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## Praise/Prayer Requests

For Ruth Pierson. 1  
She will begin chemotherapy again as her tests indicate she is no longer in remission.

Praise the Lord! The 2  
shipment made it and except for a slight bit of thievery everything seemed to make it here!

Understanding as we 3  
learn to live in a new culture and the heat. It is really hot now!

The Sierra Leone 4  
Wesleyan Church as they begin to choose a new General Superintendent.

For Mimi and Chris 5  
and Marc who we left behind.

God will work in all 6  
Matt's friend's lives.

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- To become a financial or prayer partner in our ministry [Click Here.](#)
- Asher family fund WM04-0332 or Start Up fund WM06-1272.(solar)
- We thank all the people willing to continue to pray for us
- We currently have 98% of our support budget pledged.

# Ashers In Africa

Volume 1 Issue 10

March/April 2009

## The shipment has come, the babies keep coming, and the hospital is beyond full occupancy!

Wow, where did March go. Just yesterday it seemed that I was writing the February newsletter and now it is already April! We had such a busy month. The hospital is really full. We have had another outbreak of meningitis in the pediatric ward. The number of ! births at the hospital has doubled since we first arrived. It seems like the days just fly by.

Early in March, Karen attended a seminar on maternal and child health with Wanie, our nurse midwife. It was an excellent seminar and we both learned so much. The very next week, back at Kamakwie some of the very scenarios that we studied came to our hospital. We had a very difficult case with a woman who was hypertensive and going into kidney failure. We call this eclampsia and even though we tried to intervene with medications, she continued to progress. We had to explain to the family that even though she was only 28 weeks into the pregnancy that we needed to do a c-section and take the baby to save her life. We explained that with no ventilator or newborn intensive care unit the child would probably not survive. This is hard to explain to a patient in the U.S. But trying to do this through an interpreter and with the difference in culture, was very difficult. We had to wait while the husband walked to a village to talk it over with the patient's mother and father. This is usual

in the culture here, the husband must get the wife's family's permission because if she were to die and he didn't, he could be charged with murder. Finally all were ready and I must say it was with a heavy heart that we went into the operating room. We always pray for the patients before surgery but these prayers were especially intense. I just can not explain to you the joy on the faces of all those present when a baby girl was delivered that immediately began to scream. She was less than two pounds but so full of life ! Within the hour she was nursing and happy with her mother who also did well. Less than 10 days later we discharged the family and she weighed over 3 lbs.! We thank the Lord !

Speaking of the obstetrics department, we are booming. A study was released by unicef that indicated the safest place to deliver a baby in Sierra Leone was in Kamakwie Hospital. This can be attributed to many factors. The group Health Unlimited has a grant to aid in maternal and child care in our district. In conjunction with the hospital they provide transportation to the hospital for difficult OB cases. One of our staff members goes with the driver and helps with the delivery where the woman is or attends her as she is transported to the hospital. Our staff is continually improving their knowledge and care of OB patients. And finally



with more and more success, the confidence in the institution and the transport is growing among the village birth attendants and the village people, so they are not as afraid to come in. I have a little thing I preach in all my teaching sessions to the community health aids, nurses and midwife classes. "If the sun rises and sets on a lady in labor, there is probably something wrong and it is time to arrange for transfer to a center with more advanced care." I also tell them that "it's a sign of a good nurse or birthing attendant to refer, not a sign of defeat. A healthy baby and mother delivered at any institution is success for all involved." The other day I heard one nursing student tell another this same thing. Either this is being taught elsewhere or someone is listening! Either way, it is good! Last week our OB ward was completely full, our alpha ward was full of OB patients and we had two more in the pediatric department because we needed the beds! And as I finished rounds and looked back into the ward, there was a live baby (or two) at every mother's bed! We are thankful! Maybe it is time to build more beds!

