



# Malawi Early Literacy News

M.E.L.T. - An Ecumenical Mission Project of the Watertown First Presbyterian Church  
Summer 2018

Volume 1

## M.E.L.T.'s Mission is to:

- Design, publish, and supply the Northern Region of Malawi with culturally appropriate early literacy materials.
- Provide professional development in the uses of these materials to our teachers in Malawi.
- Reach remote, rural villages with the MELT1 Book Mobile service.

## M.E.L.T.'s Vision:

- Strong, literate communities in the Northern Region of Malawi.



**“Education is a human right with immense power to transform. On its foundation rest the cornerstones of freedom, democracy and sustainable human development.”**

**~Kofi Annan**

## Land Cruiser

The first order of business was to secure a strong, reliable, safe vehicle. This vehicle would need to be able to navigate the dirt paths that quickly become slippery mud during the rainy season. It will travel up, over, around mountains, over plank wood bridges, through valleys to our schools.

Quick research proved a new Toyota Land Cruiser was the vehicle for M.E.L.T. A successful fund-raising campaign ended in March 2017 raising funds to purchase the vehicle and retain \$6,000.00 in a maintenance account.



## M.E.L.T. 2017 Trip - the team

Four members of M.E.L.T. traveled to Malawi in late June 2017 (Andy Burns, Patricia Constable, Carol Stevens, and Heather White). The goals for this trip included: receiving and registering the new Land Cruiser, setting up the book depository, school visits, meeting with classroom teachers and local education representatives. MELT's photographer, Andy Burns, also took many photos and videos to enhance our website and expand our database of Malawian photos for future book creation.



Annie Ghambi of Mbowe School signs out the first book from our library.



Meeting with teachers who helped us design the ABC Fluency Kits.



Beginnings of the MELT Library



Initial book delivery in the MELT 1



## M.E.L.T. 2017 Trip - the people

School visits talking with children and teachers was an important part of the 2017 trip. For Patti and Andy this was their first trip to Malawi and seeing the desperate need first hand was powerful.

Our meeting with teacher representatives from our schools led us to our next project. They requested an ABC kits to assist them in teaching their students the English alphabet – for most of these children English is their third language. We spent hours together designing what would become the ABC Fluency kit. M.E.L.T. prides itself in being an organization that designs specifically to the unique needs of teachers working in the rural Northern Region of Malawi. These teachers tell us what they need.





The 2018 Travel Team with several of our teachers.

## ABCs, Easels and the Long Path - 2018 trip



Every School Has a Bell!

Three MELT members traveled to Malawi in late July (Heather White, Carol Stevens, Patti Constable) to deliver the ABC kits they designed last summer with their fellow teachers in Malawi. The Malawian teachers were moved when they learned that seven of the thirty sponsored kits were from children. Children helping children! All kits were sponsored by April so publishing began as final travel details were put into place. A four-day workshop was held for our Standard One teachers and their Head Teachers. This workshop included modeling all lessons in the Teacher's Edition, time for the teachers to practice the lessons, and a half day session using Big Book Read Alouds.



In May, M.E.L.T. received a generous donation of 40 additional Big Books for our MELT1 mobile library. Once reviewed for cultural appropriateness they were prepared for travel. We determined easels would be an appropriate addition to teacher's classrooms to facilitate the use of Big Books. Sam was able to have 15 easels made and ready for our arrival. We delivered easels during our school visits. It was delightful to see the smiles on teachers faces once they saw how an easel can assist them as they instruct their large classes; usually between 60-80 pupils.



Capital Kavuta and Frank Mwale from Kamwala School familiarize themselves with a Big Book. We have worked with Frank since 2012.

The MELT1 Land Cruiser proved its worth this year as we traveled to our most remote schools out in the bush. Most of our schools have no desks, chairs, or basic materials. The MELT1 is changing all of this! We rode along narrow dirt paths up, over, around, and around again to reach these schools. It is easy to see why many of these schools are inaccessible for days during the rainy season. We did travel the long, long path to some of the most talented, dedicated teachers in the world!



Teachers worked in teams to practice sample lessons for the rest of the group. We were impressed with how much they learned this week!

## M.E.L.T. - A Look Back and Moving Forward

2015-16 We formed a talented professional team of individuals each bringing their unique gifts to the table and assessed the direction M.E.L.T. should take.

2016-17 We undertook the Land Cruiser campaign knowing we could NOT reach the rural schools out in the bush and on mountain tops without a reliable vehicle.

