

MY ONLY HOPE

is in him

~Psalm 39.7

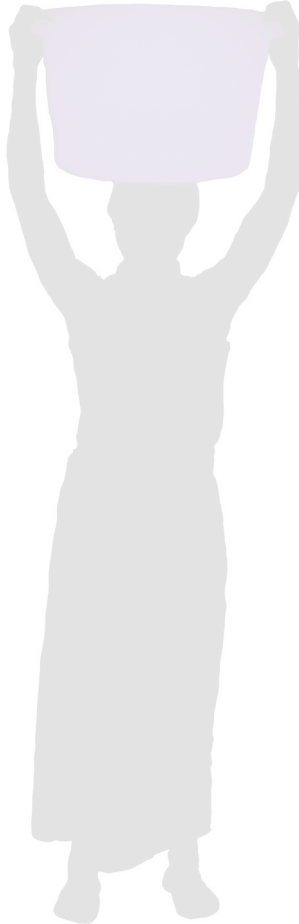


Team Members



Team One

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Team Two

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Carol Nussbaumer
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Betty Samelson
Michelle Snyder
Hugh Stempfley
Paulette Stempfley
Jan Van Heiningen

Daily Devotions

For African Staff,
U.S. Volunteers and
those at home.



Marion Medical Mission



2017

Important Dates



Team One Departs U.S.	.....	September 15th
Team One Arrives in Malawi	.....	September 17th
Team One Training	.....	September 18th
Team One Drives to Assigned Areas	.....	September 19th
Team One Begins Well Installation	.....	September 20th
Team Two Departs U.S.	.....	October 6th
Team Two Arrives in Malawi	.....	October 8th
Team One Leaves Malawi	.....	October 8th
Team Two Training	.....	October 9th
Team Two Drives to Assigned Areas	.....	October 10th
Team Two Begins Well Installation	.....	October 11th
Team Two Leaves Malawi	.....	October 29th

A Prayer for Travel



God's grace and peace be with you as we give thanks for this day.

Heavenly Father, by your inspiration we are reuniting again with new and familiar faces in Malawi, Tanzania, and Zambia. We ask for your blessing during this journey – and loving embrace for our family and friends at home – and for those less fortunate than ourselves.

May your guiding light touch the mentors and leaders in each village, community, and government body – so they may seek justice, inspire hope, bring change, and extend a compassionate ear and voice for all.

We arrive in Africa with an abundance of gifts and opportunity – and we give thanks to you for these blessings and the spirit to share them with our brothers and sisters in the days and weeks ahead.

Father, the well has been prepared, the cement, pipes, pump installed, the GPS confirmed. We ask what's next? You remind us we are left with ourselves..... just as you made us. The connection of humanity – we too are like them, and they like us. Created in your image. We come together – all of us hungry, thirsty, yearning for connection, hope and LOVE.

Father, we give thanks to you for these blessings.

In Jesus name, we pray, Amen

Rick Delaney
Volunteer, Ohio

Working Together



"He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love."

~ Ephesians 4:13

Jesus didn't call Caesar. He called you and me.

Only together can we be who God created us to be. Together the impossible is possible. Apart the possible is impossible.

Marion Medical Mission's (MMM) Well Program bears active witness to the Prince of Peace in a violent and suffering world. It has brought us together: the extreme poor, the not so poor, the wealthy, black people, white people, Americans, Africans, white collar, blue collar, college professors, those who never attended school, diverse cultures. God's creation.

There have been fuel shortages, storms, truck accidents, injuries, gunfire, and death. Yet, God has blessed MMM and we have exceeded our goal each and every year. 30,000 wells have been built covering an area of roughly 57,000 square miles, providing an estimated four million of the extreme poor (2.4 million children) with a sustainable source of safe drinking water.

This is an example of what is right in the world. It is an example of what can happen when God's people come together to work hand in hand as His people. Each of us has a role to play, each is important, each is needed. This is Holy ground; the Beloved Community that spans the globe.

The term Ubuntu addresses a central tenant of African philosophy: A person is a person through other people. The only way we can be human is together. The only way we can be free is together.

I can't be who I ought to be unless you are who you ought to be. And you can't be who you ought to be unless I am who I ought to be. (Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.)
We are in this together.

Prayer: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven...

Tom Logan
Co-founder, MMM

Fear Not

*"Do not be afraid...
for I am with you."
~ Isaiah 43:5*



"Fear not" is stated in the Bible 366 times.

Fear, if we let it, can be debilitating. It can disable us and cripple our relationships with each other and with God. It can keep us from doing the things we should and the things we want to do. It keeps us in the comfort zone of familiarity and no change. It makes us stagnant. It interferes with our relationship with God because it keeps us from focusing on Him when He calls us. When Jesus told Peter to "come," Peter responded without fear, but when he looked down he lost his focus on Christ. He became afraid and began to sink. Fear can prevent our spiritual growth.

You have been called. His people need water. You will go to a land and culture of unfamiliarity. You will witness unimaginable poverty. Your family is thousands of miles away. Installing wells in Malawi is not an easy task. It is indeed risky. The risk is off the road and tarmac driving. There are potholes, ditches and overloaded lorries with tobacco, maize and people sitting on top of that.

My greatest fear is an accident. I recall in 2000, the Land Cruiser my husband, Tom Logan was a passenger in, rolled over. Tom had to be airlifted out of Malawi to a hospital in South Africa. His left hip was crushed, his right hip fractured, his clavicle and seven ribs were broken, his lung was punctured and he was bleeding internally. He needed a blood transfusion and an operation to put three steel plates in his hip. Then he got candida, a life threatening blood fungus. It was the most difficult period of my entire life. I was alone, helpless in a strange country transitioning from the end of apartheid, and Tom's life was at risk. I finally took my fears and anxieties to God and allowed myself to be carried...to have Him control the course of our lives.... Then I silently heard His voice and knew God "is not finished with us yet." I felt a sense of calm and His presence.

Prayer: God open our hearts to your spirit. Give us the courage to step out of the boat and be who you created us to be. Amen.

Jocelyn Logan
Co-founder, MMM

My Weakness



*"My grace is sufficient for you,
for my power is made
perfect in weakness."
~ 2 Corinthians 12:9*

What weakness in me needs God's grace and power?

Weakness is an uncomfortable word. We aren't taught to be weak! But I confess that each time I have gone to Africa to work on wells with MMM, I have been VERY aware of my own weakness. For example, I am not a strong off-road driver. I thank God for the Land Cruiser I drive. But I know my driving skills will be tested many times by the obstacles, sand, water crossings, hills and the tight turn-around spaces near the well sites. I do my very best, but I am weak in skills and confidence when driving in Africa.

Here's the good news! God's power IS made perfect in my weakness. In 2012, I prayed this 2 Cor. 12:9 verse every day I worked in Malawi. God strengthened me every single day as I drove. My confidence grew, not in my own powers, but in God's grace. My husband Tom still is the better one to back up the Land Cruiser in a difficult spot. But I know that my driving is in God's Hands. I picture myself, not in the palm of His Hand, but safe inside His Mighty Fist! It is God's power that keeps us safe.

Maybe you are a stronger person. Maybe driving doesn't bother you at all. But if you think it over, there may be some weakness that you confront. Turn it over to God. Ask for His grace, His power over that weakness. Africa is a place where God's power really shows up. If your loved one is far away, God's grace is there for you too. God is sufficient!

Prayer: Dear God, help me to see my own personal weakness--to name it and claim it as part of myself. Help me to accept your grace, to change through your power, and to grow in your strength. Thank you Jesus! Amen.

Karen Dragano
Volunteer, Colorado

It's a Noisy World

*"My sheep listen to my voice,
and I know them, and
they follow me."
~ John 10:27*



Where will I hear Christ calling today?

We live in a noisy world. It is not just the sound of traffic mixed in with jackhammers, chainsaws and dozers changing the landscape. It's not just the roaring surf or the sound of a windstorm. It not just the cacophony of a room of unruly kindergartners. We all have myriad voices competing for our attention. Sometimes these voices can be heard and sometimes not. We can hear the voices of our families wanting our attention, of our bosses wanting our devotion, of our customers wanting service. But there are other voices, that sometimes, while not audible, are very loud. That voice of temptation that bids us to go where we know we do not need to go. The voice of pity that shouts that we need to pay attention to all the needs we see around us. The voice of guilt when we don't heed all those needs. The voice of greed that draws us to think of only ourselves. The voice of the one calling in the wilderness, calling us to "follow me."

Both of my children swam competitively when they were young. My wife and I would go to these swim meets and during each race the noise was deafening. Each swimmer had teammates yelling for them to go fast. Parents cheering their child on. Coaches each giving instructions and encouragement. You literally could not hear yourself think. My oldest was very accomplished in the butterfly. His coach would shout a cadence he wanted Tim to follow. But for the life of me I could not hear him above the din. I asked Tim once, "How do you know the cadence your coach is giving you?" He told me, "Dad, through practice, I know what my coach's voice sounds like and I block out everything else." Need I say more? Through practice, we need to know the voice of our Savior. By practicing the means of grace by attending worship, prayer, reading our Bible, by engaging one another in Christian conversation, we learn the sound of the voice of Christ. Listen. Christ is calling.

