

Robert Gideon of the CFCM Committee writes:

Dear Brethren,

In Isaiah 46: 9 God said to the Israelites:
“Remember the former things of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me”.

There are many religious beliefs these days - Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Baha'ism to mention but a few - but they can not and will never lead us to God the Father of Jesus Christ (John 14:6). We must not compromise in presenting the true gospel message of salvation to those who do not know Christ as Lord and Saviour.

Children need to know that there is NO other God apart from the one whom we as Christians worship; and that the only means for us and anyone else to be in fellowship with Him is to have a relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, so that we can be assured of eternal life (1 John 5:13).

May the good God bless you as you direct others to Christ - who is the ONLY truth and the ONLY way to God the Father! He does not want any of us to perish. Amen.

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for the introduction of safeguarding training into CFCM Sunday school teacher training. Pray that this will result in greater awareness and action to protect children in all communities from abuse and risk of abuse.

- Pray for Joseph Jeke who is CFCM's Child Protection Officer. Not only will he be responsible for dealing with any cases that directly affect CFCM staff, but he will also be available to advise anyone that CFCM trains.
- Pray that the issue of safeguarding will become a national conversation in Malawi, and that the government will establish robust systems to protect children from abuse.
- Pray for CFCM's programme of seminars planned for this quarter: in Neno, Mwanza, Nsanama, Mchinji and Muona.
- CFCM are planning a five day club combined with teacher training in Muona the week after Easter. But it can only go ahead if the roads are safe following the rainy season. Pray for wisdom and direction as the team plans.
- CFCM are working on a business plan to develop a nursery school in Blantyre to sustain their ministry. Pray for wisdom in this process and that, if this is God's will, He will provide the funds for this.



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and His church in Malawi and northern Mozambique



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CHILDREN FOR CHRIST MINISTRY February - April 2020



PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN - NOT JUST IN WORD BUT ALSO IN ACTION

The Bible presents countless examples of how children are valued by God. Our Lord Jesus demonstrated His love for children and He called His followers to treasure them. It is CFCM's desire to see children thriving, being allowed to be children, without being exploited, and experiencing the love of God. In this bulletin we will share more about two ways that CFCM is demonstrating this through practical action.

We report on our hospital visit to sick children in December 2019, where the children of one of our Bible clubs ministered to the needs of other boys and girls.

In 2020 CFCM will be introducing safeguarding training into Module One of our teacher training course. It is a fact that child abuse is rife in Malawi, but it is a subject that few speak of. There is a great need for awareness and action.

A VERY SPECIAL CHRISTMAS PARTY

For our Christmas event in December 2019 we decided to invite the children from one of our Bible clubs to bring joy and blessing to other children.

Preparations began early in the year at Chitakale Primary School, where we taught the children who come to our fortnightly Bible club how to use the Wordless Book to explain the Gospel to others. After many weeks some of them had become very good at telling others the way of salvation.



With the permission and support of the school headteacher, we organised a group of 12 pupils to come with us on Saturday 7th December to the Mercy James Centre at Queen's Hospital in Blantyre, to visit the children's ward.



We distributed gifts of sugar, soap and drinks for the children in the hospital. The school children went around the sick-beds, telling 45 children about God's love for them and praying for them.



The children from Chitakale learnt a lot that day about how they can show God's love to others. They don't have much themselves - some of them have no other clothes than the school uniforms they were wearing - but by giving of their time and showing care, they brought joy and blessing to many sick children.

When we took them back to the CFCM office for some lunch, we provided them with some new clothes - a really unexpected Christmas present for every one of them! Joseph Jeke says, "Those who water their friends will be watered too."



CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING

Stephen Monjeza, Country Director of Forgotten Voices Malawi and local supporter of CFCM, helps us to understand the context in which CFCM has introduced its new safeguarding training:

"Most communities in Malawi haven't been sensitized on children's rights, or trained on how to

protect their children. Many parents leave their children to wander the streets while they are at work. It is quite common for them to allow their children to sleep in the homes of people they don't know. Abuse is not taken seriously or acknowledged. A "culture of silence" has found its way into local churches and communities, and cases of abuse have been covered up in the past. Even when reported, the cases have sometimes been neglected. Sometimes those in authority have been abusers themselves. Most cases of abuse have gone undocumented and/or been handled in an unprofessional manner. Indeed the welfare services do not even have the resources in place to care for the victims, let alone protect those at risk of abuse, demonstrating the low priority given at national level.

It is very difficult to open up the conversation about why certain things (e.g. parenting) are done in a certain way, or how this state of affairs has arisen and become widely accepted.

Christian organisations like CFCM who work with children and have a good understanding about child protection need to help fill the gap by raising awareness and advocating for the rights of children. Prevention is better than cure. Our structures on child protection need to be strong. We must ensure there is no secrecy to the detriment of the children we care for.

I am glad that CFCM is starting to open that conversation by introducing safeguarding training to all Sunday school teachers. It is a worthwhile endeavour as it is rare amongst organisations dealing with children. It's high time we get things done, and I applaud CFCM for the initiative."