



Six days visiting Presbyterian churches in Malawi and Zambia  
- on behalf of the PCA

## **Africa reflections**

### **DAY 1**

31 hrs transit (4 flights) all seem as nothing when I land in one of my favourite places, after a 5-year absence - Chileka International Airport, Blantyre. Everything comes back quickly - the dust and soot in the air, the bad roads, and tragic sights of poverty and struggle all around. John and Sue (missionaries from Eltham Presbyterian) met me at 2.30pm, then took me straight to our Orbus school and orphan-centre to inspect the new buildings, see the initial steps of the water pump project, and the whole premises. Very impressive. We should be proud to support Orbus. Craig and Jayni Manners and their five boys met us on site as well.

After a quick drive through the city, we met Rev Colin M'Bawa at Grace Bandawe Conf Centre and then, at Synod headquarters we met and prayed with the recently elected Moderator of Blantyre Synod Rev Masauko Mbolebole - and shared reflections on what being moderator means. He has vision for the Synod (covering at least a million people) and has a particular desire to encourage ministers and elders of his church to engage in true spirituality and purity of life, and in teaching the truths of God's Word faithfully.

I was then interviewed by Blantyre Synod Radio - asked questions as to why I was there and what benefit the partnership relationship was between the two churches. It was a joy to be interviewed by Lloyd - a young man who was so helpful to Colin during the initial years of setting up the Theological Resource Centre years ago.

Then, we prayed with John and Sue for their work ... then off to Annies Lodge in beautiful Zomba (the former British capital city).

### **DAY 2**

A day to remember – a glimpse of heaven. Words will fail me ... but let me try. 4.50am rise, drive to the River Shire (along which David Livingstone came), 6 hours in worship, lunch in the manse, 4 hr warm (hot) drive to Lilongwe ... now, but only now: exhausted.

Words definitely fail to describe the exquisite experience of worshipping God alongside these beautiful, warm-hearted, faithful Malawian Christians at CCAP Mawira (on the Shire River at Liwonde). I was blessed 'out of my skin' by my Malawian brothers and sisters – they ministered to me in a powerful way.

First service (English) began at 7am. Every element of the service, from the sincere welcome speeches in the vestry with the elders, through the singing, Bible reading, prayer, announcements, preaching and the closure ... even to the prayer, thank yous, handshakes and singing of amazing grace in the vestry post-service ... everything is done attendant to purpose (to glorify God) and done with reverence and dignity. 250 powerful voices singing great hymns of the faith, familiar to me, was breathtaking and inspiring. 'Glory be the God the Father' sung like I've never heard it. Such passion to bring honour and glory to God. Six special choirs, each with their brilliant item of praise. One, in particular, I've recorded – outstanding.

It was a real blessing to share the ministry today with an old friend Abusa Rodney Bona (now 75 years of age, but still working full time) and my 'identical twin brother' Rev Colin M'Bawa. Three old men leading the service!

After a huge week at work, then 31 hours in transit and little sleep, I shouldn't have been alert, but I had such upholding through the prayers of MANY people back home in the PCA, and especially family and friends at Reservoir ... I felt the most liberating empowerment to preach and to communicate with the

whole congregation as I took them through the amazing encounter the Roman centurion had with Jesus. Words flowed, Scriptures opened, lives were coming under the inspired Word of the living God. After 2½ hrs, as the Session Clerk was summarising my message, I realised that the service was drawing towards a close – and I felt disappointed ... I could have stayed. 2½ hrs of wonderful heavenly worship of the living and true God. We could have sung more, prayed more, heard the Word more. No one wanted to leave quickly.

I gave the congregation multiple printed copies of the message so as people could go over it again in their homes, but also because it left them with an example of how to open up Scripture and teach the Word to others.

One of the great blessings for me, was a sense of assurance of faith. I see the radiant faces, hear fervent voices and heartfelt confessions of faith in the Saviour ... and then I think these folk weren't raised like I was in the comforts of western life and surrounded by resources and books, recordings and conferences ... but, while raised in deepest central Africa ... the VERY SAME savior: Jesus Christ, has gripped their soul and has mine. Surely Paul got it right: "one faith, one Lord, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all" (Ephesians 4). From a background utterly removed from mine, from within a life context that's radically different to mine ... their faith in a Triune God who saves through the crucifixion and resurrection of the beloved Son of God – is a POWERFUL witness that gives me assurance of faith. How could this have happened? Is this accidental? How is it that our worship and expressions of Christian faith are the same? Walking the dusty streets of Malawi, breathing the soot-filled air, dodging in and out of chaotic traffic – I feel absolutely like a fish OUT OF WATER, especially with my pale skin and English-only language barrier. BUT, I walk into this CCAP church and I feel these are my people, this is my faith, my Lord ... and in all the important things ... MY LIFE.