Prayer: O Lord my God, help me to listen for your voice, to be able to pick it out from the many I hear, and to follow you. Amen.

Rev. Ed Hoke
Volunteer, Illinois

Easier To Give Than To Receive



"I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

~ Luke 21:3-4

How can I learn to accept God's great gifts humbly and graciously?

This story of the "widow's mite" is familiar, maybe too familiar. A "mite" was a tiny coin in the time of Christ and not worth a lot. It wasn't much and probably did not make any difference in the Temple income that day. But Jesus declared this widow had put in more than anyone else. Why? Because she had put in absolutely everything she had. No putting in one mite and keeping the other to buy a tiny bit of food. She put them both in, giving out of her poverty an amount not even considered by the rich people around her.

I used to let this story skim the surface of my mind - until I saw it in action in Malawi. In 2000, I was out for a day of wells installation with hubby Jim. We had done the installation - received a chicken - and were walking back to the truck. A man asked us to wait so he could go dig some onions from his garden for us. A young woman handed me a bowl of tomatoes. As I stood there trying to decide where to put them so I could return the bowl, an old gogo came out of the bush. She walked up and put a single egg on top of the tomatoes, saying "ye'wo, mama." ("Thank you, mama"). I am sure she had gone home, searched to find the egg and brought it back. Equally sure it was the only egg the hen would lay that day. That was "the widow's mite." She had given everything she had. In that moment I learned how hard it is to receive a gift graciously. Malawi manners insist that you accept a gift, and a teacher friend once told me, "Don't ever tell me I am too poor to feed you."

So what can we do? We can't refuse the gift and we certainly can't give it back! What we can do is take this experience home and share it. God has a way of using us to get His work done and we can be sure that He will guide our tongues and mold our stories about Africa to move others. And we can - we must - remember how hard it is to receive a gift from one we know is far worse off than we are. And we can - we must - remember that God has given us the ultimate gift through the death of His son. Christ gave everything, withholding nothing so that we can have eternal life. What a gift!

Prayer: Almighty God, You have given me everything I have and made me everything I am. I thank You, Lord, for these gifts and for all the other gifts I have received here in Africa. Father, it is hard to take a gift from one who has almost nothing. Help me to receive such gifts humbly and graciously and to pass on gifts of my own wherever and whenever I can. In the name of Your Son who gave the ultimate gift, Amen.

Carol Nussbaumer
Volunteer, Colorado

God Is Our Refuge!

*"Hear me, O God, when I cry;
listen to my prayer. You are the One I
will call when pushed to the edge,
when my heart is faint."
~ Psalm 61:1-2a*



May we learn to trust God in every situation, especially in hard times.

This Psalm reveals to us that the God we serve is a faithful God. He is concerned about our affairs. Many times we feel God is far away from us but the Psalmist here is bringing to light that God is good, even in our times of hardship. The Psalmist is pouring out his heart speaking from a convinced heart, having witnessed the presence of God, the touch of God. As he says, You are the one I will call when pushed to the edge, when my heart is faint!

We are to learn from the Psalmist more importantly now that we live in a world with more things that stress our hearts, things ranging from family issues, finance, to global village influences. We seriously need to hold on unto God, depending on God in and out of season regardless of how tough the situation. Let us not shift our focus away from Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith. As he rightly points out in John 14:1, that let not your heart be troubled trust in God trust also in me.

Jesus Christ is here offering himself to be our help in times of our troubled and faint heart! He is always faithful!

Prayer: Lord, I humbly come before your throne, teach us Lord to look unto you, cry to you in our times of need as we do in our times of plenty, Lord as MMM many are the times we work in impossible situation be our ever present help. We pray in the precious name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Lewis Silungwe
Malawi Field Officer, MMM

Worries



*"Give all your worries to Him,
because He cares for you."*

~ 1 Peter 5:7

"Trust fuels thanksgiving. Thanksgiving activates peace." ~The Armor of God by Priscilla Shirer

Allen and I were preparing to go to Malawi in 2014. We had hoped to once again be a team, although Allen's ankle was progressively growing more painful. The thought of going to Africa without him frightened me. After much prayer and discussion, I told Allen that if he could do the driving and the money, I felt like I could handle the walking and the dedications. So with our 'action packers' packed, passports in hand, we made final preparations to travel. It was not to be! Two days before departure Allen got a call from his doctor telling him that he had an intestinal infection, requiring injections for the next five days. Allen would not be going to Malawi with me that year.

But God cares for your every need. Steve Brewer (my son-in-law) was also going with team 2, so I had a traveling companion. The money exchange was totally confusing to me. Fortunately I was paired up with Carol, who was the bookkeeper for her son's business. (Thank you Jesus) She was happy and capable to do our finances. Driving in Malawi petrified me. But again He showed His love. He held our Land Cruiser in His hands (as well as 'giving me the peace that passes all understanding'). He protected us in all conditions, dark of night, through villages, shaky bridges and hazardous roads. While in Malawi, I knew He was watching over me.

Whether you are in Africa or waiting at home, may you find God's peace. SHALOM!

Thoughts 1) Pray - giving Him thanks and "your worries." He cares for you! 2) Keep a journal - I had forgotten the details of this trip until I reread my journal.

Prayer – Heavenly Father, Thank you for your love. Thank you for caring for me. Please help me remember the times that you have walked me through the storms. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7)

DiAnne Hughes
Volunteer, Nebraska

Are You Tired?

*"But they who wait for the LORD
shall renew their strength; they shall
mount up with wings like eagles; they
shall run and not be weary; they shall
walk and not faint."
~ Isaiah 40:31*



Your service on the MMM well team is a 'calling.'

As in becoming a Christian and exchanging your old life to become a new creation, this service focuses on others and is renewing you. Is this a 'good tired'? God gives his own strength to his people.....and they exchange (gain) their strength for His.

You are bringing the Gospel news to these folks NOT to make them like us, but because we are like them.

As you rise early, share your food with the team members, persevere through the day without stopping, and exhaust your resources, remember this is all for the Gospel. Keep your eyes on the prize.

Your service is an important part of development, of providing a helping hand or 'hand up' to these villagers, who are providing all they have to offer (hard labor, clay, sand, grit, relationships) and they trust you and the MMM ministry to walk alongside.

Faith in God's promise empowers his people for endurance. God is not too great to care and will carry you through to the end of this season of service and into the next.

Prayer: Lord, we trust that you will provide all the needs of each of the members of the MMM team as they persevere in their role in building your Kingdom.

Harry T. Jones
Volunteer, Georgia

The Body of Christ



"Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not have all the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others."

~ Romans 12:4-5

Each day examine how God is calling you to be the Body of Christ. What are your specific God-given gifts and how can you work with other children of God to accomplish his kingdom on earth?

This Scripture reading is one that I have studied many times over my life. It has helped me to appreciate the diversity that I see in God's world and how he is building his kingdom here on earth.

This message came to me in powerful ways during my first trip to Malawi, Africa working with MMM helping to install water wells in remote villages. The success of this project certainly embodies how the Body of Christ accomplishes great and yes even impossible things. The Africans do all the work digging the well by hand, making and installing the brick, hauling the 100-pound bags of cement over large distances and then making the concrete cap and apron. This is all done with the assistance of the African field officers, installation supervisors and builders. Africans also help to manufacture the well parts in Malawi. We Americans partner with the Africans by providing the money for the pipe, pump and cement. When we arrive at each well site, all the work has been done. At the dedication speech when the well is dedicated to the Glory of God, the Africans ask us to return to America and tell our American brothers and sisters about them our Malawian brothers and sisters and their need for clean safe drinking water. Because even though their village now has a well, they know many of their neighbors who are still drinking from unsafe water sources.

We need one another to accomplish what God intends for us. Through the Body of Christ working with MMM, peoples' lives have been saved from water-borne illnesses in sub-Saharan Africa. Together we can make this happen but apart we cannot.

Prayer: Dear Father, we thank you for sending your Son to us. May your Holy Spirit be our guide as we try to be the hands and feet of Jesus on earth. Amen

Susie Selock
Volunteer, Illinois

This Is the Day

*"This is the day the LORD
has made; let us rejoice
and be glad in it."
~ Psalm 118:24*



It's no secret: the days of well installation are long. Sometimes the afternoons seem to go on forever.

Often times we're exhausted and caked with dust and sweat as we arrive back at the guesthouse for the evening. Yet, each morning arrives fresh, and we start over.

My favorite well of the day was always the first one. Often times we'd have driven for an hour on the tarmac before pulling off onto a rutted road, winding back further and further to a remote village. Then we'd arrive, we'd begin to unload the truck (the first real test that we'd remembered to pack everything) and the installation team would spring into action. I'd think "This is why we came to Africa." The pipe was measured, the down-hole parts were assembled, the pump was installed, and the spout cut, heated, and readied.

And then it was time for someone from the village to pray. And, THIS is why we came to Africa. I would lift my face to the sun, close my eyes, and listen to the prayer, not understanding the words but feeling the emotion. And, tears came to my eyes at almost every one of those first-of-the-day wells. This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

If the day was destined to be hot, the first well of the day would be the coolest. If the day was destined to be long, the first well of the day would be the one when I was at my best physically. From the villagers' perspective, this was the first day that they would have clean water.

