

Eric & Mercy Mango

MALAWI CHRONICLES

JANUARY 2020

It was Monday morning, November 25. Eric Jr. had just gotten out of bed and walked to mommy, looked into her face, and said “pizza” and “lasagna.” His facial expression said—I miss these foods. Later in the day he came to us asking for a third bath. We had just hit the third day without running water and the temperature was 100.4 degrees. What a joy to be back home!

We are grateful for the time spent in the USA sharing about how the Lord is using you and us to reach the lost with the message of God’s grace through different ministries in Malawi. We have been blessed and encouraged by all of our ministry partners in different ways. The team of missionaries we traveled with are amazing, and we have been inspired by how the Lord is using them.

During our time in the US, our family went through a cloud of sadness as we lost our baby of 15 weeks gestation. We are grateful for the brethren at Port Orchard Grace Bible Church for being there for us physically and you for your prayers and encouraging messages. We are glad the little one is in the hands of the Creator.

The Yao people are among the least reached people groups in the world. Through trainings in farming, youth meetings, sports, and music, doors have been opened for us to share the gospel of God’s grace with them.

It is November and fields are being prepared and our hope is for a good harvest. A windy storm with the loud sound of thunder brings flashbacks of Cyclone Idai that hit so hard last rainy season. Through your generous giving we were able to help 300 households with food. However, we are not sure what to anticipate for this season as we have begun on a sad note. On Tuesday, the 19th of November, we were shocked at the sight of the damage of an overnight rain in a nearby village that damaged over 60 houses bringing them to the ground and injuring people. The worst sight was that of a woman who was sitting under the scorching sun picking the grains of



Eric with the late Yao chief and her husband

corn that had scattered under her collapsed house. We are at that time of the year when people are living on mangoes for a meal and the worst has not yet come. January through March will be the hardest months when people can’t go

out to work in the fields and there are no mangoes to eat on the trees. **Pray for the affected families. Children are getting malnourished and the elderly weaker.**

Iddrisa (name changed for protection), married and a father of five, a well-trained Sheikh (Muslim priest) in the religion and forms of magic, and in charge of over five mosques, met the Lord in one of the “Farming God’s Way” trainings. He gave up on the religion he was born and raised in, not afraid of what would happen to him, and he publicly confessed his faith in Christ and burned his religious books. What was a joy soon turned into a moment of trial both for Iddrisa and us. Iddrisa was kicked out of the community and Eric was summoned by the Islamic community accused of forcing people into Christianity. After several tough meetings, the Lord opened a door for even greater opportunities. The female chief who strongly opposed us became a channel that the Lord used to get us into another Islamic community with no gospel witness! Praise the Lord! After building a good relationship with her, we gave her an audio Bible and one day she said, “I like your Bible because it is in my language



Memorial service for our baby in Port Orchard, WA

and I can understand what is being said, unlike my religion. We are repetitive and hardly understand what we are learning. While on our trip to visit the Northwest conferences, we received heartbreaking news of her death. **Pray that whoever is chosen to replace her will value our relationship built with the community through the late chief.** Iddrisa is passionate about reaching other Muslims with the good news through “Farming God’s Way.” **Pray for Iddrisa—giving up his religious position meant losing everything, including his job which was his main source of income.**

Khadija comes from a family of four; she is 19 years old and in her last year of high school. Her desire is to become a nurse. Through this career, she wants to be a role model and help girls who are vulnerable. Khadija is smart and has passion for what she does. She is known as a “go-getter” in the group. She is full of potential, has a servant heart, is cheerful, and is a natural leader. At the age of two she was separated from her biological family and moved into her grandparents’ home. Her grandfather was abusive. Growing up without love and affection, her only advisors were her peers. At an early age Khadija began sleeping around with men in hopes of finding love and acceptance. At age 16 her grandfather kicked her out of the house and she moved in with her sister (a distant relative) who was no better than her. After she gave her life to the Lord at one of our meetings, she could no longer withstand her sister’s pressuring her into prostitution and moved out. Living in three differ-

ent homes within a week, she made up her mind to open up to us. We helped her settle and are helping her with her education. Through counseling and Bible study she has been helped spiritually and emotionally. Last month she started her own girls’ program in another community,

and she is teaching the girls what she is learning from Mercy’s program. **To help girls like Khadija see our Christmas project: <https://www.gracem.org/project/yao-girl-education-in-malawi/>.**

Mercy continues to work with women in the churches affiliated with Grace Ministries International in Malawi in equipping women leaders for the ministry. She also continues to mentor those running the sewing class in Lilongwe. Through her travels in the different zones she has realised the need to train women in Bible study leadership and community development skills. Many of our church members live on less than a dollar per day which is the case of most Malawians. A lack of good education also hinders their ability to learn, read, and understand the Bible. She is blessed to have a committed friend who has lived and worked among the Yao people work alongside her. Alice Thomson is married and a mother of three. We are



An ever joyful Khadija

toward meals for the women’s national conference held in August this year! Praise the Lord! We are also grateful for Sylvia Nyakambiri and Emmanuela Asong for their contribution and timeless efforts in helping the women within various ministries. Pray for Mercy as she balances her personal life and her passion to train and equip the women. **To help support more women with the training see our Christmas project: <https://www.gracem.org/project/training-women-in-malawi/>.**

We are happy that through your continued financial and prayer support the sewing class has continued to benefit women in the church and communities of Lilongwe, Malawi. We cannot forget how much this class has contributed to our passion to serve among the Muslims today. It is through the Muslim women who attended the sewing class that the Lord put a burning desire for us to evangelize the larger community. This year we have enrolled 25 women who will graduate in March 2020. Our desire is to see these women break away from their cycles of poverty, be transformed, and be instruments of transformation in their communities. **A gift of a sewing machine means so much to these women.**

We are so thankful for all of you!

Eric and Mercy Mango



An old man preparing his meal

very encouraged at how these trainings and zone visits are benefiting the women. The attendance and participation in this year’s conference and reports from the zone leaders paint a great picture. We had 145 women raise personal transport and contribute