As an aside, it speaks of a time when the Church of Scotland was powerful in the Word of God and urgent in bringing the gospel of salvation to the nations of the world. Those early Scottish missionaries did such a faithful and enduring work in establishing Christian faith in these lands. I refer to the work of David Livingstone and Dr Laws and a host of others, some who died early in their days, some through attack by wild animals and others by the dreaded fever that mosquitoes bring. Of course, this is the work of an earlier version of the Church of Scotland – when it was devoted to bringing the message of the Word of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.

It brings my mind to a Wilson forebear I never met. But my Dad did, and he spoke highly of his Uncle George when back home on furlough. Rev George Wilson served for 25 years on Likomo Island (Nyassaland) heading up the Theological College there in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Back to my day ... after a short break for Coca Cola (yes, it's found in every country in the world) the 2<sup>nd</sup> service was in Chichewa which, obviously, is harder for me, but I can tell what's going on even if I'm not understanding their words which are so quickly spoken. I use my standard Chichewa greetings and sermon opening sentences ... a method I try in order to make a relational connection. I was flagging by now, flagging in strength and the eyes were beginning to close over ... but somehow, the Lord provided superhuman strength and attention, and I was able to preach again without feeling the weakness that I should have been feeling.

By 1 pm, we'd concluded and I went on my way to the manse rejoicing. Chambo fish (whole fish) and nsima for lunch. Not being very adept at extracting the flesh from the bones of chambo, I did feel ashamed at how much of it I had to leave for fear of choking on a fish bone.

A long and warmish drive to Lilongwe with Colin, and I'm deposited at the Crossroads Hotel – in the same shopping mall that some of us had walked to on a previous trip, when we'd stayed overnight at Korea Lodge Hotel, Lilongwe.

A day to remember, and a reminder that we in the PCA have a wide-open door for opportunity to minister here in Malawi. We have a role to play in this partnership and that's to understand where we best fit in – and that's probably to spend time here in preaching and then training others to preach and teach. There is a recognition in CCAP that PCA can lend a hand in discipling leaders in becoming teachers of the Word of God. There's plenty of English-speaking congregations in the major cities of Malawi. Recently retired ministers ... can you give a year of your life in this way? Ministers of the PCA, what about spending your long-service leave here?

### **DAY 3**

Still processing the privileges I've had today with my 'twin brother' Rev Colin M'Bawa. I think it all comes under the category of building relationships for ministry on behalf of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

The serious and far-reaching Christian influence in the Malawian Defence Force has to be witnessed and experienced to be understood. So it was my privilege, at the invitation of the CCAP senior chaplain, Major Andrew Kamponda, to visit the central barracks of the Malawian Army.

A small country in geographical terms, Malawi is defended by an Army of 16,000 personnel which includes a minor naval presence on Lake Malawi and an airwing of fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters. Out of that 16,000, it's reckoned that about 1,000 of the army personnel are Presbyterian Christians and regularly attend church services when stationed at home. The CCAP connections within the Army (assisted by local congregations) have recently built a massive church structure for these purposes – a large enough auditorium to seat 500. The basic structure has been completed, but it's completely bare and they're up to fund raising to tile the floor.

After being proudly shown around the new building, I was asked to address the troops who had gathered to 'recognise the important visitor'. I spoke of the Australian Defence Force (such that I knew) and especially the role of the PCA chaplains – explaining that though the Presbyterian Church in Australia was small, it had 12 full-time chaplains serving. I ended my moderatorial address with a short appeal for faith in Jesus based on the biblical account of the day that Jesus saw in the Roman centurion such faith that he'd never seen elsewhere (Luke 7). Well received. I gave them a copy of the address as well.

These men and women put their lives on the line for the noble cause of protecting their nation of Malawi. Some of them are deployed into dangerous places, such as on peace-keeping missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). They see action, they see their mates killed, they face life and death and eternity questions all the time. Christian chaplains do a remarkable job because they are deployed alongside regular troops and speak a word in season, speak of the love, mercy and compassion of a sovereign God. They help make sense of the world to those in peril. And then, back home, they serve Christ by ministering to families of soldiers and attend to various emergent pastoral and counseling needs.