Every day, each of us has the opportunity to do whatever we can to make the world a better place, whether we're in Africa or at home. Each day we can start anew, ready to greet the world and rejoice for the gifts that we have received.

Prayer: Gracious God, we thank you for this day that you have given us, and we ask for your blessings as we start this day anew. Be with us as we head for the first well today.

Jane Swanson
Volunteer, Illinois

Strength



*"It is God who arms me
with strength and makes
my way perfect."*

~ 2 Samuel 22:33

How often do we ask God to strengthen us when we feel weak?

Strength is defined by some dictionaries as 'physical energy or intensity'. Many of us feel very good when we are praised for being strong or perceived to have body strength. This is the state that we all want be. We eat food and do body exercises for us to be strong or remain strong to accomplish our daily activities.

Food and exercises help us to have physical strength but we also need spiritual strength. The Bible tells that God created us in his own image. He is our Creator. He is therefore the author of our strength.

As we carry on our activities do we realise that our Creator is the author of our strength? As Field Officers, Well Builders, Maintenance people, ZONE members, community members and volunteers where do we resort to when we feel we need more strength to accomplish our goals? God is there for us. Through prayer God will arm us with strength to do our work effectively.

When carrying out wells activities to reach out to our brothers and sisters in our communities so they can have clean water to drink we often feel tired after long walks, rides and drives to well sites, we need strength to go on, that is the right time to turn to the author of strength, God, through a prayer.

In my 17 years of working with Shallow Wells program with communities I believe God has strengthened my spiritual and physical strength to carry on his work and reach out to more people in need of clean water. That is the reason why I ask God's intervention when I feel weak and need strength.

Prayer: God our Lord, strengthen us with love for others so that we can be vessels of effective change. Help us to be strong enough to reach out to our neighbors so that they can have clean water too. I believe that when we believe in your strength the impossible becomes possible. Amen.

Vyalema Khosa
Malawi Coordinator, MMM

Great Cloud Of Witnesses

*"Therefore, since we are surrounded
by such a great cloud of witnesses,
let us...run with perseverance
the race marked out for us."
~ Hebrews 12:1*



We are not alone in our service to God and our neighbors through MMM.

At times this adventure called Marion Medical Mission can take you out of your comfort level and leave you feeling a little isolated and lonely. That first trip when you are on the other side of the world, away from family and friends, bouncing around in the bush, packed in a truck with a field officer and another volunteer and a bit uncertain about what will happen next, you may question, "What was I thinking?" Thankfully this changes as you get to know other team members and become accustomed to the routine; I now look forward to seeing friends I have made among the volunteers and our African MMM hosts, see fewer surprises in the bush and sleep more comfortably in my mosquito tent.

But, there is more going on here than accommodation to the unfamiliar. In the journey to find the motivation and strength, not only to install the wells and survive the trek, but to complete the task with appreciation and enjoyment, it is important to see God's presence and acknowledge the support and encouragement of "such a great cloud of witnesses" (Heb. 12:1) that surrounds us in this mission:

- Tom, Jocelyn, and all those who have helped envision, create and nurture this amazing mission.
- Volunteers, board members, U.S. and African Staff who have done this for so many years.
- The donor in my church (and the thousands like him), who beamed with joy when he showed me the picture of "his" well.
- Spouses, family members, congregations and friends who support MMM with prayer.
- The millions of villagers who recognize the source of their gift and give the Glory to God.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for the great cloud of witnesses you have provided who have created, grown, supported, served and received blessings through MMM. Help me to become one more witness to your glory.

Wayne Schultz
Volunteer, Colorado

Great Is Your Faithfulness



"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."

~ Lamentations 3:22-23

Every day, good or bad, God is faithful and provides what we need to do His will.

Every day in Africa with MMM is an adventure. What will today bring? Bumpy roads bouncing in the Toyota until your back hurts? Flat tires? Few villagers at a well celebration because of a funeral? Wells not ready for installation or without sufficient water?

Or,

Villages with enthusiastic children and women singing and in anticipation of clean water? Thankful people and new friends showing the love of Christ and giving thanks to God? Picturesque villages and glorious sunsets in the bush?

Yes, yes, yes all of these things and more.

Today God will show us His faithfulness and the mercies He extends to those who serve with MMM in Africa. He reveals Himself both in the good and in the challenging experiences of each day. We need only look for his blessings.

I learned this not as a volunteer, but as one who prays daily for each volunteer and their family, for the coordinators and field officers, and for the villagers. In this way I am connected to their highs and lows. Last year during the trip I developed a blood clot in my leg and was told I would have to give myself a daily injection. A nurse I am not, but God in His mercy provided me not only the strength, but family and friends to see me through. He met my needs so my husband could meet the needs of others.

Prayer: Lord, open our eyes to see your miracles and the mercies you extend to us each day. You are the Faithful One without whom we could do nothing.

Suzanne Schultz
Spouse of a Volunteer, Colorado

Sue wrote this in February and went to Heaven in May. This devotional is a remembrance for Sue and introduces you to the heart of a woman whose life was lived to serve Christ. We are grateful for Sue's voice in this devotional.

Family of Believers

"And all the believers met together constantly and shared everything they had. They sold their possessions and shared the proceeds with those in need."

~ Acts 2:44-45



God's family works best when its members work together and pray for one another.

In this text we see the early church in Jerusalem having the spirit of love moving amongst. They are recognizing other believers as brothers and sisters in the family of God. They shared all they had so that all could benefit from God's blessings.

It is tempting especially if we have material wealth, to cut ourselves from one another, which sounds not good. It happened in the time of Jesus where by the rich young man felt unhappy when he was told by Jesus to go and sell his possessions and give the money to the poor (Matt. 19: 21).

The spirit we see in the Christian community of Jerusalem differs from that which operates in this rich person. It is the same big challenge in our days.

Being connected to God's purpose as MMM spiritual family of God, we have a responsibility to make a difference in the lives of the poor, the starving, the naked and the thirsty. Have I played my role as a good follower of Jesus Christ to support the needy? Maybe yes or no! Perhaps I demand more than what I give. Sometimes I am tempted thinking that there is someone else there who will respond and fulfill the call to serve the poor and not me. God has called you and me to be one of His eyes, legs and hands for His Glory.

Prayer: Holy Spirit come unto us so that you may refresh our minds and souls. Fill us with your power and love so that we may strengthened and do what you want us to do and love one another. In Jesus name I pray. Amen

Rev. Elisha Mwasakifwa
Tanzania Coordinator, MMM

Learning Contentment



*"I have learned to be content
with whatever I have."
~ Philippians 4:11*

What is one thing I'd like to have, but can learn to be content without?

The apostle Paul says he has learned how to be content with whatever he has. It's something I need to learn, over and over. On my first trip to Malawi in 2001, what I missed most was cold drinks. One day, our truck got a flat tire. The villagers helped put on the spare, but we had to drive to a gas station in Mzimba to get the flat tire fixed. When we pulled into the gas station, I saw a refrigerator case with cold Cokes. I had two ice cold Cokes that day. I've never been so glad for a flat tire in my life.

When I got back home, I went on a retreat with my church. We had a cooler filled with ice and cold drinks, and as I looked into the cooler, I was disappointed because there weren't any Diet Dr Peppers, my drink of choice at the time. It had only been a couple of months since that two-cold-Coke day, but I had already started to take things for granted.

Going to another country is great practice in learning to be content because often things aren't like they are at home: different food, different accommodations, sometimes no electricity or running water, no internet connection or phone calls home to loved ones. If we can learn Paul's secret of being content no matter the circumstances, our lives (and our trips to other countries) could be much more peaceful and joyful. I don't have to have a cold Diet Dr Pepper to be happy.

But I'm sure there were some things Paul wasn't content to do without. His calling and passion was to spread the good news of Jesus Christ, and I'm sure he wasn't content until he did all he could to make that happen. We, too, have a calling to make sure our brothers and sisters have clean water and enough food to eat, and we won't be content until we do all we can to make sure that happens. That's what I call "holly discontent."

Paul's contentment went much deeper than just being satisfied with what he had or didn't have. His contentment came from God. The reason he was able to be in want at times was because he knew he had the most important thing: God. With God, he could face any situation.

Prayer: Dear God, help me focus less on what I don't have and more on what I do have. Remind me that all I really need is you. Amen.

Rev. Suzanne Gorhau
Volunteer, Nebraska

Plans for You

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,' declares the Lord."

~ Jeremiah 29:11-14



Confession is good for the soul – said by many – so here goes...I am a worrier. I come from a unique family of worriers which included the matriarchal aunt.

My father, her younger brother, often teased her that she worried when she would find herself without something to worry about. So I have concluded that I learned this weakness from one of the best.

While preparing for my return to Malawi each year, I begin this worrying process quite early – usually right after orientation in St. Louis. The list goes something like this: Will I ever be as good as Meg (Presley-Packard) or Betty (Samelson) at training new volunteers; How will I ever get everything packed in the AP and under 50 pounds (I never do by the way); Is it too early to begin praying for the pilot of the plane; What if Mr. Kapuma taps me as the preacher for Sunday worship at his church; and the list goes on and on.

