



# Home Sweet Home

Stories of people who are trying to make a difference by loving Jesus and loving others in the nation of Zimbabwe.

Hello friends of Refuge,

What a great month September has been! Here in Harare, our winter has ended and we have been met by warm days and strong breezes. Summer has arrived and so has the busiest time of the year. September- December seems to be when every Zimbabweans work schedule increases and mine is no different.

This month, I started teaching another session of Training Hearts for Jesus in Highfields, and our classroom is PACKED full once again! I also began a writing class for the students in the School of Ministry to help our "Pastors in Training" improve their writing skills for their academic papers.

We've had so many exciting developments, one of which is being included as part of a team of volunteers from the church I grew up in-Woodside Bible Church, in Troy, Michigan. They have launched a fully interactive internet campus, where they will host Bible Studies and they have church LIVE online, including worship, a message and an interactive chat room where you can talk to the other people in church with you and even a private chat room where you can pray with someone else! Our pastors here in Zimbabwe are so excited that we get to be a part of this and we are praying that our electricity and internet connection will hold up! I am so blessed to be included in what my childhood church is doing! Check it out!

Something else that is really dear to my heart, as you know, is the counseling I do with the orphaned children of Zimbabwe. I have started working with another young boy, Tinashe who is 6 years old. He has experienced severe trauma and is having a really hard time. I have been called in to help with his treatment. We have a long road and have only just started so please keep us in your prayers.

Our Foster Care Discussion Group made great progress this month. Our group has grown and in our meeting a new attendee announced that although his organization has previously only funded orphanages, because of what he is learning they are planning to change their vision AND he and his wife are going to register as foster parents! What an amazing month indeed!

With love from Zimbabwe,

*gigi*



*Participating in the training and testing our connections for Woodside's online campus!*

## *What We Do:*

- *Show love to the kids on the street*
- *Counsel children living in orphanages and provide training for the staff who love them*
- *Try to reunify families separated by a relatives death and/or poverty*
- *Organize teams of volunteers to hold babies abandoned in local hospitals*
- *Teach 'Training Hearts for Jesus' parenting classes in poor, urban areas*
- *Encourage the adoption of orphaned children by Zimbabwean families*
- *Partner with local projects and organizations to improve programming*
- *Encourage Zimbabweans to serve one another in love.*

*A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His dwelling. God sets the lonely in families. Psalm 68:5-6*

## Training Hearts for Jesus

New class, new opportunities to make a difference

We have started a new session of Training Hearts for Jesus at LEAD International Ministries Highfields campus. We have already had such a great time with the information sessions and the first few classes. What a blessing this class is and the testimonies from people who have participated in the class are so inspiring!

I always enjoy seeing the looks on the faces of the men and women in the class when they hear that I am not married and have no children and that I will be teaching them parenting skills for the next few months! I am so grateful to Sharon Cannavo who designed the curriculum that we use. Thanks to her (and my experiences as both a social worker and someone who was parented) we are able to give the parents an opportunity to apply biblical principles into their lives at home and examples of how that can happen. It is always a joy to start a new session of the class and get to know the families we will be working with.

Our class is overfull and we have about twice as many families as we were hoping for, but we just couldn't turn any of them away until we ran out of chairs and space!! In our group we have single mothers, widows, married couples hoping for babies, a few couples expecting babies in the very near future and even grandparents who have come along and brought their children who are parents. We have several people who work as counselors with local organizations, sent by the directors who have made them take time out of their work day to undergo the training so that they can better help the families they are working with. It is unbelievable to me how so many people are hearing of this class, not just people in our community, but all over Harare!

Some of our parents have come because they want to start out right, training up their infants to love the Lord, other parents are heartbroken because their teenagers have chosen a path of sex or drugs or other unhealthy choices. I love seeing those faces in our introductory session when I share a little of my life story. It never ceases to amaze me how the life I have been given by the grace of God, inspires other parents to believe that the same can happen for their children. It is never too late to start applying biblical principles at home!

