

“The Very Heart of Christ” by Madison Wheeler (Intern)

The Bible Schools are in their final month of study for the 2017 year. It has been a good year. After working at Namikango for a few months, we asked Madison Wheeler, one of our interns this year, to write a summary of the Bible School ministry – its present and future. Here is what she had to say. Ben

The Namikango Bible School is a vital ministry of Namikango. The purpose of the Bible School is to train godly leaders who are filled with the spirit of Christ who can go out and teach others.

Namikango supports 28 different Village Bible School centers, which are held in Church of Christ churches, throughout Malawi, plus others in Mozambique. The Bible School is currently a four-year program that is divided into 26 separate courses. Six courses are offered each year, and each course takes one month to complete. These courses are designed to take the students through the Bible while focusing on important aspects of the Christian faith, such as Christian growth, grace, and leadership. **Chitani Bakali**, the Bible School Coordinator, says that all of the courses are designed to go beyond head knowledge to lead each student to [the very heart of Christ](#).

The Bible School includes -

- Training students in the Word and in godliness
- Leading students by the Word and by example
- Transforming their lives and those around them, for godly living

The schools use a lecture method to teach, with 11 assessment tests scattered throughout the course. These tests help keep track of the student's progress and learning. Each course is completed with a major exam to ensure the material has been mastered. The students consider it a privilege to come for study. It takes dedication, because the courses are very demanding.

One of the beauties of the Village Bible Schools is that the cost of having one in a village is shared by the village churches. In this, the people there have an investment in the school, an ownership – the school is important to the villages and the students. They are serious about studying the Bible.

Namikango is currently working on creating two separate programs for the Bible Schools. Their desire is to have a shorter, two-year program that is taught solely in Chichewa. It will be a "Certificate Level" program that will appeal to nearly everyone for basic Bible knowledge. Then there will be a longer, more in-depth, three-year program, to be taught in English.



Chitani and Eric visit a Village Bible School

All of this is being done with the intentions of one day developing the Bible School on Namikango's campus into a Bible College whose focus is creating growing disciples who are well equipped to teach and share the good news of the Gospel.

During my time with Namikango, my team and I had the opportunity to go into some of the local villages to visit the Bible Schools there. Though we couldn't understand the lessons that were being taught in Chichewa, it was still a rich encouragement for us just to know that we have brothers and sisters across the world who are taking the time to dig deeper into the Bible.

It's such a blessing and is uplifting to see young, energetic people seek to understand the Word and live by it.

These students simply wanted to know more about Jesus. There was nothing fancy about the schools, they didn't even have individual desks or blackboards, and the seats were blocks of cement, not very comfortable. But none of that mattered because they had the Word, they had study materials, and they had someone to help them grow in their understanding of it.

These students come before the feet of Jesus, as Mary did – hungry to know and be known of Him. Their humility in learning humbled me. May we all desire knowledge from God because it brings abundant life and because it shows us who we are and who we are to be.

The Water Well has been Drilled

We are now waiting to install the pump and construct the tank and tower for storage and distribution. All the funds needed have been received. We are so thankful for the generous and quick response in providing funds for this project. God bless you all.

Ben Hayes



A Visit North by Eric Gephart

In September Chitani, Sam, Ben and I traveled to Central and Northern Malawi to meet with several congregations that have been asking for a visit from Namikango. We spent six days visiting with several groups of churches (from Mkanda, Kasungu, Nkotakota, and Mzimba), plus one Village Bible School (in Kasungu). We stayed in one village for two days and attended their Camp Meeting that was in progress. The trip went incredibly well, covering 1,225 miles in a week. (We only had **one car issue** the whole time!)

Spiritually, this trip was great. We met with several church leaders who had questions about Namikango and our ministries. We were able to build relationships with these brothers and sisters who were struggling, and were able to give encouragement to God's people in different parts of the country.

Our entire trip North went very well. We were continually blessed by good conversations, good food, and company. Our team left feeling like we could have enjoyed staying longer with the good brethren there.

