

Looking to the Future with E.M.I.

The Mission staff, the missionaries, and the Mission Board of Directors have been in prayer for the past two years about the best way to serve in the years ahead. A primary concern has been that the Mission facilities, houses, offices, kitchen, and dorms have been getting old. We have made many repairs over the years and these facilities have served us well . . . but, they are nearing the end of the journey and need urgently to be repaired or replaced.

At a Board Meeting while back home, the Board agreed to seek outside help from E.M.I. (Engineering Ministries Intl). This is a non-profit organization that sends engineers to foreign countries to help provide valuable research, engineering, and planning to help improve mission efforts just like ours. E.M.I. receives calls for help from all over the world. When we told them about our work and our needs, they put us at the top of their list and said they could have a team on the ground in Malawi in June 2015.

We couldn't believe it. That was only six months after submitting an application. The timing couldn't have been better; we saw God moving once again.

E.M.I. is a unique organization that, after selecting a project, recruits professionals in their respective fields who also have a heart to serve God and people. The team of 11 Americans (mostly Canadian) that visited us included Architects, Civil Engineers, an Electric Engineer, a Structural Engineer, and a couple of Land Surveyors. Most of this team had never met each other until they touched down in Malawi, as they had come

from different parts of America to work together on our project. These folks volunteered their vacation time from their regular jobs, as well as using their own finances to pay their own way here to serve us. It is quite remarkable really and humbling to be a part of as this as they squeezed three months of professional work into one week's time, working from early till late. After five intense days, they presented us and our staff with drafts of what this place may look like in 10 years. Their job is not finished though. They will go back to their homelands and continue working on this for us while they return to their regular jobs. The week was a massive blessing for us – valuable beyond our imagining.

We have been discussing ideas with the staff and with the Board of Directors for a year and half and we have seen those ideas and prayers begin to materialize. All of us here were humbled to realize that years from now we may all look back and be able to say we were here when these ideas first made their way on paper.

In a real sense we have seen the hand of God answering our prayers as we asked Him to show us the way He wants us to serve in the future. *(more to come next month)*

Ben Hayes



Missionary Mom

Being a mother of three children ages 4 and under, I am busy training them at home. I love being a stay-at-home mom and a homeschool preschool teacher. However, I often ask myself, "am I doing the right thing in the way I am raising them?" There are few "English first language" children their age, so in comparing their development levels, I am rather blind. Recently I talked to a visitor who had worked with many missionaries and he said the number one question of mothers on the mission field is, "Am I raising them right?" "Are they developing well?" Being at home with my children 24-hours a day seven days a week without a preschool to drop them at or a Sunday school class to have even a few hours off or relatives to give a night away can be a bit tiring, ...but it is completely worth it. I would not miss these growing years for anything. Our expatriate friends (people who live outside their native country) are a small community of about 10 families.

I heard it once said that missionaries have very few friends, but the ones they do have are usually as close as their own family. I agree with this statement, even for my children. Braylon's best friend, Michael, came back from furlough and they played together four of the first five days they were back. I feel as though my current role as a missionary woman is to raise my children in the Lord, support the work through supporting my husband, and hosting the many visitors we have come through Malawi. I have set a rule for myself that I will not travel away from my kids to teach. However, if there is a women's class on campus, I will often teach there. It is not easy to say no to the frequent requests for women's ministry to expand. But I have confidence that if I am not able, God will use someone else to teach the women.

Children on the mission field often say "good-bye." This is something that also poses difficulty for missionary children. We have visitors once or twice a month most of the year. We are always welcoming our "new friends" and saying "good-bye" to the last ones. Often expatriates will live in Malawi about two years at a time. I can count at least six families we have come to know well that we have already said goodbye to in the three years we have lived here.

There are several challenges, but many benefits. Children are adaptable and I am thankful that ours have adapted well. I am thankful for the family times we share most evenings and the slower pace of being able to be at home often learning and growing together.

Becca Hayes

New Intern Program has Begun!

