

Modreck Maeresera, President

Harare Lemba Synagogue
1 Heathrow Close
Bluffhill (Main House)
Harare, Zimbabwe

modreck.legenda@gmail.com

+263 773 907 51

Skype: Modreck Maeresera

Donate: tinyurl.com/lembafoodprogram

Harare Lemba Synagogue Newsletter

Emergency Food Program

Zimbabwe is in its second year of drought and that has led to dire food shortages in the country. Most families in the countryside and urban areas have no food. The food problem has been made worse by the economic meltdown experienced in the country for close to 10 years. The economic situation is at its worst, with shortage of cash in the banks, and more than 90% unemployment in the country. The government is also so broke it is unable to pay its employees. The result is most families are without money to buy food and are in a desperate situation. In the countryside NGOs like US AID have started emergency food programs to help people with basic foodstuffs. Feeding scheme programs have also been started at schools to provide students with protein rich foodstuffs like Kapenta fish and beans.

Our community at Harare Lemba synagogue has not been spared these hardships: some of the congregants are unemployed and those who are employed are not getting their salaries. This has prompted us to ask for help from our friends and Baruch Hashem through Kulanu and its affiliates we were able to start the Harare Lemba synagogue Emergency Food Program HLSEFP. The Harare Lemba synagogue formed an Emergency Food Program committee with Mr. Listen Zhou as chairman and Mrs Sharon Zhou and Mrs. Nomsa Hwingwiri as committee members. On Monday the 26th of July the committee purchased basic foodstuffs for 2 months. They registered 19 families who are in need of food assistance and on Sunday the 31st of July the committee distributed food items to the registered families. Each family got 10kgs of maize meal flour, 2.5kgs beans, 2kgs dried Kapenta fish, 5 litres cooking oil, 1kg salt 2 kgs flour and 1kg powdered milk. We made sure to include flour so that the families can bake challa for shabbat. We have food for one more month is stock which will be distributed at the beginning of next month. This program will go a long way into helping people who would otherwise have gone hungry; we were especially worried about the kids who were going to be affected by nutrition deficiency during their developmental stage. In the chairman of the program, Mr. Listen Zhou's words :

" This programme came in time as Zimbabwe is facing a crippling economic downturn that has affected many households whose meagre salaries can no longer sustain decent meals to feed their families. On this day our members were enthralled as their faces melt with happiness when they received basic food requirements for each household in the form of maize meal, cooking oil, flour, Kapenta fish, beans and salt. The food supplemental program will go a long way to augment food shortages faced by our

members. The Harare Lemba Synagogue members remain united and feel we are part of a larger Jewish community."

The Harare Lemba Synagogue would like to thank Kulanu for starting the food appeal to fundraise for the emergency food program, Jevin and Janine Eagle who helped fundraise to kick start the program.



Above cooking oil stacked before distribution





Above : Flour , Kapenda fish , and beans



Below Russell and Pheno Zhou holding placards thanking our donors and friends



Below Kunashe Ariel Hwingwiri holding a pack of dried Kapenda fish.

Cancellation of the Eagles learning program and the circumcision program

The Harare Lemba synagogue regrets the cancellation of our July and August programs. The HLS was supposed to host Jevin and Janine Eagle who were coming to teach for 2 weeks in July and August. However the Eagles had to cancel their trip due to security reasons. A week before their scheduled arrival Zimbabwe was rocked by nationwide protests and more protests were being forecasted. The result was the Eagles had to postpone their visit. In August the HLS was also scheduled to host Dr. Lerner and his daughter Hilary. Dr. Lerner was coming to teach 8 day circumcision to a group of trainee mohels at the HLS. Unfortunately the circumcision was postponed for the same reasons as the Eagles' program. These programs have been postponed to yet to be announced dates next year. The HLS regrets any inconvenience this might have caused to anyone.

My Experience in Israel

By Kupakwashe Yedidah Marazani

My participation in Tikkun Olam in Tel Aviv Jaffa left me with a lot of experience in the humanitarian field. Tikkun Olam in Tel Aviv Jaffa is a Jewish pluralist organisation that works with young Jewish people from around the globe. It engages them to work to contribute their skills to poor neighbourhoods of Tel Aviv particularly South Tel Aviv. Tikkun Olam works with a lot of organizations in Tel Aviv such as Messila, Yalla Africa, Windows, Kadima Youth Centers, Bialik School to mention but a few. I worked with Yalla Africa as my internship. Yalla Africa is a social network movement that helps young people from Africa to express themselves through media as it advocates for peace, innovation, new projects and ideas through the use of facebook, blog, and twitter. Part of my work was to find opportunities for young African people by getting links on websites like Ofa (Opportunitis for Africa) to help young people who finished high school, college and universities in various fields to advance their education through funded programs. I then posted links on the Yalla Africa facebook page. The internship helped me to develop confidence to work in an office environment and to research what to post on our networks by following the Yalla Africa weekly media strategy plan framework, for example macro agriculture, Africa is beautiful, motivational quotes, positive mindset, environmental issues like pollution, land degradation, water and land degradation and to research about solutions to these problems.

