



# The Nyadire Connection

The Nyadire Connection (TNC), based in Pittsburgh, PA, is a faith-based non-profit volunteer organization that seeks to support and sustain the United Methodist Mission in Nyadire, Zimbabwe.

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[www.nyadire.org](http://www.nyadire.org)

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## Home Of Hope Intern Learns From Her Nyadire Experience

*Note From Mary Beth Zollars, TNC program director for the Home of Hope: During our February mission trip to Nyadire, we met **Lynn Dekete**, the intern at the **Home of Hope**. She was a complete delight and eager to help us each and every day we were on the mission and at the village schools. Below, she shares her story...*

I'm a 21-year-old young lady who's seeking to utilize my skills and abilities in the field of Sociology. Being a sociologist has always been my passion. I am currently in my third year studying for a Bachelor's Honours Degree in Sociology at Great Zimbabwe University in Masvingo. I also studied Sociology in Organizations which has led me to the HOH orphanage, since it is a non-governmental organization. Being at HOH has taught me a lot.

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## Coronavirus Concerns Lead To Lockdown In Zimbabwe

As of this writing in mid-April, Zimbabwe remains in a strict lockdown due to the Coronavirus. Businesses, restaurants, schools and churches are closed and individual movements are greatly restricted. Troops will be used to enforce the requirements. Photos show deserted streets and food booths throughout Harare.

Prior to the shutdown, thousands of people left the cities to return to their rural homes partly because they may otherwise not have enough food during the lockdown. These travels raised concerns that the virus would quickly be spread to the rural areas. Nyadire is holding virtual church services using a platform on What's App, and UMC projects are on hold. TNC continues to be in regular communication with our friends at Nyadire and still hopes to organize trips for later this year.

# Home Of Hope Intern, continued...

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When growing up, I used to tell my mother that I would love to build an orphanage, have children around me, associate with them, play games, etc. Here's what I've learned at HOH:

- Training of livelihood skills. The Home promotes, assists, and encourages livelihood skills that are age-appropriate. These skills will enable children to survive after they have left home, for example: washing dishes, farming, gardening, poultry, piggery, and garment making. I have noticed that some of the children are currently at Tabudirira Training Centre which is a great idea and a great achievement.
- Home of Hope is developing a paradigm shift towards self-sustenance. They practice agriculture whereby they grow potatoes and tomatoes and sell them and get money for the Home. Currently, they are working on the Fish Pond Project.
- I have also learned that the mandate of the organization is to protect children against physical, mental, and social harm, and any form of abuse. It also provides shelter, clothing, and adequate blankets.
- Home of Hope has a unique set-up; it is located near the hospital. The Home is also next to the ECD Centre, Primary School, and Secondary School, and Teachers College. The children at Home of Hope are part of this family.
- There is a specified HIV and AIDS Policy ensuring that children infected or affected by HIV and AIDS are respected and supported to access appropriate care, medical treatment, and counseling. This is helpful, because at Home of Hope we have kids who are under treatment. The mothers on duty are the ones who monitor if they are taking their medication on time.

## Hearing Innovation Becomes New Name For TNC Program

TNC has changed the name of its Hearing Impaired program to **Hearing Innovation**, in part to reflect the use of technology to help those who are deaf or have trouble hearing. The change also highlights the belief that deaf people don't regard themselves as "impaired," but rather as whole human beings who have their own culture and language.

Since 1994, the Nyadire Primary School, with help from the community, the church and the Ministry of Education, has served as a school for deaf children in the Mashonaland East Province. Students learn and perfect Zimbabwean Sign Language, and learn life skills such as arts and crafts, market gardening, welding, fashion and fabrics, and carpentry. The opportunity for them to receive an education gives students an identity and voice, teaches self-reliance, provides meaningful purpose, and encourages friendship, value and goals.



# Jim And Sue's Excellent Adventure In Zimbabwe

**Jim Gourley** and **Sue McCann** are long-time friends and colleagues of TNC, and they've traveled to Zimbabwe numerous times, both on our behalf and to assist with other projects in the country. In March, they returned from a nearly five-week visit to Zimbabwe and shared the following thoughts and pictures with us:

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We recently spent almost five weeks in Zimbabwe, arriving in Harare Feb. 25 and leaving March 20, five days early due to the global Coronavirus pandemic. These weeks were marked by renewed friendships, travel to visit five projects, and several challenges.

