

# HANDS ON DECK



## CONTRIBUTORS

in this issue of Hands on Deck

Michael Mwila  
Angelle Coutu  
Royie Nazombe  
Daytona Swarbrick  
Pinky Ngutshane  
Tyler Ralph

*“but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown.”*

*- Mark 4:19-20*



*“We can’t forget about the children who are sitting under the tree, alone, not smiling or participating.” – Michael Mwila*

## HOPE IN KABWE

Recently, Michael Mwila and Angelle Coutu travelled with several other volunteers to Kabwe, to share the Watchword for 2020 with the coordinators from the Community Based Organisations (CBO) that we are serving in the Kabwe area, and then to spend time visiting each of their communities.

**Michael Mwila, African Volunteer (Zambia), Luanshya Service Centre Coordinator**

“Something that struck me from the Watchword launch with the CBO coordinators was hearing people be vulnerable and sharing that, in order for them to bear more fruit, their roots in Christ must grow deeper. It was encouraging to hear the Care Workers say that they want to grow deep roots, that they are expectant for the year ahead and how they will bear fruit.

While I was in Malakota Community, I was reminded that we know our children – they are easy to identify. Even if you are with other children who don’t come to the Care Point,

you will know who our children are, because they are weak and unable to smile or jump. Yet that’s why we are called to this ministry – to bring hope and put a smile on their faces. Sometimes it can be easy to concentrate on the children who are jumping and engaging, but we can’t forget about the children who are sitting under the tree, alone, not smiling or participating.”

**Angelle Coutu, International Volunteer (Canada), Partnerships Team**

“A highlight from the week was the time that we spent in Chisamba Community. As we were walking to the Care Point, I saw a group of about 15 children running in my direction, and I thought that they were running towards me. However, it was super humbling when I realised that the children were running straight past me, and into the arms of one of the Care Workers. All of the children were climbing on and hugging her with such joy. It was a beautiful moment to witness, because I imagine that is how the children would react if they saw Jesus coming to the Care

Point. It was a moment of hope, and it wasn’t simply because we were there. It was incredible to see the Care Worker interacting with the children, and the way that the children look up to their Care Workers. The relationships that exist are so evident.

On the last day that we were in Kabwe, it was suffocatingly hot and we had driven for two hours to Malakota Community. As we were walking to the Care Point, a group of 15-20 children started following us, some who attended the Care Point and some who didn’t. When we got to the Care Point there was nobody there, because the Care Workers had gone to a funeral. It would have been easy in that moment to leave and start driving back home. Yet Michael took such amazing leadership. Immediately, he opened his bible and asked the children if they knew who Jesus was. Quickly, all of the children gathered around Michael as he taught them about who Jesus was, and then afterwards we spent two hours playing games with the children. It was such a rich time.”





## FAITHFULNESS IN THE CHALLENGES

Royie Nazombe, African Volunteer (Malawi), Dedza Service Centre Coordinator

In the middle of January Royie and his wife, Violet, travelled to Zambia where they will spend half of the year, learning from and being invested into by the Regional Support Team and spending time in the communities that the Service Centres in Zambia support. In Malawi Royie and Violet lead a team of eight people which is committed to serving six of the most vulnerable communities across Africa.

Throughout 2019 the Dedza Service Centre has seen God's hand actively at work. They have experienced many challenges but within those situations have seen God's faithfulness. "There is a child in Malawi named Simon\* who has been ill for a very long time. He was unable to walk, which meant that he was unable to properly access a toilet. Because of the support and encouragement that we have received by the Regional Support Team and visiting teams, our Dedza SC made his story personal and fought to ensure that he received medical care. Thankfully, he was able to receive surgery, and today is able to walk. He has since started trying to speak, something that he was completely unable to do previously."