Leading this valuable work is a friend of mine, Chaplain Kamponda. I've worked alongside this man firstly when he was minister at Neno (and therefore chaplain for the Girls School), then as minister of the central St Michaels and All Angels Church in Blantyre. I've noticed a remarkable growth of maturity in him and I note how army life and army chaplaincy suits him. How I wish that I could persuade one of our ADF chaplains to be allowed to visit Malawi, spend time with the MDF and especially encourage and build up the under-resourced CCAP chaplains. It would be so helpful, and they'd be welcomed.

To top off a great morning, I was ushered into the office of the Commanding Officer of the entire base, and I presented him with a Bible on behalf of the Presbyterian Church of Australia. The CO was happy to pose for an official photograph with this visitor from Australia (I think it helped having a title with the word 'General' in it).

Following lunch (with Colin and Shirley) ...

The serious and far-reaching Christian influence in the Malawian Police Force has to be witnessed and experienced to be understood. So it was my privilege, at the invitation of the CCAP senior chaplain, Deputy Commissioner of Malawi Police, Rev C K Masambuka, to visit the central headquarters of the Malawian Police, also in Lilongwe.

Yes, such is the profound respect the Malawian Police has for the Christian church, they give the senior chaplain the rank of Deputy Commissioner and the 2<sup>nd</sup> in charge chaplain the rank of Inspector.

Rev Masambuka is a faithful minister of the Gospel, a CCAP minister, but totally employed by, and dedicated to, Malawi Police. The force is 15,000 strong, employed to uphold law and order for the 17 million population of Malawi – a big job!

In his HQ office, Rev Masambuka introduced me to one of his assistant chaplains, Rev Mabvuto Chipeta – whose rank is Inspector. I asked them to describe what the pressures are for police (and therefore for chaplains of police). This was their story: their work as chaplains (apart from the obvious, Evangelists for the Christian gospel) is to head up the Department called ‘Spiritual Integrity and Counseling’. Malawi police are poorly paid, and yet long hours on the streets can be expected of them. So, they’re open to temptations of corruption and bribes, and often fall for those temptations. It’s not unknown among them to have problems associated with drugs, heavy drinking, violence and other unsocial behaviours. This results in personal stress, mental breakdowns, relationship breakdown, suicide – these are all consequential risks they face. There’s so much call for the services of police chaplains, and they are highly valued, and never short of work.

While talking about the daily work pressures faced by the men and women out on patrol, I think I became distracted – I noticed on the wall of the office, what appeared to be a Victoria Police cap. Upon inquiry, I learned that there is a partnership between Vic Police and Malawi Police and that Rev Mabvuto Chipeta had just returned from visiting our Deputy Commissioner and touring Melbourne and Bendigo. Then, I was told that a VicPol officer, a Christian from Horsham, is about to visit Malawi to assist in their programs over a number of months. The senior officers present were glad to hear of my visit, and now I have been asked to visit this VicPol officer in Melbourne before he travels to Malawi.

We shared a wonderful time of prayer together in the office of the Deputy Commissioner of Malawian Police.

To cap off a great day, I spent time in the evening with two Malawian friends who had become well known and well loved at Reservoir Presbyterian Church while they were on Masters Scholarship at La Trobe and Melbourne Universities ... up until January this year.

What a pleasure having coffee with a Malawian instructor of nursing, Esther; and then also with the strikingly intelligent senior ranking official in the Malawian Government Dept of Foreign Affairs, Dolipher Ndala. Dolipher spoke to me of her government’s plans to establish (at last) a Malawian Embassy in Canberra, AND the invitation to our Government to establish a much needed consulate in Malawi. Up until now, we’ve had a Malawian Consulate Office in Melbourne, but nothing more than that, AND, would you believe it – the Malawian Embassy in Japan has to cover Australian inquiries as well. And then the nearest Australian Embassy to Malawi is situated (unhelpfully) in Harare.

#### **DAY 4**

Yes, this will be brief as you can’t do much when moving between countries, except move between countries. We had a useful morning driving to the border with Colin and Shirley, 2hrs north-west of Lilongwe. Great to talk together in a relaxed manner.

