



Presbyterians Sharing

October 2008 Update

Presbyterians Sharing is your fund for mission and ministry across Canada and around the world. Help grow these ministries by supporting *Presbyterians Sharing*. Discover more at www.presbyterian.ca.

Goal for 2008: \$8,950,000

Received by Sept. 30 2008: \$4,664,719

Received by Sept. 30 2007: \$4,645,156

Thank you for your faithful support of *Presbyterians Sharing*. Givings are currently 0.42% higher than the same time last year. Let us continue to work and pray together as we encourage congregations to reach and surpass their commitments to *Presbyterians Sharing* in 2008.

On August 27, 2008, the Rev. Edward and Mrs. Jacqueline Hoekstra arrived in Blantyre, Malawi accompanied by Jacob and Nico, two of their five children. The Hoekstras have been appointed to work with the Blantyre Synod of The Church of Central Africa Presbyterian for the next three years. This fall the Hoekstras are studying the Chichewa language and visiting and speaking in churches throughout the Synod. In January the Rev. Hoekstra will be inducted as the Associate Minister of St. Columba's CCAP Church, a large congregation of more than four thousand members in Blantyre.

Jackie Hoekstra has been documenting their experiences in a series of letters that are being posted on the PCC website. The following is an extraction of her letter written September 29, 2008. Find more letters from Jackie and other international staff at www.presbyterian.ca/international/letters.

Last night I put the mosquito net down as usual and Nico and I were going to have a little reading time, when Jacob excitedly said, "Look mom, there's a little gecko on top of your bed, inside the mosquito net."

The boys were delighted by my facial expression. How could that gecko be inside my mosquito net? Very calmly, given the circumstances, I said, "Okay could someone please get that gecko off of my bed

and outside."

My three masculine men, my protectors, my knights in shining armour, went to work. Immediately the gecko scurried all around, on the ceiling of the mosquito net and eluded their pursuit. As they pursued the gecko, Jacob kept on teasing, "Oh mom we don't have a dog but we have a little pet gecko, ah he's so cute."

You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God.

2 Corinthians 9:11-12

NEW RESOURCE ON POVERTY

Justice Ministries encourages congregations to learn about poverty. Download their new one-page resource called *Love your neighbour as yourself at* www.presbyterian.ca/resources/online/3651 or order a printed version from Justice Ministries.

That's when the gecko fell, (yes they can lose their grip) on to my pillow! Then he scurried all around my pillow, then going underneath my pillow and I thought for sure they had lost him. This is when I sort of lost it and said, "Get him! Don't squish him! Oh please get him, I can't sleep with a gecko lost in my bed somewhere!" Those critters can move fast and after what seemed like an endless game of hide and seek, Ed got the prize, and deposited him outdoors. Needless to say I didn't sleep very well that night.

We took our time at the market today trying to learn the names for things in Chichewa. They swarm us as soon as we get out of the van. Madame, sir, good price: a mop, a comic book, sunglasses, cloth, strawberries. We practice our Chichewa phrases. *Mukupanga bwanji*, "How much?" *Mukundulitsa*, "Too much!" When we say that, they laugh and laugh. When I say, *sindigula* meaning "I don't buy", they don't believe me. And then as I leave their stalls with their beautiful, stinky, fresh fish they say, "*Muyendebwino*." You have a nice journey. Wishing me well on my journey of life.

This morning was a real treat. We got a piano! Praise the Lord. God is good, piano or no piano. Clara Henderson who had been a missionary in Malawi for many years had left her piano at the Inglis' and they said we could have it! Yippee! With the help of some Malawian friends we got the piano in the house. As Ed played, I got everybody a Coke or a Fanta and we laughed a lot. I asked for requests, but our movers said they only knew Malawian songs. We are going to have to learn some Malawian folk songs. Music is the language of the world!

Sunday we went to a small church somewhere near Zomba where there was going to be an installation of a new minister. We went with McDonald Kadawati (the General Secretary of the Blantyre Synod) and McDonald junior. On the way to the church Rev. Kadawati said that

ADVENT CALENDARS

This year's calendar tells the story of eleven-year-old Michel and his little sister Helene, as they prepare for a 'green' Christmas in Montreal. Calendars can be ordered from the Book Room for \$0.90 each for 1-9 copies, or \$0.80 each for 10 or more.

Ed didn't have to preach because the moderator would be preaching. That was fine with Ed, he just tucked that sermon into his back pocket. When we got there we were led to the manse, shook thirty people's hand, impressed the heck out of them with our Chichewa greetings and sat down with a Fanta. We were told that we were waiting for some people to show up before the service could start.

Then Ed was asked by the moderator if he would preach. So Ed just pulled the sermon back out of his pocket. An hour later the service started. The church had only temporary metal sheeting hooked up for a roof. (They took off the roof to build the walls higher because it got very hot and humid inside their sanctuary.) It was hot, and long, and I don't know how many *abuesas* (pastors) there were, but it seemed like too many! We left three hours later and were escorted back into the manse for a nsima, chicken, cabbage lunch. When we left an hour later the church service was still going strong. What stamina!

Muyendebwino everyone. Wishing you well on your journey. Much love,

Jackie



Mercy Chilapula, a minister in the Blantyre Synod who has received support from *Presbyterians Sharing* for her educational studies, is now the minister at Mount Pleasant Church in Blantyre, Malawi. She will be a colleague of the Hoekstras.

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