If you are in Southern California or Harare, Zimbabwe and would like to participate in a class please email [Sharon](mailto:Sharon@rockofafrica.org) (USA) or [Regina](mailto:Regina@rockofafrica.org) (Zim) for details. If you would just like to know more about this wonderful class, please visit the [website!](http://www.rockofafrica.org)

The class is called TRAINING Hearts for Jesus and I love watching the people in our class as they begin to understand the difference between raising (providing food and sustenance,



*I started serving in children's church this month. Please pray for us, we are organizing a children's conference for November 18-20 in Highfields-we will teach our kids about prayer and praise!*



*So blessed to introduce Pastor Lovejoy and his wife Charity to Ruthie and her friends at a local orphanage. I don't know who had more fun playing soccer...*



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## Get Involved

Have you been moved by what you've heard about Refuge? Do you want to join our team?

### *Here's what you can do:*

- Pray- become a prayer partner. Email [Regina](#) to receive the name of a child or family you can pray for. Please pray for the work we are doing.
- Collect supplies and ship them to Zimbabwe to be distributed in orphanages, hospitals and schools.
- [Make a donation!](#) All financial support donated through ROCK of Africa Mission is tax deductible and can be used to either help support Regina and the work being done in Zimbabwe.
- Travel to Zimbabwe as a member of an outreach team. We have an outreach coming over Thanksgiving, **JOIN US!**
- Spread the word about the work we are doing. Forward emails and newsletters to people you think would be interested and ask them to sign up to receive information!
- Host a fundraiser: do you know people who would buy Mary Kay Cosmetics or Cookie Lee Jewelry? If so their orders could be providing donations to support Refuge. Do you have a great fundraiser idea? Get in touch!

### Parenting

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(fostering physical growth.) and training (causing change in the one being directed. These parents start to see that raising their children is not enough. We must utilize our influence in their lives to help guide and direct them on a path that will honor God and prepare them for difficult situations they will face.

I read this quote recently, I think it sums up where most of our class is before we start, "Before I got married I had six theories about bringing up children; now I have six children, and no theories." ~John Wilmot I am so pleased that we are not offering another theory, but instead showing that as parents we can train our children how to live by following Matthew 22:37,39: love God and our neighbors.



*I haven't had a vehicle since I returned, because I gave my Baby Pajero to Pastor Chris's family before my last trip to the States. This PINK Toyota may become my next vehicle! Please pray that I will receive the finances to purchase it!*



*Our little Ruthie has really been growing and has gotten so strong! Thank you for your prayers!*

*Find more stories about life and ministry in Zimbabwe on my blog [gigiinzim.blogspot.com](http://gigiinzim.blogspot.com)*

*If you would like to make a tax deductible donation to support the work we are doing, or for the purchase of a vehicle, please visit [ROCK of Africa's](#) website or email [Debi](#) for more info! You can also donate Bibles, maize seed and mosquito nets to be distributed on our upcoming Thanksgiving outreach!*

## LOCAL HEROES

### Zimbabweans serving boldly in their own communities

As we have started to engage people working with children in the conversation about alternative care for our many orphans, we have heard many different reactions. Often it is people who oversee orphanages who are the most skeptical about the possibility of foster care being a viable option to improve the current situation for children in Zimbabwe.

This month my choice for Local Hero is Mr. and Mrs. Chifamba. Mr. Chifamba has done a wonderful job directing an organization that helps local churches who are taking care of orphans by purchasing properties for the churches to use for small orphanages. Since our first meeting Mr. Chifamba and his wife have had a hunger to gain a better understanding not only of the legislation in Zimbabwe but also of what the research says is best for children without parents.

Mr. Chifamba and his wife have joined our network to discuss improving the foster care system, and they have also decided to become foster parents themselves! I love watching people open their hearts and then their homes to these special little children! I am looking forward to sharing with you more stories of people who see the Chifamba's growing family and decide to foster as well!

**Please pray for our growing relationship with Social Services and our voice in the community.**



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*This is why we do what we do... to teach little children how and why we praise. Pray for our upcoming children's conference Nov 18-20!*