

Updates on Dr. Paul Thistle and family, from Zimbabwe

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# The Thistle Epistle

## February, 2016

*'If you spend yourselves on behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday' (Isaiah 58:10, NIV)*

### **Dear Friends,**

A belated Happy New Year from Zimbabwe!

We pray that you have all had healthy beginnings to 2016. This time of year is full of activity for many around the planet. We would like to share our recent Karanda encounters of a different kind with you.

After a quiet Christmas and New Year's (less rain, less rowdy, and less road accidents), the Thistles commenced 2016 with our annual Team conference in the eastern highlands of Zimbabwe, a time of rest and restoration, a rope-a-dope before the next round in the ring. We were delighted that the school calendar permitted James and Alex to be present this year.

A rack of responsibilities greeted our return to Karanda. The poor rains have kept the river route from Harare open, increasing the flood of patients. Unlike most medical practices where patients book appointments with their physicians, at Karanda we have no way of predicting our day's workload. If a bus breaks down it will be quiet today, but double duty tomorrow. Like ancient Egyptian pharaohs, visitors often just 'Toot and Come In.'

The struggle of scarce resources and high patient numbers continues. We are thankful for our struggles, because without them we wouldn't have stumbled across our strengths! Every rose has its thorns. Here are some of the January blooms:

1. The completion of the Mother Child Health (MCH) construction, including a new cervical cancer screening unit.
2. Thanks to Rotary, there's been the digging of trenches everywhere and laying of new water pipes across the compound. All is not quiet on the Karanda front.
3. The arrival of a container of medical and surgical supplies from the Compassionate Resource Warehouse (Canadian Nazarene Church) and two smaller shipments of supplies from supporters in Toronto and Oklahoma! Thanks a million!
4. Volunteers; we have been blessed by a bevy of students and volunteers. Many more to follow in 2016.
5. Out in the community, there have been exciting developments at our schools, with increased support for orphans' fees and the proposed construction of an Early Childhood Education block at Nyamuti Primary. The parents are preparing and donating bricks for the walls. Don't mention this to Pink Floyd.

On the subject of education, James and Alexander are back to school in the throes of the second term. James is still playing basketball and French horn, the latter for a concert in Mozambique next month. Alexander just won the national table tennis championship for his age group. Andrew needs to learn how to sit at the table. He prefers running around and 'reading' books on the floor. Pedrinah continues her heavy schedule of teaching, study and Nurses' Council.

We have countless blessings to be thankful for, and requests that we would like to bring to your attention. Please pray for:

- Economic growth and political stability in Zimbabwe.
- Affordable health care for the people.
- Rain sufficient to salvage the thirsty crops. People are hungry.
- Ongoing water, electricity and building projects at Karanda. We need a new diesel generator to match the increasing demands of the hospital services.



- Our staff retreat in March. That our senior staff will come together in unity of vision, mission and purpose.
- James and Alexander at school and their transport Harare-Karanda. Our new Toyota will be a blessing here...when the customs clearance is complete. "She'll be coming 'round the mountain when she comes."
- Our health and safety.

The Thistles deeply appreciate the love and prayers from 'round the world. You support our work at Karanda in many wonderful ways. Further details of how you can participate are provided below.

God's richest blessings upon you.

**Paul and Pedrinah**

**James, Alexander and Andrew Jacob (AJ)**

***Karanda Mission Hospital***

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'No one is so poor that they have nothing to receive, and no one is so rich they have nothing to receive'

*-Mother Teresa*

(Please scroll down for photos and donation information)





*Predictions of drought*

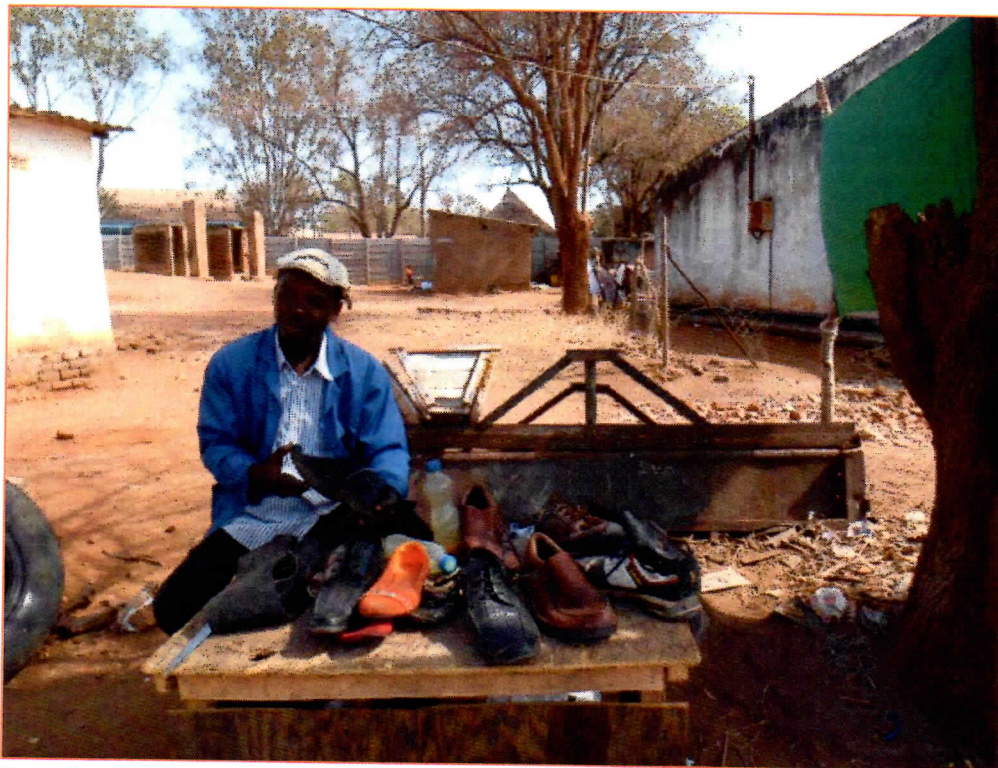


*"Office Work"*





*Watching out for crocs while wearing crocs!*



*"Payless shoes"*

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**Donate in American funds**

For those who are able, please consider an automated monthly or quarterly gift, as these help us better plan our work at Karanda. All donations are tax deductible.

T2X-2X7, Canada. Please indicate on your cheque that the donation is intended for "The Thistles".

If a printable handout for donations would be useful to you for to give to your organization, one can be found [here](#).

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