

International Partnership Orientation Packet



"...a threefold cord is not quickly broken."
Ecclesiastes 4:12

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Malawi...
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Pittsburgh Presbytery International Partnership Ministry Team

Partnership Mission Statement

Our mission as the International Partnership of Pittsburgh Presbytery, PC(USA) is to carry out God's plan for His world through mutual encouragement in our faith and life journey's in partnership with the Synod of Blantyre of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) in Malawi, Africa, and with the South Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church in South Sudan, Africa.

The purpose of this guide is to help to prepare and equip members from the Pittsburgh Presbytery for travel to the Synod of Blantyre in Malawi. Please be aware that daily life for our partners in Malawi is different from that experienced by our partners in South Sudan. This resource will help to facilitate visits to Malawi.

Facts about the Malawi Partnership

- ♥ Formed in 1991
- ♥ 40 Pittsburgh congregations partnered with 40 Synod of Blantyre congregations
- ♥ Over 500 Pittsburgh Presbyterians have visited Malawi
- ♥ Over 300 Malawians have visited Pittsburgh
- ♥ Blantyre Synod special projects and the Blantyre Synod Health and Development Commission (BSHDC) are ways to send donations to Malawi for projects such as education, medical support, scholarships, capital improvements, etc.
- ♥ Since the inception of the partnership with Blantyre Synod, we have looked to Paul's letter to the Romans for direction: "...that we may be mutually encouraged..." Romans 1:12



Facts about the Synod of Blantyre

- ♥ 1.6 million members, grows by 6% per year
- ♥ Fewer than 150 pastors
- ♥ 600 congregations and 1,000 prayer houses (prayer houses become churches at 200 members)
- ♥ 18 presbyteries
- ♥ Synod leadership consists of the General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary, Moderator, and Vice Moderator. They serve four year terms which are staggered to preserve continuity in leadership.



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Facts about Malawi (a)

- ♥ Known as: "The Warm Heart of Africa"
- ♥ Slightly smaller than Pennsylvania - mountains, valley, lakes
- ♥ Population: 17,377,468
- ♥ Language: English and Chichewa are official languages, other languages important regionally
- ♥ Literacy rate: 74.8%
- ♥ Life expectancy at birth: 59.99
- ♥ British Colony, Nyasaland from 1891 - 1964
- ♥ From 1964 - 1994, single-party rule under President Hastings Kamuzu Banda
- ♥ Since 1994 multi-party democracy, elections held every 5 years
- ♥ Capital city: Lilongwe,
- ♥ Commercial center and largest city: Blantyre
- ♥ Religious affiliations: 82.6% Christian (Roman Catholic and C.C.A.P.), 13.0% Muslim, other 1.9%, none 2.5%
- ♥ Per capita income: \$900 (2013 estimate)
- ♥ Economy: agriculture (tobacco, tea, sugar), industry and services
- ♥ Monetary unit: Kwacha (MWK)
- ♥ HIV/AIDS adult prevalence rate: 10.8%
- ♥ Poverty level: 53% live on approximately \$1.60/day, 10% of the population has access to electricity and it is the 3rd or 4th poorest country in the world (depending on the source)



Maps of Malawi



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Protocol for Health Emergencies U.S.

Visitors to Malawi

This protocol is designed to provide guidelines for dealing with health emergencies during Partnership journeys. Each health emergency is different; no protocol can provide solutions to every problem that may arise during the course of a long-term partnership. Whenever possible, decisions regarding treatment should be made in partnership, with the best interest of the patient and the partnership in mind.

1. Pre-existing medical conditions must be identified on the application for travel.
2. Partnership Committee will require applicant to obtain a doctor's approval for travel, at the applicant's expense.
3. Pittsburgh Presbytery Partnership Ministry Team (or Malawi committee from partner church for congregational visits) will review applications and make judgment concerning the feasibility of travel for those with pre-existing medical conditions.
4. Travelers must provide evidence of holding health insurance that is applicable in international travel. The presbytery will make it possible for travelers to obtain such insurance if needed.
5. Travelers must sign a medical waiver indicating that they are traveling at their own risk, that they have no known medical conditions that are not identified on the application, and that medical care is their own financial responsibility.
6. If a health emergency occurs while a U.S. traveler is in Malawi, a decision to seek professional medical attention will be made by a combined group of trip leaders from the U.S. and Malawi, if possible.
7. Trip leaders will make all necessary decisions concerning notification of family members of the traveler's medical condition.
8. In treating the patient, the goals will be to:
 - Make the patient comfortable
 - Prepare the patient to rejoin the group or to return to the United States
 - Treat presenting symptoms with a short term therapy
9. In treating the patient, the goals will not be to:
 - § Engage in long-term treatment of illness
 - § Seek out or treat pre-existing medical conditions
 - § Engage in extensive testing



Basic Chichewa

Vowel Sounds: A = ah, E = a, I = ee, O = oh, U = ooh

Greetings

Hello
Response to Moni
Hello (all of you)
Hello sir (father)
Hello ma'am (mother)
Hello Pastor
Hello (to Pastors Wife)
How are you?
I am well. How are you?

Moni
Zikomo
Moni onse
Moni abombo
Moni amayi
Moni Abusa
Moni Mayi Abusa
Muli bwanji
Ndili bwino. Kaya inu?

Morning

How did you sleep?
I slept well.

Magona bwanji?
Ndagona bwino.

Afternoon

How is your day?
My day is going well.
How have you been since I saw you?
I have been well and you?

Mwaswera bwanji?
Ndaswera bwino.
Madzuka bwanji?
Dadzuka bwino, kaya inu?

Arriving at the House

I'm home (entering)
Enter. Please come in.
Be seated (on the chair)

Odi
Odini. Lowani.
Khalani (pappando)

Leaving

I'm going. (I've gone.)
Go well (to one or more departing)
Stay well (to one or more remaining)

Ndapita
Pitani bwino.
Tsalani bwino.

