



Presenting Hope by Satellite

Lonnie and Jeannie Melashenko headed a Voice of Prophecy team that traveled to Lusaka, Zambia last summer and presented "Hope for Our Troubled World," a three-week evangelistic series carried across Africa by satellite. Medical professionals and other laypersons, along with college and university students, participated in the event, which also included 20 simultaneous campaigns at Lusaka churches.



Enoch Mogusu from Kenya traveled to Lusaka and set up an onsite construction shop to make satellite dishes when campaign coordinators learned that many dishes would be late arriving by ocean freighter. He trained a crew of 16 and together they made 60 dishes.

PHOTOS BY DAVID COE, TODD GESSELE, AND KURT JOHNSON

Everyone loves a parade. More than 2,000 marched for over an hour and a half, handing out handbills for the meetings. At the end of the parade in a park, a television reporter interviewed Pastor Melashenko.





Behind the scenes, the technical crew kept the signals going to the PAS 7 satellite, including simultaneous translations into 18 languages.



His Excellency Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, president of Zambia, came to the opening night meeting. He welcomed the team and addressed the audience, reminding them that Christians are called to more than lip service and imploring them to get involved in the challenges of society.



Prayer bands met nightly at the Mulungushi International Conference Centre as Pastor Melashenko delivered the message.



Each night Jeannie Melashenko presented "Journeys With Jeannie," a video segment featuring human interest stories.



Joining VOP musicians (from top) Ullanda Innocent Palmer, Jan Judd, and Adrian Westney were many local choirs.



LightBearers Ministry teamed up with the Voice of Prophecy to print and ship Discover Bible Guides in several languages. Most of those attending the evangelistic series in Lusaka completed the lessons and received their diplomas.



About 6,000 were baptized in Lusaka on the last two weekends. Before the service, each candidate returned a blue card with the signature of a pastor and a Bible worker. Lonnie Melashenko gave the baptismal charge for each group. At right, VOP evangelism director Walter Arties talks with a few of those present. More than 22,000 have now been baptized throughout Zambia, and reports continue to come from other countries.

Professional puppeteer Tracey Garver from Michele Puppets (holding Creation sign) assisted with the children's meetings. She was sponsored by the Florida Hospital System.



STUDENTS HOLD MEETINGS IN ZAMBIA



Theology students from Walla Walla College (WWC) and La Sierra University (LSU) participated in the Voice of Prophecy's public evangelism in Africa just before the academic term began last fall. The project was conducted in cooperation with the Global Evangelism initiative based at the Carolina Conference.

Lonnie Melashenko's nightly messages at the Mulungushi International Conference Centre in Lusaka, Zambia were beamed by satellite across Africa and beyond,

Eighteen students from West Coast colleges took part in the Voice of Prophecy evangelism thrust in Zambia. The La Sierra University group (left) included (from left) Adam Weeks, Josie Asencio, Scott Arany, theology professor Dr. John Webster, Jesse Seibel, and Raewyn Hankins. Students from Walla Walla College were (front, from left) April Lord, Rachel Davies, Emily Schmidt, Nadia Neil, (back, from left) Bryan Cafferky, Caleb Henry, Ofahelotu Langi, Chris Clemmons, Lindon Ng'onga, Moises Ramirez, Matthew Vincent, Timothy Peters, and Kristopher Loewen. Not shown is Dr. David Thomas, dean of the Walla Walla School of Theology.

but many churches within the city and nearby preferred their own event instead of the satellite feed.

Though all the students are

attending American schools, their home countries include not only the United States, but also Canada, Jamaica, Tonga, and Zambia.

Each student was assigned to a church and spoke each night, usually on a platform in an adjacent field to accommodate the crowds. City electricity or a portable generator provided power for their

projector with PowerPoint slides and for a sound system.

Hundreds of church members brought their friends, and often curious neighbors joined the audience. Most sat on the ground; some stood during the meetings.

Many locations had translators. Even though Zambia is the former British colony of Northern Rhodesia and English is the official language, more than 70 other languages are used in the country.

