Greetings from the Central Africa Medical Mission staff in Zambia and Malawi,

Warm greetings from Jackson Kalekwa and the entire staff at the Lutheran Mission Rural Health Center in Zambia. The staff continues to faithfully tend to the thousands who walk long distances to get to our clinic. Recently, Jackson reports difficulty in obtaining some of the necessary medications needed to treat patients. Unfortunately, it is not possible to purchase them either as certain medications are just not available anywhere in the country. He thanks all of you for your continued words of encouragement and support.

In Malawi, Alison Westphal arrived safely on January 23rd to begin training as the next Clinic Administrator for the Lutheran Mobile Clinic. Alison has a Bachelor of Science degree in Health Promotion and Wellness. This background will be a special asset to the Lutheran Mobile Clinic. As a member of St Marcus in Milwaukee, she was involved with two choirs – Joyful Noise and the gospel choir United Voices of Praise. Alison’s birthday is July 3rd. Kari Belter and Megan Behl were very excited to have Alison arrive safely and gave thanks that only one of Alison’s luggage was “delayed” til the next day. Both Kari and Megan are scheduled to return stateside in 2014 and we are looking forward to welcoming a nurse-in-charge.

Alison seems to have arrived at a great time when patient levels in Malawi are spiking. In Megan Behl’s January letter, she writes: “our numbers in January have been quite high this month …not only have they been “quite high,” we easily shattered our January records. We had 1,724 positive malaria cases. (In past rainy seasons, we averaged around 700-800 positive malaria cases, and in the dry season, about 100-400 cases per month.) We had an additional 5,640 outpatient cases for January. (In the rainy season, we usually average about 2,000-3,000 outpatient cases, and in the dry season average about 1,000-2,000 cases per month.) So … our overall total for January, all services included, was 7,923 - double the amount seen in any given month.”

Megan also writes: “In looking at this, it’s no wonder why we’ve felt “busier” this month, and why we’ve felt like we’ve barely been able to keep up with stocking our malaria test kits and malaria medications! Thank and praise the Lord, that he has blessed our clinics with the ability to provide these services to so many of his people.”

In addition to the spike in malaria, the “hungry season” has hit. The maize (corn) is still growing in the fields; people are running low on their personal supply of ground maize – a staple to make nsima. This is the time of year when more people (mostly children under five years of age) enroll in our nutrition supplement program. Because we received a grant from Christian Aid and Relief, we
were able to purchase additional maize and soya this summer and have confidence we have the necessary supply that we will need for our clinics to get through this hungry season. Without these funds, we would be trying to purchase the maize now at much higher prices – if even available. Praise the Lord – and thank you to all who donate to CAMM and Christian Aid and Relief.

Other exciting news from the Lutheran Mobile Clinic: YOSSA (Youth Support for Social Advancement) is a non-profit organization focused on youth and orphans near Lilongwe. Support includes feeding programs, education, and a spiritual foundation based on the Bible. YOSSA operates in the area of Chitukula, a cluster of nine villages. Children are often the head of the household. The closest health facility is 20 kms away. 12 YOSSA children died in 2013 because they did not have access to health care. After assessing their needs and consulting with local Lutheran Church of Central Africa pastors, it was agreed the Lutheran Mobile Clinic would provide services once a month. On Nov. 4th, the entire staff and LCCA Pastor Msowoya arrived for the first visit. Megan Behl writes “With a population of 342 children, we saw over 180 children. Most were treated for skin diseases, worms, respiratory infections and malaria. We returned to the feeding center on Dec. 23rd. How wonderful to be able to share the news of Christ’s birth in Dec. and return in April to bring the news of salvation to these children.

Please pray the Holy Spirit works in our staff, the children we serve, and their families as we continue to bring medical services and gospel outreach to the people of Zambia and Malawi.

Malawi News
Greetings from Malawi!

We are still in the Rainy Season here but most of the time the skies are clear. It seems like the rains just arrived but they are already nearing their end. The maize is very tall now. Pumpkins are growing in the fields among the maize stalks. Pineapples and avocados are in season. We are also enjoying lemons from the lemon tree in our yard.

February has been a busy month for us. We saw just under 5,700 patients at our five clinic sites combined. There were almost 1,100 patients with positive Malaria tests. Our Nutrition Program has also been seeing larger numbers of children needing nutritional supplementation. This time of year is known as Hungry Season because the maize is in the fields and is not available for food. At YOSSA we saw ninety patients total. We have struggled with some very muddy roads this month but we have always managed to get to the villages albeit somewhat late.

We had a nice time with visitors from the U.S. this month. Howard Mohlke from the WELS Board for World Missions, and Matt Sauer and Bill Meyer from WELS Kingdom Workers were all able to stop by our clinic at Mwalaulomwe. They had a very busy schedule while they were in Malawi so we were thankful for the time we got to spend with them. Also, Joel Gaertner from Jesus Cares Ministry along with two volunteers visited us before they traveled to Southern Malawi.

I will be leaving Malawi on March 23 and returning to the U.S. for a few months of much-needed family time and relaxation. It’s hard to believe that my three year tour is over and then some. The time has gone by so quickly! While I am very excited to get home to my family, I am also thankful that I am not saying goodbye to Malawi for good because I have the opportunity to return in July of this year.

God’s blessings to you all,
Kari

I know my faith is founded on Jesus Christ, my God and Lord;
And this my faith confessing, unmoved I stand upon his Word.
Man’s reason cannot fathom the truth of God profound;
Who trusts in worldly wisdom relies on shifting ground.
God’s Word is all-sufficient, it makes divinely sure,
And trusting in its wisdom, my faith shall rest secure. CW 403

Malawi Updates
Greetings from the muggy country of Malawi!

We hope everyone is doing well at home and even maybe enjoying some spring weather! The rainy season is winding down in Malawi. We only get rain about once a week now, and very soon, even that will end. We enjoyed it while it lasted; now it’s on to
sunny days! The maize is also growing very tall and soon the farmers will be ready to harvest.

Our clinics are still very busy, and although the rains have calmed down (and therefore the malaria has calmed down), we are still seeing over 300 sick patients each DAY in our lines at times. Our medical staff has been working very hard over the last several months! We are all thankful for the Lord’s continuous blessing on our clinics. The government-run healthcare in Malawi has been showing no signs of improvement. I’ve heard rumors that at some of the government centers, the only medication they have in stock is a form of Tylenol. They are without basic antibiotics and without malaria medication. Being from the US, this is still a difficult thing for me to grasp. Again, thank you to our Lord for blessing us with the ability to provide these basic medications, and to all of you for your continuous support.

March also brought Kari’s current stay in Malawi to an end. We will miss her for now but also look forward to her return in July! Alison is officially official and is settling in nicely to the job title and living in a different country. Over the last several weeks, we have also been enjoying a new puppy to the family! Mada definitely keeps us on our toes, as all 12-week old puppies should. She has been quite the little pleasure to have around the LMC property, and to the delight of our staff as well.

As I’m writing this, I’m enjoying a beautiful view of Lake Malawi! The lake is still, the sun setting, and the clouds have a pink hue to them. The gorgeous scenery of this country reminds me how wonderful our God is! Although man has tainted his creation with sin, underneath all of that lies God’s amazing handiwork. How creative and generous he is to us!

We hope you are all having a blessed Lenten season as we all are reflecting on Jesus’ suffering, death, and resurrection.

God’s Blessings,

Megan

“But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5).