Phrases and Short Sentences

Thank you (very much)
OK
I'm sorry
I don't know

Zikomo (kwambiri)
Chabwino
Pepani
Kaya



Phrases and Short Sentences (Continued)

Maybe
Yes
No
Certainly, Truly, Indeed
He/She isn't here or There isn't any
It doesn't matter
I'm glad, I'm happy
Please help me
What is your name?
I want...

Kapena
Ee or Inde
Ai or lai
Ndithu (di), Zoonadi
Palibe
Palibe kanthu
Ndakondwera
Mundithandize
Dzina lanu ndani?
Ndilikufuna



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Meals/Foods

Breakfast
Lunch
Dinner
Bread
Corn Flour
A staple dish, made of ufa
Tea
Coffee
Salt
Sweets
Chicken
Rice
Fish
Lake Malawi specialty fish
Groundnuts (peanuts)

Mfisulo
Khomaliro
Mgonero
Buledi
Ufa
Nsima
Tiyi
Khofi
Mchere
Switi
Nkhuku
Mpunga
Nsomba
Chambo
Mtedzu



Nouns

Bed
Luggage, stuff
Toilet
Hospital
Child, children
Pastor
Pastor's Wife
Sir, Father
Ma'am, Mother
Grandmother, grandfather
Everyone

Kama
Katundu
Chimbudzi
Chipatala
Mwana, ana
Abusa
Mayi Abusa
Abambo
Amayi
Agogo
Onse



Money

How much is it?

Mukuchita bwanji?

Church

Let us pray.
Hymn
God bless you (all).

Tipemphere
Nyimbo
Mulungu akudalitsen(i).

Questions

Who?
What?
When?
Where?
How?

Ndani?
Chiyani?
Liti?
Kuti?
Bwanji?

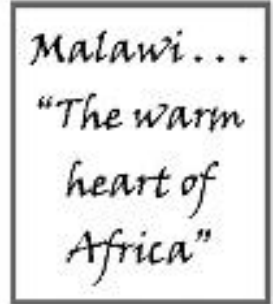
Trip Cancellation Policy Statement

Short-term mission trips often inherently include a certain element of risk. Part of the trip processing will include the completion of a "Release and Indemnification Agreement".

In this time of heightened world uncertainty, the Pittsburgh Presbytery Malawi Partnership Executive Committee and the trip leadership team will closely monitor the U.S. State Department advisories, travel warnings, and consular information sheets to ensure that we have as much accurate information as possible to make a balanced risk assessment. We will also gather regular up-to-date input from the Synod of Blantyre leadership regarding situations internal to Malawi.

While we fully expect the trip to go forward, there may be certain circumstances, which would result in cancellation of the trip. For example, if the U.S. State Department issues a RED alert that includes East-Southern Africa, the trip participants would be notified of the Presbytery's "intent to cancel". A final decision regarding cancellation would be made by the Partnership leadership in consultation with the Synod of Blantyre leadership.

Depending on the timing of such a decision, refunds of deposits and money already paid toward the trip may not be possible, although every



effort will be made to provide refunds in the event of cancellation of the trip.

Refunds will not be available to individuals who cancel their own participation in the trip, when the trip goes on as planned.

It would be a good idea to consider getting your own trip travel insurance so your cancellation, lost luggage, medical problems, delayed flights, etc. would be covered or refundable under certain conditions.

Fund Raising Ideas

Sometimes it's hard to think about asking people for money even for a trip like this. You are not on a solo mission... it's a partnership! You are going as a representative of the hundreds who cannot make the journey. By financially investing in your journey, they are given the chance to be included in a once-in-a-lifetime trip. Give them the chance to say "no" if they need to. The best fundraisers are those that invite participation and investment in the idea of the partnership. Try to think of ways that will help the folks at home be in prayer for the folks in Malawi.

Malawi-Style Dinner

Have a chicken and rice meal including a program geared to helping the attendees understand the history of the partnership and the benefits to both parties. Invite a past participant or someone from the Partnership Committee to speak or show slides or lead songs.



Support Letters

Send a letter describing your hopes and God's calling to you to three or four dozen friends. Ask them to pray for you and invite them to make a contribution to the church's mission account in your name (clear this with the Mission Committee ahead of time!). Your friends and family will have a chance to give you what you really need for your birthday and you'll have a chance to involve them in the mission of Jesus Christ.

Marathons

Organize a "Miles to Malawi" walk-a-thon, a basketball shoot, etc. You might increase the church's investment in the mission by getting another group in the church (youth group, women's group, etc.) to sponsor this event.

Promise Auction: Sell donated items, services, tours, etc. to the highest bidder. This could work well in conjunction with another event, such as a dinner or coffee hour.

Sell Stock in Your Mission

To raise \$2,500, create 100 stock certificates and sell them for \$25 each. In addition to the certificate, you could treat stockholders to a simple "send-off" breakfast just for stockholders, make sure each stockholder gets a postcard from Malawi, and promise a personal visit upon your return to share some of your experience about the trip.

"Sell" T-Shirts

Sell T-shirts with your church logo, but put the profits toward the trip and actually take the T-shirts to distribute at the partner church.

To record your fundraising progress, you could create a bulletin board with a map of the world showing the path from Pittsburgh to Malawi, divided into units that correspond to the money you need to raise. As contributions are made, you could move a cutout person farther along the path, or you could add a new cutout for every \$25 so that you'd eventually have people holding hands from Pittsburgh to Malawi.



General Information for Travelers in Malawi

Currency

The unit of currency is the Malawian kwacha (MWK). This is divided into 100 tambala (t). Bank notes include MK1000, MK500, MK200, MK100, MK50, MK20, MK10 and MK5. Coins include MK10, MK5, MK1, 50t, 20t, 10t, 5t, 2t, and 1t, although the small tambala coins are virtually worthless. The use of tambala or kwacha coins for personal transactions is generally considered an insult; if you receive these coins try to use them only in commercial transactions. You can see the current currency exchange rate at <http://www.xe.com/currency/mwk-malawian-kwacha>.

