Acts 11:23

“...When Barnabas came and saw the grace of God, he was glad; and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose…”

What is Church?

They say ‘home is where the heart is’, and my heart is most definitely here in Swaziland! I have grown in my understanding and love for the diversity in the human family. I recently visited Lavumisa, in the southern part of the country, where it is very dry, and there are very few jobs. It is common for a home to house 15 people, it is also common that only one person is employed, two if they are a lucky family. If there is a man in the family, he will often go to stay where the work is, and come home once a month to see his family and bring home his paycheck. In these homes, it is never the ‘traditional family’ structure; it is most often a grandmother, a mother/wife possibly, maybe a father/husband, some adult children (20s/30s, unmarried), often a baby or two of the adult children, and some younger school age children - then there are the adopted children (of aunts, uncles or sisters who have died from AIDS), who are now incorporated into the family. They are not treated differently; they are simply called daughter or son. No one gets a free ride and laziness is not an option when food must be found to feed so many. Everyone is expected to contribute to the household through work, to bring in some income, or by doing household chores.

Kukhany’okusha Zion Church (KZC), our Global Ministries mission partner in Swaziland, is responding at this point of deepest need – knowing that prayer isn’t enough to cure HIV, bring parents back from the grave, or make food magically appear on the table. Zionists have a long, and strong tradition of helping the needy, even though most of them are needy themselves. These people of faith do not waiver. They pray and pray and pray – and sing - for hours! and they work very hard to help others. They know – while a new church building would be nice – church is in the heart of the people. And even if (when) the church falls down, God will build it back up. These are a faithful and loving people, who give all they can to their families, communities, and churches. I know this – I have seen it.

Pray that our faith may be as vital, lively and giving as the church of Swaziland, and that they will sense the hope and care we send to them through our prayers.

Lizzy Beach, Global Ministries long-term volunteer, assists with youth development programming and sustainability with the Kukhany’okusha Cares for Children Project (KCCP), a project of Kukhany’Okusha Zion Church in Swaziland.

You make the difference...

The prayers and help you provide through your local congregations make possible the work and witness of GLOBAL MINISTRIES, which is supported by Disciples Mission Fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM) of the United Church of Christ.