

Dear friends,

Warm greetings to you all at this special time of year. I hope this email finds you well, and looking forward to Christmas. I'm really looking forward to time with family, rest, and time with Jesus - the reason for Christmas.

We are doing well here in Bulawayo, and it's been a good year. We have seen so much happening, so many lives touched, lives transformed, and much growth.

I want to take this opportunity to express our HUGE THANKS to everyone who is a part of Our Neighbours Ministry. There are so many people who enable Our Neighbours to be what it is and do what we do. To the staff, the volunteers, partners, those who pray, those who support us in many different ways, those who encourage, etc, etc, etc, thank you SO MUCH to you all.

There is much to share, but in this update I'll just touch on a few key things:

- We've been asked to take-over the running of another ministry, Children of Grace, which was started by friends of ours a few years ago, and also supported by our partners Edge Foundation. You may have heard of this ministry, as we've been assisting them for approximately 6 months.

Children of Grace (CoG) assists 16 young students from very vulnerable backgrounds in the Trenance community of Bulawayo with education using the ACE curriculum. These students will become part of Lighthouse Christian Academy, which we run in partnership with Edge Foundation Australia also. Children of Grace also has what we call a 'forever family home' where a lady is caring for her one son and four other orphans. This family home, which we'll continue to call 'Children of Grace', will become one of Isaiah's Homes of Love.

The Children of Grace house is on a 5 acre property, and also has other buildings on the property, including one with many rooms, etc, from where the school children were learning. We will have full use of this property, and are looking at doing farming and poultry also on the property. Exciting hey, and it's great to be able to assist these lovely young children.



The 14 youngest children from CoG doing their end of year school play

- For ease of understanding, I'll put at the bottom of this update our latest organisation chart for the different areas that make up Our Neighbours Ministry now.
- We just distributed food to the group of 30 families/individuals that we assist with regular nutritional food parcels. As I saw a number of the Gogo's and Mdala's (grandmother's and elderly men) who receive these, and given I know in general of some of their circumstances (for example, 7 of these families are where widows are caring for orphans), knowing where they stay, etc, I really felt for their plight. But, I'm thankful God has called us to show His love to them and to care for them in this small way.*
- I've really been thankful and joyful recently as I've seen some of the people we have relationship with doing so well. One of the Gogo's who used to be part of our empowerment project, and who we assisted with a small business, recently gained some part-time employment also, and she is so thankful. Also, one of the gentlemen who we've assisted for many years, who was homeless and had a significant mental illness, is now doing so well. We are truly blessed by the relationships we have with people.

- Preparations have started for the Christmas Soup Kitchen, and we will also be having a New Year Soup Kitchen.
- Lubelihle was fostered, to be adopted, from our Isaiah's Babies Home, by a lovely lady last month, and below you can see Lube with her Mum and new big brother:



Her Mum wrote to Belinda soon after she was able to take Lube home:

Hi Belinda,

Many thanks for the photos, may you be richly blessed. I take your wish for us as a prayer that shall be answered everyday as long as we live.

Luba is a joy to us and I have no doubt in my mind she is from God! I thank you all for helping us get together, Luba was the missing link. May you all at Isaiah be crowned with favour for the work that you do.

Stay blessed

- As I write today, another 4 children from the babies home have been at court to be fostered, and they will ultimately be adopted by these Zimbabwean families. The amount of families coming forward to adopt is wonderful!
- We ran a camp the other day for the girls that are being assisted through Esandleni Sothando. This was a wonderful time for the 18 girls who could make it, and it was lovely to hear of growing relationships and much fun had.
- Lighthouse Christian Academy has had a good term. The integration of the students from Children of Grace went well, and we've been able to add some additional curriculum, and well as improve the running of this school this term. We are excited by continued growth planned for next year.
- Just to also share, finances are challenging for us as a ministry currently. We have gone into some debt, not too much, and are thankful that this option was available to us, and continue to trust in God's provision.

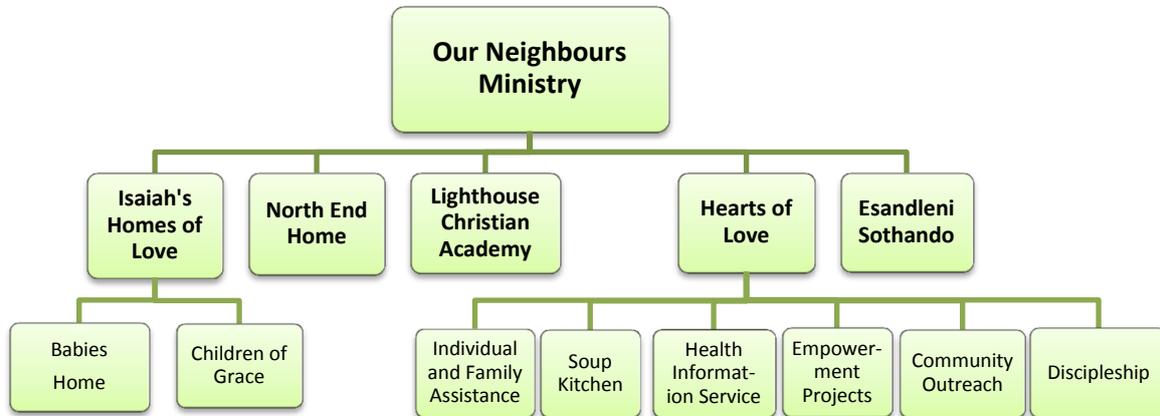
Well, that's a quick bit of news from us.

Wishing you all a special Christmas.

Thank you for your love, prayers, support and partnership with us. Please know what you are part of.

Love and God bless,
Martin

Please see next page.



Our Neighbours Ministry is proud to be a partner for Project J301 Our Neighbours Community Project - Zimbabwe with Global Development Group (ABN 57 102 400 993), Australian DFAT approved Non Government Organisation carrying out quality humanitarian projects with approved partners and providing aid to relieve poverty and provide long term solutions.

Global Development Group takes responsibility of the project according to DFAT rules providing a governance role and assisting in the areas of planning, monitoring, evaluating and auditing to ensure the projects are carried out to DFAT requirements. Tax deductible receipts for donations over \$2 to this approved aid and development project will be issued by Global Development Group for project J301. For more information please visit www.globaldevelopment.org.au

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