

# NEWSLETTER

**FEBRUARY 2021**

***A Big Thank You.....***



on behalf of the pupils and teachers at Chakulanjala, Kanthete, Msambaimfa, Mikanga and Sopani Primary Schools in the Diocese of Lake Malawi, who have benefitted from the new classroom blocks built as a result of over £90,000 raised through the MACS 2020 appeal. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters a total of six double classroom blocks have been completed, allowing pupils to enjoy a safe and secure learning environment.



# Caring for the Whole Planet – and its Smallest ‘Somebodies’

## The Big Picture

One of my earliest memories of Malawi is the sight of women carrying firewood on their heads as they came out of the blue-gum forests just outside Blantyre (we landed in Chileka in those days!) and one of my most recent memories is the sight of heaps of charcoal for sale along the roadside close to Lilongwe as people try to reduce the cost of unreliable and costly electricity in the city.



*Collecting firewood*



*Charcoal for sale*

Recent figures suggest that Malawi lost 36 percent of its forest cover to firewood collection between 1972 and 2011, with all the implications for land degradation leading to lower productivity in the fields and silting up of the rivers, which, in the case of the Shire, should be providing hydroelectricity. It is a vicious circle which can only be broken by renewable energy - and, in Malawi, that must mean solar.

## The very small

A woman in obstructed labour doesn't worry too much about climate change. Her big priority is a very small ‘somebody’ – her baby struggling to be born. By the end of February 2021, generous donors have enabled us to reach our target of £20,000 so that we can equip three rural health centres in the Diocese of Lake Malawi with the solar power that can make sure that every small arrival can be delivered in safety, day or night. But now we know that we must have a bigger ambition .....



*A new health-centre arrival*

***With ten months still to run for our 2021 appeal, MACS is now aiming to raise another £20,000 for three more rural health centres, this time, in the Diocese of Upper Shire. There is one big planet and many more small “somebodies” who still need our help!***

Tony Cox

## Africycle Mountain Bikes for Ordinands

Every year MACS has, from the Gift List, funded the gift of a bicycle to each final year student at Zomba's Leonard Kamungu Theological College. Many priests and deacons in Malawi do not own transport to cover the scattered church communities in their large rural parishes. Happily, close to the college is Africycle, a charity that receives shipments of secondhand mountain bikes from Canada and refurbishes them to a high standard. They also offer maintenance training to the recipients and a repair kit.

Eileen Eggington



Deacons Martin Patrick and Malinda Burton from the Diocese of Southern Malawi



Learning how to keep their bikes roadworthy!

**Please remember,**

**THE GIFT LIST IS NOT JUST FOR CHRISTMAS!**

**Please support our work by buying alternative presents for  
birthdays and anniversaries**

**Available online at [www.malawimacs.org](http://www.malawimacs.org)**

## Tamara Nyasulu in conversation with Brian Griffin



Tamara Nyasulu was appointed to the Headship of the Nkope Day Secondary School on the Southern Lakeshore two years ago and faced the immediate challenge of being one of the very few female teachers in the country to lead a mixed secondary school. She explained that, generally, her female colleagues prefer to manage all girls' schools; boys having the reputation of being far more difficult!

Tamara believes that there are merits in mixed gender schools, particularly in competition, with girls gaining in prestige when they beat the boys and boys then being embarrassed, which make them work harder.

As the first female Head at Nkope, Tamara is aiming to impress the community by raising standards, in general, to become the best school in the Division (particularly by improving the pass rate in national examinations) as well as encouraging greater community participation in school affairs.

Another of her important aims is to provide guidance and counselling to prevent girls from dropping out of school through pregnancy, which is all too common and also to be particularly alert to pupil relationships.

Tamara is married with three daughters and one son. Her eldest daughter has recently graduated in Political Science and her son is employed in a welding and carpentry workshop.

Tamara grew up in a family of seven children and lost her father at an early age, which led to her having to attend a multitude of schools up and down the country from Blantyre to Mzuzu. She believes that in many ways she can be an example both to her family and to her pupils, having gained a Diploma in Education and a B Ed degree at Nkhoma University which led to starting a teaching career and promotion 'through the ranks' to her Headship at Nkope.



Finally, when asked if she had any more ambitions, her reply was to carry on studying when time allows, maybe to gain a Master's degree, to build some more teachers' houses at Nkope and as a geographer, when possible, to enjoy some more of the beautiful parts of the country, such as the Nkula Falls rapids, the Karonga geysers and Lengwe National Park.

