



# COMMUNITIES WITHOUT BORDERS



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## How Two Very Different Communities Have Created a Partnership: Wellesley Village Congregational Church and Fumbelo, Zambia



*Fumbelo students.*

In 2008, a group from Wellesley Village Church (WVC) traveled to Fumbelo, Zambia to explore the possibility of becoming a partner with the village through Communities Without Borders (CWB). The group understood CWB's mission to be educating orphans and other vulnerable

children in order to nourish hope for a better future for them, for society, and for the world. What they didn't realize was how much WVC would gain through the partnership. Over three subsequent trips, we have come to learn that, as in all relationships, success comes from good channels of communication, hard work, and a real effort to keep improving the relationship.

The most essential component in building a strong relationship between WVC and Fumbelo has been the commitment on both sides to sit down and learn about each other. Each summer we meet separately with the teachers at the community school, the village women who support the community school and its children, the teenage girls and boys, and the village chief. From these conversations, we have come to understand what daily life is like in the village and how the residents would like our partnership to work.

After establishing the villagers' strong desire for a regular medical presence, WVC contracted with a doctor from Lusaka's University Teaching Hospital to visit Fumbelo twice per month to examine and treat the children. Other initiatives that have come out of our partnership dialogues include: two water quality analyses of the village's communal bore hole; a weekday feeding program

at the community school; a bicycle incentive program, where every child who passes the 10th grade entrance exam receives a bicycle; delivery of beads and other jewelry-making items to the teenage girls as an income-generating activity; construction of blackboards, bookshelves and benches for the community school; and construction of a community school latrine.

Key to strengthening WVC's commitment to the partnership has been traveler's faithful witnessing to the greater church community of our ever-strengthening bonds with the residents of Fumbelo. By telling our story, displaying our pictures, and leading church school, the whole church has come to embrace the partnership. Beyond embracing, WVC has come to understand in a concrete way what "loving our neighbors" means – even those neighbors on the other side of the globe. Each year the thousands of miles between Wellesley and Fumbelo seem to diminish a bit more and we find we truly are becoming partners and friends.

—By Liz King



*Liz King (top) and Catherine Warren with Fumbelo students.*

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*Abraham has two dreams. He hopes one day to become an accountant or a doctor. He also hopes that one day soon his younger brothers Charles and Christopher will have sponsors to help them attend school and have the opportunities afforded to his sisters and himself.*

## Abraham Lungu: An Industrious Young Man

When Mr. and Mrs. Lungu both died of tuberculosis in 2001 they left behind five young children. Abraham, then 9 years old, and his younger siblings Charles, Christopher, Mary and Martha, moved into their grandmother's two-roomed windowless house in the Zambian compound of Ng'ombe. Their grandmother sold vegetables in small baskets along the side of the road to provide for the family of six but still could not afford to send the children to school. In 2002, Abraham was one of the fortunate children identified by SWAAZ to be sponsored by CWB.

Ten years later Abraham is a handsome nineteen-year old in the tenth grade, and he is working hard in school. He wakes each morning at daybreak on the grass mat he shares with his siblings, dons his worn school uniform and begins the two hour walk to Lusaka High School. Abraham enjoys his long days at school, especially because his teacher, Miss Bobo, "treats all students fairly and ensures that all of her students understand their lessons." He relishes the opportunities he finds there, and loves the novelty of learning new things. After his evening trek home from school he has supper, helps his grandmother with household chores, and then studies until he falls asleep. After church on Sundays he earns money by cutting hair to help with expenses.

Abraham has two dreams. He hopes one day to become an accountant or a doctor. He also hopes that one day soon his younger brothers Charles and Christopher will have sponsors to help them attend school and have the opportunities afforded to his sisters and himself.



*Abraham, child-of-the-month.*

## Record Number of CWB Students Pass Qualifying Exams

A record number of 132 CWB seventh and ninth graders successfully passed their qualifying exams this past fall and have advanced to the 8th and 10th grades respectively! A breakdown of the figures shows that 74 seventh and 58 ninth graders passed the exam. Slightly less than half of the seventh (46%) and ninth (40%) graders were female students. Comparisons of CWB's overall success rate with regional and national figures are still to be compiled at press time. We are very excited about these preliminary results and hope to provide a more complete analysis in our next publication.



*A student in Linda compound receives his 7th grade certificate from CWB.*

### OUR PARTNERS

#### AFRICAN ORGANIZATIONS IN LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

Society for Women and AIDS Zambia  
Zambia Nsunga CWB

#### PARTNER COMMUNITIES IN ZAMBIA

Bauleni Community  
Chawama Community  
Fumbelo Community  
Garden Community  
Linda Community  
Mandevu Community  
M'tendere Community  
Ng'ombe Community  
Simukanka Village

#### IN SOUTH INDIA

Tamilnadu Community

#### USA PARTNER COMMUNITIES

Brockton Neighborhood Health Center  
Eliot Church, Newton  
First Baptist Church, Lexington  
First Parish Unitarian Church,  
Lexington  
First Unitarian Society in Newton  
Friends of Simukanka  
Pilgrim Church, Lexington  
Union Church, Newton  
Harvard Vanguard Health Center,  
Watertown  
Wellesley Village Church  
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