Security

To keep your money and other valuables (such as your passport and air tickets) safe from pickpockets, the best place is out of sight under a shirt or skirt, or inside your trousers. You can make or buy a pouch that goes around your neck or waist. Some travelers go for “invisible pockets,” money belts and other imaginative devices. Keep the bulk of your money here, and then use a separate wallet with just a little money for day to day purchases. Avoid the mistake some travelers make of keeping their money carefully hidden but then exposing the lot when purchasing something in a crowded market.

Your Malawian hosts will take good care of you. Keep a low profile; it's best to limit wearing jewelry; do not take a lot of money or pull it out and “flash” it around. Do not go anywhere by yourself and do not go anywhere without a Malawian host. Pray and trust God for His protection.

Time

Malawi's time is GMT/UTC +2. The country does not observe daylight saving time. When its noon in Malawi, its 5:00 AM in Pittsburgh, EST or 6:00 AM DST.

Water

When you are in Malawi it is perfectly fine to drink coffee, tea, soft drinks and bottled water. When given a choice, choose one of these options. The water in Blantyre is processed as well, but it is generally a good rule to avoid water that has not been boiled prior to drinking even in Blantyre. This includes ice cubes. Take a couple of bottles with you



when leaving even for a day trip. The Partnership Committee and churches are used to this and should have plenty of water available.

Eating

Before eating, a member of the family will pass around a bowl of water, or jug and bowl, for washing hands. If it comes to you first as honored guest and you're not sure of the routine, indicate that the bowl should be taken to the head of the family, then do what they do when it comes to you. The Malawian staple, maize meal (nsima), is the center of nearly every meal. It is normally eaten with regular silverware but in villages they eat with the right hand from a communal pot. Roll the Nsima into balls, dent a small "bowl" in it, and dip it in some sort of sauce, meat gravy, or vegetables and eat.

Appropriate Dress

Malawi is still a very conservative country. As a general rule, dress simply, neatly and conservatively.

- Women: Dresses, culottes with wide legs, or a skirt and a blouse; no slacks, tops with spaghetti straps, tank tops or tube tops. It is best to wear blouses or T-shirts with sleeves (either short or long). Denim skirts are great because they don't show dirt as quickly. You may want a pair or two of slacks for plane or back country travel. Dresses and/or skirts should be below the knee.
- Men: Slacks and sport shirts. Sport coat and tie for church and formal partnership occasions.
- Pastors: Collar for any Church or official function. It actually is preferable that you wear a collar at most times.
- Shoes: Open toed shoes (while comfortable) allow your feet to get very dirty. Sturdy walking shoes are a better choice. Sneakers or hiking shoes are OK for casual wear. Dress shoes for Church functions.
- Follow the lead of your hosts in all matters of dress and etiquette.

Guidelines for Women

- Pay attention to appropriate "cues" for male/female interaction. You may need to be more "submissive" than you are used to being.
- We recommend little or no makeup, and limit your jewelry (wedding band and small earrings).
- Pack any sanitary supplies that you will need for the trip. If possible they should all be paper products. Be sure to include travel sized toilet paper, baby wipes and hand sanitizer. Ziplock bags are a good idea as well. Be sure to be mindful of your host's



feelings - for instance, you would not sanitize your hands immediately after the ritual hand washing before a meal. Also, if you are in a remote location and have to use a pit toilet do not complain or make a big deal out of it!

It is a good idea to take extra sweaters or jackets and go with the layered look so you can be warm enough in the morning and peel off layers as the day warms up. We have also had one group experience snow in Johannesburg on their way home! Since planes load and unload on the tarmac you may be glad to have something along to help you keep warm.

Guidelines for Group Travel

1. Be cooperative: Ignore minor problems you can't solve yourself. Take any major problem you can't resolve, to your team leader. Perhaps something can be done. Perhaps not. Not everything will go as planned or as you might wish. The leaders will do everything they can, within reason, to make this a memorable and positive experience for everyone.
2. Be a team player: For example, don't ever go off by yourself without checking with your team leaders. This guideline is operative even if a Malawian missionary friend invites you to go with them. When seeking permission from your team leader, don't apply pressure on them. If their decision is counter to what you want to do, don't pout or hold resentment. Please simply obey. The welfare of the team and team morale are more important than any one individual's personal preference or pleasure.
3. Be positive and avoid criticizing others: Critical thoughts are best kept to oneself in this context. Criticism can poison the waters of fellowship and unity. There will be ample opportunity for comments in the evaluation.
4. Be sensitive to everyone, especially to those who will welcome and host you. You were selected because the interview team believed you were a "Christian lover." Prove them right!
5. Be early/prompt for the following; don't make others wait for you:
 - a. announced meetings
 - b. departures (if your flight is delayed for any reason, remain close enough to the gate to hear boarding calls)
6. Be aware of where your roommate is at all times: Be responsible for one another.
7. Be flexible. If you can bend, you will not break.



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The Gift of Partnership: Covenant of Giving & Receiving

What you are about in this mission pilgrimage is far more significant than offering help to the Christians in Malawi. Many people will have the idea that Christian mission, either short or long term, is a form of charity. It would be arrogant for us to believe that we could fix anything in Africa. God may choose to do that through someone who goes, if something indeed does need "fixing," but that kind of change only comes from God. Malawi's problems are enormous, as are ours here in the United States, but changing anything that is causing those problems is for the Malawian Christians to do. If you are going to change anything, it will likely be yourselves that are changed. You go to see with new eyes and hear with new ears. You go to learn, to give, to receive, and to celebrate the love God has given to all who are part of this Blantyre-Pittsburgh Partnership. You go as agents of mutual encouragement in the things of faith.

