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Prayer/Praise Requests

- Continued health for Ruth Pierson. She had a good check-up in May! 1
- That the Lord will find donors to help solarize the hospital. 2
- Praise Him! Our start up fund is 89% complete! 3
- Sierra Leone Wesleyan Church 4
- Our remaining prayer and financial partners so we can go and get to work! 5
- Praise Him! Marc was selected for a 4 year scholarship to WVU through ROTC 6
- Praise Him!! Tom has returned from S.L. and we are more certain than ever that we are to move there. 7

- To become a financial or prayer partner in our ministry click [here](#) Click on Missionaries and give online. Account number— WM04-0332 Asher Family
- We need many donors committed to giving \$25-100 monthly for our four year term
- We also need 400 people willing to pray for us on a weekly basis
- We currently have 62% of our goal budget pledged.

Ashers In Africa

Volume 1 Issue 4

Newsletter Date June 3, 2008

Home Mission Notes

April found Karen returning from Africa and Tom still in Kamakwie. The internet went down shortly after Karen left so we were not able to communicate very often. We finally found out that Karen could call Tom's cell phone in Africa for \$.29/minute by using Skype on her computer. Even when the internet was up in Kamakwie the bandwidth was not able to handle Skype calls there. We will need to be creative in communicating with our family and friends here in the U.S. Tom's mother sent a letter to him in Kamakwie 8 weeks ago and it has yet to arrive. I spoke with UPS and they can deliver packages to the church office in Freetown, but it is \$20.00 per lb. and then would need to be hand carried to someone going to Kamakwie. Possible, just not fast.

While Tom was busy working in Kamakwie, Karen was able to speak to some churches

here in Michigan and Ohio.

Early April found her at Dryden Wesleyan Church. They had a missions conference and the pastors, mission committee and host family were fantastic! Their church is very active in missions and they have a lovely map that shows the missionaries they support. Kamakwie will now be added to the board! We can't thank them enough for their kindness!

Later in the month she spoke at a missions conference at Mulberry Wesleyan Church. The Steinbrechers were also there and it was so encouraging to spend some time with them. They are also raising their financial and prayer support team. They were such an inspiration as they spoke of trusting the Lord daily for the care and support of their family! A special thank you, also to our host family who had just returned from Florida and still took us in!



And finally Lambertville United Methodist Church had a great fundraiser soup supper for us. The ladies made soup and everyone voted on the best by putting money in it's basket. We had great soup and now we have new families supporting us!

We are presently scheduling more speaking engagements. If you would like to see where we will be click [here](#) then click on missionaries and then schedule. If you would like us to come to your church or group to speak please call us!

Tom's cell 419-344-2341

Karen's cell 419-349-1399

So what did the Asher's do in Africa?

Tom cared for many inpatients and outpatients. Often the patients are on mats for lack of beds.



Surgeries— c-sections, bowel resections, hernia repairs and amputations to list a few.



Tom began preparing our house for our arrival. He and Chuck started the wiring and tile.



More about Africa

It is hard to express the enormity of the need in Sierra Leone. After adjusting to the heat for a few days, we started walking through the community in the evenings. Our neighbors houses were mud block buildings, some with metal roofs and some with thatched roofs like on our prayer cards. Many have only the barest of necessities for cooking and eating. One pan, one spoon and a large bowl. I didn't see any local homes that had bathrooms. Baths are taken in a large rubber bowl. One evening we visited with a retired mid-wife from the hospital. While we sat in the yard and visited, the children were getting their evening baths. I must say that when the temperature was 100 F being washed off with cool water didn't seem so bad.

Most families work all day to earn enough money to buy that day's rice. There are no pantries and freezers full of food. There is no discussion of new toys or where they are going on vacation next. And yet when we went to service on Sunday the pastor would say "God is good" and the congregation would answer "All the time" and the pastor would say "All the time" and the congregation would answer "God Is Good! Africa and the people of Sierra Leone continue to humble me. Did you know that they pray for you? They pray that in spite of all the "things" you have you will stay close to God and depend

on Him for your every need. After all the terrible things they endured during their civil war they saw how wealth can corrupt people. When I told one man that it must be very hard to praise God with the hard life and the heat, he responded that it would be harder to depend on God with all the things that we have been given so freely. "When you have to depend on Him for your daily needs it is easier to give Him the credit for what you receive." His logic is beautiful and profound. I am praying that God will make me aware of His provisions for me. This man was so right. It is too easy to forget where our provisions come from here in the United States. We have been so blessed that we have begun to take the credit for what we have. And we have so much that we can't put it into prospective when it isn't quite as good. After traveling to Africa I can't complain about living on the road with the most pot-holes in my county. At least I have a road, with a vehicle to drive on it. And if the price of gas causes us to tighten our belts a bit, we can be thankful for the meat in the freezer and the pantry of food. And if I am a bit warm, for the cost of a \$.89 drink I can sit here in a restaurant and type my newsletter, without any fear of malaria infested mosquitoes and free internet access. We are so fortunate, indeed.

Many people have asked what they can

do personally to help. We will be taking a truck load of supplies and medicines down to Louisiana in September to be shipped over to Sierra Leone. We have been overjoyed how the Lord has exposed us to opportunities to get the things that the hospital needs. Flower Hospital here in Sylvania, Ohio has donated a large amount of medical equipment. They provided many needles, I.V. sets, suture, and sterile gowns for us. I felt like a kid at Christmas going through all the boxes they had set aside for us in central supply.

We were able to purchase \$150,000 of medications for \$750. Isn't that awesome? We were at the right place at the right time and found out that this was available. I don't believe that was a coincidence. We also happened in to a store that was closing during it's last week and got boxes of scrubs for pennies on the dollar. We are still looking for a few things, bowel staplers, suture and surgical blades to list a few.

We had mentioned at one of our churches that there was a real need for medical textbooks in Sierra Leone. The medical school has only one set of books per class. They take in 80 students but only graduate 7-8 per year. A chiropractor friend heard this and took it on himself to put the plea out there for our colleagues to donate their books by way of an article in a national publication. Pray that the doctors will respond and we will be able to ship the books over in the container in September.



This is Lazarus. His mother was sent in from a village because they couldn't detect a fetal heart tone. His mother came to the hospital thinking she was going to have surgery to deliver her dead baby. But praise the Lord, when he arrived we were able to detect a very faint heart beat that was slowing and indicated he was in trouble. A c-section was performed and after a bit of resuscitation he gave a lusty cry. His mother named him Lazarus because "he was dead and now he isn't"!!!!



These young men are brothers. One was suffering from malaria and was very anemic. The other brother donated a unit of his blood for his brother. Malaria is a very real and dangerous illness in Sierra Leone. Dr. Tom said one of the hardest things to deal with was the babies who die from malaria. Often when they come in they are in a coma and it is too late for the medicines to help. Many people walk for hours to get to the hospital. We feel such an urgent need to get there before the Piersons need to leave.



This is the man in the village who bakes bread. We buy just enough for that day. It is a hard crusty bread that is very tasty. Ova and parasites are an ever present problem so we "flame" the bread prior to eating it. It is a great change from the usual fare of white rice. We are not sure where the increases will end, but rice prices have increased by over 50% this year. This makes feeding a family even more difficult than usual.

As we begin our summer months, take time to appreciate the wonderful blessings this country has to offer. With the price of gas so high many families are reconsidering their usual vacations. Look around at the wonderful amenities right in your own town. Concentrate on the time with your loved ones rather than where you can't go. God bless you and keep praying for our brothers in Sierra Leone. Tom and Karen Asher