At some point, I dig out the hand written, tattered and dirt-smudged index card with today's scripture from my MMM Journal and tape it over my coffee maker. Since I visit this brewing station many times a day – I figure this is the best place for me to remind myself that "God's got it – Jan!!" This scripture instructs me to pray to Him with all my heart and with assurance that He will protect me wherever I am. Then this old gospel hymn comes to mind – "I know who holds tomorrow and I know who holds my hand."

By the time I leave for Malawi, my prayers and this scripture have finally penetrated my brain and the Holy Spirit has soothed my worries. Arriving in Malawi I am greeted with the Welcome Home hugs and smiles of Mr. Khosa and Mr. Banda and all of my worries disappear – well, most of them. The remainder are eliminated at the first well dedication when I hear the opening prayer of the Headman, reminding me that his village has been praying for all of us and our families for months and months. Uchindami Kwa Chiuta.

Prayer: Thank you Lord Jesus, for always answering our prayers for peace and comfort even when we fail to remember that you have all the answers before we ask. Forgive us our human weaknesses.

Jan Van Heiningen
Volunteer, Georgia

The Path



"I will praise the LORD, who counsels me; even at night my heart instructs me. I keep my eyes always on the LORD. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, nor will you let your faithful one see decay. You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."

~ Psalm 16: 7-11

You will make known to me the path of life.

In Malawi, there is an often heard phrase: "Water is life." Most Americans cannot grasp the reality of that statement in the same way as the extreme poor of sub-Saharan Africa and the rest of the world. More than two billion people worldwide suffer from a lack of safe drinking water. In the areas where people live in that situation, more than half of the patients in hospitals are there due to water-borne diseases.

Today, volunteers with Marion Medical Mission will drive as far as possible before walking the path of life that leads to a new, protected source of life-giving water. With each new well dedication, we, along with our African friends, will experience a fullness of joy that is almost unspeakable. Jesus said in John 14:6 that He is the way, the truth, and the life, and that no one comes to the Father by any other path. Let's all walk that spiritual path today and experience the true joy that is indeed unspeakable.

Prayer: Lord, open my eyes today as I walk your path of life so that I may see the beauty of your creation and recognize how truly blessed that I am.

Daniel Doshier
Volunteer, Arkansas

Rejoice

*"Rejoice in the Lord and be glad...
sing, all you who are upright in heart."
~ Psalm 32:11*



What could be more joyous than the songs and smiles that greet you when you enter a village to bring fresh, clean water?

As a retired music teacher, I was fascinated by the melodies and variants on the same melody as I traveled from village to village. Sometimes harmonies were added to the melody, sometimes extra notes were thrown in - the possibilities were endless!

One of my favorite hymns has always been "They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love." Although this was written in the 1960s by a priest for his youth choir, I have found the words particularly meaningful in many different settings. "We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord...we will walk with each other hand in hand...we will work with each other side by side". These are such beautiful and joyous images, and as if that was not enough, the end of each verse always delivered the powerful message behind these images - "And we pray that all unity, may one day be restored...And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land...And we'll save each man's dignity and guard each man's pride...Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love."

What could be more loving than to bring clean, sweet, life-giving water to God's people?

Prayer: "Your bountiful care, what tongue can recite? It breathes in the air, it shines in the light; it streams from the hills, it descends to the plains, and sweetly distills in the dew and the rain." Amen.

Kathleen Manfredi
Volunteer, Illinois

Take Courage



*"Be Strong - Courageous!
Do not tremble or be dismayed,
for the Lord your God is with
you wherever you go."
~ Joshua 1:9*

How will I find the courage today to allow myself to be interrupted by God?

This passage called to me even though courage is a word to which I don't relate. It was the second sentence, "do not tremble or be dismayed for the Lord is with you wherever you go" that I openly respond to. As a young woman, I had a spiritual mentor explain that doing God's work was quite simple. All that was needed was to carry the Holy Spirit in my back pocket and let God do the rest. Sort of like allowing yourself to be interrupted by God. Seems simple because it is and works so well for me.

Having courage is what I was stumbling on until I heard a speaker that was a Vietnam veteran who had been in a POW camp for 5 ½ years. He described courage as being able to face your doubts and fears. Before my first trip, my fear was being able to do the job, withstand the heat in Africa, and not to continually cry at witnessing starvation, intense poverty, and babies that were malnourished. I thought I'd be digging wells in the heat side by side with Africans. You can't imagine my relief that I didn't have to do that, because I for sure, do not have the strength for that endeavor. Instead, what I got to do was drive a truck, which I admit was so scary at times, shake hands with all the villagers, be allowed to share their village walking together to the well, hold babies, and often sing and dance with the women and children. So much joy, laughter, and smiles and of course the occasional tears.

When I'm put in situations that are unfamiliar and even scary, I call upon the Holy Spirit, get out of the way, and allow God to be with me. Anais Nin writes "Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage." Oh, what I would have missed, if I had succumbed to my fears and doubts. Feeling God's presence in all we do seems simple in Africa.

Prayer – Dear God, help me find the courage within myself to have the strength and kindness and love in all that I do today, with all the people that I share my day.

Betty Samelson
Volunteer, Colorado

Is There Room In My Heart?

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.'"

~ Matthew 22: 36-40



What are the distractions in your heart that are preventing you from giving ALL your heart, soul and mind to God?

When I was a child one of our dinner rules was that I had to drink all my milk before I could leave the table. Now this was not half a glass, a quarter of a glass or a small amount on the bottom.....but every single drop, ALL ! What is most interesting is that this was a rule not only at our house, but at all my friends' homes. In order to leave the table when I ate dinner at Doug's, Chuck's, Barb's it was understood that I was not to leave their table until ALL my milk was drank. At times I wonder if our mothers were working for the National Dairy Association or how this "rule" became a standard for all Detroit neighborhood homes.

Matthew 22:37 is one of the hardest verses for me as God is asking me to "Love the Lord your God with ALL your heart ALL your soul and ALL your mind".....not half, not a quarter, not a small amount.....but every single part, ALL!

During my Marion Medical Mission trips, I have often found myself physically exhausted, mentally drained and tested, but the exciting part is that often it is a time for me to clear my heart and open up entirely to God. Many a night, as I dragged myself to bed, I was not distracted by computers, televisions or social media but instead was in a quiet room. I was left with thoughts to journal and praise to God reflecting on the Godly people that I encountered and their inspiring love while facing very poor surroundings. During these quiet times I found I prayed in greater length and with more sincerity.

I volunteered for Marion Medical Mission to serve but have also found it to be a time when I could open my heart, soul and mind and draw my life closer to His greatest commandment.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, please open my heart, my soul and my mind so that I can give you my all. Take my distractions, my worries and my fears and place them in your hands. May I live my life according to your commandments.

Tom Kage
Volunteer, Michigan

Trust



*"Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding.
Seek His will in all you do, and He will show
you which path to take."
~ Proverbs 3:5-6*

What expectation or worry can I let go of today and let God show me the path He would have me take?

Which path to take? Anyone who has driven around in Malawi probably asks himself this question many times each day. This is especially true when your MMM Field Officer or another local is not in the truck with you. Even when you do have someone giving "directions," a lot of interpretation must go into what ... "just there" ... really means.

I always find that the driving is one of the most exciting adventures of being a well volunteer, especially when my only spare tire is already flat and it's only 9:00 in the morning. ... but yes, Tom, I'm sure I checked the spare tire's pressure during my morning truck inspection. Every day presents new challenges or experiences we will recall later, hopefully with fondness and a smile. It is in these daily challenges that we can feel the presence of the Holy Spirit with manifest certainty and power. He is literally in your face all day saying "Trust Me, I will show you which path to take" or "Do not be afraid, for I am with you always." When we hear His voice and let Him lead, we relax in the day's events and find a new freedom to go boldly out of our comfort zone without worry about the things which may be ahead. In this new freedom, our trust in the Lord grows deep and we can be immersed in His "comfort zone" rather than our own.

I found this freedom to be one of the most beautiful opportunities of my times in Malawi. We must learn to be flexible in all our expectations and let God show us the path He wants us to take each day. In so doing, we are open to the inevitable glimpses where our Lord will manifest Himself to us in unforgettable situations and crystallize our trust and dependence on His daily presence, grace, and blessings.

Prayer: Dear God, help me to seek Your will in all I do today. Bend me to be flexible to choose the path You would have me take. Help me to trust Your powerful presence and lean not on my own preconceived "understanding." Let me hear You and see You in and through the wonderful people who will be part of my life today. In thankfulness and in Jesus' name, I offer myself in service.

Rich Keller
Volunteer, Colorado

Prayer

*"The prayer of a righteous
man is powerful and effective."
~ James 5:16*



What is it that concerns or burdens me in my day to day life?

Prayer is one way of how we communicate with our God. We talk to him and he talks to us. Now the Bible says a prayer of a righteous man is effective what does that mean to us? It means for us to be heard by God and be answered in our prayers we need to be righteous.