Each party in this Partnership has gifts which, when shared with the other, will enrich the life and witness of the other. Second Corinthians 8:13-15 is one key to understanding this. We in Pittsburgh stand in need of the Malawian Church's gifts of joy, faith, love, music, simplicity, and Spirit. The gifts we offer the church in Africa include administration, money, music, love, faith, and Spirit. The gospel calls us to build each other up... to be mutually encouraged by each other's faith.

In a quote attributed to an Australian Aboriginal woman, this idea is spoken well: "If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up in mine, then let us work together." Our liberation and wholeness in Christ is bound up with that of the Malawians and with people throughout the world, including our own neighborhoods here in Pittsburgh.

When the partnership was established between the Synod of Blantyre and Pittsburgh Presbytery, both parties attempted to be sensitive to the role that money can play in a relationship. Money is a commodity and symbol that can often give those who have it power and control over those who do not have it. From the beginning, our hope for this partnership was that money would not be a primary factor in determining our relationship with one another. Since one part of this partnership (Pittsburgh) had abundant financial resources and the other party (Synod of Blantyre) did not, we expected there to be many challenges in this area if our relationship was going to be truly mutual.



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When you are in Malawi and even after you return home, you will probably be asked for financial support. These requests may be both direct and implied. They may come from an individual or from a congregation. You will probably receive letters asking you to make it possible for a son or daughter to come to America for an education or to receive expensive medical treatment. It is culturally acceptable to ask for money in Malawi so please do not be offended.

You will also encounter people on the streets of Blantyre and in Malawian villages whose circumstances are desperate. They may be hungry, handicapped, unemployed, or sick. Even the poorest travelers from Pittsburgh are rich when compared to many of the people you will meet. Some Malawians will assume you have inexhaustible financial resources. Please consider the following guidelines for giving that have been developed in conversation with our Malawian partners. They are part of our covenant of partnership and not to be taken lightly if the partnership is to continue successfully:

1. At the request of the General Secretary, any Malawian individual requesting financial assistance should be rejected outright, and there is no need to refer them to the General Secretary. By referring the request to the General Secretary, we are giving people the hope and impression that we are willing to contribute to them. Then, when their requests are denied, it puts the General Secretary in a very bad position.
2. Requests from church sessions should be referred to the General Secretary and the Blantyre Synod Health and Development Commission (BSHDC). The Synod would like to have the first opportunity of evaluating and responding to requests. They have better insight into evaluating need and overseeing use of grant money than do people many thousands of miles away.
3. If the Synod of Blantyre determines that the need is valid, it may respond to the need itself through an existing program of the Synod. If Synod leaders believe the need is valid but are unable to respond themselves, the Synod of Blantyre will submit a request for help to Pittsburgh Presbytery or another of its partner organizations. We publicize the need and provide information on how to support the project.
4. The only kinds of gifts that are excluded from this arrangement are:
 - a. Financial gifts to your partner congregation may be made but are limited to \$2,000 per year. For security, it is best to send the check through Pittsburgh Presbytery, which will then wire the money to the appropriate account in Malawi. Make sure to mark on the memo line of the check where the



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money is to be directed. Send it to Dorothy Winter, Pittsburgh Presbytery, 901 Allegheny Ave., Pittsburgh 15223. Funds are wired once a month near the end of each month.

- b. Small personal gifts may be made to friends by check sent through the mail as noted in 4a. It is not recommended that any such gift exceed \$100.

Do not respond to requests with promises. What we want to avoid is for money to become a problem that threatens our mutual relationship in Jesus Christ. We ask you to abide by these guidelines that have been carefully constructed with input from Malawian leaders.

Additional Notes

The Synod of Blantyre has requested that all funds designated for famine relief be channeled through the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. The Synod will then handle the purchasing of food in bulk and the distribution. (Most churches do not have the resources to purchase food in bulk nor means of distribution.)

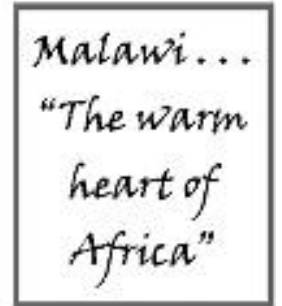
Any gift over the amount of \$2,000/year/church is contrary to the spiritual and financial guidelines established by the partnership. (See item #2) Use of a gift over that amount is best left to the discretion of the Synod - they would be able to better determine where the greatest need lies.

If your church has a project being considered which will require more funding, please talk with one of the Co-Chairs first.

Guidelines for Gift Giving & Receiving

Small gifts can be a wonderful way of communicating love, friendship and cross-cultural exchange. However, gift giving can get out of hand. It can underscore our differences rather than building a partnership in which the gifts of both parties are celebrated. Please ensure that gift giving does not become central to your experience in Malawi. Consider the message conveyed by each gift. In all cases, the focus of the trip should be on building relationships rather than on giving and receiving gifts.

There are basically two categories of gifts that will be addressed here — group gifts of partnership and personal gifts to partner congregations.



Group Gifts of Partnership

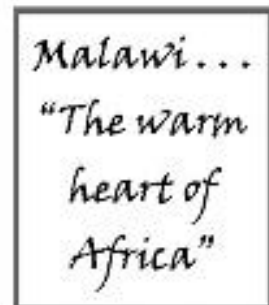
Each traveler is permitted by the international airlines to check two suitcases, weighing no more than 50 pounds each. You are also entitled to carry two pieces of hand luggage on board with you (one carry-on and one personal item (purse / camera bag)). We strongly recommend that each traveler plan to carry all personal belongings such as gifts, change of clothes, medicines and toiletries in your carry-on bag. Some space in your checked luggage may be reserved by the team for group partnership gifts, mission materials or items requested by the Synod of Blantyre.

People from Pittsburgh may ask you to bring a whole host of things, but please reserve the space in the extra suitcase or box for items identified by the trip leaders. We suggest you limit the things you carry for others to letters and other small things as you will need the space for yourself.