Love the land borders in Africa. This is so chaotic and disorganised - and being in Central Africa it means that most information is gleaned from learned behaviour and the context of culture itself - rather than explanatory signs and helpful guidelines (you're kidding if you expect what you have at Melbourne airport: signage, queues, guards who help, attendants, chained walkways, notices, directional arrows, explanatory pamphlets, TV screens) ... Here, **nothing is obvious** except that there are two run-down and dingy (even dodgy) offices where you need to know to go into. One to stamp you OUT of Malawi and another to stamp you INTO Zambia. Picture Michael Palin's north to south series in Africa. It's a good thing I remembered most of it from previous visits. You sort of learn to go slow and to go with the flow and to smile to everyone AND NOT GET CROSS.

Out of the chaos of the Zambian car parking spaces a beaming General Secretary Rev Sevatt Kabaghe appeared (how did he spot me?). And he and Diane (worker from the PCI) drove me into Chipata ... and then the GS gave me the afternoon off - the first free time I've had for the last two weeks.

Bedded down in a charming 1930s colonial style guest lodge Luangwa House, where I'll be very comfortable in the spacious rooms for my last three nights in Africa. They are very kind to appoint this as my place. For those in the know, picture Zomba: at the foot of a mountain (hill?) with the grounds generously covered with grass, flowering bushes and shady trees, the house with wide halls and verandahs, lots of wood panels. It's not flash, but a very lovely setting for an English gentleman. Feels African, in a colonial-period way.

Lunch served on the verandah and I shouted my two friends. The waiter (for those in the know: think Golden Pillow, Mazabuka) came to attention at the table and announced: "I am Derek, and for lunch we have chicken, beef stew or champ fish. It will be accompanied by chips, rice or nsima." Ah! I feel at home. Every single meal ... the same. Actually love it.

I'll have two full days out at the conference with Zambia Synod (about an hour's drive out of Chipata) and I have two major teaching sessions ... looking forward to it. I think I have enough energy left for two full days. So many friends to meet in Zambia Synod.

This afternoon, I wandered down the street to the shops - for those in the know: think Kabwe. I am the only white in the entire town. Looking for a bank in the chaos, noise and dust ... when suddenly a voice calls out: "Wilson! Wilson!" It was my friend and former GS Rev Maleka Kabandama - what a privilege to catch up with him. (How did he spot me?)

Now, the biggest decision of the day ... where will I go for dinner ... sorry, supper?

## **DAY 5**

5.30 rise, quick coffee, then an hour's 'very interesting' drive into the Zambian bush. The road needs a 4WD to negotiate it safely. Reminded me of the road to Neno in Malawi, except for the river crossing - very rough - it'd be a nightmare in the wet.

At the end of the road, and the end of the powerlines, there is a new government girls school - the premises where the CCAP Zambia Synod is meeting. Truly, we could say: in the middle of nowhere. We arrived to find breakfast finished, so by any reckoning I should not have felt such focus and energy when it came time for me to speak at noon. I was to speak on the conference theme: "Being a Responsible Pastor" from Jesus' teaching in Mark 10.

Hot, dry, tired, and a little hungry - it was my privilege to speak with ministers and elders of the church - and I found such clarity of thought and energy of expression that again surprised me. There's no other explanation other than I felt empowerment of the Spirit of God and there was such close attention given by this group of godly pastors. It was sweet.

And not restricted to the event of speaking between 12.10pm and 1.10pm, my engagement afterwards (over nshima and chicken) with different pastors was just as surprising and enjoyable. Blessed out of my skin by one pastor who said that my message moved them to the heart and felt that God was talking directly to their hearts. It was particularly over the question of the pastor who should expect suffering as part of the course for work ('drinking the cup' said Jesus). My pastor friend said that hit them hard because whenever suffering comes they have an automatic tendency to think "What have I done wrong, that God has allowed this suffering to me? How can I make this up to God?" It was such sweet conversation.

I love this church and these ministers, elders and other leaders. Let me give you a glimpse of this beautiful band of brothers and sisters:

**Lovemore Nyirenda**, who, while serving a church in a village near Lundazi, is part of the four-man translation committee for the production of a new Tumbuka version of the Scriptures. The old version was produced in the 1960s and has lost traction especially with the younger generation. Lovemore's team works from the original Hebrew and Greek sources, the old Tumbuka version and the ESV. United Bible Society is sponsoring the project. Lovemore has 5 daughters and one son.

