

## CHERISH AND COURAGE REPORT

Cherish (for girls) and Courage (for boys) are programmes that target youth starting from nine to sixteen years although children over 16 years can also attend if they are not yet married. The programme establishes groups for both boys and girls to express issues that concern them including sexual relationships. The sessions are based on teaching from the Word of God to enable them to make helpful and safe decisions about their behaviour and life choices.

### HOW IS THE PROGRAMME ORGANISED

The groups are led by trained men and women who enable the young people to freely share the issues they experience as they grow and to help them discuss what they need to know about their lives in the areas of sex, pregnancy, HIV and AIDS. Also, to reflect on the way God views them in contrast to the world's perception.

The groups are based in local churches which identify those who they feel would benefit from this training.

### WHAT HAS TAKEN PLACE SO FAR

In readiness for the programme to resume after a break due to COVID, we have just conducted a two-day training for both Cherish and Courage. The training targeted volunteers from ten churches with each sending two participants - a man and a woman. We expected twenty people and out of this number eighteen turned up, the remaining failed from one church. The training was successfully conducted, and participants were given skills to lead and help these young people with relevant information and a manual. The churches running the programmes are Africa Methodist Episcopal, Emanuel Christian Pentecost, Winners Chapel International, Zambezi Evangelical, Pentecostal Holiness, New Samaritan, Church of Nazarene, Pillar of fire and Malawi Assemblies of God. The training was facilitated by YWAM volunteer, Delia Chirwa, from Lilongwe.



Cherish and courage trainees in a photo soon after finishing a two-day training at Zambezi Church including.

Leaders discussing issues concerning their lives the same way the boys will do during lessons.



## **HOW LONG DO THE GROUPS RUN**

The duration in which the boys and girls will work through the lessons depends on the one teaching them, but the maximum period can be up to six months. After which the leaders can identify another set of boys or girls and follow the same cycle. By the end of each set, the teacher will encourage the members to commit to follow through with the principles and the members can respond by promising to adhere to the guidance. The groups will continue to meet to encourage, support and provide accountability. The members are reassured by the leader that anything shared remains confidential within the group. Furthermore, leaders will make themselves available to discuss issues on a one to one basis if the members need that as part of their pastoral care within the church.

### **ZAKARIA PATISIYO**

“Am **Zakaria Patsiyo** from New Samaritan Church. First of all I want to thank Starfish for inviting me to attend this training with the aim of giving us skills of how we can teach boys to live a new life in Christ Jesus. I have learnt that a boy has a chance to change his behaviour even if his life is faced with failures and for those who haven't gone into bad behaviours can be prepared to do well in life when they are taught the Word of God.”



### **PRISCA BANDA**

“Am **Prisca Banda** from Emanuel Christian Pentecost and am one of the people who attended the training for Cherish, With this training I hope that our church will experience a positive change and even the girls in our locality will be impacted as well. The other thing is that what I learnt from the training will transform my life too because I will engage in the work of telling the girls who are lost to come into the Kingdom of God by telling them what God expects them to do. Again I'm also inspired to encourage those who are discouraged due to others problems they have gone through like HIV/AIDS related challenges and also those who have experienced sexual abuse in one way or the other. I thank Starfish for bringing us together and having this training.”

