



Administered by: New Life Church Bristol (Registered Charity No. 1150750)  
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## Zambia Trip 2023

This report focusses on our recent trip to Zambia and the work we carried out whilst there.

### TRAVELLING AND LUSAKA



On the 11<sup>th</sup> of June a team of five volunteers left Bristol and headed to Zambia. The team included church trustee and assistant leader Dave Summerhill and school4kids project administrator Pete Moorcraft, both of whom have regularly visited Zambia. They were accompanied this year by Freddy Summerhill, Chloe Summerhill and Ed Hall who were making their first trips.

They battled a heavy storm and after a few hours made it to Heathrow Airport, where after negotiating check in and grabbing a quick snack they boarded the first aircraft and waited for take-off. The weather was so bad however, that take off was delayed by 30 minutes. This time went quickly, helped along by handfuls of Jelly Babies and the team were then into the first 3,567-mile leg of their journey.

The flight was smooth, and the team had lots of space to move around the Airbus A380 and after seven hours, the plane landed in Dubai. After a few hours milling around the airport, the team hopped on board the second aircraft which would take them from Dubai to Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia. This was another seven-hour, 3,528-mile flight.



After passing through immigration and grabbing their bags, the team left the airport building and were immediately met by Pastor Joseph and Betty and some members of their church. One thing we always get is a warm welcome and this was no different. The team then made their way to the car rental and collected their hire vehicle.

They made their way to the hotel and after checking in and dropping their bags off, they were back on the road, following Pastor Joseph across the city and through the rush hour traffic to church.



On arrival at The Messianic Covenant Church the team were met with the most amazing welcome. The church members had lined either side of the approach road into the church compound and were singing and dancing. It was a truly overwhelming welcome like they had never seen before.

After they had been shown to their seats, they were formally welcomed and were then treated to a poem about honour by some of the younger members of the church. After a time of worship, Dave introduced the team members to the congregation before preaching on how to respond to God when things don't seem to be going to plan. Entitled "Halleluiah Anyway", the message was received well.

Following the service, the team spent time chatting with the church outside, who all wanted their photo with the team.

Finally, with the sun long since set and the team running on empty, they went out for dinner at a local restaurant Chicago's with Pastor Joseph, Betty, their eldest son, Josephs brother James and a few others.



The next day was about preparing for the Solwezi part of the trip. The team checked out of the hotel and after exchanging some UK Sterling into Zambia Kwacha, spent a few hours checking out Lusaka. They also did a surprise visit to Africa Enterprise Trust and the bible college and children's home. The biggest surprise being that Bishop Hudson was not there and so they decided to head back to the hotel without going in.

On the way back to their hotel, whilst in a traffic jam and barely moving they changed lane. This resulted in a traffic police constable pulling them to the side of the road and trying to give them a ticket, for not obeying a road sign and dangerous driving! Pete was invited to step out of our vehicle to go to the police car. After a minute or so, Dave got out and went to see what was happening. He was told that as well as a ticket they wanted to impound the car. Dave used his negotiating skills and made it clear to the officer that it was not dangerous as they were barely moving when they changed lane and they were not going to accept the allegation. The officer had a rethink and let them go on their way without even a ticket.



The team then made their way back to the hotel to collect their bags, and then set off to the airport for their third flight of the trip to Solwezi. This was a short hour-long flight on a very small plane!

After landing in Solwezi they collected their next vehicle and went to Path of Life Church where they were greeted by Pastor Maureen.

She showed them around the church and school buildings and what work she wanted them to paint over the next four days, which basically was everything!

This came as a bit of a shock to the team as in addition to a large church hall, there were offices and nine classrooms, all of which needed painting.

The team smiled and pointed out to Pastor Maureen that there were only five of them and four days, but she simply laughed and said that NLC's senior leader Pastor Richard had told her to work them hard! "Thanks Pastor Richard!" The team checked in to their hotel and had an early night ready for along few days ahead.





## SOLWEZI, PAINT AND SHOPRITE

The team had arranged to meet Pastor Maureen at a local paint shop on Wednesday morning at 07:50 so were up early. When they arrived at the shop she had not yet arrived, so they took the opportunity to quickly visit Shoprite, a local supermarket, to pick up some things for lunch. By the time they were done Pastor Maureen had arrived and was waiting outside the shop.

Despite agreeing to meet us at 7:50, she advised us that the shop didn't open until 08:30 but there was another one down the road. The team were now working on Zambia time, where things happen when they happen and not before, so they followed Pastor Maureen, back the way they had just come from their hotel to another, significantly larger and more importantly open shop.

Maureen chose the colours of the paint she wanted which were certainly bold. She chose a deep purple, bright green and dayglow yellow. All seven, 20 litre tubs of paint were mixed while they waited and then they were on their way to the church to start work.



It was a busy day, but they managed to complete the inside of the church and one other room. They finished the day exhausted, at around 17:00 and headed back to Shoprite to buy the items for the children's gift bags. This was always going to be an epic shopping trip, and the team literally cleared the shelves in both of the towns two Shoprite stores of the items they required.



