

December 2020

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Zebedee Togarepi to Retire as Managing Director; Continue in Role with Mission

by Dave Thurman

Dr. Zebedee Togarepi, who has served as the Managing Director of Hippo Valley Christian Mission for over a decade, is set to retire. At age seventy, and now with residency in the United States, he will spend a majority of his time in the US, along with his beautiful wife, Ratidzo. Their eldest son, Tilma, and his family live in Quincy, Illinois, and Zebedee also has family in Cincinnati, so he looks forward to spending time with them, and resting after carrying an enormous load for so long. However, Zeb will still play an important role with the mission he has served so faithfully. As Chancellor of HVCM, he will be a member of our US Board, and also be available to speak at churches, representing the mission, as his health and energy allow. And, when in Zimbabwe, Zebedee will continue offering wisdom to our preachers and leaders, and will still serve as chairman of the Zimbabwe Christian College board.

A product of our Mashoko mission schools, Zebedee was a protégé of John Pemberton, who first saw his potential to be a kingdom leader. After time at Central Africa Bible College, Zeb continued his education, graduating from Zimbabwe Christian College. Later he came to the US, and earned a Bachelor's Degree from Kentucky Christian University, and eventually, a Master's Degree from Cincinnati Christian Seminary. In 2019 he was bestowed with an honorary doctorate from KCU.

Zebedee has served as a professor at ZCC, a church planter, a missionary to Mozambique, the founder of the Zimbabwe Preaching Summit, and the chairman of the annual Church of Christ National Conference. He served alongside John Mark and Bobby Pemberton for a number of years, before eventually becoming a partner in 2003. After their untimely deaths, Zebedee became the Managing Director of HVCM, and served with great distinction. Under his leadership, the mission planted new churches, a new medical clinic, expanded the orphanage and we saw

the quality of education and spiritual formation in the mission schools improving greatly.

Having seen firsthand the scope of the HVCM ministry, I continue to be amazed at how Zebedee was able to juggle so many balls. His phone rang continually, his meetings never seemed to end, and only God knows how many miles he traveled. Most importantly, when HVCM went through rocky days financially, due to Zimbabwe's economic woes and the loss of the Pemberton presence, Zebedee kept us up and running, and enabled us to get to a place where the mission is thriving again. He has served as the face of the mission for almost two decades, and is the ultimate Living Proof of what HVCM has been able to accomplish since 1956.



On a personal note, I was able to make nearly 20 trips to Zimbabwe, serving alongside this remarkable man, standing in awe of his work ethic and his love for the mission. I am continually amazed at his ability to understand two

cultures, moving effortlessly from Shona to English. His sense of humor is legendary, and Zebedee was always an ambassador for the mission on both sides of the water. Joyously, we worked as partners, believing our efforts would bring many to Christ in Zimbabwe, preparing future leaders, and I look back fondly on times of both laughter and tears, of prayer and strategizing, but most of all, of deep friendship and love.

Elsewhere in this publication you will read about some of the new faces that will help us replace a legend and you will notice it is taking a number of people. That alone should indicate the kind of leader Zebedee has been. So with gratitude and sadness, but also anticipation of the wonderful days to come, we salute our dear brother Zebedee, and his amazing wife, Ratidzo, the quiet force behind the charismatic leader. Well done, Baba Zebedee, well done!

Touchpoints

by Donna Stroop

I sat amazed listening to this young woman give a speech at our Clinic Dedication on the impact of a medical facility on the community. Afterwards we all congratulated Prisca. Our team befriended her and invited her to come and join the Revival that we had planned for the weekend. Our theme was "Lost and Found" and it was during the sermon on "The Lost Coin" that Prisca said she realized that she was lost.

We stayed in touch with Prisca and a few months later, I made sure that she had the opportunity to go to College Days sponsored by Hippo Valley Christian Mission at Zimbabwe Christian College that the Serhals were heading up. It was there that Prisca answered the invitation and was baptized. Prisca told me, "College Days changed my life

and it enables me to be a true Christian. I wanted to cry because deep down I knew that I was incomplete because I was not baptized. When I was baptized, I felt like a new person."



As Prisca continued to grow in her faith, we offered to sponsor her to go to Bible College. She wrote to me, "Thank you, Aunty Donna for helping me. I don't want to disappoint you. I will try by all means to make you proud."

Several touch points in the last year and a half have changed the trajectory of this young woman's life, from identifying with the lost coin, to participating in College Days, to going to Bible College, yes dear Prisca, we are very proud of you!

THE WINDS OF CHANGE ARE BLOWING

by Al Serhal

After 15 years serving as Managing Director of HVCN in Zimbabwe, Zebedee will be retiring at the end of the year. He has served us well, stepping in at the time of John Mark Pemberton's untimely death in November, 2005. Now, as a U.S. resident, Zeb will be spending a considerable amount of his time in the States and will be available to speak at churches as he continues to represent HVCN.