We were the "Kombi" drivers for **Charlie Moore**, from Community UMC in Crofton, MD, and **Dave** and **Bev Talbot** from Bel Air, MD UMC, who were in Zimbabwe to visit on-going projects. Here's a summary of our trip...

## Hanwa

We met Charlie at the Hanwa UMC Mission project, where local contractors are building a science and library school block. They are also renovating a guest house for future VIM teams. A team of 20-plus folks from several states are scheduled to work on the two projects.

## Munyarari Clinic

We then drove back to Harare to meet Dave and Bev at the airport. Their church, Bel Air UMC, is funding the building of a new clinic at Munyarari Mission, south of Mutare. The establishment and support for the Munyarari UMC Clinic has been on-going for almost 15 years.

## Fuel

The challenges in Zimbabwe are many and varied. With our great gratitude, **Lincoln Nyamusara**, a supporter of many VIM teams, supplied a van in good condition for our use since the UMC VIM vehicle was not available. Lincoln stockpiled over 200 liters of diesel for our travels as fuel is very hard to find and the queues are hours in length when a fuel truck arrives.

Fuel is simply NOT available in the amounts needed by the country. LONG fuel lines (see photo) form when a tanker truck is arriving from Mozambique, maybe every two or three days. Four- to six-hour waits are common and many are turned away. Lincoln stockpiled fuel for weeks to have enough for our travels. If you could pay in dollars, it would be about US\$5 per gallon. Zimbabwe petroleum distributors have limited amounts of US dollars to pay the Mozambique suppliers. No one outside of Zimbabwe wants or will accept Zimbabwe currency.



# Jim And Sue's Excellent Adventure In Zimbabwe

## Money

Money is a major challenge. From 2009 until early 2019, the US\$ was the accepted currency in Zimbabwe and provided stabilization to the financial market. The government then re-established the ZIM\$ as the only currency acceptable. Initially the rate was 1 Z\$ = 1 US\$. When we left, the official bank rate was 18 Z\$ = 1 US\$, but on the alternate money market (read: black market) the rate is 40/45 Z\$ = 1 US\$. And it is getting worse. Until the lock down of the country due to the virus, it was illegal to spend US\$, although, in fact, it appeared to be a common practice while we were there. We had long conversations over the last weeks about how this affects projects and it is still confusing. Worse yet, the government, in early 2019, converted the US\$ accounts held by the locals into Z\$ without notice and thus many lost most of their life saving and/or pension plans. This was the third time for this "change" in several years, according to our local friends.



## Food

Additionally, food is available on grocery shelves, but most Zimbabweans have little money. The late arrival of rains and the lack of rains in the needed amounts has resulted in food insecurity, i.e. not enough maize for making mealie meal, which forms the basis of the Zimbabwean diet and their staple dish, sadza.

## Electricity

Last, but certainly not least is the complete lack, or a significant reduction, of electricity. Load shedding, or the lack of power in certain areas during certain times, is a way of life. In Harare, the power is usually on between 11 pm and 5 am most days with some days less and others more. Hanwa Mission, when we visited, had been without power for almost three weeks. When fuel is available, a generator may be run, but mostly candles and small lanterns are used. (Photo shows solar panels on the roof of the secondary school boys' dorm.)



## Mashambanhaka Clinic Expansion and Upgrade

On March 8 we moved to Murewa Mission. Daily, we drove approximately 40 minutes each way, on good tar roads, to visit the **Rural Health Clinic** rehabilitation and expansion at **Mashambanhaka UMC Mission**. We visited there four times to see the progress of the recently started renovation work and provide comments and pictures to TNC, the project sponsor.

## Jim And Sue's Excellent Adventure In Zimbabwe



This is the fourth clinic TNC and its partner churches have renovated. The same excellent builder for the previous three clinics, **Hama Nyakudanga**, was selected as the

contractor. We have been with him at the previous clinic projects since 2013, and we enjoy the comradeship and professionalism he brings to the builds. Hama brings a supervisory team from his home region, but hires many of the laborers, (masons, plumbers, electricians) locally to provide jobs and maintain goodwill. (Photos: Head Nurse **Itai**, DS **Henry Chareka**, **Sue**, **Builder Hama**, and **Jim** review clinic plans. Residents sing in gladness for the arrival of cement for the project.)

