

**From Dave Carver,
Moderator of Pittsburgh Presbytery's
Malawi Ministry Team:**

In April 2003, I was in a remote area of Malawi (Central Africa) known as Chingale. It was in many ways the epicenter of a famine that had rocked that part of the world for nearly two years. I took a long walk with Abusa Dennis Mulele through some of the dusty paths of his community, and I asked him if the famine relief program launched by the PC(USA) and the CCAP was helpful. He stopped, looked at me, and said, "Pastor, I can tell you for sure that this program is wonderful and it is working. Six months ago, I was doing eight, or nine, or ten funerals a week. And they were for everyone – children, the aged, adults – it was terrible. Now, I am only doing two or three funerals each week, and mostly, these are for the elderly."

I am delighted that the program worked and praise God for the fact that Dennis is still teaching people the Lord's way in Malawi. But I am haunted by the fact that Malawian churches were doing all of those funerals while we were just generating ideas.



In September 2012, Her Excellency President Joyce Banda visited the USA to attend the opening of the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York. A devout member of the CCAP, Blantyre Synod, Mrs. Banda asked to hear about the Partnership between churches in Malawi and in the USA. During the course of this meeting, she said many things, but among the most gripping was this: "We are facing a food crisis in Malawi. We need help. I am asking you to help me save the lives of the children in my country."

Coincidentally, Pittsburgh Presbytery was hosting 27 visitors from Blantyre Synod, many of whom confirmed that the rains had failed and that the "hungry season" would be long and harsh in Malawi – a nation that is accurately described as "The Warm Heart of Africa" and yet has suffered the curse of chronic poverty for generations.



After a series of prayerful conversations, the leadership teams of the Synod and the Presbytery have committed ourselves to this simple course of action: we will not wait 18 months to help, and instead we will do all in our power to ensure that the children in Malawi have every opportunity to live to old age, rather than die young of hunger.

The essence of this plan is simple. Individuals and communities will be invited to contribute money for famine relief. Each \$25 gift will provide 50 kilograms of maize (corn), which is enough to supplement the diet of a family for about a month (a 50 kg. bag of maize is about ten times the size of that pictured on the front of this brochure). Those who make contributions in the USA will receive small tokens shaped like maize bags as reminders that we are blessed to be able to give. These hand-made ornaments are designed as alternative holiday gifts, appropriate to hang on a Christmas tree.



Contributors will also have the opportunity to sign personal cards that will be distributed along with the maize.

Funds collected in both countries will be transferred to the Blantyre Synod Health & Development Commission, which will work with established ministries within Malawi to equip local pastors and churches to offer food to all in need, regardless of religious affiliation or non-affiliation.

In Mark 8:1-10, we read the well-known account of Jesus feeding the 4,000 in the wilderness. Incredulous disciples ask Jesus, “How can one satisfy these people with bread in the wilderness?”

By way of an answer, Jesus did something miraculous. He gave bread – the bread that the starving crowd needed – to the disciples. And the disciples distributed the food, and not only did everyone have enough, but there were even leftovers.

The Partnership between Blantyre Synod and Pittsburgh Presbytery has taught us, again and again, that no one person, no one group, no one country, is self-sufficient. We all depend on and need each other. a-MAIZE-ing Grace is simply a vehicle wherein we enliven that reality.

Congregations and individuals wishing to learn more about participating in
a-MAIZE-ing Grace!
may do so by visiting
www.malawipartnership.org

On this site, there are links allowing one to

- *Learn more about the situation in Malawi and print resources to share*
- *Order ornaments and notecards or learn how to assemble your own*
- *Find directions for making contributions*
- *More ...*

2012-2013 Famine at a Glance

Malawi's Population: 14.1 Million

*Those at risk for Food Insecurity:
2.5 Million*

*Population Living on Less Than
\$1/day: 65%*

*Malawians who depend on Subsistence
Farming for Survival: 10 Million*

a-MAIZE-ing Grace!

*A Simple Idea for
Preventing
Famine and
Saving
Lives
in Malawi, Africa*



*For more information, or to contribute,
please contact:*

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*An Exercise in Partnership Between
Pittsburgh Presbytery, PC (USA)
and
Blantyre Synod, CCAP
2012-2013*