

## Outreach to Chiefs



For a number of years there has been a wonderful, ongoing Chief's Fellowship in Kachindamoto led by Michael Mvundula Khumalo, our Coordinator in the Central Region.

This year, in the Southern Region, Lameck prayed with local village pastors and reached out to 25 chiefs (mostly Muslim) from the Kawiya villages. They showed the Magdalena film that shows Jesus' love and respect for women. Afterward, these village Chiefs prayed and asked God to forgive them for their wrong attitudes.

...on the other side of your  
**Obedience!**

On the other side of your obedience is a Muslim chief who said, "What we saw in the film is what is happening in our communities. We would love if you would show the film to all the people we are looking after so they would also turn from this behavior toward women as we have now decided to do."



## Mission Teams

### Gaius Goes to Malawi

A Gaius mission team traveled to Malawi in July to work with SAFE.

The team saw God make wonderful connections with our SAFE staff, youth, gogos and children in the CBCCs. The men had the unique opportunity to visit all of our Community Based Childcare Centers around Zomba and put up long narrow boards to hang up the Bible Banners and other educational materials.



### Rancho Baptist Team

This team had waited years to go see the partnership they had with SAFE in Kawiya village. On the team was the first child to raise funds for Gogo Grandmothers years ago. Now at 18, John Clemente went and saw God use him personally to powerfully share his faith.

Stacy Meyer, the mission team leader, teaching a science lesson to the caregivers (preschool teachers)



The Gogo Group at Rancho Baptist spearheaded the making of over 203 fleece jackets, 200 knit hats, 84 boy shorts, 200 small wood cars, and fabric dolls for the children in the Kawiya Village CBCCs.

### Welcoming a New Gogo Group

It is always a joy to have a new Gogo Group join the team. Welcome to our newest group at Valley Christian Fellowship in Menifee!

Our 12th Year Stats	
Category	2017
Malawi Regions Served	3
Village Communities Sponsored	12
Gogos Receiving Seeds, Fertilizer	2,320
Sponsored CBCCs	20
Preschool Children Served	2,668
Orphans Receiving School Fees	149
SAFE Life Youth in 12 Clubs	493
Over 140 teachers are presenting the Why Wait? Curriculum in schools this year.	
Preschoolers cared for since we began 12 years ago: well over 12,400	



**Connecting:** Take a minute to check out Gogo Grandmothers pictures on Instagram and to "LIKE" Gogo Grandmothers on Facebook.



### We Said "Goodbye" in 2017 to:

Mary Escamilla — San Diego Gogo Leader  
Jim Knowlton (Mr. Gogo) — Original Board Member  
Bea Sherreitt — Original Board Member

### 2017 Gogo Retreat

#### Gogos "Advance" at the October Retreat

"The Other Side of Our Obedience" was our theme as we gathered to pray and learn from one another about SAFE's work in Malawi.

Lucy Nkhata was our special guest. Lucy is the daughter of Mary Phiri, our Malawian Director of Early Childhood Development. This amazing day reminded us that we are at our best "serving together" and inspired our theme for 2018 — "Teaming up to Make a Difference!"



*Thank you!*

Our Malawian SAFE Staff team sends their greetings and love.

Let's team up with them to make a difference in 2018!



In 2017, your obedience to pray, give and serve gave hope and a future to many people living in Malawi—from the youngest to the oldest!

...on the other side of your

**Obedience!**



"You Never Know What Is On the Other Side of Your Obedience" was our theme throughout 2017.

Not knowing the "other side" was part of the mystery—the walk of faith—and then realizing the amazing blessing when the "other side" of obedience to God was revealed!

2017 was full of challenges—hunger from the previous 2 years of drought, rising costs of essentials like fertilizer and seed, and dealing with the spiritual, educational and physical needs of people living in Malawi—one of the poorest countries in the world.

But the year was also filled with wonderful opportunities to serve and see God bring a "harvest" of blessings to the gogos, orphans, vulnerable children, youth, caregivers, teachers and village leaders—and a much-needed harvest of maize in May!

Our new theme for 2018 is "Teaming up to Make a Difference"! But as we "team up"—let's take a look back at some of the things your obedience accomplished for people in Malawi in 2017

*Leslie Lewis*

Leslie Lewis, U.S. Coordinator for Gogo Grandmothers and SAFE-Africa

## After The Joseph Project

Many of you gave to our Joseph Project to buy and store up maize for what is called "the hungry time" in Malawi. The worst drought in 35 years came during the last 2 growing seasons. This "hungry time" meant potential starvation for millions. Through your generosity over 2,200 of our most needy gogo families were given 60 lbs. of maize from December through March for the last 2 years. There's no way for us to understand their gratitude for this life-saving help.



## Village Gogo Groups

### The Gogos Give Back!

In all of our sponsored 22 Community Based Childcare Centers (preschools), porridge (made mostly of dried maize) is used to feed the little children every school day. The large bags of maize shown above aren't bought at the store, or given by a large organization—they are given by the gogos (grandmothers) each year from their harvest.