WORLD HOPE WAREHOUSE C/O Dr. Asher Kamakwie Wesleyan Hospital 1906 GUS KAPLAN DR. ALEXANDRIA, LA 71301. ALEXANDRIA, LA 71301. This is the address that so many of you know now! We were so surprised when we started opening boxes from the shipment! So many items that we had never seen! So many pill bottles and rolled bandages! Even some baby layettes! You all have been really busy! I want to tell you a neat story. One of our patients in Toledo had washed and folded nearly 15 garbage bags of clothing. We used it to pack items in rather than transport plastic or paper packing material. We were concerned about how to fairly distribute all these clothes. I spoke with one of the pastor's wives about it. She suggested the following plan. The Katherie Wesleyan church can not have a full time minister until they have built a parsonage. The church members had done all they can without any cash money. They have built all the blocks by hand, dried them in the sun and transported them to the building site. They have even obtained some mortar and completed the foundation and built the walls. But the rainy season is about to start here, When the rains come, all the hard work of making the blocks will be lost unless they are able to purchase and coat the outside with concrete. She suggested that the women take the clothing to Women's institute and sell the clothing for a small amount. This would help all the families from the district as they could clothe their families inexpensively, and at the same time earn money for the parsonage! This was a huge success and the concrete is being applied now! Thank you Theresa, your hard work has been multiplied and blessed!

Recently the Sierra Leone government allowed Kamakwie Wesleyan Hospital to become an AID's treatment site for both adult and pediatric patients. Until that time they had limited the supply to only government hospitals and our patients had to travel 5 hours each way each month to get their medications. Obviously, that meant they didn't get them. We are pleased to be able to offer this service to our patients in the Kamakwie area. Hope Graham RN, from Canada, has helped the doctors and staff set up our program. She and Karen recently completed the required training in Freetown. We can now offer free testing also. We were quite surprised at the number of positives we have been receiving, especially in our obstetrics ward. It appears the number of infected people is larger than previously thought.

I promised to show you how we use all those bandages that you are rolling. Next month I will try to include it in the newsletter. We have been so busy that I just haven't had time to take many photos. And it has been very hot! My thermometer said 124 this last week. So please be patient with me. I just want you to know that we really do appreciate all you do for us and for our patients.

Finally, on a sad note. we want you to know that even though we thought Mrs. Pierson had a clear surgery after returning to the U.S., she did in fact find that she has had a reoccurrence of her ovarian cancer. She had started chemotherapy again. Please pray for her and for Chuck as they enter this uncomfortable journey again. Due to this, they will not be able to come and relieve us when we go to the US in June. Please pray that someone will come forward who can come and stay for some or all of our time away to help the Africans. Please email us if you might be able to serve for part of that time.



Sorting clothes for the sale.



Our less than 2 lb. miracle!



Sidewalk chalk is always fun!



Matt leads the singing at the "Mother church"!



### So how is Matthew doing?

Matt has completed his first semester at the Wesleyan secondary school. (even Mom's chemistry exam!) He did very well. The geometry home school program is a bit difficult. We finally found a book to help him as mom and dad are not math wizards.

Last weekend he attended the mass youth movement in one of the villages. This caused a bit of a stir as the chief said he was the first white man to ever spend the night in the village. He had a good time with the

youth and was able to go swimming! He also saw some of the youth gardens and they are growing well. Recently they were able to get enough money to purchase seed for corn and ground nuts and are planting them. This is a project totally imagined and run by the youth. They plant the gardens and do all the work, they will harvest and sell the produce. Then they will use the money to purchase more seed, pay for some tuition to school for students from the Susa tribe (that's where our

local missionary pastor is working) and to pay medical bills for some of the youth that need it. We are pleased with their initiative and hard work! When we are home this summer we hope to be able to tell you more about it! Here is Pastor Albert in the garden!



Every day we pray for you, our prayer and financial supporters. We are very aware that none of this would be possible without you and we are so very thankful. God bless you! Tom, Karen, and Matt Asher