

Central Africa Medical Mission - Lutheran Mobile Clinic (Malawi) April 2018

It is still the rainy season in Malawi with hit or miss afternoon showers most days. February and March had regular rains for crops but there was an unusually dry period in January, such that fields of maize (the staple crop here) failed to grow. Some people planted a second crop and we see some healthy maize fields which will soon be ready to harvest. It is the right amount of moisture at the right time which can determine whether Malawians go hungry next year or not. But where there is standing water, mosquitos thrive, and as they are the vector for malaria parasites getting into people's bloodstreams, malarial illness increases. In March the LMC staff have treated over 1200 patients who tested positive for malaria, with a total number of patients seen for all reasons totaling nearly 5,000.

As part of the Malawian Nursing Registration process, the nurse in charge must initially spend time in the government hospital working on various wards. As challenging as these shifts are, I am always reminded that the Lutheran Mobile Clinic is helping to keep children and adults out of the hospital. The primary health care we do is focused on prevention using screening, immunization, education and early treatment for things like malnutrition, diarrhea, and anemia, as well as malaria. Pregnant women and their babies are healthier due to being seen at our antenatal clinic, receiving insecticide treated mosquito nets, iron and folic acid, tetanus vaccine, screening for HIV, and malaria treatment as needed. The devastating consequences I have seen in the hospital of malaria- severe anemia from destruction of red blood cells, very low blood glucose, damage to the brain and other organs, and infections such as pneumonia, are less likely to happen due to the care our clinic provides in four different villages outside of Lilongwe.

Having been a part of CAMM in Malawi in the 1980's, and returning now, I am again familiar with the feeling that there is always something to trust God for. It may be the traffic and dangerous roads or it may be having a full staff each day we go to clinic. It could be having the needed medicines and test kits available for our work, or it might be having electricity available to keep our vaccines cold. It is certainly also trusting Him for the health and safety of loved ones in the US. We are always thankful for each day's end where we have seen answered prayers and abundant grace. Your prayers make a difference.

My husband Gary will be joining me this week to start his orientation to become the clinic administrator for the next 3 years. We intend to continue the good stewardship that the previous administrators have done with the very careful use of funds, thus managing to keep the budget balanced despite no longer having government help for our staff salaries. Your financial gifts are generous, timely and necessary. The pill bottles used for dispensing liquid medicine, sunscreen for albino children, cards and letters are much appreciated.

I am looking forward to worshipping at a the Easter service in Mwalelouwwe, one of the villages we serve. May the good news of Jesus continue to be spread both in Zambia and Malawi through our Lutheran pastors, medical clinics and those of you at home who sustain this gospel outreach.

Yours in Christ,

Beth Evans - Nurse in Charge of the Lutheran Mobile Clinic