

Friends of Matthew Rusike Children's Home

September 2022

We give mainly financial support directly to the Home

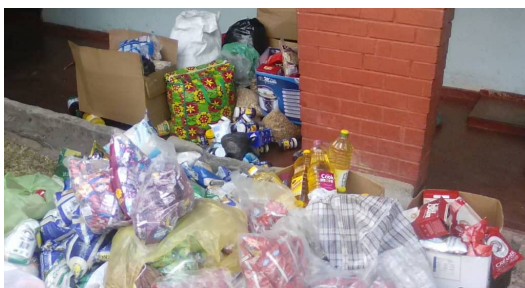
News from the Home

August Greetings from Zimbabwe.

Three months have been packed with activities for the Home. The first week of June was devoted to **Matthew Rusike Week**, which culminated in **Big Sunday** on 5 June. A sizable gathering came for the special Sunday after two years of break but the turnout was far less than it used to be in the past.



However we are so grateful for the support of the Methodist church as we received donations ranging from food, toiletries and stationery, bringing a huge relief to our depleted stocks especially of basic foods.



The following week Methodist Schools visited the Home. It was a memorable event for the children as they had time to mingle with children their own age during a worship service and a braai (BBQ) fellowship.

Soon after this we had the Marathon fundraising event on 12 July. This was the third attempt after the successful events of 2018 and 2019. We were competing with established cooperates who were running their own races so we were surprised with overwhelming support from partners and athletes. We reached our target of runners because our tickets sold out at 500.

The Marathon was earmarked for the solar project with a total budget of US\$30,000. We managed to raise US\$5,031 and this was enough to cover the entire administration block and the clinic. We therefore decided to break down the solar project into phases and are excited that the first phase has been completed. When it is completed there will be great savings of US\$1700 per month.

August came with a long anticipated children's **trip to Lake Kariba** on 12-15 August. We are so grateful to God that this event was a huge success against all odds. We began planning early in the year and the greatest headache was the funding. Through God's miraculous intervention we received free accommodation for the children at Monkey Safari Lodge, highly



subsidized bus hire rates from Mabelreign circuit to whom we paid US\$450 instead of nearly US\$2000, then we were charged \$1 per child for boat cruising instead of the normal rate of \$12 per person and the National parks also exempted us on entry fees.



We visited the magnificent dam wall, explored the giant Hydro-electric plant, the Heights, crocodile farm, briefly visited Zambia and refreshed for an hour in the mighty Zambezi river.



The children had various activities from a life coach, Mr Believe, who offered free services. The trip was capped with a visit to the scenery of Chinhoyi caves where children were mesmerized by God's signature on nature.

We took 31 children and 7 members of staff. It was a memorable educational and recreational trip.

What an exciting visit you all had to Kariba and thank you for he lovely photos ed

The Chaplain, Rev F Mhlanga, went with 16 girls to Moleli high school for Girls Christian Union inter-districts event. They had life changing lessons and time to enjoy fellowship with others. 20 boys went to Sandringham High school for a National Boys Christian Union Convention. 19

were badged and became full members of the Boys group.



Our children are all generally in good health, have been going to school and are behaving well. The economic situation in Zimbabwe, which is being exacerbated by the Russia-Ukraine conflict, has a huge impact on us as we bear the brunt of the hyper-inflation. Our committed staff continues to discharge their duties faithfully in spite of the inadequate remuneration they receive.

The one girl needing sponsors to study for her A levels has been sponsored by a local church and we are very grateful for that.

Above all, we thank Friends of Matthew Rusike for your unwavering support even as you also grapple with your own challenges. God Bless you all.

Rev Linny Mutendzwa

The economy continues to spiral out of control, inflation has hit again and life continues to be tough for the majority of Zimbabweans. In all this turmoil, God continues to keep the staff and children at MRCH safe.

On our Big Sunday we received quite substantive amounts of donations in kind and they continued to come in after the celebrations.

The costs of the marathon were entirely covered by individuals and corporates so there was no expense for MRCH.



Lin has been participating in virtual commemorations with various fellowships such as in Australia and Ireland. Our prayer is that a lot of people continue to be educated about the Home and our support base continues to grow.