One of the ways that Malawi was impacted by Cyclone Idai was with intense rain. Many of the homes collapsed and some were completely destroyed. "Although 71 houses where our children live were impacted by the rains, we thank God that each of those homes fell outwards and not inwards. If the homes had fallen inwards, we would have lost some of our children, but by God's grace they didn't." With support from the Regional Support Team, the Dedza SC managed to construct 25 complete houses and maintain 27 houses for our children throughout the six communities that they support. Additionally, 152 of the most vulnerable families were providing with food and farming inputs like fertilizer. Praise God!

*"We thank God that each of those homes fell outwards and not inwards. If the homes had fallen inwards, we would have lost some of our children, but by God's grace they didn't" - Royie Nazombe*

## INTRODUCING THE 2020 VOLUNTEER INTAKE

In February, we welcomed volunteers from around the world who have come to serve in Africa for a year. We continue to thank God for blessing us with volunteers who want to come to serve God by working with the most vulnerable communities and families. Please pray for each of these volunteers, that as they experience God's heart for the poor, they will also experience His heart for themselves and His church.



Brooke Wilson, 27, Australia



Morgan Glasbergen, 20, Canada



Ellie Bridgeman, 23, UK



Emma Baxter, 49, Australia



Jeff, 35, and Lindsey, 33, Canada, along with their six children: JR (11), Lelu (9), Leni (7), Bow (6), Barni (4), Benji (1)



## WATCHWORD REFLECTIONS FROM ACROSS AFRICA

## PRAYER REQUESTS



After the Watchword for 2020 was shared at the Hub in South Africa and at Kachele Village in Zambia, it was shared with the Care Workers and local pastors from the most vulnerable communities across Africa.

**Daytona Swarbrick, International Volunteer (Canada), Communications Team**

“I heard the Word in both South Africa and then again at Kachele in Zambia at the beginning of the year. This year, I was struck by the Watchword because I had never seen the parable in this way. Hearing the words from scripture prompted me to realise, and to question: what kind of soil am I? The times of prayer and worship throughout the week in Zambia were so different and refreshing in God’s stillness. In the times of silence, it really felt like God was there and holding us.”

**Pinky Ngutshane, African Volunteer (South Africa), Hazyview Service Centre**

“We had the privilege of sharing the Watchword at a meeting with the coordinators of the community-based organisations. It was a blessing to see everyone engaging. Audrey Sibiya shared with the Care Workers how, if our own ‘plants’ aren’t growing and being fruitful, then the seeds that we sow won’t be able to be very fruitful. We have since visited Mafambisa

Community, and have seen the fruit of the Care Workers taking the Word and making it personal. When we went to the Care Point, they were sharing the Word together.”

**Tyler Ralph, International Volunteer (Canada), Regional Support Team**

“While I was in Zimbabwe, we sat as a Regional Support Team together with Mutare and Honde Valley Service Centres and heard the Watchword that George shared at Kachele Village in Zambia. It was exciting to see the way that the team is growing. There is something about this Watchword that makes it tangible to hold on to, as many people are farmers.

When we met with the Care Workers and pastors, one of the pastors asked the Care Workers about their worries in life. They shared how it’s tough in this work because sometimes it goes well but other times people in the community are throwing rocks. The Care Workers aren’t always the favourite people and it can be easy to feel like giving up. Yet I was deeply touched because this pastor gave a huge message of hope and reminded each one of us where our hope and strength comes from. The worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth, and the desires for other things can seem big, but remembering that God walks with us was such an encouragement.

May those who care for vulnerable children highly value their children’s pursuit of education over having them work at such early ages.

Pray for the girls who are getting married at a young age, some of whom are being forced and others seeing that as a better lifestyle. Pray for God-fearing men and women to speak truth into their lives and commit to fighting for these young girls.

Hands at Work is committed to championing the worthiness of women and girls in the most vulnerable communities across Africa. It is common for women to be looked down upon, taken advantage of, or thought of as ‘less than’. Please pray as we champion the brave women who care and support the most vulnerable. Pray for each Hands at Work volunteer to make it personal as they empower girls and women.