

## Palmer Trip Report June, 2024

### Summary

Elaine's and my trip went smoothly and according to schedule. I feel like we met our objectives, God blessing our programs. Mobility for Elaine was "slow and steady" and we had no accidents, plus many African brothers and sisters got to hold her hand going up and down stairs and on rough terrain.

### Service Center

The Avondale (Harare) Service Center and Greencroft Inventory Office are running smoothly. Nonetheless, some matters need consideration as the volume of work continues to grow. Maidei is looking into what is available as an alternative office printer, as the current machine is very expensive to operate (due to toner cost) and is not considered a 'heavy-duty' model. A big task for our staff is going to the bus stages to collect or drop off lessons coming from and going to recruiters. To allow office staff not to have to take time away from their work in the office, they are looking into the possibility of a part-time person to courier the parcels of lessons to and from the bus stages.

If a motorbike was available for that, it would simplify that task a great deal. On this trip I was able to carry over a second scanner for the office, thankfully without paying any customs duty.



**Mrs Madyira helps Elaine across the terrain**



**Harare WBS Staff: Maidei, Wadzanai, Patty, Terrence**

One issue still disturbing recruiters in Zimbabwe is the slowness and inconsistency of getting back the graded lessons and next courses. One problem is when a batch of lessons sent from Harare gets split into several batches that come back at different times. The headache this creates for delivering lessons to far-flung locations is considerable, as well as the embarrassment of having next lessons for some students and not others. Another challenge mentioned is the cost of transportation to the schools.

### Gokwe

Gokwe is a large district in north-central Zimbabwe. Last year WBS recruiter Gideon Madyira held a seminar at Choto Secondary School, some two hours northwest of Gokwe Town. 67 were baptized, including both parents and students. We joined Sunday worship with that congregation on this trip, and had about 60 present. Our main effort, however, was a Saturday seminar at Nyoka Secondary School, about 30 minutes from Gokwe Town. 157 students attended whom we divided into 4 classes for about 3 hours' teaching. Perhaps ¼ of those were already WBS students. At the end of the day, an additional 98 enrolled in WBS. After the teaching sessions, 39 students were baptized and 20 adults, mostly parents who had attended the seminar. Two evangelists planned to come the next day to assist these new converts with their first Sunday worship as the

Nyoka church of Christ, meeting in one of the school classrooms. This makes just the third congregation in all of Gokwe District.

### Binga

One of the most productive areas for WBS in the last year is also one of the most remote – Binga District on Lake Kariba, which borders Zambia in Zimbabwe’s northwest. To get there we drove 7 hours from Bulawayo, parts of that over very bad roads. Emmanuel Muchingami, the lead WBS recruiter, moved to Binga about 4 years ago. The area has 4 small congregations.

The brethren in Binga are incredibly dedicated and hard-working. One brother rode his bicycle 40 miles to participate in the campaign. They have enrolled students at 11 schools, some well off the beaten path and without consistent public transportation. A brother has assisted the WBS recruiters with



**39 students and 20 adults are baptized at Nyoka Secondary School**



**Phinias rode his bicycle 40 miles to participate in the WBS campaign**

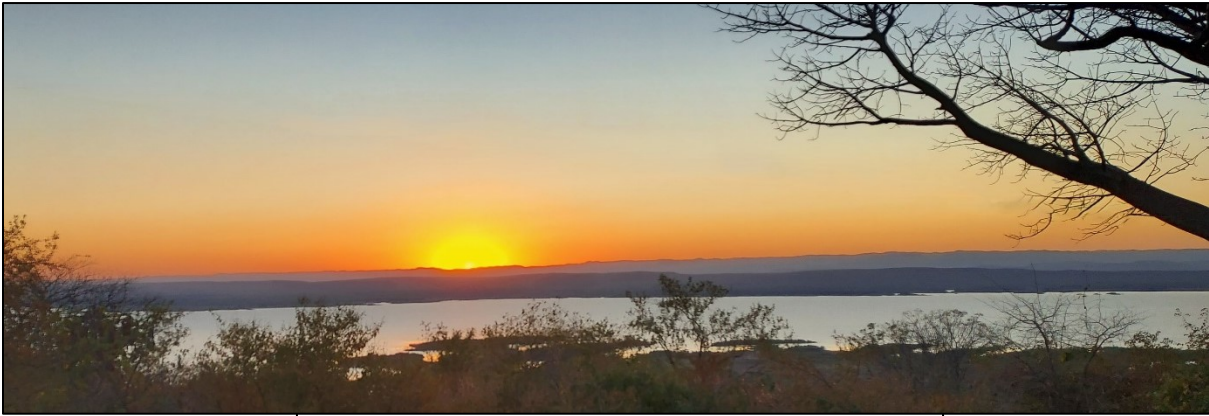
his motorcycle at times, but it is currently broken down.

10 evangelists from the 4 congregations did neighborhood and market recruiting. The first day we were in Binga Town, hosted by the town congregation and its preacher Martin Muleya. The second day we drove 30 minutes to Manjolo trading center and the Masibinto church of Christ. Recruiter William Munenge is making WBS well known in this area. Besides canvassing, we also spoke to the student bodies of Manjolo Secondary School and Masibinto Secondary School. Almost the whole student bodies are already enrolled at those schools and currently doing *This Is Good News*. Next door to where the Masibinto congregation meets (under a tree on logs for pews) is the Manjolo community

farm. Many were found there who enrolled in WBS. By the end of the Binga campaign we had enrolled 232 people in WBS, not counting some who chose to register online. The receptionist at the lodge we stayed in (his name is “Marvelous”) downloaded the WBS app and registered the first day we got there. When I got home I was able to adopt him as my student.



**Recruiters tally enrollments at Masibinto**



Sunset over Lake Kariba at Binga, Zimbabwe

Marondera

At Marondera (the place I was born and went to high school), a city-wide campaign was organized, combined with a WBS Recruiters’ Workshop for 25 WBS recruiters from across Mashonaland and Manicaland Regions. Some pertinent enrollment-procedure questions were addressed. Recruiters were given supplies, including nice WBS-branded polo shirts.

The many workers made for one of the largest campaign groups I have ever worked with. Two teams went to each of the neighborhoods of the 4 town congregations. The time spent actually canvassing was “too short,” but a total of 323 people were enrolled in WBS. The next morning a combined worship service was held at which 7 congregations were represented.

On our last morning in Marondera I got to speak briefly at 2 high schools—Cornerstone College and my *alma mater*, Marondera High School. It was the first opportunity recruiters had had to introduce WBS to Marondera High, and we pray there will be a good number of enrollments.



My canvassing partners, Kudzai and Ignatius from Mutare



Phil addresses about 700 students at Marondera High School