

Prayer Points

July 2007

By Charles Woodrow

Here are the July prayer points from Nampula:

Last month I contacted 11 embassies and aid organizations in Maputo about our hospital project, then made the 1200 mile trip to the capital to speak with those that showed interest. Though I received a lot of verbal encouragement, in the end no one had money for building hospitals. Asking secular organizations to finance a Christian endeavor is definitely not my preferred approach for reasons that would be obvious to many, but in case my opinion was incorrect I thought it was time to make the effort and be clear of the charge of negligence.

You might be interested in a few of the more unusual statistics that made their way into my report to the embassies:

- Number of surgeons in Nampula province (2002 work force report) – 4, or 1 per 850,000 population (U.S. – 1 per 6,100)
- Total Mozambique health expenditure (2003 WHO statistics) – \$45 per person per year (U.S. \$6500)
- Number of operations financed by Grace Missions 1990-1998 – 3,500
- Total cost of all materials consumed in a hernia operation by us – \$2.63
- Total cost of all materials consumed in abdominal hysterectomy by us – \$9.24
- Total salaries for the six man surgical team (today's wages) – \$700 per month
- Total net cost for 100 operations per month – \$1150
- Total operating budget for our 120 bed government hospital, excluding payroll, medications, and medical supplies – \$833 per month
- Surgical treatments in our hospital were almost always curative, cost far less than treating medical illnesses, and did not continue on or recur like most medical/infectious problems do.

Despite the complete lack of fruit from my visit to Maputo, a lot of seed has been sown. ***Pray that God might yet cause the information that has been disseminated to reach the ears of someone wanting to support this project, if this is the approach He desires to use.***

Salome Van Niekerk, the Portuguese-speaking administrative assistant supplied us by Constantia Park Baptist Church in Pretoria was a great help in organizing the data for the report to the embassies. She also has taken full control of the book shop and will do most of the organizational work for the upcoming FIEL conference for church leaders. She has been an invaluable asset on a multitude of fronts and has freed me up to do things that have been impossible these past 15 years, such as sending out these monthly reports. Her time with us will be up in a few weeks, but ***recently Salome delighted us with the news that she has decided to return to Nampula and continue her work indefinitely. Thank God with us for this much needed answer to prayer. Also pray that the funds will be available for her continued assistance.***

We are still scouring England for the type ***Land Rover*** that can accommodate our entire family and that has an engine serviceable in Nampula. ***Please pray that God would help us reach the end of our search soon.***

Last month I reported that we now had the full amount of money ***the owner of our downtown bookstore*** was requesting for purchasing that site. I specifically asked for prayer that the owner, Selso, would still want to sell and would not raise his price above what we could pay. Two days ago he called needing \$15,000 to send his wife to South

Africa for a much needed operation. I was happy to tell him that we had the whole \$35,000 he had been asking for. However, he was obviously disappointed to discover that. He was hoping to get two years rent from us and sell his car in order to finance the procedure, not sacrifice his dream of selling his downtown property and building a beautiful home with the revenue. So he is now agonizing over this decision and weighing his options, while I await the outcome. As he was leaving, he said his wife had been diagnosed with cancer of the uterus. ***Please pray that I would know how to minister Christ to him and his wife in this situation, that she might ultimately be healed, that Selso would want to sell his property, and that in the end he would have cause for much rejoicing.***

Last month I mentioned the soccer ministry conducted jointly by our son Andrew and Juvêncio, one of the young men in the church. That continues to go well, and Bonamar, one of the players, continues to come to the Bible classes and worship services. Sarah and Grace, with our administrative assistant Salome, Maria, and Arnaldo's two daughters conducted their first crafts club. Eight neighborhood girls attended and seemed to have a good time making bead bracelets and necklaces. Maria enthusiastically presented a good devotional at the meeting. ***Pray that this ministry will develop and in time produce fruit for the Lord. Also continue to pray for Bonamar's salvation.***

One of the girls present at the crafts club meeting was Sara, Maria's Muslim friend. Last month I mentioned that she wanted to come to our services, which her mother would not allow. I specifically asked for prayer that God would open the doors for her to attend. Since that time she was allowed to attend one Sunday service and has permission to come regularly to the crafts club. ***Continue to pray for Sara's salvation.***

Last month we mentioned events with Lucas and his Muslim wife Isobel. We were rejoicing that she had attended services two Sundays in a row in an effort to secure God's blessing upon her home and that God had granted a wonderfully timed windfall to come their way when Lucas promptly began receiving his promised salary only five months after beginning work instead of waiting a year or longer like most of us had to. When I wrote the last report we were eagerly awaiting the results of these propitious events. Well, here they are: Lucas and his wife were so excited about getting four months wages they spent all the first Sunday hauling river sand, putting in a concrete floor to their mud hut, and installing a new, sturdy door with a strong lock on it to keep out thieves. I was joyfully anticipating their presence in church to testify to the whole congregation of God's goodness to them. The church had been praying for months that Lucas would not have to wait a year for his salary to start. When Lucas came by the house to tell me of the bonanza a few days earlier he couldn't wait for Sunday to come. So when he didn't show, I hurried to his hut to find out the problem. You can only imagine my frustration at seeing him and his wife drenched in sweat and cement with their hired hand straining alongside them. I'll skip the details of what happened next, but it was reminiscent of Ezra chapter 9. I told Lucas it would be very hard to testify in church of God's goodness to him when he was setting such a poor example for the others to follow. Lucas appeared dismayed at being found in this condition, but the next Sunday (a three day weekend) he and Isobel traveled to his mother's house to do the same thing for her, and the next Sunday they were attending the burial ceremony of a neighbor. So we are still waiting for something of eternal benefit to come, though by now I am so disappointed at how Lucas has traded in for temporal gain the great spiritual leverage God was granting him with Isobel that I almost don't care if his home continues in nature's night! Well, not really. ***Please pray that God would bless Lucas' family despite his own efforts to snuff all prospects of spiritual gain.***

The great prayer request this month is for the annual Fiel Conference to be held in three weeks, July 24-27. Church leaders come from all of Mozambique's ten provinces and from 30 to 40 different denominations to attend these meetings. Our speakers this year will be Jim Elliff from the States and Paulo Brasil from Brazil. Errol Hulse was going to be with us but has had to cancel because of his wife's health. The following week I

host a special intensive training seminar for those pastors wishing to attend. Our instructors will be Paulo Brasil, Jacques Pentz from South Africa, and myself. Registrations for the conference are running ahead of what I expected, with 120 people already signed up, most of them from out of town. If the usual swell of last minute registrations occurs again this year, we will exceed 180 participants, the facility's maximum capacity. Please ***pray for Karl Peterson and myself as we make preparations. Pray that God would bless the speakers, send us those church leaders through whom He is especially working, and use these meetings to deepen the Mozambican church's understanding of God and His word.***

Until next month,
Charles Woodrow