expression of anger among younger children. He suggested that she spend extra time with Missy, patiently discuss her behavior with her, and try to make her feel more secure. Pastor Bernard also took time to counsel the girl. After several weeks the girl's behavior improved significantly enough that the guardian decided that she would keep her. Missy's anger seems to be a rapidly diminishing problem. Pastor Bernard is pleased to say that Missy and her guardian seem to be living in greater harmony now -- with one another and with other people in the community.

**Pastor Joko Levy** tells of Marsha who at age 13 withdrew from school and all social contact. Her caregiver threatened to send her to live with someone else unless she changed. Because of his participation in "How to Love a Grieving Child," pastor Levy understood that Marsha's behavior is common with children who have experienced the trauma of parental loss. He counseled her caregiver about this. Her caregiver readily grasped what he was saying. She approached the child in a more understanding way, stopped threatening her, and spent more time with her. A much closer bond developed between them. In a relatively short time Marsha was able to return to school. It was difficult for her to re-connect socially but even that is improving.

**Pastor Elphas Rugomo** tells of an 11 year old girl named Memory, who had been a high achiever in school but now her interest in school has greatly diminished and she is doing very poorly. Her caregiver, an aunt, decided not to send Memory to school at all until she showed more interest and promised to do better. Pastor Elphas advised the aunt to send Memory to school. He explained that children who have experienced parental death have trouble concentrating and are too depressed to be motivated to learn. He suggested that she spend more time with Memory, help her with her school work, perhaps accompany her to school in the morning, and show that she understands what Memory is going through. The aunt followed his counsel and Memory is doing considerably better.

This is just a small sample of how pastors are making a difference in the lives of the guardians and orphans as a result of our "How to Love a Grieving Child" training.

These pastors managed to prevent the guardians from causing serious problems for the orphans by imposing discipline rather than understanding, punishment rather than love. Some of the caregivers were on the verge of sending their orphans away. This would have had cruel effects upon those children. Orphans must have a stable environment if they are to recover from the death of their parents. Every change is like a second major loss. Their recovery from the death of their parents is greatly impaired. In some cases they never recover.

Our purpose is to ease the suffering and promote the wellbeing of grieving children. We appreciate when pastors tell us how much the training means to them. It's when we hear stories like the above that we are confident our goals are being achieved.

In addition to providing personal and group counseling, the pastors are actively teaching the concepts and principles they learned in the seminars to the caregivers and guardians in their churches. They are teaching in the adult education program, in their sermons, and in special workshops. This can only lead to improvement in the way the orphans are cared for. Both the adults and the children will be spared the conflict, rejection, and abuse that is so common among them.

### **NONE OF THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT YOUR SUPPORT.**

Then there is *ARISE!* If you haven't heard about *ARISE!* this is the time to learn about it.

One of our participating pastors began a ministry to "street children" in 2004. Most of these children are orphans but they suffer the additional trauma of having no one they can live with or turn to for any kind of support. So they live in the streets. Most of them have to steal, beg, or "scrounge" to survive. They've been so deeply hurt that they trust no one.

I've been hearing about the street children since my first trip to Zambia in 2004. Pastors and laypersons have said that no one can seem to reach these children. Those who have tried have met with frustration and failure. It seemed like reaching them was an impossible challenge.

But, then I met pastor John Chilufya who was a student in our seminar last November. John has a very small church in Choma.

Four years ago one of the street children tried to steal money from his niece as she was shopping. John caught the boy but rather than turn him over to the police, which is the common practice, he offered to buy him a meal. As they ate, John asked the boy to tell him about himself. It was a moving story of grief, loneliness, and despair. John decided that he must create a ministry for this boy and children like him.



Because of John's patient and obvious love for these children, he now has 350 street children in his program. He provides them with one meal a day, individual and group counseling, basic education, and recreational activities. In addition, he offers opportunities for Bible study and worship.

He is an amazingly caring and competent man.

*ARISE!* is an extremely expensive program for a small church to sustain -- a minimum of \$30,000 per year. It would cost twice that to operate the program well. Remember, the average income of a Zambian family is only \$300 per year. These people are making major sacrifices to serve the orphans.

Isn't that something worth our support? We think it is and we're not alone. The committee that awards grants under the *Legacy of Grace* program at Grace Lutheran Church of River Forest also thinks the *ARISE!* program is worth supporting. Consequently, we are forwarding \$9,000 from that fund to the HGC Non-Governmental Organization for the work of pastor Chilufya' *ARISE!* program.



*ARISE!* is certainly the kind of program that should be replicated in other parts of Zambia -- beginning in Lusaka, the capital city. There are an estimated 175,000 children living in the streets of Lusaka.

We are hoping to support a second *ARISE!* program at the Matero Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lusaka. If we are able to raise the funds, we plan to hire pastor Chilufya to assist the local pastor, Rolita Machila in this effort.

Our intent is to raise \$140,000 per year for the next three years to continue training our pastors and to support and expand *ARISE!*

Believe me I really appreciate your support in the past. I hope you see the need and are as impressed with the results as I am.

Please continue your support! If you could perhaps increase your contribution, that would be great.

Here are some other ways of supporting *Hope for Grieving Children*:

- Host a hospitality evening in your home. This means inviting friends of yours whom you think would be interested in and contribute to our work. I will provide a PowerPoint presentation. This is a way for us to expand our number of partners in this mission.
- Introduce us to individuals who have the resources and the interest to help support what we are doing.
- Introduce us to other churches. I will make presentations to any group in any church that wants to know more about what we are doing.
- Help us gain access to the federal programs for Africa. We have a good track record, with persuasive statistics -- just what the government looks for. Problem is that at this point we don't have the political contacts. If you personally know your Representative or Senator, he or she can very capable of opening doors to those funds.

I am always looking for feedback concerning what we are trying to accomplish. Also, I'm sure you can appreciate the fact that raising money for projects such as this is a real challenge. You might have some ideas that aren't listed above. If so, I would really appreciate hearing from you. Please feel free to email, phone, or slow mail any thoughts you might have.

**PLEASE Help us meet our budget for the coming year (June 2008 - June 2009).**



**THESE ARE THE FACES OF ORPHANS LIVING IN POVERTY IN ZAMBIA**

God bless you in all that you do for Christ,

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