As with most things in ministry, we went to bless and encourage our brothers and sisters in this area of Malawi, but instead, we were blessed and encouraged by them. They showed us great faith and hospitality.



Meet Zione Maharu by Madison Wheeler (intern)

Zione Maharu joined the Namikango family in 2015 as a Christian Health Evangelism trainer (CHE), which, at the time, was a newly developing ministry at Namikango. Zione's activities include going into surrounding communities to teach spiritual and physical lessons to help them escape cycles of poverty and live as followers of Jesus Christ.

She never tires of teaching the people of Malawi practical skills to improve their living situations while leading them to Jesus Christ.

Zione says that Namikango, and its Christ-centered environment, has been instrumental in developing and deepening her own faith over these past few years. She now understands so much more about the mission of God and what being a disciple of God truly means.

While in Malawi, I had the honor of spending a weekend with Zione and her family. The oldest of six, Zione steps

into the role of caretaker with great joy and grace. I've never seen anyone love and care for their family as much as Zione does. Her servant heart has been beautiful to see. She is a true friend and I am so very thankful to have had the opportunity to get to know her.





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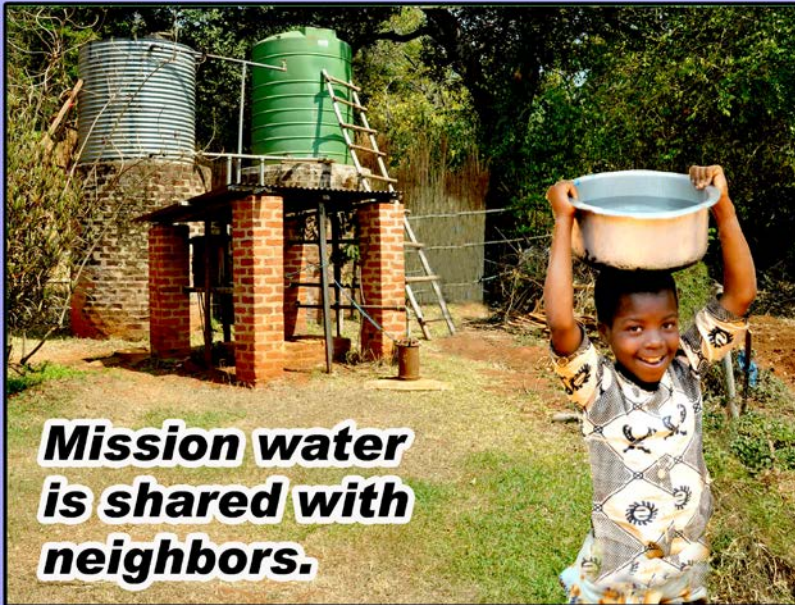
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Let's Make a Deal

For the third time since Becca and I moved to Malawi, we held a "Yard Sale" on Namikango's front porch. This is a fun and somewhat intense day every time we do it, but it's worth it. The staff has opportunity to benefit from some of the items that pile up at Namikango, both recent items or from the 60 years of missionaries' collections. There tends to be several gems that show up and become hot items at these events (old desktop computers, floor carpets, CDs, movies, etc).

For the larger items, a silent auction is held and the highest bidder takes the prize at the end of the sale. This year the interns played a big role in making the event happen. It was a good event for laughing and joking and acquiring a few much-needed items at a good price.

P.S. The money acquired from these sales goes to a charity account to meet needs that arise.





A New, Used Car

Ben explained the need for a work vehicle for city trips last month. He has since located a 7-passenger Toyota and the funds for this vehicle are already committed. Thank you for your faithful support!
SV



7 Passenger Toyota

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After the Flood

Progress after the flood is slow, but good. We are learning that we can't do the tear-out half-way and that mold is toxic and it must **all** be removed . . . **not just part, but all!**

At last, the pile of wet trash is gone from our front yard and we can soon *think* about the rebuilding phase.

I'm thankful that we are able to be back in our office and can operate with partial walls and flooring.
Sidney



*Floors,
Walls, and
Furniture are
all cleared out
to stop the Mold*

Be sure to watch the amazing Mission video!

<https://vimeo.com/174889961>

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