



CENTRAL AFRICA MEDICAL MISSION

OCTOBER 2020



I'm writing this in our pharmacy, our dog by my feet on the cool concrete floor, the sound of African music playing somewhere in our neighborhood. It is my familiar workplace and it feels good to be back. I look around at the shelves stocked full of medicines, many of which were purchased in town yesterday after careful inventory and checking expiration dates. There are Malaria, Syphilis and HIV test kits, syringes, dressings, and rehydration packets, blood pressure machines, otoscopes, pulse-oximeters and infrared thermometers. And there are lots of face masks-surgical and N95, gloves, aprons and hand sanitizer bottles. In the back storeroom are empty, clean pill bottles in bags, ready to be used. Our vaccines are in the fridge to be used at our under-fives clinics, mosquito nets provided by the government to give out to pregnant women, and boxes of health passports which are given to each new patient. We have a wonderful supply of knit baby hats, washcloths and baby blankets to give to mothers at clinic and sunhats and sunscreen for our albino patients.

Gary and I have met twice with our clinic staff members outside, wearing masks and social distancing, to develop a plan to restart our mobile clinic in the four villages we serve in Malawi. Covid-19 is here, but the numbers were increasing in May and June, then recently have been declining. We have yet to see what it is like in the villages but few seem concerned, even health authorities. They feel Africa has been spared, and are thankful to God. We will visit the villages this week with some of our staff each day to teach about Covid-19 and our changes to the clinic routines with our village staff and volunteers. God willing, we will start seeing patients October 13th, using our new clinic building at Msambo. Our staff will be using PPE and all patients will be required to mask, be screened for Covid-19 symptoms and wash hands before being seen. We are splitting up the staff into two vehicles in order to keep distances in the ambulance and then working outside the buildings as much as possible. Devotions and health teaching will be done intermittently during the day, rather than once in the morning where all patients had to come at once. We will see outpatients throughout the day, under-fives in the morning, and antenatals and family planning in the afternoon.

At this moment, we don't know what to expect except that we will have longer days, there will be more driving, and more supplies to bring to clinic. Each day may bring new challenges which may mean changes in our set up, our procedures, and in our staffing. We trust that the Lord wants the Lutheran Mobile Clinic back on the roads of rural Malawi, helping people again. We are ready, and as always, we count on your prayers.

We thank you, in Jesus name,

Beth Evans, Nurse in Charge