Last May, when the gogos again saw that their harvests hadn't produced enough maize to feed themselves for the year -- they still gave a generous portion to feed

over 2,000 children in our CBCCs. The children NEVER lacked their porridge or needed us to provide maize because—despite the little they had—the gogos gave to the children. (We provide the soy or ground



nuts, salt, sugar, etc. to make it more nutritious.)

### Fertilizer and Seed

Rains came early this year, so Mary Phiri (Director of ECD and Gogo Grandmothers) mobilized our SAFE staff quickly to distribute the Kwacha (money) needed for fertilizer and seed for 2,287 needy gogos in all our sponsored villages. The orange maize planted in a few villages last year grew so well there was enough seed to share with all of our sponsored gogos this year.

**“Whatever you do, He will make good of it. But not the good He had prepared for you if you had obeyed him.” — C.S. Lewis**

### Praying for Rain

While most of Malawi received rain last year, the rain was delayed coming to the area around Luzi Village in



the North. At the end of January, the villagers became hopeful and planted their maize, but the rain stopped.

The chief and his elders were very concerned and decided to call all the Christians to come to the Community Based Childcare Center to pray. From that day on there was rain—their gardens grew, and so did their faith in God.

The village leaders were introduced to deep-bed farming this year which may help with periods of intermittent rainfall in the future.

### Spiritual Feeding

All of our gogos are registered, and their organized groups meet several times each month for discussions, Bible study, prayer, singing and fellowship. Each Prayer Leader uses our Village Prayer Guide



in Chichewa to help gogos grow in their faith and understanding of the Bible. The verse written on the back of the gogos' T-shirts is becoming more and more a reality. "Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." — 1 John 4:11. Now, during their prayer time, gogos often hold each others' hands as they pray together.

### Blankets

2,169 gogos and the children in their families are warmer and feeling very loved because of receiving a new, thick, colorful blanket! Blankets may seem like a simple thing to us — but to a gogo in a village — they are a "prized possession"! When their only defense from the cold nights is a mat on the dirt floor and a thin piece of cloth — that blanket becomes a treasure to the gogos and little children. Not only were gogos' bodies made warm by the blanket distribution, but some gogos also placed their faith in Jesus as their



Savior when the Gospel was shared. At one blanket distribution, a number of Kondanani Village Muslim gogos expressed their desire for Jesus to be their Savior and Lord.

### Community Based Childcare Centers (Preschools)

SAFE staff members, Mary Phiri and Brenda Sanama, help our CBCCs grow in their quality of education through ongoing training and support of caregivers (teachers). We have 8 CBCCs in the Northern Region, a large CBCC of over 600 children in the Central Region and 12 CBCCs in the Southern Region.

...on the other side of your  
**Obedience!**

Many Muslim mothers are so happy with our Biblical teaching for their children that even the faces of the mothers are reflecting joy! Some have come asking to be taught to pray, saying they pray, but don't understand prayer in the mosques — they see our prayers to our living God are different!

At Christmas, the "Jesus Is Born" banner/curriculum was used to teach the children the story of Jesus. They also used it to teach the children to name animals and colors and to count angels! These little ones' hearts and minds are being prepared for school and for life!

### Two New Village CBCCs

It is always a joy to provide children with a new, safe place to learn! The CBCC at Lake Chilwa was finished this year. The number of children had grown so large they couldn't fit into the old building.

The CBCC at Tikondane is almost ready for the children. They have been meeting outside and in the Chief's house, waiting for the great day when they will occupy their new preschool.

Ben Khoswe, SAFE's Director of Finance, is shaking hands with one of the gogos at Kawiya Tikondane. He is appreciating the

work she and other gogos did collecting sand from the river and carrying bricks from the oven where they were fired to help build the Community Based Childcare Center for the children.



**“I used to be afraid of failing at something that really mattered to me, but now I'm more afraid of succeeding at things that don't matter.” — Bob Goff, Love Does**

### SAFE Life Youth Clubs

45.8 % of Malawi's population of 18,091,575 is under 15 years of age! What an opportunity! We have over 400 youth in our SAFE Life Youth Clubs in our sponsored villages. They have an outstanding curriculum to help them Biblically and culturally think through the tough issues a Malawian young person faces. They are actively helping other youth get back into school and serving their communities.

In one of the poorest countries in the world, it is always a special challenge for the youth to find something they can do to take the next step in achieving their dreams.



Cathy Cheonga (SAFE's Regional Education Coordinator) recently challenged youth involved in our SAFE Life Youth Clubs, "Let's go entrepreneurial this year so that we can buy soap and sugar for our homes and even for the gogos who are helpless." One club wants to raise money to buy a treadle sewing machine so they can provide school

uniforms for their friends in need. The youth have also been making things from locally found materials to raise funds.

The Kachindamoto youth wove mats from palm branches they found along the lakeshore. They know mats are needed to sit and sleep on. They also made brooms for sweeping, and fuel-efficient stoves. Cathy shared, "Which mother does not feel proud with the wonderful work her children have done—using their hands to help others!"

