

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

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Dearest friends and family,

Please indulge me in my paraphrase of I Corinthians 12:8; “To one there is given through the Spirit the work of carpentry, to another the work of mechanics, to another the art of painting, to another the glazing of windows...” We have just had one of the best weeks with a work team that we have every experienced. There were twelve individuals that came to Zimbabwe under the auspices of Priority 1 to assist in the completion of EBI’s library construction that has been functioning under the ten year plan. God heard the prayers that this new resource would be completed by August and now that goal seems feasible. It was a wonderful week in which much more was accomplished than even I thought possible. But even more importantly, there was a spirit of total harmony among the team and everyone seemed to have a very positive experience. Once again we find ourselves in a position similar to that of our neighbors when we feel totally inadequate in expressing our gratitude. “God will have to bless you because we have no way to thank you.” How many people would contribute a week of personal time, spend four days on an airplane, and then work from daylight to dark for six days out of a desire to be used by God? As is always the case, I believe that Chris and myself were the ones that were most greatly blessed.

But shortly after the departure of the team reality quickly returned. Part of our Zimbabwean family that are one of the few remaining commercial farmers in this wonderful country have been served with papers informing them to vacate their farm, surrender their home, and plant crops for the official who has decided that he wants to own their property. The process has no legality and takes place strictly on the basis of greed, corruption and intimidation. The procedure has already been ruled as illegal and racist in international regional courts but this government has absolutely no respect for the rule of law. Another reality that we were forced to encounter recently was the total disregard for human rights. Two men who were in the area when our satellite phone was stolen were “arrested” by the local police as suspects, handcuffed, and beaten mercilessly until they would confess. When I heard what was transpiring I went to the police and told them that if it would not prejudice their position that I wanted the men released and the theft report withdrawn. Their response was a shrug of total unconcern.

Will Tilghman is a young man who came with the Priority 1 group and is remaining for a month. He has been an asset in continuing to work on tasks in the library. He also has worked extensively with both EBI and high school students on their musical performance. They have appreciated his efforts and accomplishments. By the way, he was also part of a make shift EBI soccer team (orange jerseys by Priority 1) that challenged the high school soccer team to a match. There was even a 56 year old goal keeper involved. Suffice it to say we lost 4-2 and that everyone at EBI had great difficulty walking for the next several days. Life goes on. Please continue to keep us in your thoughts and prayers in spite of the absence of communication recently. We hope to have the next satellite phone up and operational sometime in June. Nothing happens easily here. Blessings to all of you.

Make it count,
Steve and Chris Newcomer

We serve under the auspices of Brethren in Christ World Missions. Contributions towards our ministry may be sent to Brethren in Christ world Missions, PO Box 390, Grantham PA 17027-0390 or in Canada, 2700 Bristol Circle, Oakville, ON L6H 6E1.