Zvirinane Matore

Donga Community Outreach Project

Matthew Rusike Donga Project continues to survive though in a very harsh economic environment. We continue to support 81 very disadvantaged primary school children. We provide limited school stationery, hygienic items and 21 are also covered with school fees.



We have a small garden which has a variety of vegetables. The arable land is very sandy and if we intend to utilise it for crop production a lot of manure and fertilisers are required. We need to increase the garden so the current borehole needs deepening, a big water tank made available and the water pumped into the tank through a solar system.



We also have a thriving piggery project but we face serious challenges on feeds for the pigs. There are seven pigs, which is a good start if they get the required support for a year.

The project is at its infant stage and we appeal for support towards its development. Lloyd Kupeta

Caring for a child at MRCH today

I asked Tapiwa Magonya, MRCH Finance officer, to send us updated costs of caring for the children today – here they are:

1. US\$3.00 will care for a child for a day
2. US\$5.00 will provide medical care for a generally ill child for a month
3. US\$30.00 will provide medical care for a chronically ill child
4. US\$30.00 buys a complete school uniform
5. US\$ 252.00 will feed a family group for a week. A family group has an average of 12 children excluding the caregiver.
6. US\$42.00 will keep a young person in vocational training for a month
7. US\$60.00 will pay a term's school fees for a Primary school child and US\$150.00 will pay a term's fees for a secondary school child.
8. US\$270.00 will pay a staff salary for a month.

Staff salaries are pegged in US\$ but paid in the local currency (the Zimbabwe \$) at the official bank rate.

It is impossible to get US\$ from the official banks, so when people get their salaries in the local currency they have to trade it for US\$ at the black market rate.

For example, a staff member who is said to be paid US\$270 will get liquid cash of about US\$100 because of the difference in the exchange rates.

Food: the children live on a limited diet. Your donations could help add protein, fruit and vegetables.

Clothing: in particular school uniforms. Children cannot attend school without them.

Medical Care: Even basic medicines are out of reach. 5 children now receive free anti retroviral treatment for HIV/AIDS. However the Home must pay costs relating to chronic illness like epilepsy and diabetes.

Staff: There are now 30 staff members working for the MRCH organisation, some covering the community Childcare programs in Harare, Gweru, (Donga) and Bulawayo.

Government Support: We are eligible for Government support **for those children who have valid court orders.** This is US\$20.00 (paid in local currency) per child per month

It is the Department of Social Welfare's duty to ensure that our children have valid court orders. At the moment only 9 out of 94 of our children have valid court orders. Hence we only receive US\$180 per month for those 9. Tapiwa Magonya

How you can help

FoMRCH has now been registered on more passive giving sites in addition to **Amazon Smile**, including **Give as you Live** (linking to over 5,500 retailers who donate various %) and **CrowdFunder** (enabling you to donate Nectar points) This is a useful, if small and irregular source of income.

We currently have **44 people** donating on Amazon Smile with **72 qualifying purchases** in March, **54** in April and £179 raised since May 2020. Recently **averaging £20-£25 per quarter.**

Please go to our website, How You Can Help/donations page for the links

2 messages from Friends of MRCH

"I just tried the Give as you Live donation route for an online Sainsbury delivery, it worked perfectly and gave £2.38 to FoMRCH at no cost to me!"

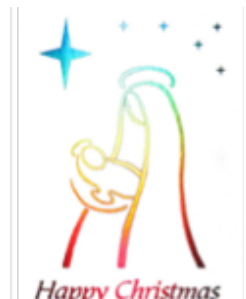
"I'm pleased to say we did as your newsletter suggested and had a coffee morning. You should see a bank transfer from our treasurer for £300.66. For a small church of 30 attendees we were well supported and sold cakes, vegetables and books. **I hope this may encourage others to have a go!**

We are now in the process of updating our website particularly the How you can Help page so please keep checking it.

We are in the process of adding some new images for our online Christmas e cards so please keep checking these too, here's the link:

<https://www.dontsendmeacard.com/ecards/charities/friends-of-matthew-rusike-childrens-home/christmas>

3 designs of "real" cards are still available



silver holographic foil



Three Wise Men



MRCH Marimba band

Packs of 10 cards for £2.

Please order from the Chair, Carol Banham

Minutes Secretary

We are still looking for a volunteer to be our minutes secretary. We are still meeting online so no travelling is involved at the moment so does this help you to consider joining us? If so please contact us;

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