### School Fees for Needy Students

Our 149 orphan students who receive school fees from Gogo Grandmothers face many difficult challenges in their lives just to be able to go to school and stay in school. They often have to labor—not only in their classes—but also in someone's garden just to eat. Thank you for making school possible for them!

...on the other side of your  
**Obedience!**



On the other side of your obedience are Fuel Efficient Stoves! For decades, people in Malawi have been cooking their meals over an open fire on 3 rocks causing major deforestation as well as upper-respiratory infections caused by the smoke inhalation. The SAFE Life Youth Clubs have started building fuel-efficient stoves for the gogos. This gives them a chance to minister to the community about the love of Christ door-to-door. They will earn \$2.50 for each stove and it will be split into 2 parts: One part goes to the youth who build the stoves (for school supplies) and the other half goes for other needs of the SAFE Life Youth Club.



Solar lamps were distributed to our supported students, school by school. The students are SO grateful to be able to use them for studying at night.

Haswell Wanja was a student supported throughout secondary school by SAFE. His Gogo was the former chairlady at Simiyoni, and is now "very weak in the legs." Haswell is a member of the SAFE Life Youth Club and is very responsible, taking care of his gogo. He has been accepted at Nasawa Technical College, which is near his home in Zomba District.

### SAFE Haven

A refurbished 40-ft. container was shipped to Malawi and become a permanent "SAFE Haven" center for children in the city of Zomba. It impacts hundreds of children every week.

SAFE's coordinator, Aaron Gondwe, runs programs which include tutoring, sports, art and Bible study. We have glowing reports of changed lives and attitudes toward school of the SAFE Haven kids. Parents are SO INTERESTED in what is happening!

Sports bring the older kids out for Bible study and some have also finished one year of our Why Wait? Life Skills Curriculum.



**The great obedience of our lives is to love God and love others!**

...on the other side of your  
**Obedience!**

A young man named Gospel has been coming to the SAFE Haven for 5 years. This year, when he heard the Day's visiting grandson Jeff share his testimony about his relationship with Jesus Christ, Gospel approached him and said, "I want that too! What do I have to do?" So Jeff shared the simple message of salvation—the Good News of the Gospel—and Gospel invited Jesus to be His Lord and Savior! Gospel is now investing his life back into the kids and coaching their new football (soccer) team.

### Parenting Classes

Cathy Cheonga, SAFE's Regional Education Coordinator, has been organizing parenting classes using material from the 6 A's of Positive Parenting, written by Josh McDowell and Dick Day. It is having an amazing impact on the participants! Recently, a 4-day class was held and 19 mothers attended!



The topics were so powerful that the participants began confessing their failings — but each day brought smiles and expectation as they testified how they had asked for forgiveness from different members of their families and started down a new path with them. The participants committed to come back twice a week for activities at SAFE Haven.

Chief Simiyoni is on the other side of your obedience. After a few days of the Parenting Training, she got up and danced! She shared that she had punished her children over petty issues because of anger in her heart over her husband's treatment of her. She wasn't affectionate or available to her children. She had gone home after the lessons and cried out to the Lord to

have mercy on her. She surrendered herself to the Lord and felt His forgiveness. Then she gathered her children and asked them for their forgiveness — asking them to check on her behavior in the future.

### Mothers Groups

These groups of village mothers have a passion to counsel young girls to end teen marriages and to encourage those who drop out of school to go back. In April, Mother groups from Mposa (Lake Chilwa) Simiyoni, Kondanani and Kachere gathered at SAFE's Training Center in Kondanani Village for 4 days to learn positive parenting skills and how to counsel teenagers.

On the other side of your obedience are 60 girls from child marriages and young single mothers who are back in school. Now village boys are coming, asking for counsel. They are seeing what is happening to the girls and they want to go back and learn, too.

### Why Wait? Life Skills Curriculum

Executive Director Moira Chimombo and Cathy Cheonga knew what would be on the other side of their obedience when they trained 100 teachers in 22 new schools—students' lives would be changed by SAFE's 8-year biblically-based life skills material. It is based on the character of Christ, and opens up students' understanding of healthy choices for themselves and their communities for the rest of their lives.



Why Wait? is also being taught in the **Zomba Central Prison** school. We have trained the Christian Headmaster and teachers, who are convicts, and who are doing a wonderful job teaching other prisoners.



### The Jesus Film

Lameck Kananji, SAFE's Jesus Film Coordinator, focuses on showing *The Jesus Film* and other discipleship films in the schools and villages. He has passion to share Jesus! He then encourages and disciples those who commit their lives to Jesus Christ.



### Mail Box Clubs

Mailbox Club is an after-school program. SAFE trains teachers to run these clubs as a follow-up to both the Why Wait? Curriculum taught in the schools and *The Jesus Film* showings.

**“One act of obedience is better than one hundred sermons.” — Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

**“You have unique things to do, but whatever you do, it should flow out of your love and obedience to God.” — Leslie Lewis**

**“I used to think you had to be special for God to use you, but now I know you simply need to say yes.” — Anonymous**