Thursday started where Wednesday left off, with another 8am visit to the paint shop on the way to church to pick up some more equipment. Once at the church, the team wasted no time at all and set to work painting the outside of the building. They made a good start on the front and recruited some church members to start on the sides and back of the building which was still being rendered.

The paint didn't go very far as not much of the building had been painted before and part was a rough cast render. This meant they needed more green paint and so the team took the decision to have lunch on the move whilst travelling back to the paint shop yet again, eating on route. They purchased another two 20 litre tubs of green paint plus some white and headed back to the church to carry on.



The team finished at 16:45 and then went to Shoprite to buy lunch for the next day and the final gifts for the bags. The store staff followed the team around the store and asked questions as they thought they were opening a rival store after they had cleared the shelves the day before. This gave them an opportunity to share about the project with the staff who thought it was amazing.

After dinner the team spent an hour or so packing the 185 gift bags that they were going to be giving out the next day with all the goodies they had purchased the day before.

## GIFT BAGS AND MEALIE MEAL

After a very late-night packing bags, the team were blessed by an extra half an hour in bed on Friday morning. As soon as breakfast was over, they loaded the 185 gift bags into the back of the truck. They made their way to the church where they were met again by Pastor Maureen.

Pastor Maureen showed the team around the school, class by class. In each class the team were greeted by the pupils and then were able to observe a typical lesson.



The classes are very formally laid out in neat rows and the pupils are very polite and well behaved. They are regularly asked questions by the teacher and correct answers are celebrated by all the class. A typical class size is between 20 and 25 pupils.

After the tour the team went back to the church building (50 metres at most) and met many of the parents who were patiently waiting inside.

The children made their way from their classes in long lines



to join us at the church.

The team then, with a level of organised chaos, gave out the gift bags to each of the pupils and a 25kg sack of mealie meal to each parent. This took some time as there are now 185 pupils and the team wanted to take photographs of each family group.



The gift bags have a selection of gifts inside, which include an eraser, a ruler, a couple of pencils and a pencil sharpener, a pen and note books, a bar of soap and a flannel, a tube of toothpaste and a tooth brush and a bar of chocolate, because everyone deserves a treat. These gift may seem basic to us in the UK but the children that receive them really appreciate them and to see the smiles on their faces is really heart warming.



This year, all 168 of the 25kg sacks of mealie meal which were given to the families of the children that attend the school were purchased through the kind donations of our supporters in the UK. These supporters are not just members of New Life Church, but also from our neighbouring churches in Frenchay and Stapleton. So on behalf of everyone, we'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that contributed. It means a great deal to all that received a sack and will help to feed their families for a significant period.

After this the families headed home with their 25kg sacks of mealie meal on their heads and the team headed back to the school to start painting the classrooms.



## A WHOLE SCHOOL TO PAINT

Chloe and Freddy started on the pre-school class and Dave, Ed and Pete started on one of the other classes. Amazingly, they were running low on some colours of paint again and also needed some bright colours for the pre-school and reception class so, Dave and Freddy headed off to the paint shop, while Chloe, Pete and Ed carried on painting.

After a couple of hours, they returned with another 20-litre tub of yellow, two 20-litre tubs of white and 10-litre tubs of red, bright green, and bright blue, which took the paint total close to 400-litres.

The sun finally set of Friday and Saturday soon came – This was the final day of painting and the team set off from the hotel at around 08:00 and headed straight to the school, for once without visiting the paint shop. When they arrived, there were a lot of very smartly dressed secondary school pupils outside the gate waiting to get in. They were from local private schools and were there to study for their practical science exams in the well-equipped science labs, the church provided funds for a few years ago and which are significantly higher quality than in their own schools.



Despite the audience, the team started work straight away. Chloe and Freddy continued in the pre-school and the three old boys (Dave, Pete and Ed) in the class they had started in the day before which was now ready for the white paint to be applied to the top half.

Once Chloe and Freddy have finished the pre-school, they moved over to the reception class which was also to be done in the bright colours. Dave, Ed and Pete completed one class then moved onto the next and repeated the process. After all the classrooms were painted, the team cleaned and reset each classroom.

That was it! With help of their local recruits, they had finished this mammoth task and in 3½ days had painted a church inside and out, an office, a storeroom and nine classes! Their work was done and honestly so were they. So, after clearing up, they headed back to the hotel for a well-deserved rest.

## SUNDAY IN SOLWEZI

Finally, a slower start! The team weren't needed in church until 10am. They were greeted on arrival again by Pastor Maureen and several others. They entered the church where Pastor Edward was leading prayers and were shown to their seats. This was an opportunity to just soak in the atmosphere.

After a period of praying Maureen welcomed and introduced them to the church members and the main service commenced. The team were advised when they arrived at the church that there was no power. This was in some respects was a blessing as the worship started acapella, which was amazing to hear and to be part of.

After the worship Pastor Maureen gave an emotional heartfelt thank you to the team and to New Life Church Bristol for the ongoing support that they receive in Solwezi.