**David Chiboboka** is Principal of the Chusefu Theological College and is so glad of the PCA support via PresAID and he is busy overseeing the building project of 4 new much-needed classrooms. David faces retirement next year (he comes up against the 30-year ministry rule and the 65-years of age rule – whichever comes first) and the College is searching for a replacement. David has 9 children.

**Sevatt Kabaghe** (pronounced: Ka-wa-ai) is the new General Secretary and a very gracious and faithful leader, following in the steps of Chiboboka, M'Bewe and Kabandama. Sevatt was a very capable translator for me at the Chililibombwe public rally – and he reminded me of the night of the fire. Among 200 eye-witnesses, he testifies to the finger of God when I was preaching on the football pitch, and mid-stream the street electricity transformer blew up in a shower of sparks the entire district when into black out ... except ... my light and my microphone. A vast crowd gathered to hear the word of the Gospel – they in darkness and me in the light!

**Lazarus Chilenje**, son of Dr Victor Chilenje, who teaches Systematic Theology and Hebrew at Chusefu Theological College. I wonder whether he might have the gifts to replace David as Principal.

**Happy Mphango** – who is so happy to be in ministry. My host for last year's preaching visit to Kabwe.

**MacDonald and Susan Nyrienda** who serve together in the Copperbelt. Susan, the evangelist, was my first translator, prayer partner and encourager in Choma over 12 years ago as we worked together with Maureen (now deceased), the mother of the children we've 'adopted'. Susan's children are Elijah and Blessings.

Time runs out for me to talk of heroes of the Zambian church – serving faithfully under monumental difficulties, with little pay and little reward this side of heaven. I had lovely time relating with Chesason Chunda, Gerald Phiri and Prince Nkhoswe.

I learnt heaps today, including that I'm eating nshima much better now with my fingers, and that I'm the oldest minister in the building and break their rules for retirement ... but seriously ... how MUCH respect there is between churches and how valuable a speaker from PCA can be. One voice ... and the whole Synod seemed to be blessed. They look to the PCA for guidance on Bible training – we must not turn this opportunity down.

Looking forward to an hour's rough-track drive and return to my 'home' lodge back in Chipata and a good shower and change of clothes. One day to go – teaching and encouraging these fine Zambian leaders.

#### **DAY 6**

Another 5.30 rise, quick coffee, then an hour's drive into the Zambian bush, to the very end of the road. Greeted by smiling faces, warm handshakes and lots of 'How are you, did you sleep well?' Of course, the answer is always: 'I'm well, and yes.' It's all to do with the courtesy of offering the greeting, rather than the reply itself. Simple courtesies such as respectful greetings are INCREDIBLY important in this country. Respecting the courtesies means that there is a warm reception to anything I do or teach subsequently.

#### **Reflections of the 'General Assembly' meetings**

Synod debate was on BOTH similar and different issues to ours, but had all the hallmarks of ours in terms of respect for agreed process, then vigorous persuasion and lots of devotions and prayer.

Similar debates, i.e. subjects we might debate, reading from the Agenda:

- Spearheading development at Chasefu Theological College
- Sunday School Synod conference
- Departmental strategic plans
- Compulsory? retirement of ministers after 30 years of service or 65 years reached
- MOUs with our partner churches

Dis-similar debates, i.e. subjects we wouldn't debate, reading from the Agenda:

- elders to wear badges
- roofing of the Synod offices
- registration of shallow wells project
- synod watchmen
- ministers wives need to be trained in first aid
- Sunday School children to have a uniform with white blouse, black skirt or trousers

#### **Guest speaker**

At noon I spoke for the last time and it was graciously and attentively received. I spoke on the conference theme: "Being a Responsible Pastor" but this time from Paul's teaching in 1 Timothy 4:12-16. What amounts to almost being beyond belief ... that I can prepare passages of Scripture to preach from while I'm in an intense week of work from my Melbourne office. And the passages I select and prepare "just happen" to hit the spot here in rural Zambia. All the pastors are telling me how they enjoyed so much the messages. Today's was on the minister's self watch – set and example in word, life, love, faith and purity. And they were able to recite back to me the main lessons of yesterday's.

There was the customary heart-felt thank you speech by the Moderator, followed by my response of thanks to their thank you ... and then they sang a traditional thank you song to me! Humbling.