Now the question is how can we be righteous? 2 Corinthians 5:21 says God made Jesus to be sin for us so that we might be the righteousness of God. Now if you are in Christ Jesus you are the righteousness of God, the prayer that you can pray can bring positive results in your life or in everything you are praying for. God will hear your prayers and he will answer you. Remember Jesus said ask anything in my name and it shall be done unto you.

So you can now be bold to pray knowing that your prayers are heard by the Father and are effective. Through prayer we can change any situation in our field experience. As we commit our friends in need or in dire situations, their conditions are subject to change based on our prayer.

Prayer: Heavenly Father we thank you for making us righteous in Christ Jesus, and for this we know that our prayers are effective, and capable to change any situation that we pray for. Thank you Lord for the privilege to receive answers to our prayers, in Jesus Name.

Veronica Mwanjikho
Spouse of Malawi Field Officer, MMM

Safety So Far From Home?



*"I will lie down and sleep
in peace, for you alone, O Lord,
make me dwell in safety."*

~ Psalm 4:8

If you make the Most High your dwelling – even the Lord, who is my refuge – then no harm will befall you, no disaster will come near your tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. Psalm 91:10-11

When I tell American friends I am going to Africa with MMM, they often ask, "Is it safe there?" My answer is, "I feel as safe there as any place on earth." The next question they ask tells me a lot about their own fears and experiences. "Where will you sleep? What will you eat? What about wild animals? Are there bandits?" I respond to their questions patiently (most of the time), pointing out that my peace is not necessarily dependent on safe and familiar physical circumstances. My peace comes from the Prince of Peace, the One who will never leave me or forsake me.

Now, the truth is, if I hear an unfamiliar sound in the night in Malawi, I wake up with my heart beating fast. I pray, remembering where I am, who I am and Whose I am, and I go back to sleep. If I don't understand what is going on around me during the day, I ask my African partner if there is something I need to do, and his answer brings me peace. When I make mistakes in language or get the truck stuck in sand due to a lapse in judgment, my peace returns with the laughter which follows the correction.

The peace I find in Africa surprised me the first year. I was a long way from home, separated from my husband for the first week of in-country training. Mama Jocelyn could not go to the field with us due to responsibilities at the office that day. At lunchtime, I was parked in the shade on the side of a dusty track with 5 African men I barely knew. I could not have found my way back to my lodging or even the tarmac road after all the twists and turns we had taken that morning. Yet I felt as safe there, with them, as I ever had in my life. My sense was that they would have laid down their lives to ensure my safety. John 15:13 says, "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." In the laughter and peace of a roadside lunch, God was in charge of our safety. Indeed, there is safety in Him regardless of how you define home.

Prayer: Father, help me to be ever mindful that I am safe in You, regardless of where I sleep or where I dwell.

Ellen Doshier
Volunteer, Arkansas

Reward

"In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord, "Remember, O Lord, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion and have done what is good in your eyes."

~2 Kings 20:1-6



Reward. It is something which is given in return for good or evil done or received; especially, that which is offered or given in return for some service or attainment, as for excellence in studies, for the return of something lost, etc.; recompense; requital. In whatever you do in life, there is a reward at the end of the day.

People have served in different status, in businesses, in administration for them to come and have a reward at the end of their service.

Hezekiah was the servant of the living God, he served with the people of God. Hezekiah had to go wherever God sent him regardless of the type of people he was to meet and without giving any condition to God. Hezekiah loved his family, despite that he had to leave his family for God's work.

Marion Medical Mission and the volunteers who come to Africa and reach the less privileged communities to provide safe drinking water to God's people, live in the most difficult places without electricity, tap water, toilets, good restaurants where you can have food of your choice, driving in very bad, dangerous roads and places full of mosquitoes.

Out of all that you are doing today, one day the most difficult day will come to you as it came to Hezekiah when he was told that he was going to die and not recover from his illness. My dear brother and sister, what are you going to remind God? Hezekiah said; "Remember, O Lord, how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion. And have done what is good in your eyes."

Blessed you are, because you have something to present before God and tell Him of your good work you did in Africa to His people. For all that you are doing, will not go in vain, you have a reward awaiting for you, because God has seen your love and work towards his people.

Prayer: Dear Lord, we thank you for the message, we pray that you bless everyone as we are going out for the field work. May the blood of our Jesus Christ be upon all the vehicles, drivers and anyone attached to the program for their protection. In the mighty name of our Lord Jesus Christ Amen.

Chrispin Mhango
Zambia Coordinator, MMM

The First Cup



"... and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward."

~ Matthew 10:42

I stepped out of the Toyota, planted my feet on the super dusty ground and thought "What now?" I was on my first trip to "The Warm Heart of Africa," and I had NO idea what was going to happen. Tim Exley climbed out like the veteran he was and went straight to work. The well heads were unloaded, the pipe unstrapped, the pump was handed off and we began to walk. As we headed down a dried creek bed and our feet were sinking into the sand, I thought "What have I gone and got myself into?" I heard the mumbles and picked up on "Muzungu," the only word I remembered from our training.

We arrived at an area with a few houses. The people smiled and gathered around as we began to install the well head. I just kind of laid back and watched, I had really no idea what I was supposed to do. After completing the work with the Android, I began taking a few pictures, something I LOVE to do. When the kids of the village saw what I was doing they seemed VERY interested. So I turned the camera around and showed them the photo. They smiled and giggled and pointed, everyone wanted to see themselves in the photo. I was finally having a blast. I love kids, they are the fun people.

Tim dedicated the well and I thought "Ok I guess we're finished," but not by a long shot. First the village headman told us how much they appreciated what we had done, how his village would pray for us and our safe travels. Then they gave us a gift of chickens, and then they danced, oh my they danced. I hadn't smiled that much with such deep felt joy in ages. We had changed their lives and they wanted to say "Thank you" as best they could and with all their hearts.

When the dancing ended I began to walk away when an elderly woman came up to me only to fall to the ground at my feet. I looked up at Lewis Silungwe and he said "It is their custom, the weight of her gratitude is too heavy and it has pushed her to the ground." I thought "Oh my, I haven't done anything." I squatted down and helped this amazing woman to her feet, the entire time she was telling me how wonderful I was... and all I could say is "thank you." When we finally did walk away life seemed a little brighter, the world a little better. Maybe some day people will understand what a beautiful thing it is to help others, not just because it makes someone else's life better, but because it also makes your life so much better.

Prayer: Heavenly Father thank you for allowing us to share your love with those we know both close and oh so far away. Amen.

Dan Kingery
Volunteer, Illinois

Unfamiliar Paths

*"I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them. I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do. I will not forsake them."
~ Isaiah 42:16*



Every day is an unfamiliar path—how can I trust even more?

The year was 2001 and our nation was rocked to its core. On September 11, a terrorist group hijacked four airliners. Two planes took down the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City and a third hit the Pentagon. A fourth plane went down in a field in Pennsylvania. No one knew what would happen next. Where might they attack next? What airplane was safe? Was our country at war?

The uncertainty we felt was palpable even as we went about our normal activities here at home. But I had volunteered to go to Malawi with MMM, and I was to board a plane in Chicago in a few short weeks. Tom Logan came to me and said, "Go home and talk to Paul [my husband] about whether to continue on. We don't what is going to happen. When we get to Malawi, I can't promise I can get you home." What to do?

Four dear ones helped me make up my mind. Jim Nussbaumer, volunteer from Colorado said, "We have a job to do and we need to do it!" Yes. Rev. Suzanne Vargo Gorhau, Nebraska, told me, "We must overcome evil with good." So true. Pastor Dan Whitfield preached the sermon on the rich, young ruler Jesus told to give it all up. And Dan remarked, "You know, we give it all up in the end anyway." Wow. And then husband Paul said in his quiet, wise way, "What I think is...if you're going to Malawi, you need to get your stuff packed." And I did.

I'd never flown before. Never been out of the continental USA. Didn't know where I'd use the bathroom in Malawi. Or what I'd eat. Or where I'd sleep. I didn't know if I could do the work. Or if I could converse with folks. I stepped onto an unfamiliar path fully trusting in God and God's children—my companions— both American and Malawian. I had a truly amazing experience, and returned to Malawi three more times.

Prayer: Dear God. Help me to trust you implicitly and to step boldly onto unfamiliar paths, here, there—wherever you lead. Amen.

Linda Allen
Volunteer, Florida

Use Your Gifts



*"Each of you should use whatever gift
you have received to serve others."*

~ 1 Peter 4:10

I was sitting in my office in the summer of 2008 thinking about Christmas. Specifically, I wanted to find a way to bring meaning back to the Christmas season because I was frustrated with the cultural norm of buying gifts we didn't need with money we likely didn't have. That's when I heard about Advent Conspiracy.

Advent Conspiracy (A/C) is a movement that encourages Christians to celebrate Christmas differently by giving gifts like time together and shared experiences and then give away the money saved to those who are in need. As soon as I heard about A/C, I knew our church needed to participate. As a community, we changed the way we gave gifts to each other at Christmas, so we could give gifts that served others, reached outside of our church, and supported kingdom work around the world.

