

PROFILE



JACKIE HOEKSTRA MALAWI

Jackie Hoekstra is in Malawi with her husband, The Rev. Ed Hoekstra, Associate Minister of St. Columba CCAP Church in Blantyre, Malawi and two of their five children, Jacob and Nico. Luke, Elleana and Kiera are continuing their studies in Canada.

Jackie's main focus is to look after Nico and Jacob and help them with the many transitions they are facing in adjusting to a new culture, but she is also very much involved as a volunteer in the community. She is secretary of the board of the Tidzalerana Club, which is in the process of building a shelter for many handicapped members of the Ndirande community. She also volunteers and helps organize the regular club meetings with crafts, singing, and many different types of sensory stimulation activities for the most, severely challenged members. She also leads singing at the 5:00 p.m. worship service at St. Michael's.

Jackie writes a monthly newsletter account of the challenges and joys of living, and working out one's faith, in a foreign and very economically poor culture. She continues her work on her Social Work degree one course at a time.

Ed and Jackie have always been interested in doing mission work. In 1986, they spent three months in Mexico, in the Yucatan Peninsula living with the indigenous people and learning Spanish. This experience confirmed their desire to one day return to the mission field on a full-time basis.

The Hoekstras have been in Malawi since August of 2008. In January, 2009, after 4 months of visiting and preaching the Gospel in several churches, being oriented to Malawi and taking language training, Ed was installed in the congregation of St. Columba.

Jackie writes, "We represent so much more than Ed and Jackie and the kids. We represent the Presbyterian Church, the body of Christ, the hands and feet of Christ, the desire for justice, companionship in suffering, possibilities of something new. We feel honoured to be among our brothers and sisters here, nurturing and encouraging them in their faith and having our faith strengthened by them."

Jackie's letters can be found online at <http://www.presbyterian.ca/ministry/world/staff/news>