Dave was then invited to give the word and he preached a slightly different version of Halleluiah Anyway which was targeted at the Solwezi church and their need to get behind their Godly anointed female leader. This was received well, and the team were advised it was a timely message. As has been the case over many years Dave was accompanied on stage by Pastor Edward who translated his message into the local dialect.

Pastor Maureen then summed up and after this the church went back into worship. The service finished at around 1pm and the team said their goodbyes to the many friends they had made in Solwezi. After this they headed back to the hotel for lunch.



In the afternoon the team took the opportunity to drive north out of Solwezi to visit the grave of Pastor Maureen's late husband, Bishop Evans Luwi, who had died suddenly in 2021. This was the first time the team had had opportunity to pay their respects in person and to say their farewells.



They then took a quick drive north around 10km to show the members of the team who thanks to the third flight, had not experienced the drive from Lusaka to Solwezi just what the roads and area are like.

Later that afternoon the team met with Pastor Maureen back in Solwezi as they had arranged to see the house she owns and had lived in with Bishop Evans and also the rented house she is now living in. In the evening the team enjoyed a farewell dinner with Pastor Maureen before saying goodbye one last time and heading to their rooms to start packing their bags ready for their flight back to Lusaka.

## REST IS BEST



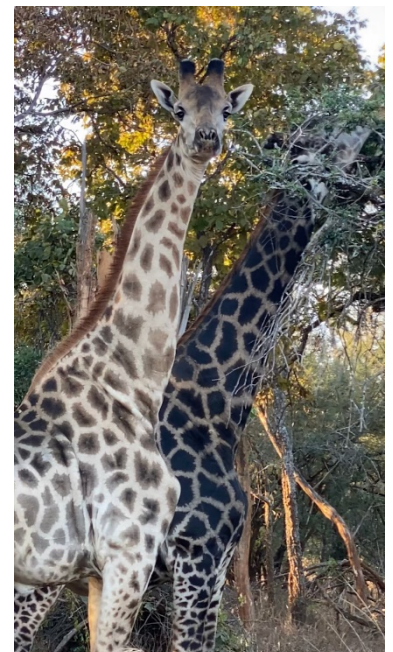
Monday was an early start as the team's flight to Lusaka left at just after 8am, which meant leaving the hotel intime to be at airport for 7ish. The plane to Lusaka was another small one; around 30 seats in all, and as it took off from Solwezi we could see the freshly painted church which is next to the airport. As we went down the runway the team could also see a lot of people waving us off from outside the church.

The flight back involved a short stop at Kalumbila which made Solwezi airport seem large but was otherwise uneventful.

They checked in to their hotel, dropped their bags off in what was becoming a familiar routine and then went to meet with Bishop Hudson at the Kingsgate Centre.

However as before, on arrival we were informed that we had just missed him as he was not feeling well and had gone home. Mark, one of the staff and someone that Dave had worked with on a previous build team some 15 years earlier showed us around the Hope college and the orphanage. The team met the house parents and some of the children living at the home.

After lunch the team decided to go on an adventure and followed some road signs, they had spotted to Lilayi Lodge, not really knowing what Lilayi Lodge was. This turned out to be well worth the risk as it was a small private game park where they were able to jump on a cheap as chips one-hour safari drive where they saw lots of animals including all five of the park's giraffes.





Tuesday was much more of a planned day of rest. The team had worked hard to the point of exhaustion and needed to recover. So after breakfast, they headed to Chaminuka Nature Reserve for some much needed R&R. On route however, they were again stopped by the police after ignoring a stop sign (which we didn't see). Pete was driving again (there seems to be a pattern here), so he produced his driving license and was invited to the police vehicle to discuss the matter and the options. After another short negotiation they were allowed to continue their journey without further issue.

The road between the park's entrance gate and the reception area is long and during this drive they saw many ostriches and other animals. The team were able to enjoy a game drive with three other visitors and saw many different animals including giraffe, zebra, wildebeest, monkeys, and elephants which they also negotiated the opportunity to feed.

After a lunch they went on a boat trip around one of the lakes before going to a cheese and wine tasting at the cheese factory on the reserve. They then headed back to the hotel and headed out for dinner at a local restaurant.

## FINAL GOODBYES

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June was the teams last day in Zambia. They checked out of the hotel and visited the cultural village, where they haggled and negotiated the purchase of some gifts for their families back home.

After returning to the hotel for drinks, they met with Pastor Joseph, Betty, and a few others to chat and say their goodbyes.



The teams flight back left Lusaka on Wednesday at 9:35pm. They travelled through the night to Dubai and then the next day boarded a flight back to London Heathrow arriving just after 4pm. They made their way through passport control, baggage collection and customs and onto the bus transfer to the car park. Loaded up the car with their luggage and headed back to Bristol, sad to have left, but glad to be home.

This had been a great trip where they had achieved so much and were able to bless the church and school communities in Solwezi. Some had made new friends. They had all painted lots and lots and lots and had all come home full of god's blessing, and full of memories.

If you want to watch some short videos of the team's trip, you can do so by visiting the latest news section of our website - [nlcbristol.org](http://nlcbristol.org)