



# COVID-19 UPDATE

AUGUST 2020

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Dear Churches and HVCM Partners,

I wanted to write and update you on how things are going with the Mission work in Zimbabwe, as well as how things are going here with our U.S. operations during this time of pandemic.

## The Work in Zimbabwe

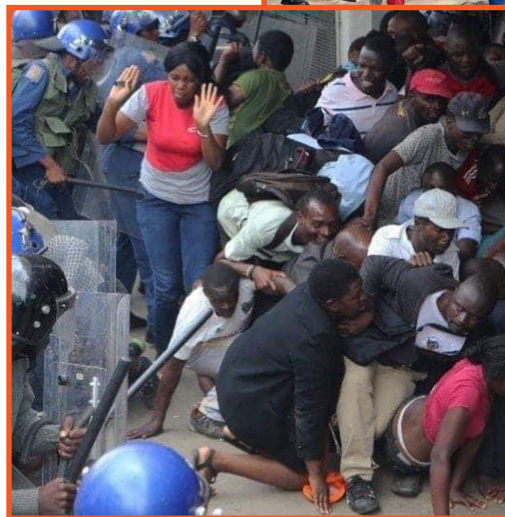
In Zimbabwe things have pretty much grinded to a halt. Economically, things could not be worse. Every day the value of Zim currency drops more and more. It is reminiscent of 2010 all over again. To add to the financial challenges, it is getting more and more complicated and costly for us to get U.S. funds to Zimbabwe so that we can do the work we need to do. The Zim government and banks are getting more and more desperate for U.S. dollars and so they are taking bigger and bigger percentages of the funds we send over. On top of all of that, the Government has shut down schools and other businesses because of pandemic concerns, which just intensifies the problems.

Sadly, our annual National Church convention has been cancelled for this year along with our Living Proof College days event that we and the Living Proof kids were so looking forward to. With schools shut down, the Living Proof clubs have not been meeting. However, it appears that schools will be opening in September. This will be a blessing.

Construction is moving slowly but surely with our Gutu School and hopefully, students will begin classes the first of the year at that new school and mission station. In addition, we have once again partnered with our friends at IDES (International Disaster Emergency Service) to arrange a food distribution program directly through our churches

over there to assist some of the neediest families from our churches and schools.

Politically, things seem to be heading toward a tipping point! The economy is so bad and people are literally starving. There is little to no healthcare



for most people, the current government cannot provide much in the way of basic services and the only thing that seems to be continuing is the military, which protects

the current government administration. When the people gather to protest, they are often beaten in the streets and even killed.

In terms of confirmed Covid-19 cases in Zimbabwe, thus far there has been relatively little outbreak. Fewer than 5000 confirmed cases and 102 deaths with a population of 16 million.

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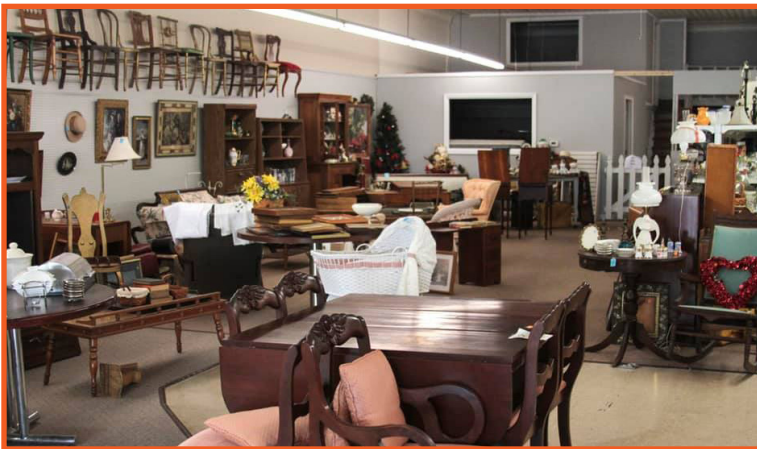
## U.S. Operations

Here in the U.S. we have been busy during this pandemic. We have been scheduling, postponing and rescheduling speaking appointments, trips, group trips, weeks of camp, VBS, airline refunds and more. We have been caring for our 4 Zimbabwe students that we sponsor at KCU and deploying them for the summer at different camps and internships. Hopefully, they will be back in the classroom next week and life may start to resemble "normal" once again for them. All 4 of them made the Dean's List and Presidents list for their last semester of school.

Giving for the mission has been down somewhat. About 15% from where we usually are at this point. Certainly, the pandemic has contributed to this. While most of our dear partners and churches have been faithful in their support over these months, it is not surprising that we are experiencing some challenges as many of you and your churches are experiencing challenges. My personal travel and speaking schedule has been adjusted due to churches not meeting in person. Consequently, we have not been able to sign up new Living Proof sponsors to accommodate the nearly 300 kids who are currently waiting to get into the program.

### On a Positive Note:

Our Mission Thrift Store has been doing very well in spite of the shutdown and Covid restrictions. Even during the two months of State ordered mandatory shutdown, thanks to Patty, Anita and Cana here in Grayson, the store managed to generate revenue for HVCM. They took to social media and began selling thrift store items through Facebook Marketplace with curbside pickup! Well, once we were



able to finally reopen the store at the end of May, we were busier than ever! The Thrift Store has been a lifesaver for us in 2020 in terms of Mission revenue.

## How Can You Help?

### 1 Pray for HVCM

Please continue to pray for us! Pray for the Nation of Zimbabwe. Pray for HVCM, our Preachers, workers, ZCC students at Bible College, LP children, Orphanage, U.S. staff and board. Pray that this great Mission will keep focused on fulfilling the great commission and come out stronger than ever.

### 2 Help us Find 300 New Living Proof Sponsors

Let's schedule a Living Proof Sunday at your church. We have 300 kids we want to add to the program. You can do this with us there or we can send you information, sign up forms and a 3 minute video so that you can do it yourself as our representative. Give us a call or send an email and we can walk you through it. Of course, we would welcome an opportunity to personally come to your church to promote a Living Proof sign up Sunday.

In addition, Rachel will be launching a LP promotional drive via Facebook. You can certainly help us out by watching for it on your Facebook feed and sharing it when you have the chance along with your personal endorsement.

### 3 Schedule a Thrift Store Drive

The Mission Thrift Store has been a great blessing during these months of pandemic and is doing better than ever. Of course, this means we need more and more items to sell in our store. Would your church consider having a Thrift Store drive for HVCM? It is really a simple operation and is such a great help to us. Patty will send you information that you can put in bulletins to promote the drive. Simply announce a day (or a couple of days) when folks can bring their thrift store items to the church and we will arrange to come with our van and trailer and pick it up at an appointed time.

Again, I want to personally say thank you for your faithful support of Hippo Valley Christian Mission and please give us a call to arrange a Sunday when I can come to update the church/mission team and perhaps even bring the morning message. I love visiting our supporting congregations!