

If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.
I Corinthians 12:26 ESV

ETOSHA PAN, NAMIBIA

HILTY NEWSLETTER apr '06

I am sitting in our living room listening to Tim as he is attempting to memorize our vocabulary for language class tomorrow. I just wrote the quiz and he knows it will be difficult. We began orientation and language study in the beginning of March. We are finishing Orientation in April but language will continue on indefinitely. Being able to "get by" with English is a blessing and a curse. If we couldn't use English we would not have any of the friendships we already have...on the other hand we would be light-years ahead in language acquisition.

Our orientation to Action Zambia has been very informative and helpful. We've dealt with issues from theology of poverty and suffering to politics, history and geography. Through discussing the overarching AZ Philosophy of Ministry, it was decided that each ministry area needs to have its own Philosophy of Ministry. Tim and I have worked on putting forth a preliminary draft to our AZ team as well as our HIV/AIDS team. Through the exercise of writing this document we are reminded that our primary motivation and purpose is to see God glorified; to be worshipers of God and to create worship. The HIV/AIDS team (pictured below R-L, Tim, Andrea, Susan, Eta and John) in particular has been struck with this reality. Our purpose is higher than a disease, it is to see suffering peoples, churches and communities worship the one true living God.



The first week in May our team is going to have an offsite team retreat for 3 days. Action Zambia is a relatively young organization and has been growing rapidly over the last couple of years. Our offsite will help to unify the vision of the team and each of the ministry areas. We hope this will set the course for the coming year.

Following the offsite Tim and I will see a marked increase in our responsibility for the HIV/AIDS ministry of Action Zambia. Our teammate, Susan, is heading back to the States in May for several months. This month we have been spending much needed time with her to "learn the ropes".

We are excited about the ministry as we move into a new phase. The churches have received information on the basics of HIV and AIDS as well as home based care. Now it is time to help them practically implement what they have learned. As a team we are meeting with each of the churches to determine what our continuing relationship will look like with them. We desire to pour ourselves into a few churches and really build up their HIV/AIDS ministry; willing to tackle any obstacles that present themselves. For example, one of the obstacles that has presented itself is, "We don't know how to pray with our patients." We are looking forward to building relationships with the home care givers and the churches. Just by way of introduction to you and for your prayers the churches we are hoping to work with are as follows: Shiloh Baptist, Ng'ombe CMML, Vantor Baptist, Kaunda Square CMML, and Chisomo Baptist.

There have been various other things occupying our time here. Tim and I have counseled several people as they get tested for HIV. I have been with two women as they received their HIV+ results - very difficult. One woman has a 6yr old daughter who is also HIV+ and is very sick. She works for me a couple afternoons a week - helping with language and cleaning. It helps her to provide food for her family. Every other week we have been involved in teaching a 3 hr class for volunteers that are doing home-based care in their communities and churches. We went to a funeral and were overwhelmed with the number of fresh graves we encountered. In the section of the cemetery we traveled through Tim counted 75. I was acutely aware of the ages—young, mostly under 40. Although being confronted with this suffering has been unyielding we praise God that he has us here. We take joy in being able to encourage and lift up our Zambian brothers and sisters.

We thank you for your prayers on behalf of us and our team. Pray that God would free both of us to be vulnerable and transparent with our team members. We desire to have deep friendships but those can only be forged once we are willing to give up control and allow others to see us with all of our insecurities and weaknesses. Also pray for God's Spirit to lead and guide each of our decisions as we move into a new phase in the HIV/AIDS ministry for Action Zambia. We love you all and pray for God's blessing on you and praise him for your generosity toward us.



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