After researching well building programs, we heard about Marion Medical Mission and loved the work MMM was doing. That first year, our church of less than 50 people gave \$6,759! Since then we have given a total of \$51,854 that has helped build 138 wells and provides water for 14,358 people!

I don't say that to brag. I say it to encourage you to keep giving the gifts you have to give for God's glory and the good of His Kingdom. Every gift matters. All we did was change the way we celebrate Christmas and God has enabled us to support the work that many of you are doing in the villages of Africa. The scripture reminds us that we all have gifts. We are invited to shift from using those gifts for ourselves to using those gifts to serve others. May we all use the good gifts God has given us for the benefit of others!

It is a privilege for our church to support Marion Medical Mission with the financial gifts we have to give. To God be the glory!

Prayer: Lord, give me awareness of the gifts you have given me and give me courage to use those gifts for your glory. Amen.

Pastor Andy Lucas
Emmaus Road Church, Colorado

Love and Wisdom

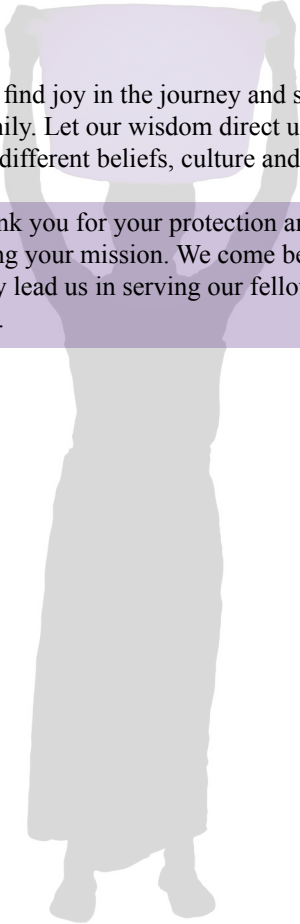
*"And this I pray, that your
love may abound yet more
and more in knowledge
and in all judgment."
~ Philippians 1:9*



Let us relish life as we live it, find joy in the journey and share our love with friends, the community we serve, and family. Let our wisdom direct us to make the right decisions as we are serving a society with different beliefs, culture and understanding.

Prayer: Almighty God we thank you for your protection and guidance from the Holy angels as we are accomplishing your mission. We come before you to ask your guidance so that Love and Wisdom may lead us in serving our fellow men. Our culture and beliefs should not be a barrier, Amen.

Innocent Deus
Field Officer, Tanzania



Not By Sight



"For we live by faith, not by sight."

~ 2 Corinthians 5:7

"We've been praying for clean water for years. We had faith that God would answer our prayers."

Over and over again, volunteers hear similar words during well dedications after installations. My own faith is often simultaneously uplifted and challenged whenever I hear them express their unwavering trust that God is good and will relieve them from the burden of drinking dirty water. How often have I been quick to dismiss the power and goodness of God for my own needs and desires? My prayers are most often needs and requests spoken from a place of comfort and privilege, rarely for things that didn't threaten my own life or those of whom I loved. Yet I would find myself losing trust and hope that God would answer, often with my own sense of perfect timing.

I would encourage you to remember what these installations mean for each village as you arrive at the well site. These villagers are celebrating the clean water they will receive that day. Your presence means no more long and treacherous morning hikes to get water that has been shared with animals. It means more time for harvesting crops and education for the children; healthier communities; and an ease of years of terribly heavy burdens.

But it also means something much deeper. It is a realization of years of prayer, day after day of trusting that God would provide when there was nothing in sight that would seem to indicate clean water would someday be a reality. Living in a rural area in extreme poverty, often feeling like there is no one in the world, aside from God, that knows you're there and suffering could easily cause a lack of faith and hopelessness. But they trusted God in spite of what they saw. The well installation is a long answer to prayer, an assurance that God is good and He hears us.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, I pray that we open up our eyes and hearts to you, that we place our complete trust in your goodness. I pray that we seek to see more of you every day and that we surrender ourselves to your will. I pray that our volunteers and villagers touch each other's hearts and they continue to lift each other up in prayer after the well is installed. I pray that we never lose sight of who you are and our purpose here on this earth. Amen.

Amanda Prather
Program Coordinator, MMM

Being a Help

*"Serve one another in love."
~Galatians 5:13*



Where do I place my faith? What makes me unusable?

God has shown us in many instances that it pleases Him that we serve one another. He has given some kind of blessings to others so that they may be a help to others in need of His hand. This is why we rise by lifting others and that there is no better way of living this life than being a help to others.

However, often times we are so engulfed in our comfort zone and in the protection of what we have that we don't look out for those in need. May God help us realize that our blessing and our wealth are not our making it is all from Him and may we use in helping others. So that we are not asked as in 1 Cor 4:7, "what have you that you have not received? and if you have received, why then do you behave as if you give it to yourself?"

In my working with MMM and seeing the coming and going of volunteers and being close to them I have had chances of seeing pictures of their homes. I have seen a great sacrifice of leaving their comfort places, their loved ones and what they value, for the sake of some others. In my quest for explanation on this, I settled on "faith." Where do you place your faith? Do you place your faith in what you have and fail to go out to serve others or you place your faith in one who provides what you have? MMM volunteer-ship teaches all of us this important thing that we need not place our faith in what we have even how good and comfortable it is. We need to place our faith in God from whom all what we have comes and that He can give it again even more.

Realization of this, should make us proudly go through a hard volunteer work with MMM under the scorching sun of Africa with joy knowing that Him that has sent us into this course can protect and can restore any ailments, for all perfectness comes from him.

Prayer: Lord I thank you that I have an opportunity of going out into the field today as your instrument on your mission to help others. I also thank you for the presence of your people out there who can accept my offering. Lord, strengthen my faith and help me root it in You not in my possessions. My Lord is there anything in my life that makes me unusable? Anything you need to chisel out, go ahead and take it out of my life so that I can be more of a help to others. May I live my life glorifying You my Lord in both good and hard times in Jesus Mighty Name I pray. Amen.

Franics Mayamiko Kaponda
Field Officer, Malawi

What's In Your Spirit?



"For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love, and of self-discipline."

~ 2 Timothy 1:7

What in my daily life do I fail to turn over to God's spirit and power to help and guide me?

As I reflect on this verse and my experiences going to Africa with MMM the last nine years it is clear to me that God's spirit provides us with the power, love, and self-discipline we need to do a very difficult job in His name.

Through prayer and faith we are able to do things that we would never have thought we could do. In difficult physical circumstances we are able to persevere and get the job done. In circumstances that can be very emotionally taxing we are assured that He is in charge and we are merely a vehicle to see that His will is done.

When we turn it over to God we are able to love and be loved. Caring for our fellow man won't feel like an obligation but a privilege. My experiences in Africa have always been that I have received far more love than I could ever give.

Self-discipline is perhaps the most difficult aspect of serving for me. I have to constantly remind myself that I could never do what we do alone. I have to rely on the Holy Spirit to guide my thoughts and actions, and when I do "the pressure is off." I love the saying that "God doesn't call the prepared; he prepares those who are called."

For those who support those who go, rest assured that your prayers for MMM are answered. What happens in Africa would be impossible if God's hand wasn't in it. The greatest joy I have when I'm there is watching it all happen. A miracle right before my eyes and God has allowed me to be part of it. God's spirit never fails.

Prayer: Dear God, I ask you to give me the courage and strength to trust that you are in charge and that your will is sufficient. Strengthen my resolve to follow you in every aspect of my life. In your Son's name, Amen

Tim Exley
Volunteer, Georgia

Potter's Clay

*"Yet, O Lord, you are our Father.
We are the clay, you are the potter;
we are all the work of your hand."
~ Isaiah 64: 8*



Can I trust God enough to let Him mold me and use me according to His plan, not mine?

In the Africa Bible Commentary, Dr. Edouard Kitoko Nsiku says this: "Here...the focus is on the clay's helplessness in the hands of the potter. It is totally dependent on what he chooses to do with it." Or, as the old hymn states it: "Mold me and make me after Thy will, while I am waiting yielded and still."

Not bad things to remember as we work in Malawi, where the soil is often red clay hardened now by the hot, dry weather and waiting for the renewing rains to come. We, like the clay, have no real say in what we will do today. We are dependent on where wells are ready, what the road conditions are, is the truck working, will there be people at the well to greet. And that is o.k. God is here and in charge. This is His program and we are simply agents -- the clay. The clay has no business saying "why did you make me a cooking pot when I wanted to be a drinking cup?" Like the clay, we must accept the way God is molding us and understand that we probably don't know all the reasons why we are driving a truck through the African bush when it would be so much more comfortable to be sitting at Starbucks with a book. (Hint: Maybe it has less to do with helping install a well than it does with God's plan for your temporal and eternal life.) My personal belief is that I am in Malawi because God told me to come here. After 20 years I still am not completely sure why He wanted me, but there it is. After 10 years I stopped fighting and began to relax in the hands of the potter as He worked. Apparently God wants me to be a pot; maybe one day He'll add on a handle and I can sort of be a cup. Nevertheless, "Have Thine own way, Lord; Have Thine own way. Thou are the Potter, I am the clay."

