



### Youngs in Malawi

Jim and Diane worked in Malawi from 2003-2018. Since their return they have continued to support the work in Malawi for STUM (Sunday school Teachers United movement) and medical work based on ABC clinic (Africa Bible College). STUM started in 2013 with John Msowoya who is still the current director. They 4 people and networks with STUM district committees of volunteers. The focus is on week-long trainings of TOT's (trainers of teachers) in the districts and the trainers are supported to go out and run trainings in their area.

Dear Supporters, Greetings. (5 October)

Thanks for the journey you took with us over June-September in Malawi.

I include in the update a report on the time with the STUM team.

**Praise-** The shipment from India of 2000 Sunday Lesson books arrived at the Malawi border this week after a long wait! Thanks for your persistent prayers!

*Isaiah 30:8 Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show you compassion. For the LORD is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!"*

We rejoice in the reprinting of these books in the new form - being the first time the two Old Testament books have been combined together; the same for the two New Testament books. This was done to save printing costs after it became too expensive to have them printed in Malawi. The final cost per book (after including a levy for them to enter Malawi of \$3300!) is NZ\$16;50. The cost of printing in Malawi was over \$30 a book!

**Pray-** Churches and teachers will be eager to purchase a book for \$5; a price that is generally affordable.

*Psalms 119:9-11. How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*

### **Report from Jim Young in his time in Malawi.**

I was able to spend two months with the STUM team in July- September.

- The STUM leadership. We had been away from Malawi for 8 years and I am very thankful to God for the leadership of John Msowoya over that period. John came to NZ in 2018 and visited our churches and in that time in our country it gave him a better understanding of the source of support for STUM. John has led the work with integrity and that cannot be taken for granted when corruption is an issue even for Christian groups worldwide. He has led the organization sacrificially as I mention later in this report particularly in regards to remuneration.
- Trainings. I was with the team at four weeklong trainings in four STUM districts of Sunday school teachers to be TOT's (Trainers of Sunday school teachers). For three days they received teachings from the STUM trainers- Lovemore and Levton. The other two days of the week we went with them (6-8 trainees) to observe them training Sunday school teachers. I gave a devotion each training day.

Observations- the teaching is in the local language and I struggle to understand but

-The two STUM trainers are very enthusiastic in their teaching.

- You have to be realistic as to what you can expect from the Trainees with only 3 days of training received. I observed they grew with confidence in the two days they did teaching.

-I gave feedback and prepared some material to help Levton and Lovemore in their teaching.

Overall, I think this is a good training model we have in place by concentrating on having a small group trained to be the trainers of teachers. The ministry is being realistic in what it can achieve with the financial and people resources it has available.

In the time I was there we trained folk in five STUM districts bringing to a total of 16 districts having TOT's. There are still 14 districts still to receive trainings.

- **My time with the STUM team and families.**

I took the five families to Lake Malawi for 3 nights and that was a good time to get to know the families and they appreciated the time together. I had time with them sharing the joys and challenges of the ministry. Especially sharing with them the financial challenges of keeping the ministry functioning as it is all dependent on NZ funding. The salaries for the team compared to other Malawi NGO's is small owing to our limited budget so that was discussed and I think I have a more informed understanding of their feelings on this.

- **Vehicle-** The main challenge was the STUM Toyota Hiace breaking down twice on two different trips. We purchased it 4 years ago and it is well cared for by John Msowoya. The main problem was the Steering pump which they say is a fault with this model. The

standard of roads in Malawi take their toll on vehicles. I realise now the need to be looking ahead and saving each month for when it needs to be replaced. In saying all this it is an ideal type of vehicle for our ministry as we have room for 14 people and so for example can take the trainees with us during those training days at our weeklong events.

- **Meetings with the STUM district coordinators.** We had a meeting with those in the central region and another with them in the Northern region.
- Naturally they were very happy to see me as they had their doubts as to how committed I am having not returned for 8 years. John has played a pivotal role in keeping them informed and encouraging them.

We discussed the work and future direction of the ministry. I especially spoke about the need for them to be looking at ways to raise money themselves for the ministry. There seemed to be enthusiasm for raising money through farming so time will tell whether this bears fruit. They went away knowing the ministry has its financial challenges like for example in providing Teacher lesson books and the cost of transport in Malawi with one of the highest fuel costs in the world (\$5;50 a litre).

**We pray together that we can keep STUM viable as a ministry.**

- **Visiting Malawi again?** There is no plans in the foreseeable future to return. The ministry is in good hands and I am in regular contact with John through mainly WhatsApp. It is costly being there as people are very needy understandably, as for example supermarket food costs had risen approx., 10 times in those 8 years.

Thanks for your partnership with the work of STUM! I had shared in our time there of needs that folk have in School fees, irrigation projects, Health centres. Thanks for those who have contributed to these. If it is still on your heart to help let me know.

*Phil 1:3-6 We thank my God every time I remember you. In all our prayers for all of you, we always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

Blessings to you all!

Jim and Diane Young.