Personal Gifts to Partner Congregations

If your own congregation has a partner congregation in Malawi, it is customary for your congregation to give a gift to your partner congregation. Gifts that have been well received in the past include:

- A church directory
- Church history information (perhaps from an anniversary celebration)
- Framed photo of the church (replace the glass with plastic, or laminate the photo for ease of travel)
- A letter from your pastor or session
- New or used books, especially Bibles, commentaries, study guides, devotional materials, or Sunday School materials
- Liturgical items such as banners, paraments, embroidered napkins for covering communion elements, or collars or stoles for the pastor
- Partnership T-shirts or Christian theme T-shirts
- Presbyterian or Christian symbol pins or small crosses (in Malawi only clergy wear cross necklaces so avoid these)
- Tambourines or other small percussion instruments



Guidelines for Photography & Videotaping

- It is advisable to appoint one individual on the team to take photos and one to take video, which can be shared later with the entire team. It is much more culturally sensitive than having the entire team focused on taking pictures, each with his or her own equipment. It also frees team-members to enjoy the experience, without the pressure of capturing it all on film.
- As soon as a camera is brought out most Malawians will want to have their “snap” taken but it is a good idea to ask for permission first.
- If you are using a digital camera, the subjects will be delighted to see themselves on your camera. Be sure to take enough film/extra memory cards as these are very difficult to find in Malawi and may not work in your U.S. camera if you are able to find them.

Sharing Your Home Photos

Taking a pocket-sized photo album with you is a great way to begin a relational discussion with people that you meet on your mission trip. It’s a no-pressure way to “break-the-ice” as you get to know your hosts, and it also makes a very nice gift for your host family or other special people that you meet. Gear your album towards sharing what your life is like as a Christian in the United States.

D0s

- Include photos of people who are important to you; your family, close friends, church groups, Sunday School class, small group Bible study, Youth Group, etc.
- Include only photos that have a “neutral” background (snow, trees, public parks, blank wall, etc.) rather than one taken in an atmosphere that would accentuate material differences in our cultures.
- Include appropriate photos of celebrations and church activities, including wedding ceremonies, baptisms, Easter sunrise service, confirmation, graduations, etc.
- Malawians are very interested in what grows here, the types of animals we have, the landscape, seasonal changes, snow, autumn leaves, etc. Photos of farms, local flora, fauna, landscapes and snow yield much animated discussion.



DON'Ts

- DO NOT include photos with your house, car, boat, or other evidence of material wealth.
- DO NOT include photos of celebrations that may include drinking alcoholic beverages, smoking or social dancing, all of which may be offensive to conservative Christian hosts.
- DO NOT include photos of anyone who is inappropriately dressed by Malawian standards.

Notes to & from Home

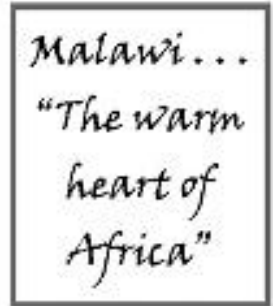
In preparing your family for this trip, one thing some of us have found helpful are daily notes to be read while you are away. This takes two forms, both of which require advance preparation.

Notes to Home

Especially if you have children, you may want to leave them a note, card, or small gift that could be given to them each day you are away as a reminder that you are thinking of them. These may be presented to them at a regular time each day, maybe bedtime or breakfast, when they can think, talk, and pray about you.

Looking over your schedule (if we have gotten it), you might try to anticipate what you would be doing on a particular day and tell them what you expect or where you will be. Loving notes of reassurance of your care for them and your return – including all the stories you'll be able to share of your adventures are a good idea. Even a funny cartoon or joke, or a brief "remember when" will brighten their day. What about a favorite and/or reassuring scripture? Or a special prayer for them? One set of parents found scripture cards in a packet at a Christian bookstore and had the care-taking grandparents leave a card on the child's pillow each night. Use your imagination and your knowledge of your children to know what is most appropriate for each child.

And don't think just of the children – maybe there are others too, who might appreciate such care while you are away – your spouse, your parents, etc. (Every day may not be necessary.)



Notes from Home

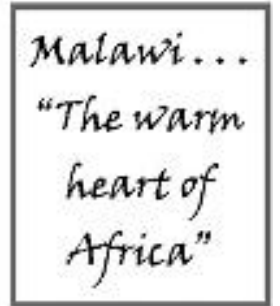
While you are thinking of and preparing your notes, have your family prepare notes for you to open each day while you are away. Divide the days among your family members so you get one note from one person each day – that is on Monday there’s a note from Mary, on Tuesday from Jack, on Wednesday from Laura.

These can be drawings, jokes, scripture, or just an “I love you.” Have them put each in a dated envelope (they can decorate the envelope too!). No fair peeking – you must wait until the date to open each, so it will be a surprise. When you are lonely and far from home, these notes are really a great boost.

Email notification of team arrival and group events will be sent out, or put on the Malawi Partnership website. Instructions on this will be provided to all trip participants.

Daily Journal

Depending on the age and inclination of your children/family, you might also encourage them to keep a log or journal of the day’s events, much like you will be doing. “What shall we tell Daddy/Mommy about today?” Maybe just a quick entry at dinner or bedtime will help fill you in when you return – since you’ll have stories to tell, this can help jog their memories of stories to tell you too.



