

August 2020

Dear friends,

We hope your summer has been pleasant and that you can squeeze a little more sunshine and sandal-wearing into the season before fall arrives!

It is time to write an update about the programs in Zambia, especially as they relate to Covid19.

Some background: Grades 7, 9 and 12 are examination grades for all pupils. In June of this year, following school closures due to Covid19, all pupils in these grades *returned* to their schools to carry on with preparations for the year-end exams. The same applies to pupils who are in their final year of college – these have also returned to class.

In fact, there was an attempt made by some schools to provide instruction for Grades 10 and 11 using various internet platforms, but these were found to be inaccessible to too many pupils who did not have a device or internet and so were subsequently stopped.

The Ministry of Education in Zambia has been trying to make a good decision about other grades returning to school (not unlike here in Canada) and this past Thursday the MOE made an official announcement that, apart from Grades 7, 9 and 12, all schools should remain closed until January of 2021.

This decision impacts programs for student sponsorship and school grants (teacher support). We have some ideas to present to you for this interim time of school closures.

If you are willing, between now and December, we will use funds normally designated for **sponsorship** and apply them to construction costs for a new computer/science lab at Butale Christian Community School. In January, Lord willing, schools will reopen and the sponsored pupils will once again need your help to pay school fees.

If you are willing, between now and December, we will continue to support the teachers who are supported by school grants from ZMF-C. Most of the teachers have families to feed, and/or parents to support, and we believe the right response is one of compassion. Over the course of the next week each school will be visited by Ruhtt Mbumwae to discuss with the Head Teachers, and teachers supported by school grants, to brainstorm about ways to connect with pupils during the next few months. One idea discussed today is that of delivering printed lessons to pupils at their homes. It would give the students a little bit of something to stimulate their learning. We look forward to hearing some additional ideas presented by the teachers.

If you would like to discontinue your support we do understand. Please let us know as soon as possible if this is your preference. If you are unsure what Grade(s) your sponsored student(s) is presently in, get in touch with us and we will let you know.

Thank you for reading through this update and don't hesitate to ask questions if there are some gaps in the information as presented.

Above all, we want to honour God in all decisions we make and in all attempts to help vulnerable children. They are precious in His sight and in ours!

Blessings,

Joan Mann

Zambia Mission Fund Canada