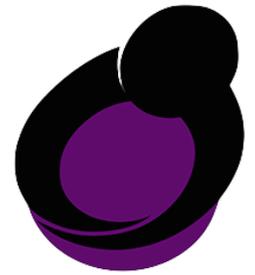


# Feed Love Change International



December 2018

Dear Donors:

December is here and we will soon be celebrating another Christmas season with family and friends. On behalf of the FLC board members I am updating you on our work in Zimbabwe and the current conditions there.

As many of you may know, Robert Mugabe is no longer president of Zimbabwe, and Emmerson Mnangagwa assumed power in November 2017. Mnangagwa vowed to revive Zimbabwe's ailing economy by attracting much needed foreign direct investment, however this has not proven as straightforward as declared. Unfortunately, the election results were marred with alleged irregularities and violent repression thereafter resulting in lukewarm support from the international community for Mnangagwa and the ruling Zanu-PF party.

Currently, opposition leaders in Zimbabwe are pressuring the new president, Mnangagwa, and his ruling Zanu-PF party to SHARE the power of rule. Nelson Chamisa is the leader of the Movement for Democratic Change in Zimbabwe (the main opposition party in the former British colony). Many Zimbabwean people believe Chamisa is trustworthy and honest in his attempt to move the country forward. They support Chamisa. There is real doubt that the election results are legitimate with Mnangagwa as leader. Please continue to pray for these leaders as they attempt to come to a peaceful resolution and work together to help the Zimbabwean people and the country overall.

Our leadership team in Bulawayo tells us the situation

is dire once again, with very little food or supplies available in stores. Moreover, currency and financial transactions are difficult in Zimbabwe as 96% of all financial transactions are through electronic payments. Exchanges as small as buying a single tomato and as large as purchasing a car are now completed by using mobile money – a form of currency stored and exchanged by cell phones. If Zimbabweans want cash they have to line up at the bank – often for hours – and are only allowed to withdraw the equivalent of \$20.00 US dollars per day. If lucky, they are given “bond notes” – the equivalent of US cash that can only be used in Zimbabwe. Many people in Zimbabwe prefer these bond notes to mobile money because extra charges are incurred when using the digital currency. Needless to say, things are a mess and more than ever our brothers and sisters in Zimbabwe need our help.

FLC (formerly known as Arms of Love) has operated in Zimbabwe for 14 years. It was in 2004 that Jackson – a key leader for FLC in Bulawayo – was first spotted on a video shown at Waterloo Mennonite Brethren Church. In the video Jackson is seen pleading for help – specifically to feed the orphans in his community.

FLC has consistently fed over 300 orphans and widows for the past 14 years, in addition to paying education fees for program recipients in need. The three main pillars of FLC are: feeding the poor; assisting with educational development by paying school fees and community development. The third pillar (community development) has proven to be a

real challenge. We had initially hoped to work towards this goal with the implementation of micro financing programs and small businesses – encouraging sustainability versus dependability. Prior to the board’s involvement, attempts were made with various projects such as raising chickens and fruit and vegetable stands, but we have had limited success with these small business projects. It’s important to recognize that Zimbabwe is a difficult country for any organization to conduct business in, let alone to develop small startup companies. Unemployment continues to be high and the majority of Zimbabweans are employed in the informal economy – characterized by low wages, poor working conditions with little or no social security (think street vendors).

FLC realizes that the community development pillar we strive for will take time and patience – but we are hoping to move in that direction more intentionally in 2019 with plans underway to send two board members who will meet our local team to determine how best to support community development initiatives. We will in the interim continue to feed and educate the most vulnerable in Bulawayo.

To this end, and on a personal note, preparations are underway to transition the leadership of FLC. **I will continue on the board as a member** but the time has come both personally and in the life of FLC to achieve these next steps with a new leader(s). I am excited to hand the reins over for this next chapter! We are fortunate to have an outstanding board of directors that meet regularly in Waterloo, Ontario, and we have been discussing possible changes in our recent board meetings. I will be stepping aside as President and Chair of the board as of March 1, 2019 and other board members will step in to help with the transition period as we search for a new leader.

This ministry has been a huge part of my life the past 14 years and I believe deeply in its presence and the calling that God placed on my heart for the people in

Zimbabwe. I wait in anticipation to see what God has planned for FLC and WHO our new leaders will be. Please pray for us as we seek God’s direction in this next phase and discern His will.

Thank you again to all our faithful donors who continue to support the work of FLC and stand by Jesus’ call to feed the poor and help the disenfranchised. Because of YOU – thousands upon thousands of children and widows have received nourishment and support. We look forward to what the future holds and we are grateful to be part of this ministry. Please continue to partner with us as we live out Micah 6:8 “And what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God”..

Sincerely,



Carolyn McIlwraith

*And what does the lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8*