Of course, this leaves big shoes to fill! Zebedee's retirement requires and provides an opportunity for HVCN to do some organizational restructuring. We will not be replacing Zeb with another Managing Director. Our plan going forward is to move key people into key leadership positions to strengthen and provide focus on the different areas of our ministry.

Our board has identified 6 key areas of ministry emphasis with our work in Zimbabwe:

- **Evangelism** (This includes churches as well as clinics)
- **Education** (28 mission schools)
- **Living Proof**
- **Orphan Ministry** (Children's Village and our half-way house)
- **Properties** (Maintenance as well as building projects)
- **Zimbabwe Christian College (Not technically under HVCN, but very much a part of our work and certainly a partner ministry)**

Although every key position has yet to be filled, we are very happy to announce the following changes, additions and reassignments:

Alone Gudyanga who has served as the director of our orphan ministry for many years will be moving into the role as Head of Evangelism. Alone is not only a terrific preacher and church planter, but he is just passionate about evangelism. Alone is also a medical nurse and will serve well expanding our efforts not only in the churches, but also in the clinics. He will work with preachers, chaplains and nurses providing leadership, literature and inspiration to every aspect of HVCN's ministry.

Samuel Mahwehwe will move into the role of Mission Schools Head. Samuel is a very bright star in the Zimbabwe school system. He has served as headmaster at Dewure High School which is one of our finest mission schools and is one of the top 10 high schools in the whole country! What Samuel was able to do for Dewure High School over the years, we have commissioned him to do for all of our mission schools! And he is enthusiastically up for the challenge! He and his wife will be moving down to Chiredzi the first of the year to begin his work with us. Samuel is a strong member and leader in our churches and will be a tremendous addition to our team.

Mark and Meghan Burbidge have served as missionaries in Zimbabwe for the past 10 years. Mark grew up in Zimbabwe and Meghan is from Chicago, IL. They met as students at Central Christian College in the U.S. and married a few years later. They have been very involved with children's ministry and especially with at risk youth ministry during their years in Chiredzi, Zimbabwe as well as serving with the Christian church in town. We are now happy to announce that Mark and Meghan will be coming alongside HVCN and serve as co-managers of our orphan ministry! With fresh eyes, fresh vision and the latest remodel and updates made to the Children's Village, we anticipate great days ahead for the precious children entrusted to our care!

Cephas Zivanai who has served as head of the Living Proof program will be moving to Harare to work with Zimbabwe Christian College. He will serve in the role of Campus Minister as well as doing some teaching. Cephas is a solid doctrinal teacher and will serve wonderfully in the area of mentoring students and recruiting young men and women from around the country as well as from the Living Proof program to come to ZCC and prepare for the ministry! Cephas helped build the Living Proof program from ground level and we are very grateful for the good work he has done over the years with HVCN.

The positions of Living Proof head and properties have yet to be filled, though candidates are currently being considered.

To help facilitate these big changes, Darel and Mary Pruett (HVCN's Vice Chairman) and other board members and representatives plan to be in Zimbabwe beginning January, 2021 and through most of the year to help ensure a smooth transition.

We covet all of your prayers as we embark upon this big and exciting transition.

Blessed Beyond Measure

2020 has been hard on so many and in so many ways. In many regards this is true for HVCN as well as we look back over this past year. However, there are also so many reasons to be thankful! One of the many blessings that came this year was the much needed renovation of our orphanage, Chiredzi Christian Children's Village, which was made possible by the efforts of two extremely generous donors.

The renovations included much needed repairs, new appliances, fresh paint, tiling, flooring, fans, curtains, shelving and the improvement we might be most excited about... solar power!

These upgrades brought the buildings up to commercial grade and will last for years to come. The main renovations are complete

and we are now doing the final touch ups with the landscaping to finish off this amazing project.



The children and staff are so thankful for the upgrades and can't wait to show it off to their American visitors!



We'll See You Next Year!

Our staff, orphans, students and churches look forward to visitors from the states every year as it's a time of mutual encouragement, joy and fellowship. Sadly, the pandemic has prevented any teams from making the trip to Zimbabwe in 2020. However, we are hopeful for a couple teams to return in February and March and prayerfully confident about the summer 2020 teams being able to rebook for 2021! Please join us in praying not only for the teams who work so hard planning and raising funds, but also for all the people in Zimbabwe who are anxiously awaiting their visitors.

Most of our existing teams for 2021 are full, but there's currently room on the calendar for new teams if your church or organization would like to lead a team to Zimbabwe in 2021-2022! Check out the link below or email rachel@hippovally.org for more information.



<https://www.hippovally.org/trip-packagescosts.html>



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