Packing List for Trip to Malawi

- Passport (and passport belt)
- Addresses of supporters and friends
- Bible, pen, journal, camera, batteries and memory cards
- English/Chichewa word and phrase list
- If you wear contacts, take your glasses too (or spare glasses)
- Prescription medications (in their original containers)
- Malaria medication, motion sickness medication
- Ministry materials (Bibles, bible studies, literature, music, etc.)
- Cash for souvenirs (approximately \$100)
- Culturally sensitive photos of your family
- Small gifts for hosts & friends - i.e. flag pins, reading glasses (which can be found at most dollar stores and are most popular at the 1.5 & 2.0 strengths), and spiritual gifts - study Bible, bible studies, inspirational t art, WWJD bracelets, picture of yourself
- Toiletries - scent free shampoo, soap & deodorant, toothbrush, toothpaste, razor, aspirin or Tylenol
- Towel for bathing
- Small, battery-operated travel alarm clock
- Sun screen, sun hat
- "Mountain Suds" or similar bio-degradable detergent for hand-washing clothes; asking Malawians to wash outer clothing is acceptable but asking for underwear to be washed is never done as it is insulting
- Bug repellent with "100% Deet"
- Sense of humor
- Appropriate (modest) clothing for play and for Church
- Lightweight jacket or sweatshirt/windbreaker
- Flashlight and spare batteries
- Pepto-Bismol, Imodium or similar anti-diarrheal
- Extra pair of sturdy shoes
- Wet wipes and hand sanitizer, travel tissue and zip lock baggies for garbage
- Musical instrument if applicable
- Inexpensive relational toys, games, or puzzles to play with kids (UNO is great)
- An empty carry-on to bring gifts home, or plan to give away some of your clothing

Don't Bring:

- MP3 or DVD players, cell phones, PDAs or other electronic devices
- Too many clothes
- Inappropriate photographs
- Prized possessions (be prepared to give anything and everything away)
- Clothing with unacceptable advertisements
- Immodest clothing
- Expensive items
- Electrical appliances such as hair dryers and curling irons

REMEMBER: If you bring it, you must be able to carry it.



Pre-Trip Health Preparations

Make sure you're healthy before you start traveling. That includes being well rested and in shape. A typical day in Malawi will start at 6AM and end at 11PM. You will do a great deal of walking. Don't wait until you get to Malawi to exercise those "out-of-shape" muscles. Start getting in shape now.

Make sure your teeth are OK. If you wear glasses or contact lenses take a spare pair and your prescription.

If you require a particular medication take an adequate supply, as it may not be available locally. Take the prescription or, better still, part of the packaging showing the generic rather than the brand name (which may not be locally available), as it will make getting replacements easier. It's wise to have a legible prescription or a letter from your doctor with you to prove that you legally use the medication to avoid any problems.

Passport Information

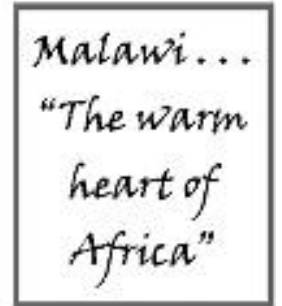
You must have a valid U.S. issued Passport Book for travel to Malawi. Passport Cards are NOT acceptable for international travel by air. Visit the State Department web site at: <http://travel.state.gov/passport> to download forms and instructions necessary to apply for a new passport or to renew or add Visa pages to an existing passport.

If you already have a Passport Book:

- Confirm that the expiration date is at least 6 months beyond the trip return date. If it is not, use Form DS-82 to renew your passport by mail. Go to the State Department website for instructions and eligibility.
- Ensure that you have 2-4 empty Visa Pages. If you do not, use Form DS-4085 to request more Visa Pages by mail. Go to the State Department website for instructions and eligibility.

If you do NOT have a current Passport Book:

- Schedule an appointment at a local Passport Acceptance Facility (such as participating U.S. Post offices). Go to <http://iafdb.travel.state.gov> to search for locations near you.
- You will need to provide proof of U.S. citizenship (such as a certified birth certificate) and proof of identity (such as a valid drivers' license or social security card or employee id). You will



need to provide an acceptable passport photo or have one taken at the facility for an additional fee.

Passport Fees:

- The fee to add additional blank Visa Pages is \$82.00
- The fee to renew a Passport Book is \$110.00
- The fee to apply for a new Passport Book is \$135.00
- The fee to expedited service is an additional \$60.00
- The fee for overnight delivery is an additional \$12.85

Processing Times:

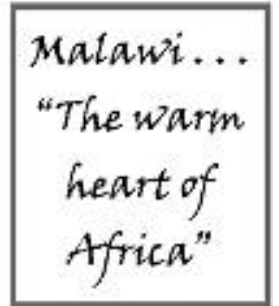
- Routine service takes approximately 4-6 weeks from the time of application.
- Expedited service takes approximately 2-3 weeks, when overnight delivery is requested and paid both ways (to and from the passport agency).

Important Notes about Passports:

- You must receive your passport 5-6 weeks prior to your travel date, so your passport name and number can be provided to the airline as required! If you need to apply for a new passport, passport renewal or additional Visa pages, you should do so as soon as possible. Before submitting your application, check the expected processing times to determine if you should apply for expedited service and overnight delivery in order to get your passport in time!
- Once you have a valid passport, make three copies. One copy should go to your trip leader, one should be left at home and one copy should be kept inside your carryon luggage.
- Passports are valid for ten years from the date they are issued.

Recommended Vaccinations for Preventable Diseases (b)

Below are the current recommendations for vaccine-preventable diseases in Malawi. Since this information changes so frequently, visit the CDC website for the most up-to-date information at: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/Malawi> Schedule an appointment with your health care provider at least 4 - 6 weeks before your trip to allow time for the vaccines to take effect. You can also contact the Allegheny County Health Department to request the recommended immunizations specifically tailored for you and your trip. You can also get your immunizations at the ACHD office in Oakland, as an



alternative to going to your doctor. Costs for each vaccine is available on their website at: <http://www.achd.net/infectd/travel.html>.