Prayer: Lord God, You are the potter, the maker of all things. Everything – even me – was made by You to serve the best purpose possible. Father, sometimes I wish things were different. Help me to trust enough to accept who I am and where I am and that I am doing what you want me to do today. Take away fear, impatience, worry and self-importance; replace them with the spirit of Jesus and the faith to trust no matter what. Amen.

Carol Nussbaumer
Volunteer, Colorado

All the Little Children



“...Jesus called the children to him and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”

~ Luke 18:15-17

Will you remember the love of Jesus as you enter each village? Will you picture Jesus letting the little children come to him?

Jesus loved those children. The disciples were trying to get the children out of the way, so Jesus could take care of business. But Jesus knew the children were important in God’s kingdom!

Jesus STILL loves children. Sometimes we get like those disciples. We get in a rush, determined to install more wells than ever. No time for kids? Jesus would surely make time for each one. Can you picture him climbing out of the Land Cruiser in the village? He loves the rowdy kids and the shy ones too. He loves the kids with runny noses and the eager ones with bright eyes. Jesus loves the ones who linger in the background and the ones who dance and sing. We want to love all the little children like Jesus does. Can’t you just picture Jesus smiling and laughing with the kids? Jesus knows their toughened feet and torn shirts. He knows their stomach cramps, and their potential for growth and learning. These village children touch the heart of Jesus. Since these children are part of the Kingdom of God, surely they should have safe drinking water! It must give Jesus great joy to know how much healthier and stronger these little children will be as they drink the sparkling water from this well over the years.

The love of Jesus is what brings us to this village. The love of Jesus is what motivates the donors. The love of Jesus is strong and true.

Prayer: Thank you Jesus for all the little children we will meet during this well season. We know you love them. Help us to carry your love to them. Thank you for giving us this opportunity to make a difference in their lives.

Karen Dragano
Volunteer, Colorado

An Inner Spring

"...but those who drink of the water I give them will never be thirsty. The water I give them will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life."

~ John 4:14



Where is the inner spring welling up in my life? When and where and with whom do I experience its flow?

As our team arrived at a village to complete a well, we were warmly greeted by a 16-year-old girl named Memory who steadied her limping grandmother. I asked if we might pray for grandmother's (arthritis) knee before continuing to the well site. They said "Yes!" (Grandma spoke with her eyes!)

We had prayer together and walked a short distance to find that the team had already begun the pump installation. When it was time for the dedication prayer, I noticed that the village headman had removed his shoes to symbolize that we were on holy ground. Following the well dedication/celebration, Memory invited our team to stay and share a lunch of nsima and beans with her family in their home. After lunch we walked toward our truck when over my shoulder I heard the whole family singing. I turned and noticed that they were also dancing—including grandmother! The song was translated as "We have seen the love of God!"

I wondered how it could be that there was such joy and gratitude among people who lived with very little, materially speaking. I remembered the story of the Samaritan woman at the well and how Jesus promised that those who would drink of the water he would give them would never be thirsty. They would have an inner spring!

I thought about the variety of water containers I had seen at village well sites: buckets, jugs, gourds, watering cans. And then it hit me. Water takes the shape of its container! When you drink of the flow from Christ's inner spring, His life comes inside you. You wake up inside your life. And Christ looks like you and everyone else who has tasted the "living water" of Christ's Spirit!

Prayer: Fill my heart, O God until my eyes overflow. Let me marinate in Your fullness!

Rev. Dick McFarlin
Volunteer, Texas

Generous Are Blessed



*"The generous will themselves
be blessed for they share their
food with the poor."
~ Proverbs 22:9*

"Generous" originates from Godly love which is in the heart of any son or daughter of God.

Whoever believes in God must inherit the Godly love (to love without reason) i.e. John 3:16. ".....He so loved the world to the extent of sacrificing his only begotten son for the world's salvation."

Being generous is being a servant of God, because helping the poor is helping God; so blessing to the Generous is inevitable.

Prayer: Father in the name of Jesus; we thank you for the love you have shown us, for the salvation you have granted through your son Jesus Christ, for the health and life you have given us.

We thank you for the day in which we have been working safely, As you have said, you will be guiding our steps in our going out and coming in. We ask your guidance and protection in every breath we take. We ask you to help every one of us to be generous to others and to serve you GOD and to serve our fellows in love. Amen

John John Wellah
Field Officer, Tanzania

Faith

*"Now faith is the assurance
of things hoped for, the conviction
of things not seen."
~ Hebrews 11: 1*



What do you see that gives you hope? Who is your faith placed in – at home, at work, in your community, or at your church?

Faith is what motivates most of the volunteers to board a plane and travel halfway around the world to install wells with Marion Medical Mission. Somehow, somewhere, God has pinged us, grabbed us, and moved us from the place that we were to the place that we find ourselves now. Faith moves us, even as it moved mountains.

When arriving at a village, we find a village that has dug a well on faith. Faith that MMM will come and install and dedicate a well. Their faith has led them to believe, to dig holes, make bricks, break gravel, and to wait, to wait expectantly.

Faith is what sees us through our questions, our fears, and our wonder. Faith is incredibly tied to hope, as noted here. Faith gives us hope, through the stories of those who have gone before us, and through the stories we tell one another. It is faith that sees a well in one village and allows hope for a well in our own village. Faith guides us down the air bridge for a long flight. It is faith that leads us to hope towards the day when everyone has safe, clean, drinking water, enough to eat, and a world that more closely resembles the kingdom of God.

As well season progresses, what are your hopes for the season? For the volunteers? For the villages? For the field officers, installation supervisors, and builders? What signs of faith do you see? What signs of hope do you see that strengthen your faith?

For me, blue PVC gives me hope, and strengthens my faith. Messages from my friends half a world away remind me that God is mightily and greatly at work. Telling the stories of well season, the glorious and the embarrassing, with those who have driven and trod the same ground, restores my hope.

Prayer: Dear God, help me to keep the faith, with you and with my neighbor. Open my eyes to see you at work in the world and in my life. Let me be your faithful, hopeful child. Amen.

Rev. Wade Halva
Volunteer, Illinois

Strength



*"I can do all things through
him who strengthens me."
~ Philippians 4:13*

Everything is unfamiliar - unusual foods, inconsistent and sometimes primitive bathroom facilities, irregular showers and hot climate.

In a real way, you are offering your body to God, sacrificing comfort for aches and pains. You are giving your physical body to God to perform hot sweaty work, tiring and perhaps, at times, even frustrating work—pure and pleasing because you intentionally chose this way to serve. You are preparing for an exhausting day, yet at the same time you are looking forward to an exciting day - meeting new friends, learning new skills, lots of laughter and singing, and a renewed appreciation for the beauty of God's creation.

When I was young and had an unpleasant or difficult task ahead of me, my mother encouraged me to separate the job into smaller segments that seemed less formidable. Frequently, she would say something like, "Swim these next two laps for your grandmother" or "Carry this next load for your uncle." While I was in Malawi, there were several days when the distances between villages seemed extra long or the incline was extremely steep. I employed my mother's trick and walked the "next 20 steps for my brother" or climbed to the next outcrop "for my son." Although I was still the one exerting the effort, I felt surrounded by the love of my family and seemed to gain a fresh surge of energy, especially as I would look around at my surroundings with the "new eyes" of those who were with me only in spirit.

Focus: There will be tough times while you are in Africa, but know that you are surrounded by love and prayers every moment you are traveling. Find joy in every day and look for God in the faces around you. God will be changing the way you think as a result of your service.

Prayer: God, we lift our difficulties, pains and sorrows to you. Receive them. Sometimes we can't fly over our problems on eagle's wings; we plod through them. But it is you, O Lord, who saves us and gives us the strength to go on. Thank you, God, for being present with me today. Open my heart and eyes. Fill me with excitement as I prepare to live out my faith today. Let your love shine through me. Help me sleep well tonight, trusting in your love and in your closeness to each one of us. Amen.

Kathleen Manfredi
Volunteer, Illinois

Thirst

*"After this, Jesus realizing that everything was now completed, said..." I am thirsty."
~ John 19:28*



So Jesus has been hanging on the cross for six hours. He has been beaten and brutalized beyond imagination. Right before he dies when his body can take no more, he simply says "I'm thirsty." Why did he say that? What was he thirsty for? Are we really to believe that after six hours of suffering, that the son of God simply asked for a drink of water? Or was Jesus thirsting for so much more?

When you read what Jesus said throughout the Bible you find that his words had much deeper meaning and that they were meant to teach us something. His words were never self-centered, but rather always for us. So given all that Jesus said previously it makes little sense that Jesus would simply be asking for something to drink.

Perhaps Jesus was saying that he was thirsty for so much more. Perhaps rather than a simple statement, it was a profound commandment to ask us what it is we all really thirst for and whether that matches His teachings?

What do you thirst for? Is it money, prestige, power, glamour, riches, success, revenge, sexual fulfillment, a buzz, a great pair of jeans.... Will those things really quench your thirst? Or, are these the superficial distractions that result in us really missing the point of what Jesus taught us. Are these the distractions that distract us from the mission?