Coping With Distractions

The student evangelists coped with blowing dust, power outages, drunks from local bars, demon possession, and other distractions. Fortunately, it was the dry season, so rain was not a problem.

Accompanying the students were Dr. David Thomas, dean of the School of Theology at Walla Walla College, and Dr. John Webster, a theology professor in the School of Religion at La Sierra University. Coordinating the entire student project was Pastor David Dobias from Fletcher, North Carolina.



Children surrounded La Sierra student Jesse Seibel and made up half of his opening night audience. Early in his series, a little boy, Kristof, came to him in tears and said, "Sir, can you pray for me? I want to be a good boy." A few nights later, he returned with his brother, sister, and a friend, so that Jesse could pray for them also. Jesse had been discouraged with the initial public response to his messages, but he realized that Kristof was an example of those God was working with.

In addition to the student groups, several pastors and laypersons from North America also participated in the Voice of Prophecy event in Lusaka. These included Pastor Mike Pettengill, whose church in Ooltewah, Tennessee has sponsored a mission project on the border of Zambia and Zimbabwe.

One of his members, Jim Haney, was the singing evangelist for his meetings in the middle of a dusty soccer field, where nightly attendance was over 3,500.

Divine Intervention

A family from Pettengill's church also took part. Russell and Valerie Haveman, along with daughters Cassie and Carrie, ages 7 and 5, served as missionaries in Nicaragua for a year. "I told Pastor Mike I wanted to be his support team and maybe give health talks," says Russell, an auto body repairman for a dealership. He had never preached, and had no intention of doing so.

God had other plans. Less than a month before departure, La Sierra University phoned to say one of their students couldn't make the trip, and would he fill their preaching slot? "I prayed about it," he says. "I knew it was divine intervention and God would give me the words to say."

Haveman's soccer field crowd reached 6,500 by the third night, then dropped off somewhat when the site lost power for five nights and there were no pictures on the screen. Often, power went off just as Haveman began and came back on as he was concluding. After shouting to be heard some nights, he obtained a car battery to provide power for the sound system.

Exhausting, but a Blessing

A Canadian student at WWC, Rachel Davies, had "been on lots of mission trips, but never done any preaching." She changed her mind about Africa several times, first wanting to go, then deciding not to, but finally buying her ticket and making the long flight. At Lusaka, she told Pastor Melashenko, "It's a marathon trying to keep up with sermons every day. It is exhausting, but I'm glad I came. It has been a struggle and also a blessing. I have learned a lot."



At most locations, people sat on the ground or stood for the meetings because benches were scarce. Where the power supply was not reliable, generators were used to provide electricity for the sound system and projector. Student speakers included (from left) Kristopher Loewen, Scott Arany, and Adam Weeks.

April Lord, another WWC student, held her meetings at a former garbage dump. "They had cleaned it out," she said, "but there were still many evidences. They want to build a new church on the site." Children made up a majority of the 650 to 1,000 attending at her location. Near the end of her series, she declared, "I'll miss this when it ends. I could go for more weeks and be really happy. I'm going to miss the people."

Walla Walla student Bryan Cafferky described his first impression as "excited, but scared too. It was my first time doing evangelism." He recalled his opening night: "I didn't feel I had enough prepared. I had no power, so I couldn't look at my notes. I decided to wing it, and it went well. Ever since, I have gone without notes. Seems more powerful."

Before leaving Lusaka, Cafferky told Pastor Melashenko, "There's always at least two people praying while I am preaching. I have grown in my praying faith because of them, and I have become more bold in my prayers."

The first baptismal service for candidates from all the meetings was held just before the students returned home to begin the Fall term.

Josie Asencio from La Sierra University said, "Standing at the pool with 3,000 baptisms had to be the most moving experience in my life. Because these people need God to provide physically every day, they can see the change He makes in their life and accept Jesus."

Since returning home, La Sierra and Walla Walla students have shared their Africa experiences at churches and Voice of Prophecy meetings.