The following are recommended to ask about for your trip:

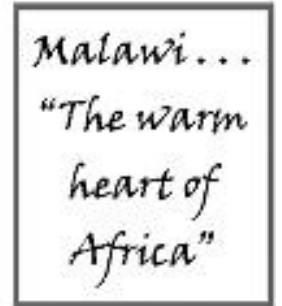
- **Routine** - if you are not up-to-date with measles mumps rubella (MMR), diphtheria pertussis tetanus (DPT) or polio vaccines.
- **Hepatitis A** or immune globulin (IG) - to prevent exposure that might occur through food or water
- **Hepatitis B** - if you might be exposed to blood or bodily fluids, have sexual contact with the local population, or be exposed through medical treatment.
- **Typhoid** - to prevent exposure that might occur through food or water
- **Rabies** - if you might be exposed to wild animals.

Malaria Prevention Medication

Malaria is a preventable infection that can be fatal if left untreated. Prevent infection by taking prescription anti-malarial drugs and protecting yourself against mosquito bites. In addition to taking medication as prescribed, it is important that you sleep under treated bed nets whenever possible. Using insect repellent can also prevent against mosquito bites.

Anti-malarial drugs to prevent malaria are only available by prescription through a health care provider. Atovaquone-Proguanil (Malarone), Doxycycline or Mefloquine (Lariam) are all good choices for Malawi. **Note: Chloroquine is NOT an effective anti-malarial drug in Malawi and should not be taken to prevent malaria in this region.** Visit the CDC website for more information to help you and your doctor to decide the best antimalarial drug for you at <http://www.cdc.gov/malaria/travelers/drugs.html> based on your medical condition and the noted side effects.

When taking anti-malarial drugs it is important that you take the medication exactly as prescribed, on time and without missing doses. Over dosage of anti-malarial drugs can be fatal. Each medication has different instructions as to how long to take it before and after your trip. Therefore, based on the drug chosen by you and your doctor, it is imperative that you carefully calculate the number of doses you will need, based on the length of the trip and the prescribed dosage before and after. Your health insurance may not cover the cost of these drugs, so you may wish to shop around for the best price.



Other Diseases Found In Malawi

Food and waterborne diseases are the number one cause of illness in travelers. Travelers' diarrhea can be caused by viruses, bacteria, or parasites, which are found throughout Central Africa and can contaminate food or water. Infections may cause diarrhea and vomiting (*E. coli*, *Salmonella*, Cholera, and parasites), fever (typhoid fever and toxoplasmosis), or liver damage (hepatitis). Make sure your food and drinking water are safe.

Dengue, filariasis, leishmaniasis, and onchocerciasis are other diseases carried by insects that also occur in this region. Protecting yourself against insect bites will help to prevent these diseases.

Schistosomiasis, a parasitic infection, is found in fresh water in this region. Do not swim in fresh water (except in well-chlorinated swimming pools) in Central African countries.

Basic Hygiene

You can go a long way towards avoiding illness by following these basic but important guidelines:

- Wash your hands before eating. Use plenty of soap or hand sanitizer.
- Wash your hands after using the toilet. Once again, use plenty of soap or hand sanitizer. Pack a roll of toilet paper for emergencies. Also pack a dozen sandwich size zip-lock bags. Garbage cans are few and far between in Malawi. Use these zip-lock bags until you find a garbage can.
- Keep hands and objects out of your mouth.
- Drink plenty of bottled water or carbonated beverages to avoid dehydration.
- Eat clean fruits and vegetables and don't be afraid to try new things when they are offered to you. Malawian passion fruit, beans, mangoes, tomatoes, tiny bananas, etc. are delicious!
- Avoid sunburn! Bring at least a #15 sunscreen and a hat. Malawi is close to the equator and you will burn much faster there. A bad sunburn will incapacitate you for a few days.
- Never antagonize animals or insects. Treat every creature with respect.



- Never walk around with bare feet and if you have to dig a lot in the soil with your bare hands, ask about gloves. Hookworm enters the body through bare skin.
- Get adequate rest and pray against sickness.

HIV/AIDS Awareness

HIV, the Human Immunodeficiency Virus, develops into AIDS, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, which is a fatal disease.

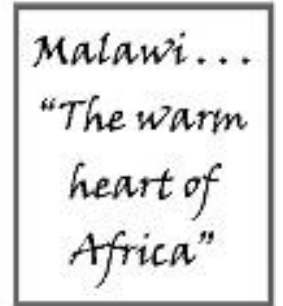
HIV is a major problem in Malawi. Of the 37% of the population that has been tested for HIV, 14% tested positive. A report by the London based PANOS Institute says that Malawi's most important public services, including the military and the ministries of health and education, continue to see a reduction in their workforce because of HIV/AIDS. Currently, 70% of the hospital bed occupancy in Malawi is taken up by patients suffering from HIV/AIDS-related diseases.

Any exposure to blood, blood products or body fluids may put the individual at risk. The disease is often transmitted through sexual contact or dirty needles. Vaccinations, acupuncture, tattooing and body piercing can be as dangerous as intravenous drug use. HIV/AIDS can also be spread through infected blood transfusions when the blood used has not been properly screened.

If you do need an injection, ask to see the syringe unwrapped in front of you, or take a needle and syringe pack with you. Fear of HIV infection should never preclude treatment for serious medical conditions.

The basis of universal precautions is the assumption that blood and body fluids of anyone may be infectious, and that measures to protect against exposure must be observed at all times. The major elements of universal precautions for non-healthcare providers are:

- Use of "protective barriers" - gloves (and gowns, goggles, and face masks when available) -- to reduce the risk of exposure to blood and other potentially infectious body fluids. Each team member should pack 3 pair of latex gloves. If you don't use them, leave them in Malawi.
- Caution in handling and disposing of needles, scalpels, and other sharp medical instruments. There is no reason for a member of this team to be using any of these instruments. If you are diabetic take a proper disposal container and bring it home with you.



- Immediate and thorough washing of hands or other parts of the body contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious body fluids.

