

Week 1: Zimbabwe

The people of Zimbabwe have suffered a great deal over many years because of the political and economic situation in the country. This has often been made worse by the weather and the effect of cyclones and droughts. Our Link Dioceses have all been affected in one way or another and many people have found themselves in need of housing.

Diocese of Matabeleland

The Diocese of Matabeleland, which is linked with the Kingston Episcopal Area, has been considering what makes people feel safe and at home. One respondent said: “Home means a future. Once we had a stable home, we could think beyond where we were going to live from week to week, and we began to look ahead to where we wanted to go. Home is a base where everything begins.”



Bishop Cleophas at a ceremony breaking ground on the St Augustine of Hippo project.

Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, members of the Diocese felt very much at home in Matabeleland but the pandemic has made them feel less so. To help with this, the Diocese hopes to establish St Augustine of Hippo in the northern town of Binga as a Centre of Transformation, with a local clinic, a nutritional garden and a boarding school. The Diocese is also working hard to re-establish projects that failed during the pandemic: one helps to ensure that clergy have a stable income through a poultry project so they can think more about their ministry than the need for food and shelter.

Diocese of Masvingo

In the Diocese of Masvingo, which is linked with Southwark Cathedral, the Mothers' Union (MU) office is running a soup kitchen at the Cathedral Church of St Michael and All Angels, providing for the homeless in the region who are forced to sleep on pavements. They have been uprooted from their native communities because of poverty and now have no appropriate housing. There are families as well as individuals in this situation and they cannot buy food or pay for healthcare and education for their children. Some have mental and physical challenges, too.



St Michael and All Angels' soup kitchen.

The soup kitchen is open every Tuesday and the MU serves hot meals to those in need and sometimes gives out food hampers and clothes. The MU members give cash and goods themselves to support this work. Homelessness and poverty are interrelated and affected people are in dire need of support.



*The Bishop
of Southwark's*

LENT CALL 2022

*“My people will live
in peaceful dwelling
places, in secure
homes, in undisturbed
places of rest.”*

— Isaiah 32:18



*Raising money for
the dispossessed*



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Diocese of Manicaland

The Diocese of Manicaland, which is linked with the Woolwich Episcopal Area, is still trying to recover having been badly affected by Cyclone Idai in 2019 when more than 300 lost their lives. Many are missing and many lost their homes and livelihoods. More than 270,000 people in Zimbabwe were affected by the cyclone and 51,000 were displaced.



People have been living in tents since Cyclone Idai damaged their homes beyond repair in 2019.

Various charitable agencies have given help but more is needed to provide shelter for those who have survived the traumatic experience of seeing their loved ones swept away by the floods, their homes damaged beyond repair, and their livelihoods taken away.

The Diocese of Manicaland is working to help provide shelter and food for those who have been displaced, including repairing the rectory at Chipinge after it was damaged by the cyclone. The Diocese very much hopes that the people of Southwark can be generous to the Bishop's Lent Call and enable those who are homeless and whose houses need repair to receive the assistance they need.

Diocese of Central Zimbabwe

The Diocese of Central Zimbabwe is becoming overwhelmed by the need to respond to disasters that are sadly increasingly common in the region. The effect of climate change bringing floods, droughts and heavy winds has resulted in the serious displacement of people. Floods are destroying people's homes, fields, crops, and livestock. When there are no floods there are often droughts, resulting in food shortages which leave many people starving.



Housing has been constructed for volunteer workers at Harbern Park but more is needed.

The social service arm of the Diocese has been granted Private Voluntary Organisation Status and as a result it can also work beyond Diocesan boundaries. It is therefore in the process of upgrading and enhancing production at its Harbern Park plots in an attempt to have stocks of food ready to respond in the event of disasters. Produce from these plots has always been used to offer supplementary household food to those in need.

The extra activity means that they have employed another worker and so need to increase living accommodation; there is also a need to increase storage capacity for the produce. The cost of building the new housing and the storage facility is approximately £5,900 and the Diocese very much hopes that Southwark can help to raise money towards this.

Can you help our friends in Zimbabwe as they continue to deal with the challenges they face in helping the homeless and those in need? As Isaiah 32:18 makes clear, it is God's wish for all his people to "live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest". A gift to the Lent Call will help our Link Dioceses in Zimbabwe to live out that vision as they work so hard to share the Good News with those in need in practical ways. Find out more at southwark.anglican.org/lentcall



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Walking
Welcoming
Growing