I also had two volunteering places, one of them being the potter day care for the elderly people that I attended every Monday and Wednesday mornings till the afternoons. My duties were to help the kitchen staff to help setting up tables for lunch, teaching elderly people computers, English, helping decorate the home for the holidays like Independence and Passover and I worked to help with anything general that needed to be done at the home. Elderly people really needed young people around them to tell them their life stories and in some cases they just need company of people around them. My time at the elderly people's day care centre made me to improve my spoken Hebrew as most of them spoke Hebrew. My second voluntary place was The Kadima after school program for young children from poor neighbourhoods of South Tel Aviv. I worked with Kadima to help children from disadvantaged families to stop dropping out of schools and to become part of a normative society and not to fall into its dangerous margins. I taught English and math to young children for their after school program and I planned lessons that were taught in a fun way suitable for an after school program. I helped them with their homework for math and English. My Hebrew also improved during my time at Kadima and I gained experienced to work with young children.

I learned a lot by interning and volunteering through Tikkun Olam, by getting immersed into the Israeli society I got to know about the Israeli culture. By working with people from different backgrounds, this boosted my confidence and exchange of ideas. I learnt about the rich history of Israel and I met very meaningful friends in my program and by working with my supervisors I developed skills like presentations, workshops, social networking, writing skills, and research. I also discovered that it is possible for young Africans to participate in Tikkun Olam in the near future.

I would like to thank the Kulanu Board for supporting me with airfare and partial living expenses the airfare, and to thank the MASA program and Tikkun Olam program for my program tuition and additional expenses. I'm very grateful for your support and I am very hopeful to see Jewish young people from isolated communities taking an initiative to participate in Tikkun Olam in the near future. Such an internship and volunteering opens doors for job markets by improving their resume and experience. It also improves spoken and written Hebrew by taking Ulpan classes and understanding the Jewish peoplehood, culture, and religion through taking twice a week seminars.

BCI and related programs

As HLS we are happy about the exposure our young people like Kupa and Simcha are getting. Kupa recently came back from Israel and we hope he will put the things he learnt during his five month stay to good use. As we are writing our first issue of HLS newsletter Natasha Simcha Butchart is in the USA where she is teaching at Camp Ramah, a Jewish summer camp. Both Kupa and Simcha are graduates of the Brandeis Institute Collegiate (BCI) a summer program for Jewish youth from around the globe. The young Jewish people spend four weeks together "to experience the multi-faceted Jewish life and culture." The BCI experience changed Kupa and Simcha; it exposed them to different sects of Judaism and different aspects of Jewish life. Both Kupa and Simcha followed up their stay at BCI with a half-year stays at JENE, (Jewish Experiential Nature Educator) in California USA where they learnt about organic gardening skills and caring for the garden. As we are writing this article Simcha has successfully applied for a Pardes program in Jerusalem Israel with MASA funding and she recently got her student visa to go and study at Pardes in September.

We are thrilled with the exposure our youth are getting and we hope it will empower them to be great leaders of our community. Those who are interested in applying for next year's BCI can come and register their names with Kupa who will help them with their applications. The applicants must be between the ages of 18 and 25.

Harare Lemba Synagogue Learning program

Mr. Modreck Maeresera the president of HLS is teaching on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 14:00 hrs and 16:00 hrs . This program was necessitated by the need to educate our new members and to bring them up to the level of the old members. Eight new members joined us between April and now and the program is meant to cater for those, so that they will be able to read Hebrew, follow and understand the service as well as understand the basics of Judaism. In a way this program is a replacement of the cancelled Eagles' program. When schools close a kids' class will be added.

Johannesburg Limmud 2016

Mordreck Maeresera will be presenting in this year's edition of Limmud Johannesburg which is scheduled for the weekend of August 26. This gives us a rare networking opportunity and a chance to cultivate friendship with fellow Jews in South Africa. Maeresera will be joining a diverse cast of presenters from all over the world and his presentation will focus on Lemba customs and traditions as well as an update of what's going on within the Lemba community

My Experience leading the services in Maeresera's absence

By Hilary Zhou

I was quite an honour for me to lead services, which words only cannot explain and my greatest moment was when I lead the Pesach seder. This period has led me to up my Torah study and observance, not a day now passes without me studying, devoting an hour of study. My Hebrew has improved greatly and I am now looking forward to one day enrolling in a rabbinic college and be in a capacity to further Judaism amongst my fellow Lemba brothers and sisters in Zimbabwe. The HLS has also broadened our Jewish networks and connections am currently coordinating a Rejews.org project which seeks to raise funds for the HLS communities through recycling.

Note from the President

I would like to thank the HLS community who have stayed together and continued to meet for services during the 3 months I was in Israel studying at Rabbi Shlomo Riskin's Ohr Torah Stone Yeshiva in Efrat. You have demonstrated that we are indeed a community and have put to bed any doubt that this community will continue to flourish in my absence. As you rightly demonstrated: this is not my community but our community. It is everybody's duty to make

sure we move forward. We have a lot of able leaders who will step in when they are needed. Thanks to Mshavi Hilary Zhou, who led services. Thanks to Simcha Butchart for leading the Purim projects; thanks to you all.

B' Shalom,

Modreck Maeresera, President

Harare Lemba Synagogue
1 Heathrow Close
Bluffhill (Main House)
Harare, Zimbabwe

modreck.legenda@gmail.com

+263 773 907 51

Skype: Modreck Maeresera

Donate: tinyurl.com/lembafoodprogram