Namikango Mission has an intern program created largely due to the efforts of Becca Hayes for students to come over for six weeks and learn about mission work, about Namikango, and what it is like to live in Malawi. We have recently received three interns from Lubbock Christian University: Taylor Castleberry, Jake Walton, and Samantha Wheeler. God has been very gracious to send these three excellent students and they have been willing to learn everything about Malawi, including its culture and language. They have done much around the Mission to help with projects and have built good relationships with our staff. They have been a blessing and we foresee the rest of their time here as further room for mutual encouragement, learning, and growth.

Ryan Hayes





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Family time is precious



Namikango Staff Marriage Retreat

For the last several years, the staff here at Namikango has been asking for a Marriage Seminar. When we knew when Kirk and Susan were coming, we felt the timing was perfect and asked if they might lead us in a Marriage Seminar. They humbly accepted our request.

During their two-week visit, they led a rich, two-day seminar hosted by Namikango at a lodge on the side of the Mulanje Mountain. Aside from the stunning views of the valley and walks through tea fields, it was a rare chance for staff couples to "get away" and spend time in sessions aimed at strengthening marriages, all with Jesus at the center. They were grateful for many things, from the chance to experience new "exotic" foods such as Brazilian sizzling steak, to the evening devotional where each couple shared the story of how they met. During the teaching sessions, Kirk and Susan also spent time praying Scripture over each couple. When it came time to close they prayed a blessing over the couples. Two full days went so quickly, rich and filled with hope and blessings. The staff and their wives invited Kirk and Susan to return next year for another seminar. We hope this might become a regular part of the Namikango program.



Justine Hayes

Strengthening Marriages at Kara O'Mula

Kara O'Mula is a Country Lodge, located near the base of the beautiful Mulanje mountain and about two hours away from Namikango Mission. This is the site Ben and Ryan chose for the two-day marriage retreat for the Mission staff. Susan and I had the blessing of conducting the retreat during our two-week visit with Ben, Becca, Ryan, Justine, and the kids. Though the weather is cold in July in the southern hemisphere, we enjoyed warm fellowship with the group. Six Malawian couples from the Mission staff were able to make the retreat: Leo & Everess Kabanda, Alex & Gift Nunu, Isaac Paul & Violet, Chitani & Iness Bakali, Symon & Edna Katete, and Bisani & Lilian Mphongolo.

It was a joy spending time with the couples and studying God's word together about how we can make our marriages stronger. (Needless to say, it was a special joy to be there with our own sons and their families!) Though it took a bit for some of the group to warm up to the discussion,

they shared keen insights during our two days together. The four older couples spoke up the most, but the two younger couples evidenced maturity and wisdom in their reflections as well, showing there are kingdom truths that transcend the cultural differences in marriages. We based our study on Scripture and spent time reading and bringing God's word to bear on the husband/wife relationship. (Thanks to The Allison's for their African book on marriages!) The teaching and modeling of godly marriages by both older and younger couples provides a good foundation for the future.

On a light-hearted note, Bisani asked the six couples to share how they met and married as a part of the Wednesday night devo. There was much laughter as they told their stories, especially when Symon, Bisani, and Leo told how they were rejected at first as suitors for their eventual wives!

Kirk Hayes



Namikango Happenings

The second semester for the Village Bible Schools and for the studies here on campus is well under way. We invited one of our village school teachers to teach at Namikango campus last month. This gives our staff teachers a chance to breathe as well as giving a village teacher the chance to experience life on the Namikango campus. We also get to know our village teachers better this way, and the gentleman we had last month, Alex, was a wonderful, humble man. It was an enjoyable month for both us and the students.

We have several new people coming on staff in the next month, some in new positions, but mostly to fill gaps that have been left open by retired staff, or other staff who have moved on. The work load continues to grow and having these new people is vital to our work here. We will introduce you these new, God-given additions to the team over the next several months.

Blessings to all of you.

[Ben Hayes](#)

