**Return to Ishe Anesu**

**Marion Team Finds Zimbabwe Mission ‘Humbling’**

By Suzanne C. Hickerson

**Zimbabwe missionary Maria Humbane talks about plans for the Ishe Anesu school, scheduled to open in November.**

A LITTLE BOY SAT IN A DOORWAY, watching his mother tend a small fire and cook what food they had in this city in southern Africa. Hordes of people passed by in one of the oldest and poorest neighborhoods called Sakubva, where hundreds of wooden shacks line the narrow, dirt roads.

The experience proved to be overwhelming; eye-opening and humbling for many of the team members, they said.

The mission “made me more aware of the plight of others and more appreciative of what I have,” said Sarah Staley, who teaches preschool at the Abingdon Diocese preschool. “It also makes me more appreciative of what God has done. Christ is all we need in the world together no matter what color they are,” she added.

Aaron Brown, a student at Marion Senior High School, said he was most impressed at how “many of the people lived and their [positive] attitude about life.”

While in Mutare, the mission team stayed in the home of Bill and Maria Humbane. The Humbanes are missionaries for the United Methodist Church. Currently, the children leave Ishe Anesu each evening and walk a small fire and cook what food they had in this city in southern Africa. Hordes of people passed by in one of the oldest and poorest neighborhoods called Sakubva, where hundreds of wooden shacks line the narrow, dirt roads.

MUTARE, ZIMBABWE - This was the first opportunity for a mission team from United Methodist Church in Marion, Va. To be here and its firsthand knowledge of the conditions that how many of the team members say they saw poverty and hunger that made them appreciate their own lives all the more.

The 10-member team traveled to Zimbabwe this summer to assist with the construction of a school, lead a Bible school program for more than 50 Sakubva children, and furnish medical supplies and services.

Several years ago when Humbane began to pursue her dream to build a school for the children of Sakubva she said she was met with a lot of skepticism. However, last year her dream received a big boost when members of Holston Conference donated $30,000 to construct a 3,500-square-foot facility. The building includes six classrooms, office space, bathroom, a cafeteria and kitchen. The construction is scheduled to be complete in time for a Nov. 10 dedication.

According to Humbane, the relationship with Holston Conference has greatly benefited the Ishe Anesu children as well as their families and Sakubva as a whole.

Once the school facility is complete, the Humbanes want to purchase land and construct a youth center to be used as an outreach center. The building will be equipped with a chapel, a community hall, a library, and a medical center. The Humbanes said the facility would be a central location for the community and would provide a place for the community to meet, gather, and worship.

Despite the progress being made, there are still many unmet needs, including insurance for school premises, purchasing of school uniforms and feeding the children.

The construction of the school is currently underway and is expected to be completed by the end of the year. The Humbanes are working closely with the United Methodist Church to ensure that the facility is completed in a timely manner and meets the needs of the community.

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