

The Well is Deep!



Cool, refreshing

water. Cool, refreshing, CLEAN water.

That's what the community and congregation at Nagome village have. *Finally* have. And they can't get enough of it. Every day they come to draw and to drink. Cups. Containers. Buckets. Pots, pans and pails. Now there's nothing they can't fill with clean water. But they weren't able to do that for more than a year since October 2017.

It was then that the first well was dug, the hand pump installed and hopes were hung on the promises: *"Don't worry, the dirty, muddy water will clear up after a short time. Just be patient. Let things settle down. Give it time."* (The WELS Committee on Aid and Relief, CAR, funded this well. In Malawi, a well like this is called a "borehole.") The drillers packed up and pulled out. Off they went with their words of promise blowing in the breeze.

The people in the village were patient. They gave it time. But like a visitor, time came and went. Days passed. Then weeks. Then months. An entire year crawled away. But one thing remained: Mud. Reddish brown liquid mud.

For over a year, nothing but this muddy soup was coming from the well. They could pump from morning till night and still the only thing that would come from the spout was this appalling brown muddy soup.

Clean water? Not a drop!

But there was a deluge. A deluge of phone calls, text messages and emails to the drilling company. Face-to-face visits. Questions and complaints from the village heaped up like the mountains that surrounded them: *Where was the drilling company to fix the problem? How could they simply pull up and back out? Are they ever coming back? It's been so long! Why did they leave us high and dry?*

It wasn't just the land that was thirsty, it was also the people! This well was supposed to be the answer to the people's need for potable water.

At least to a little extent, I now have a sense of what the widow felt like. *The widow? (Luke 18:1-8)*

The one who badgered the judge. Persistently she came to his office, knocked on his door and demanded justice. He wouldn't help her. I can only imagine her questions and complaints. *Why won't you do something! Why are you leaving me high and dry? Why must I hound you to do your job? Why won't you help me?*



LCCA President Pastor Enock Mkwasega (blue shirt) visited the site of the Nagome well. With him stands Ammon Mungungu Macherenga, Pastor of Nagome Lutheran Church.

Finally he did. *Finally*. But he did so begrudgingly. The judge gave in to the widow's pleas. Mind you, not because he cared for her or because it was the right thing to do, but simply because he wanted to put an end to all the bother. He feared that she'd wear him out with her relentless coming.

Jesus told this story so that his disciples would always pray and not give up (Luke

18:1).

The widow didn't.

Neither did we. There was too much at stake. More than the value of money, even more than the value of water, it was more about the value of life.

How do you measure it? In buckets and cups and pails? I think not.

Like the widow, we persisted. We didn't give up. Not only did we bombard the drillers with pleas and pleadings but we knocked on heaven's door (*yikes, did we knock it down?*) in prayer. Persistent, believing, hopeful prayers. You might say by the bucket full!

Finally the drilling company ("Water For Life") responded.

I don't know exactly *why* they consented to finally come to the site and sink another well, but they did. Did they want to actually set things right? Or like the judge, did they just want to put an end to our coming? Did they fear that we'd wear them out with our widow-like persistence?

I don't know. But I do know that it took over a year for them to show up. They came. They drilled. They went.



Water For Life workers drilling at Nagome

This time when they drove off with the drilling machine, they left behind a working pump that produced fresh water. Not just a drop here and a dribble there. Nope, a deluge. Pump the handle and your bucket is full. Cool, refreshing CLEAN water.

Full buckets make for full hearts. Happy hearts full of thankfulness! *“Now Thank We All Our God, With Hearts and Hands and Voices!”* Maybe you wondered what all that singing and shouting off in the distance was. Now you know: the joyful songs and voices of people at Nagome were echoing and resounding off the nearby mountains of Mulanje.

But wait a minute...the newly drilled hole is literally just a few meters away from the previous one...so why is there plenty of clean water this time and nothing before?

Because this time they drilled deep.

After pulling out the pipes that had been installed the first time, they discovered that the previous drillers had only bored down 15 meters.

But the cool, refreshing CLEAN water? It's at 30 meters. The significant factor now is this: The well is deep. 32 meters deep. A “Water For Life” worker even inscribed those very words into the base of the Nagome well when the cement was still wet.



The cement base for water run-off on the Nagome well

Now there is plenty of water for everyone and you've probably guessed it, *everyone* is coming. Like the water, there's now a continual flow of people from the surrounding villages.

For Ammon Mangungu Macherenga, the Pastor at Nagome Lutheran Church, a prime sermon illustration stands right out his front door. The steady stream of the same people coming to the well each day is a reminder that when we drink this water we thirst again. No matter how much water people consume in one day, they are back the next.

Repeat customers.

Even Jesus, True Man, knew what it was like to thirst. And thirst again. One day he stopped by a well and asked a woman for a drink. He asked because he was thirsty.

But there was so much more to that request. Not only did he want to *get* a drink, even more-so he wanted to *give* one.

“Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst.” (John 4:13,14a)

He gave her a drink and she thirsted no more.

Another thankful, happy heart.

Jesus didn't leave her high and dry. You neither. He values life and shows that He does. He even inscribed it in blood.

He knows how to quench thirst. His Water is living. The Well is deep.

Your Malawi Mission Partner,

John Holtz

Please pray for those working in fields that are ripe for harvest. Share their story, engage with future news and receive updates. Go to this link to learn more about our mission fields in Africa and how the Holy Spirit is working faith in people's hearts
<https://wels.net/serving-others/missions/africa>