

YIELD

Ministries of Brook Seekins
in Malawi

January 2021

Greetings from Malawi!

"God is Good." "All the Time." That is a common saying in churches here both in English and Chichewa. During this past year, I was reminded of that perspective often. No matter what we face, we know that our God is good, all the time.

Covid-19 has affected the entire world in some way or another. I'm sure each of you has a story to share of how you were directly or indirectly affected in the past year. I was in the US to speak in mission conferences in the East and Midwest. It was great to see some of you last winter. We held conferences in Michigan at several churches when Covid-19 brought it all to a screeching halt! I went back to Ohio to stay with family. There I was able to communicate with some churches through zoom and videos. I also had the opportunity to help out in my local Ohio church and with family. But it was not what I had planned for those months. When it came time to buy tickets to return to Malawi, the borders were closed. So I kept watching and waiting for them to open and the opportunity for me to return. My original return was set for mid-June, but borders did not open until September and by then

my work permit had expired. So we had to wait for immigration here to approve it before I had a green light to return. Thankfully, the green light was given, and I returned in November. Shortly thereafter I was able to get my work permit stamped in my passport and I am free to move around the country for another two years.

Covid-19 is here in Malawi. In fact, since the holidays, the numbers have been rising. They have closed land borders once again but the airport is open for now. Testing is available for a price and limited in locations. Yet we have seen some government leaders die recently and we anticipate more regulations soon. Right now each shop has mask requirements and handwashing stations or someone putting hand sanitizer on your hands as you walk in! Larger churches have limited numbers or have gone to two services. Smaller churches are meeting with some caution in spacing. But in life, people need to do business in order to eat. For several months schools shut down and in the fall they reopened. Many kids are behind and many high school students have quit school because of complications of boarding schools and school fees.



Learning to set up Zoom meetings is a new norm.



Zoom meetings became the norm with churches and the Malawi team

We are careful to not have large seminars or conferences, but small meetings are happening for now. I am excited to start back in piano lessons and was glad to see some of my students play in church for the New Year's Day celebration. I have added new students and new locations of teaching as well. This will help our churches in their future worship services.

It was exciting to see Mark, one of my former Bible study students, start teaching a youth group in one of our newer churches this January. They had just finished their building recently and are ready to start new ministries. I will be joining him and helping him often.

Pastor Evance and I have had a few meetings concerning national youth programs. We have seen fruit from the trainings we did a year ago setting up teachers for youth in many churches. We will be holding future trainings this year in order to encourage those who are doing well and to train others who have been chosen to start anew in their churches. Pray for wisdom as we schedule meetings and training sessions with regional leaders around the country. We hope to set up new systems to help guide youth in God's Word and in life decisions.

Both Pastor Evance and I have been translating and preparing new curriculum to teach and make available for these leaders. Recently, I have pulled out some teachings we used in Tanzania and I have been translating them into English in order to have them put into Chichewa! I have restarted my Chichewa lessons but still have a ways to go before I can write curriculum in Chichewa!

Continue to pray for health and wisdom as we seek to serve even during the virus. Pray for the youth as they seek to study and grow during these unique

times. Pray for leaders to rise up who will help to lead youth in their regions and local churches to grow in their faith. Praise the Lord for opening the door for me to return.

I have sent frequent email updates about what has been happening in my life and ministry. If you are not receiving these email updates, please let me know and I will gladly add you to my mailing lists. Sometimes your email has changed and I only have your old address so I can easily update it if you would like!

Thanks so much for your faithful prayers and support, even during these trying times. I am thankful that we do not need to fear because we know that in all things our God is Good! In Mark 10:18 Jesus says, "No one is good except One, that is, God."

By His grace,
Brook



10-year-old Blessing is a new piano student.



Mark, back left, with his new class along with an elder who is assisting him. Believe it or not these kids are 13 and older.



I was able to help teach about missions in VBS in OHIO.