### Nyadire Mission

Water and electricity continue to be real challenges throughout the country. We left Murewa and headed to **Nyadire UMC Mission** where they, too, are having water and power issues. We took water at Murewa from a borehole (deep well), filtered it using Charlie Moore's fabulous water purifier, and carried 5 gallons with us...all part of daily living in rural Zimbabwe.

At Nyadire, a ZESA transformer blew out so half the mission was without power.

**Christopher Kuwana**, maintenance head, will investigate installing solar power on the mission to get off the ZESA grid. With TNC funding, a solar pump was successfully installed at borehole 1 with a second to be installed at borehole 2. Christopher would like to see a new, 80+ meter borehole close to the teachers' college girls boarding. A big surprise on our last day was hot water bathing, with the hot water coming from the solar geyser on the roof of the guest house.

We visited the new **Home of Hope** and talked with Director, **Emmanuel Chiimba**. The maize crops at HOH were not successful this year, but potatoes were harvested. There is an organic garden past the fish tanks that appears to be doing well. A piggery has been established, and HOH has 16 female cattle. Three solar water heaters were installed, with a fourth planned. When operational, hot water will come from a spigot at the outdoor heaters.

### Thanks

Thank you to all who have supported us and who kept us in your prayers. Our brothers and sisters in Zimbabwe certainly need our help and prayers, and we are fearful of what the pandemic that is raging in our country now could do to the African continent.

In His Service, Sue and Jim

# Program Highlights From TNC's March Meeting

## Health Area

- Eyeglasses: Shipment arrived and will be used during **Don Ziegler's** next trip, during which he plans to conduct advanced training and certification of assistants.
- Ocean Container Shipments: Two containers left **BBF** in mid-December and arrived at Nyadire in February and March...all contents were intact with no damage and have been distributed to the designated people at Nyadire...containers included 2,126 math and science books, medical items for Nyadire hospital, and maintenance tools.
- Empowerment Pads: Containers included 26 sewing machines...each school received 164 GEP kits for a total of 1,148 at 7 schools...schools also received fabric, sewing supplies, underwear and pants, and gifts for teachers...we have 16 sewing machines in Pittsburgh that need repair and cleaning, and **Bonnie Lawson** will coordinate efforts.
- Medical Supplies: Initiating funds transfer for purchase of drugs for April/May/June.
- Rural Health Clinic Rebuilds: Groundbreaking held at Mashambanhaka on Feb. 17 and construction work began in early March, however, work has stopped because of the country-wide lockdown...phase 1 was scheduled for completion by June 30...still need to raise additional \$150,000 to complete this clinic.
- Medical and Hospital Support: Four doctors are now working at Nyadire.

## Education and Relationships Area

- Engineers Without Borders/CMU: Students continuing to study two options for implementation of a biogas digester at Nyadire, with classes and events now curtailed.
- Hearing Innovation: Parent workshop at Nyadire planned in September/October to equip parents with basic signing skills, and show them how to care for solar hearing aids and how to empower their child to strive.
- Volunteer-in-Mission trips: **Molly Michael** attended VIM Team Leader Training in February and still hopes to plan a trip for later this year.
- Sister Rut Scholarships: Recipients listed on page 9-10 of TNC's monthly minutes...students required to remain in contact with TNC throughout the semester, to maintain passing grades, and to conduct community service.

## Orphans Area

- Home of Hope: The orphanage now has hot water! Thank you, **Sandy McKnight**, for helping with the purchase of iron frames to set up the solar hot water tanks...Christ United Methodist church's HOH rummage sale, scheduled for May 1-2, has been postponed due to the Coronavirus.
- Home of Hope Outreach: Back packs were distributed, and we sent O-Level Exam fees.

## “Prayer For A Pandemic”

We closed TNC’s March meeting with the following “Prayer for a Pandemic” and we’d like to share it with you:

- May we who are merely inconvenienced remember those whose lives are at stake.
- May we who have no risk factors remember those most vulnerable.
- May we who have the luxury of working from home remember those who must decide between preserving their health or making the rent.
- May we who have the flexibility to care for our children when their schools close remember those who have no options.
- May we who have to cancel our trips remember those that have no safe place to go.
- May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market remember those who have no margin at all.
- May we who settle in for a quarantine at home remember those who have no home.
- As fear grips our country, let us choose love.
- During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other, let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbors.
- Amen

