

Habari za leo? (What's the news of the day?)

We hope you all had a happy Independence Day! It came and went over here and we barely noticed. It wasn't Independence Day over here of course. We did stop for a moment and think of all of you watching fireworks while eating hamburgers and hot dogs.

June was packed full of interesting stories:

Cultural- June 1st was my birthday, and it was very special. Two of my Tanzanian friends bought me a kanga (a few yards of fabric with various prints), and took me to the tailor to help me get a dress made. They made sure that I ordered a "cool" style. When I wore the dress to work the next week, everyone at the hospital complemented me and told me how nice I looked. I guess I don't look as nice in my American clothes. Maybe I will have to have another dress made.

The Young Women's Seminar- Young women ages 15-20 from the surrounding villages came together to learn about "Being Good Examples" which was our theme from 1 Tim. 4:12. Unfortunately, I was really sick during the entire first day of the seminar and was unable to attend. I talked to one of the teachers who said that the girls were really enjoying the lessons and discussion groups. The second day I was starting to feel better, so I went down to introduce myself and say a prayer in Swahili. I'm not sure that what I was saying was completely grammatically correct, but I did the best I could. At the end of the seminar, 4 girls decided to follow Christ and were baptized.

Preacher's Seminar- Kyle co-taught with Dr. Black a class entitled "Purity and HIV" and it was very well received. In fact, Kyle is still getting phone calls from preachers who attended the seminar wanting him to come to their home churches to give the same talk. There are still many myths floating around about the HIV virus over here. The more we talk openly about the virus, the better the population will be able to love and accept those who have it as well as prevent its spread.

Medical Team- We had a team of 2 American doctors, 1 Nurse practitioner, 2 Nurses, 2 pre-med students, and 6 nursing students join us for 3 weeks. Half of the group was from Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas, and the other half was from Indianapolis, Indiana. It was such an encouragement to have them here. They were wonderful clinicians, culturally sensitive, and spiritually focused. They continuously showed the love of Jesus and were able to make a lasting impact on the employees as well as the patients here. We really hated to see them go.

Roza's Story (as told by Kyle)- Roza is a 23 year old young lady who came to us several weeks ago with a badly infected c-section incision. Her social history was one that would be fit for any soap-opera. Her 3-week-old child she was caring for was not her husband's child, and the mother of the baby's father was caring for Roza and her new baby at her bedside. The guilt and frustration this grandmother was carrying was seen in the lines of her face as she told us how disappointed she was in her child's decisions. Yet the love she felt for this innocent child was driving her to hold and care for the baby

while his mother was suffering on the verge of death. The grandmother cried at her bedside saying that because of this young lady's decisions, she had been cursed by an evil spirit and would certainly die.

The patient had waited a long time before coming to the hospital and she was already showing signs of severe sepsis. The doctors assessed her and decided to operate and clean-out the infected tissue. They knew that she was so sick that a full-recovery was going to need the powerful hand of the Great Physician to bring her through the tough times. Our two visiting doctors took on the challenge and performed the large operation.

After the surgery, she continued to struggle. She had waited so long to come to the hospital that all of the staff had little hope for her to walk out of the hospital. Her situation continued to worsen and she became very confused and even violent at one point. Unable to breastfeed, her child was getting weaker and weaker, and Melissa and I began mixing some Nido and teaching the mother to feed the child with a small syringe. Several of the Harding students decided that all of the medical efforts had been exhausted but they were still concerned about Roza's soul. They talked with her, prayed with her, and read some familiar verses from a Swahili Bible. She finally told them that she wanted to be right with God. They told about how we can seek to have a relationship with him and then later she said she wanted to change her life. She told the students she wanted to start a new life in Christ and show it by being baptized. We lifted her frail body into a Land Cruiser and took her to one of the Mission houses. That afternoon we saw a promiscuous, guilt-laden lady arise from the water as a new creature-innocent and new. The next morning, we were greeted by the previously prostrate patient, sitting up in her bed with a big smile on her face. "The evil spirit has been lifted" she said. "God has healed me."

One week later, Roza was discharged home - physically very weak, but now guilt-free and walking on a new path in life. Praise God for His healing and for bringing one of his "lost sheep" home.

Thank you again for all of your support and prayers.

Love, Melissa and Kyle