It isn't hard to figure out what Jesus was thirsting for us to remember. He laid it out right there for us. He said that we are to love God with all we've got and do so by loving our neighbor as we love ourselves. To make sure we got the point he then told the parable of the Good Samaritan to teach us that loving our neighbor means helping those that need our help the most. Even if they are really different from us. Even if we hate them.

My friends, I'm "preaching to the choir" because you are living that mission! You are doing exactly what Jesus was so desperately thirsting for while hanging on the cross. You are living the mission by "thirsting" to make the world a better place by serving those that need our love and help the most. What is so beautiful is that you are quenching the thirst of our Lord by quenching the thirst of those that simply need clean water.

Prayer: God bless you my friends. I thirst for more people to hear our story so they too can thirst to change the world by quenching the thirst of our friends in need.

Grant Arends
Volunteer, Kansas

Do Not Worry



*"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again:
Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.
Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation,
by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests
to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding,
will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
~ Philippians 4:4-7*

On my many trips to Africa I have experienced a huge range of emotions: amazement, joy, fear, anxiety, homesickness, anger at the injustice of the world, wonder at the incredible diversity of God's creation, etc., etc.

I don't know what emotions will strike you on your trip but, if you're like me, you will be having an experience like no other in your typical middle-class American life. Strange land, strange food and shelter, different cultures and languages, poverty like you've never seen before and difficult days of off-road driving and hiking. Lots of things to worry about: Will I get sick? Will I get hurt? Am I doing a good job as a volunteer? How is my family doing at home? What will become of these dear people I meet in the rural villages even after they get clean water?

We're out of our comfort zones here, aren't we? So worry and anxiety can be more prevalent on our hearts and minds here. These verses from Paul's letter to the Philippian church often come to my mind in stressful situations. They remind me that God is with me and all around us in every place and every situation. You can turn to God in prayer in the midst of stress, fear, anxiety, sickness and, with a thankful heart, God will bring you peace which transcends all understanding.

- Spend a few moments in prayer with your team each morning. Share your concerns with your partner and your field officer in prayer.
- As you meet villagers, note signs of the impact God has in their lives. In the midst of very challenging lives with limited resources, I often see that people still laugh and joke, sharing what little they have in thanks.
- Share these verses with family and friends back home. If they are worried about you, they too can share their concerns with God and seek the peace of God in prayer.

Doug Kee
Volunteer, Michigan

The Service Of the Saints

*"...because the service of this ministry
is not only providing for the needs of the
saints but is also overflowing with
many thanks to God."
~ 11 Corinthians 9:12*



What Marion Medical Mission accomplishes every year is impossible. Without God, it is impossible. We know this. We are rightfully reminded of this often by Tom Logan. And so, we each embark on the path of our individual roles in this impossible task. Do you, like me, stand amazed of each aspect of this miracle, not the least of which is that God gives you a part in it? When Tom came to my Rotary Club in Herrin, Illinois to tell us about MMM and how they were changing the lives of countless people in Africa every year, I decided then and there that I had to be a part of it. I knew I had the skills, the physical stamina and the financial means to be a part. But to be honest with you, it still fascinated me that MMM asked me to come be a part. Me.

The scripture I've selected here states the obvious about the work of the church, not only in the work of MMM, but of everything the worldwide church accomplishes every day. The church is "providing for the needs of the saints...". But providing for the needs of the saints is not the only thing going on here. The phrase, "is not only", indicates the "service of the saints" is being accomplished along with "providing...overflowing with many thanks to God." Do we give thanks to God just to have the privilege to be a part? Do we thank God that God has given us the skills to do what needs to be done, that God has given us bodies with the physical stamina to do the hikes, to climb the mountains, to carry the parts, that God has given us the financial means to be able to do this awesome ministry? If you haven't, I invite you to do so. Give credit where credit is due, to God.

Prayer: Thank you God, for giving me everything I need to provide for the needs of the saints. It's only because of you. Thank you, thank you, thank you. Amen

Rev. Ed Hoke
Volunteer, Illinois

Far Away



*"If I rise on the wings of the dawn
and settle on the far side of the sea,
even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast."*

~ Psalm 139:9-10

When you go out into the field today, open your heart and mind to the very real presence of God and pay attention to the little things that let you see and feel that presence in unexpected places – a child's laugh, a woman's smile, a young man's eyes, an old man's dignity.

I take great comfort in knowing that no matter where I go during my life, God is always right there with me. He is there to guide me in times of trouble or confusion and to sustain me when I don't seem to have the strength to carry on. He is likewise there to share in the joy when I am overflowing with gratitude at the incredible "alrightness" of life.

Make no mistake about it: Wherever we are, we are never "far away" from God – not when we're traveling across oceans, not when we're far from home in unfamiliar lodgings, not when we're driving our trucks through difficult terrain, not when we're struggling to hike up those mountains, and not when we're standing in those remote African villages watching the miracle of clean water happen. He is always there with us. God is already in all those places before we are – knowing we're going to be there – and preparing the way for us. He is behind us, he is beside us, and he is waiting for us up ahead with his loving arms outstretched.

Prayer: Thank you, Heavenly Father, for loving me and knowing me so perfectly. Thank you for the comfort of knowing that I will never have to face my problems alone. Thank you for giving me strength when I need it. And thank you for being with us and allowing us to share the love of Jesus Christ in these faraway places with our African neighbors and friends. All glory to you. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

Meg Packard,
Volunteer, Alabama

You Did It To Me!

*"Just as you did it to one of
the least of these who are members
of my family, you did it to me."*

~ Matthew 25:40



What can I do for others that will bring glory to God?

Serving others sounds negligible. Perhaps, people believe in; self-resource acquirement and inheritance as means for a living. However, a certain segment depends on support from others. Think of the blind, paralyzed, elderly and many more. Born in the African community deprived of; Safe water, better schools, and improved health services, is the most challenging thing to go through in life. The tragedy is made worse by; diarrhea, dysentery, malaria, and malnutrition which claim a lot of lives especially children under the age of 5. Statistics shows that 4.5 million children die every year. I thank God I survived.

When I grew up, my desire was to make a difference so that the next generation may not fall in the same tragedy. But the question was; where will the resources come from? When I joined MMM in 2006, I realized that it's more than just a job, but a calling to serve others, exactly, an answer to my dreams.

MMM is a life changing adventure that aims to provide a service to others in order to share the Love of Christ. Jesus Christ's teaching on the final judgment, the Son of Man sitting on his throne and surrounded by his holy angels, will carry out the judgment. One of the criteria for judgment is kindness to his brothers. These brothers are interpreted as all those who are needy and deprived. Our God is God of the poor and needy, for the deprived and disadvantaged certainly occupy a special place in the heart of God.

Your involvement in charity such as MMM, is a fulfillment towards admission into heavenly gates. Some of you go on a mission trip. Some of you work hard to raise money. Some of you pray for success of the program, or utilize your intelligence to come up with technology. Some of you work tirelessly, hand in hand with the community to get the job done well. Together we achieve the impossible and bring glory to God.

Communities see God in your endeavors. They praise God when they see water coming out of the new installed pump, especially those that have never received a safe water facility in their community ever since the creation of earth.

Prayer: Our heavenly Father, Thank you for this day. Father, help me to understand that helping out others is an obligation that you have entrusted my life with. Help me to accept that you have a purpose with my life and that whatever I do will bring glory and honor to thy name.

Jordan Banda
Nkhoma Coordinator, MMM

More Than Enough



*"We are God's workmanship, created
in Christ Jesus to do good works,
which God prepared in advance to
be our way of life."
~ Ephesians 2: 10*

Too easily we get separated from each other, from being who we have been created to be. We are linked together like a chain, only as strong as the weakest link. Each of us has a role. Each role is important; each needed.

Marion Medical Mission has built over 30,000 wells since 1990, covering an area of roughly 57,000 square miles in Malawi, Zambia, and Tanzania. These wells provide an estimated 4 million of the extreme rural poor (2.4 million children) with a sustainable source of safe drinking water.

This is an example of what is right in the world. It is an example of what can happen when God's people come together to work hand in hand as His people. This is Holy ground; the Beloved Community that spans the globe. We are in this together.

The Africans decide who gets the wells and where they are built. They organize the village communities, they build the wells, they maintain the wells, they make the pumps, foot valves and plungers.

Those outside Africa tell the story, and raise the funds needed. Volunteers from the United States document and verify each and every well built. All of us take the responsibility to insure each village knows their well is special because it is Christ's love shared with them.

Marion Medical Mission builds a well for \$400, far below what it costs others to build the same well. 100% of all designated donations go to their designated purposes. 100% of all undesignated donations go to the mission field in Africa.

Marion Medical Mission's 2017 goal is to build 2,800 wells scattered over roughly 57,000 square miles in Malawi, Zambia, and Tanzania—before the end of this year. The question is not how can we possibly build 2,800 wells, but why are we building only 2,800 wells when so many more are needed and the resources are available to do so?

God has provided more than enough. Donate, fundraise, and tell this story that needs to be heard

Glory to God * Ulemu kwa Mulungu * Uchindami kwa Chiuta * Utukufu kwa Mungu

Tom Logan
Co-Founder, MMM



Many thanks to all who volunteered
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Zikomo!

MARION MEDICAL MISSION

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