## **Soil Erosion Threat to the Water Supply at Nkope**

The large lake pump water system funded by MACS has had some problems with both exceptionally low water levels followed by heavy rains and high levels. The high lake levels, while good for the water supply, bring their own problems: the shoreline has suffered erosion, and the jetty which joins the pump to the land and supports the intake pipe, has been undercut and risked collapsing.

Discussions with the Nkope parish water committee concluded that the cheapest way of protecting the sandy lake bank from the waves was to fill 15 gabion baskets with large stones to break the waves and prevent further erosion. Grafiud Tione helped source the wire gabion baskets in Lilongwe and the local community sourced large stones to fill the baskets and provided transport and labour.

Adrian Brown



## Clean Water for Villagers in Nembere, Magomero Parish

Eileen Eggington reports that just before Christmas, trustees were delighted to hear news that an Afridev water pump, funded through MACS by the congregation of their UK link Parish Church in Haslingfield, had been installed by Thamz Investment Water Tech Drilling Engineering company. Our Representative Grafiud Tione was present at the drilling and measured the required borehole depth of 45 meters. Below is a letter of thanks from Parish Priest, Father Eddington Matendeu:

*We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the Haslingfield Group of parishes and the entire board of MACS for a grant amounting of 3.5 million Malawian Kwacha to install a new beautiful and durable borehole at St Michael's Nembere in Magomero parish.*

*Be assured that, your assistance is greatly appreciated. Previously people walked a long distance fetching safe water hence wasting time and energy that could have been used for other profitable developments.*

*The beneficiaries include all villagers from all faiths. They will be saved from diseases that claim many lives when using unsafe water, such as cholera. With Covid 19 pandemic this project will help us to prevent the same. The contractor has given us a guarantee of one year. The committee too was trained to identify faults and maintain whenever necessary.*

*We are very grateful, thanks so much ZIKOMO KWAMBIRI.  
God bless you! God bless MACS and our friends at Haslingfield.*

*Sincerely,  
Fr Eddington Matendeu*



## **New Projects Approved Since the Last Newsletter**

**Kaphiridzinja Cottage roof repairs (DUS)**

**Nkope Water Gabion replacement (DUS)**

**Double Classroom block and office at Mitembo Junior Primary  
Dowa Hills Parish (DLM)**

**St Anne's hospital maternity wing and operating theatre  
refurbishment (DLM)**

**Ten shallow hand-pumped boreholes in five parishes in  
Southern Malawi** (through Seed Sowers Trust ,UK Charity number  
1084847)

**Afripump Borehole at St Michael's Nembere, Magomero Parish  
(DUS),** funded by Haslingfield Group of Churches

**Staff House refurbishment at St Martin's Hospital, Malindi (DUS)**

## **MACS CIO - NEW BANKING DETAILS**

As you will be aware, MACS has recently changed to become MACS CIO and therefore we have had to open a new bank account.

Supporters who donate by Standing Order should have already received details of how to change these. The new account is:

Beneficiary: Malawi Association for Christian Support CIO  
Barclays Bank PLC Sort Code: 20-54-25 Account number: 70069507

The original MACS account will remain open for a while and funds deposited there will automatically be moved to MACS CIO so that we can carry on our work. However, the sooner we can finalise the new arrangements the more streamlined our activity can become.

Should you wish to confirm these details, or need more details of Standing Orders, please ring Julie Jupton on 01580 291658

You have received this newsletter because you are registered on our system as a supporter of MACS, Charity no.1188309. You can update your preferences or unsubscribe at [www.malawimacs.org](http://www.malawimacs.org) or by contacting the secretary at [info@malawimacs.org](mailto:info@malawimacs.org)



**Let's Zoom again!**



*Following the success of our  
2020 Supporters' Day  
join us for our*

## **2021 MACS Supporters' Day & AGM**

**10.30 – 1.00 Saturday September 18<sup>th</sup>**

*To include interviews with  
Grafiud Tione, our Malawi Representative and other  
partners in Malawi*

*Further details and joining instructions to follow in the summer Newsletter*

## **MACS WHO'S WHO**

**Patron:** Jane Arden, MBE

**Chairman:** Tony Cox

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**Trustees:** Gillian Barber, Adrian Brown, Margaret Campbell, Richard Davies, Brian Griffin, Martin Herrick.