Motion Sickness

Motion sickness (car sickness, sea sickness, air sickness) is not really an illness per se, but rather a collection of symptoms, which occur when your body, inner ear and eyes all send different signals to the brain. When riding in a car, for example, your inner ear will sense motion, but your body is sitting still and your eyes only see the inside of the vehicle. These mixed signals confuse your brain, and the result can be nausea, dizziness, lightheadedness and general malaise. Motion sickness can also be a problem for some people in airplanes, during turbulence, takeoffs, and landings.

For most of us, a trip to the drug store to purchase Dramamine, stocking up on ginger tea, or learning acupressure points, is preparation enough to be able to head off any symptoms of motion sickness. But for an unfortunate few, the symptoms refuse to be ameliorated by simple remedies, and can be severe enough to cause real misery. While motion sickness is only rarely life-endangering, the fear of spending several hours aboard a plane, bus or car suffering from nausea and vertigo, may be enough to encourage you to take precautions.

Make sure you consult with your doctor if you feel that motion sickness may be a problem for you. Make sure that your doctor is also aware of any other medications that you are taking, both over-the-counter and prescription, as drugs can occasionally interact unfavorably with each other.

Traveler's Diarrhea

Diseases that are transmitted by contaminated food and water pose the number one health risk to travelers. The most common consequence is traveler's diarrhea. While it has some colorful pet names like "Montezuma's Revenge" and "Delhi Belly," persistent diarrhea can lead to serious complications.

There is no foolproof way to prevent diarrhea. Some of us are more susceptible to it than others. A group of people can all eat the same food and one will become ill, and no one can figure out why. It is important to remember that your hosts are preparing their best foods for you. You are



Malawi...
"The warm heart of Africa"



eating better than their children do at every meal you are served. It is rude not to sample everything but never take more than you will eat. If offered more, say, "Everything was delicious, but no thank you, I am full." Be very appreciative of their hospitality.

In hot climates like Malawi, make sure you drink enough - don't rely on feeling thirsty to indicate when you should drink. Not needing to urinate or the passing of very dark yellow urine is a danger sign. Always carry a water bottle with you on long trips. Excessive sweating can lead to loss of salt and therefore muscle cramping.

In Malawi, traveler's diarrhea affects as many as 20 to 30 percent of all travelers. In the event that you do become ill, Pepto-Bismol or Imodium are effective remedies to prevent and relieve diarrhea - two tablespoons (or tablets) are recommended. If vomiting accompanies the diarrhea, lay off food and drink for one hour. Then try a tablespoon of oral hydration serum (i.e. Gatorade) every 5 minutes for one hour. Powder packs are available and are easy to carry. Professional care should be sought (notify the team leader) if the following occurs:

1. Diarrhea or fever lasting for more than 48 hours
2. Blood and/or mucus in your stool
3. Persistent or severe abdominal cramps or pain
4. Vomiting that lasts more than 6 hours
5. Painful urination or discharge

Jet Lag

Jet lag is the term used to describe the discomfort caused by flying across multiple time zones, and tends to be more pronounced when traveling in an easterly direction. It results from disruption of the body's internal clock and produces symptoms such as fatigue, irritability, disturbed sleep, forgetfulness, and poor appetite. Although jet lag affects people differently, on average, travelers need about one day to adjust for every two hours of time change.

There is no specific cure for jet lag, but travelers find some remedies helpful. Exposure to sunlight may help your body readjust its internal clock naturally. Melatonin has recently become a popular remedy among world travelers as well, although its actual efficacy continues to be studied. (It is important to know that Melatonin is not classified as a drug, and therefore its supply is not FDA-regulated for potency, quality, or sterility.)



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Africa"



Here are suggestions to help reduce jet lag:

- If possible, plan your trip so that you arrive at your destination in the early evening. Try not to sleep on the plane, and go to bed on local time. If you have to arrive in the early morning, try to get some sleep on the flight.
- Set your watch to your destination's time zone as soon as you board the plane, and try to eat and sleep according to that time schedule. Adjust exercise and meal times to the new local time as soon as possible.
- Dramamine or Bendadryl, over-the-counter drugs, can be used as sleep aids.
- Minimize your intake of coffee and alcohol en route, and stay well hydrated. Symptoms of dehydration may accentuate any discomfort due to jet lag.

Questions & Answers

1. Is the trip tax deductible?

No, it is not since there is value derived by the traveler from this trip but if you are interested in pursuing this, check with a qualified tax advisor.

2. Are slacks or jeans appropriate for the women to wear on the trip or only in Blantyre?

Our suggestion is women travelers do not wear slacks or jeans at any time during the stay in Malawi. While increasing numbers of Malawians, especially in the urban areas, are wearing slacks, most of the women do not wear them particularly to church-related functions. It is still controversial and frowned upon by many. So as not to offend or embarrass our hosts, women travelers should not wear slacks. The only exception to this might be if there is a work project that all participate in but even then, the permission of your hosts for the women to wear pants should be sought by the team leader first. It is possible to do construction work in a sturdy long denim skirt or jumper, so as not to offend conservative hosts -- it is comfortable, modest and not a hardship to handle it in this way.



3. What will the temperature be like?

May to October is the dry season, with July generally being the coolest month. The daytime temperatures in Blantyre are normally in the 70's-80's at this time of year, and cooler at night. Daily temperatures in the lowlands do not fluctuate too much. Nighttime temperatures in the highlands can be very low at night, dipping toward freezing if it is clear.

4. What kind of shoes are appropriate---are sandals okay?

Be certain to have a good, sturdy pair of walking shoes, which are appropriate to wear with all clothing; even skirts or dresses. Sandals are appropriate. You can bring a pair of flip flops to use as slippers or shower shoes. Remember that you will be walking more than you might be used to, often on rough terrain, without sidewalks or pavement. Be sure to break in any new shoes.

(a) Most information from the February 2015 Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook website at:

www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mi.html

(b) Please refer to the website for the Center for Disease Control at: www.cdc.org



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