#### **Eating fish**

It was a great privilege to speak with ministers and elders of the church over nshima and fish from the Kafua River. I've even nearly mastered the art of finger-eating a whole fish without getting bones caught in the throat. BUT, I did leave the head and eyes on the plate. Rev Lovemore Nyirenda has a dry wit and a very quiet manner ... but he can tell stories. He told me of old African ways: in that the fish has to be served WHOLE, and eaten whole. According to traditional ways, if a husband on his honeymoon is served just the body of the fish for his supper, without the head, the wife can be dismissed!

#### **Christian schooling**

I also spoke with faithful and hard working Mrs M Dokowe who is the Synod Community Schools program coordinator. A gracious lady, full of faith. CCAP Synod Community Schools are the equivalent of our Christian Schools BUT run on a shoe-string budget with volunteer Christian teachers. Primary schooling is

from Grade 1 to Grade 9, and Mrs Dokowe was pleased to tell me that Synod schools rate 92% at the Government standardised testing at Grade 7. Altogether there are over 5,000 children enrolled across Lusaka at these CCAP Christian schools. The children are mostly from the very poorest of families and so are accepted even without paying fees. The staff at these 12 schools are totally dedicated to serving Christ and training these children in the ways of Christ while giving them a solid start to their education.

### **African culture**

Our final dinner was at a hotel nearby to my Chipata lodgings. Upon arrival, I noticed the hotel foyer and dining room was almost entirely occupied by well-dressed old men with strange headwear and badges, along with dozens of what I thought were police - maybe 50 uniformed 'police' – just milling round. On inquiry, I discovered that this was the annual dinner for all the Chipata district chiefs and that each chief brings a uniformed guard. The chiefs were dining on massive plates of food, while the guards had nothing, they simply waited for their chief to emerge, and when they did, there was a salute, bowing or down-on-bended-knee to their chief, then to lead him home!

The Zambian government recognises the part chiefdoms play at the level of local government structure. The Government pays a small salary to each police guard for each chief.

Zambian culture is very conscious of rank. Sadly, this creeps back into the church as well, where ministers are held with too much honour (IMO).

### **DAY 7 - the Malawian church from an insider**

Spent the morning with Colin M'Bawa, listening to his issues and his vision. It was all so helpful on an early morning drive from the Zambian border and then over a beautiful eggs, toast, Mzuzu coffee breakfast at Crossroads, Lilongwe.

Colin's a wise and faithful man, and one of the most senior men in the African church. He's suffered and endured much in his lifetime, and he's worked so hard – harder than any minister I know. His perspective is wide and his discernment is sound. He shared his disappointments and his vision with me.

### **Disappointments**

[I won't record his specific disappointments in print,  
but I'm happy to talk further one to one if you are interested.]

Yet despite his disappointments, Colin loves the CCAP (Malawian Presbyterian churches) and is convinced yet that he has much he can do for the Lord within it.

### **Vision**

- \* to be re-elected to another four-year term as Secretary-General of the CCAP General Assembly (his terms expires in December this year) BUT to be released to do this part-time.
- \* to be appointed as pastor of a congregation in Blantyre, as he considers that's his main calling and that he can do this while being Secretary-General.
- \* to run a continuing ministry discipleship program in Blantyre especially designed for the younger generation of ministry graduates from Zomba TC, and to make the emphasis: the calling to ministry, living the pastoral life, holiness, servant ministry and all the aspects Paul teaches in 1 and 2 Timothy.

\* to re-energise the ministry of the Theological Resource Centre and sharpen its focus for the benefit of all those who want to know more of how to read and teach the Bible. NB, all the PCA resources sent over the years are still there, but since Colin's removal to Zomba some years ago, the Centre's been run by ministers without the same vision and commitment.

\* to develop and expand his home in Blantyre so that it can serve as a comfortable accommodation place for visiting Australian ministers and lecturers to stay when they come on their LSL to assist in the vision mentioned above. He wants his home to be a gift to the ongoing reformed-evangelical ministry within the African church (I'm not sure that he's discussed this with Shirley yet!).

This was just some of the stimulating conversation and prayer on my final morning in Malawi. May the Lord spare this senior father figure of the Malawian church for Gospel purposes for some years to come.

There's much respect here for the Presbyterian Church of Australia, and CCAP is warmly open to visiting PCA leaders lending a hand. If we are guided by Colin's intuition and spiritual discernment I think our efforts will not be in vain, but well accepted and very fruitful.

I'm sad to again leave both Zambia and Malawi, but grateful to have made a small contribution for Gospel causes on behalf of the PCA.

**John P Wilson**  
**August 2017**