

News Update – June 2021

Brother Stephen has just returned from a most encouraging visit to Malawi – his first since February 2020. The main reasons for this trip were (1) to help Anna (Vallance) get settled into her new home and environment, (2) to “eyeball” the project site at Saidi for the first time (Bros. Harold & Goodson had been our eyes and ears through the entire process of buying the land), and (3) to meet and encourage many of SALT’s partners in the work in Malawi. With the gracious help of the Lord, Stephen was able to accomplish what he set out to do.



It was great to be reunited with Harold (l) and Goodson (r) after over 15 months



We had a very useful lunchtime meeting with translators and literature distributors

SALT has recently employed Wati(paso) to assist with the growing administrative burden of the work (particularly in view of the distinct possibility of ongoing Covid-related travel restrictions). Wati excelled herself by finding a very suitable little home for Anna to rent, prior to her arrival in the country. This meant that when Anna’s dad, Dave, arrived a few days later, they were able to set about getting the home ready for Anna to move in without any undue delay.



With Wati & Anna on her first morning in Malawi



A breakdown becomes a preaching opportunity

As Brother Dave’s flights arrived in the capital city, Lilongwe, we used the opportunity to make a day-visit to the refugee camp at Dzaleka. It was a real thrill to watch the excitement of a brand-new borehole being drilled to provide a much-needed clean water supply at the School / Orphan-care campus run by Christian Orphan Organisation in Malawi (COOM). This borehole was generously funded by a SALT donor, for which we praise the Lord.

It was a very special joy to leave 800 Swahili Bible Time children’s lessons with Brother William Iyango, who heads the school and orphan-care work at Dzaleka. We plan to use the Swahili work to pilot Postal Bible School type ministry in the camp, with a view to rolling out more widely once the Chichewa translation is

available. Again, we were so grateful for Wati's experience and help to find a very competent printer who produced the lessons for us at a fairly reasonable price. We are hopeful that they will be able to help us with further printing projects in the future.

While in Lilongwe, it was wonderful to renew fellowship with some of those with whom we work in the literature ministry. Over the past number of years, we have published more than 10 million items of Gospel literature, and this simply wouldn't be possible without an ever-expanding network of village volunteers. There, and in a similar meeting in Zomba, it was humbling to hear their reports of how the Gospel literature has blessed them in their labours for the Lord. We are assured that only eternity will reveal the mighty work the Lord has been doing.

A significant portion of Stephen's time was spent at the new development site at Saidi, just a few Km from where the Harpers made their home for so many years. Brother Goodson has been working hard in the locality, and it was a delight to sit down to a traditional lunch in his simple home on the site, with the Village Headman of Saidi, the Group Village Headman and representatives of several neighbouring villages all present. They were warm and welcoming, and we look forward to developing neighbourly relations with them. Pray that the Lord will give us wisdom to effectively reach our community there.



Aerial view of the site



Preparing the Block Moulding Machine



Prototype Inter-locking Soil Stabilised Blocks to be used in construction

The most recent acquisition brings the total area to around 7.5 acres. It was great for Stephen to "see the land with his feet" and walking the perimeter and the contours of the site helped give a better sense of its potential use. While at Saidi, work was begun on drilling a borehole to provide a clean water supply at the site. We hope to complete the first phase of that project shortly, with a ubiquitous "Afridev" hand-pump and plan to install a solar electric pump and water storage tanks in a later phase.



We are thankful for good relations with the Village Headman & his superiors



The new Afridev hand pump at Saidi will eventually be replaced with a solar electric one.

Storage and office accommodation for the translation and literature distribution work are top priorities, so Stephen initiated a project to build a loading bay and 18m x 14m concrete hard stand for three 40ft containers, one of which will be converted as office space. The whole area will be roofed and enclosed to

double up as a secure temporary space for garaging vehicles. Our next priority is to continue with fencing the boundary and providing some additional security fencing and lighting to prevent opportunistic thieving. Thereafter, the next phase will entail provision of suitable facilities for Gospel preaching and other community outreach.



Loading a new concrete mixer



Building a base for containerised office and stores



With 75,000 John's Gospels en route, we are looking forward to using the loading bay

We are looking to the Lord to really bless this new facility. During Stephen's visit we received confirmation of a shipment of 75,000 John's Gospels in Chichewa, and this confirmed our exercise to prioritise the handling of literature at the site. Pray that these Gospels will arrive in good time, and be a real blessing to many in Malawi, and that we will be able to discern the Lord's will for the development work.



Pray for Ananda, Grace & family – they have had security issues recently



Bro Harold's wife, Egly, just gave birth to their third boy, Trevor

Stephen is looking forward to getting back to Malawi on 6th August, Lord willing, when he hopes to move forward the building work. In the meantime, Anna and Wati are making plans for a 3-day training seminar to roll out a pilot "Postal Bible School" (we're still thinking about a good local name) using Swahili Bible Time children's lessons at the Dzaleka camp. These are exciting times for the work in Malawi.

With thanks again, for all your prayerful interest,

SOUTHERN AFRICA LITERATURE TRUST

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Further info available at www.SouthernAfricaLiteratureTrust.com

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<https://chat.whatsapp.com/BSf71PYIBF9LKQeIXscOUA> or message Stephen on +447546772343