2017 - The teachers themselves asked us to create an ABC Fluency Kit with them, which we did - hand in hand.

2017 – The interior of the library in Mzuzu was designed, built and stocked. It serves the MELT1 Book Mobile library that travels to 15 schools servicing 30 classrooms on a regular schedule.

2017-18 – Sponsors were found for 30 ABC Fluency kits (each able to serve 100 students) and the kits created and shipped with their accompanying Teacher’s Manuals. Using these tools, M.E.L.T. conducted a four-day professional development with Standard One teachers and their Head Masters. Each school also received an easel for use in their classrooms.

**Next... All steps are led by our teachers in Malawi with survey information.**

2018-19 Design and publish Level AA easy fluency readers. Design the workshop to accompany these readers. The teachers have also asked for more work in comprehension and a review of the ABC work.

2019-20 Design and publish the Level A and Level B readers. Design the professional development workshop to accompany these new materials.

General goals include upgrading black boards- building more easels, and providing one book shelf per classroom.



*We always buy what we can locally to support the Malawian economy.*

*Meet Annie and Cleverson our newly appointed teacher representatives. Their exemplary knowledge of the ABC Fluency lessons will allow them to answer teacher's specific questions. They will accompany Sam Chirwa on three school visits a year.*

# Zikomo – Thank you

From M.E.L.T. and our 30 classrooms in Malawi!  
M.E.L.T. would not be possible without you!



**Individual donors who participated in the Land Cruiser 2016 campaign.  
Individual sponsors of the 30 ABC Fluency Kits – 2017 campaign  
Watertown First Presbyterian Church Outreach Council**

**Watertown Noon Rotary**

**Stage Notes Inc.**

**Women Listen to Women**

**All who attended “Plant the Seed to Read”**

**Presbyterian Women**

**Members of M.E.L.T.**

**Presbytery International Partnership Fund**

**Delaney Bay Fund**

**Ohio School teachers**

**Sherman Primary School**

**West Carthage Elementary School**

**Wilson Student Council – South Jeff.**

**Xi Alpha Kappa**

**local chapter of Beta Sigma Phi Sorority**

**Elm City United Methodist Church**

**Greenfield School**

**Sulphur Springs United Methodist Church**

**Mission Committee Presbytery of NNY**

**Trinity ECW**

**Potsdam United Methodist Church**

**Mr. Sullivan’s class- LaFargeville**

**United Presbyterian Church of Sackets Harbor**



## Membership - M.E.L.T.

*MalawiEarlyLiteracy.org*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Level:

- \$50+ **ABC Level** - One book and annual newsletter
- \$150+ **Book Level** - One book, annual newsletter and bag
- \$500+ **Library Level** - One book, annual newsletter, bag and mug
- I would like my entire donation to go directly to the literacy work in Malawi - no gifts please.
- Knowing every donation is welcome, no matter its size, please accept my donation of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Please contact me for volunteer opportunities!
- Payment Method  Cash  Check  Please Bill Me

## Do the Math

The MELT1 Book Mobile service reaches 30 teachers a year with an average class size of 75. That equals 2,250 children a year – in five years we will have reached well over 10,000 children!

It is expensive to get to and from Malawi – it is expensive getting our new materials into the hands of the teachers in the Northern Region. An annual trip costs about \$14,000 but divide that by 2000 children and we are reaching these children for \$7.00 a child!

## Become a Member

**Do you recall a favorite book from childhood? Help us get books in the hands of children who have none.**

Having a strong membership allows us to plan ahead we can print materials & purchase materials when there are sales.

Please consider becoming an individual or group member today!

Make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church and write "MELT" on the memo line.

Mail to:

First Presbyterian Church  
403 Washington Street  
Watertown, NY 13601



Visit us at [m-e-l-t.org](http://m-e-l-t.org) to:

**Meet our team** Heather White, Andy Burns, Grace Chiumia, Sam Chirwa, Patricia Constable, Barb Eldridge, Joanne Lavarney, Margot McGorman, Carolyn Osborne, Carol Stevens and the Malawian Teachers

**Learn more**

**Contact us** to speak to your family, civic or religious organization, scouts, clubs, or educational groups.

## You Can Help

We are looking for gently used Big Book easy readers. Contact us and we will evaluate for cultural appropriateness.

Check our website as we occasionally ask for specific materials.

Donate or become a member today

Sponsor a book publication in honor of or in memory of a loved one and have that noted on the dedication page.