

MALAWI BLOG

DEACON LAURA RAMLOW

October 24, 2024: Gratitude, Grace & Guests

Hello again, dear friends!

Takulandirani – (welcome) to you all as we embark on our 2024 Malawi visit! Bishop Martin and I have safely landed in Lilongwe, Malawi after 17.5 hours in the air and several moments of grace. Now, to catch you up!

We arrived in Chicago on Monday evening, parked the car for the next 16 days (whew!) and checked into our hotel. We enjoyed some Chicago-style pizza for dinner (as the bishop would say, “When in Rome, right!?”) and returned to the hotel for a good rest before our flight the next day.



Tuesday morning we loaded up the shuttle with suitcases and arrived at O'Hare. Knowing that some of our suitcases with gifts for our friends - which contain several theology books and children's bibles - were over the weight limit, we were prepared to pay our attendant extra fees, as it is far less costly pay at the airport than to ship them 9,000 miles away. Although both were 25 lbs over - he only charged us for one extra. Moment of grace number one.

We were not disappointed to discover that there were empty seats in between us for extra leg and stretching room for this entire flight! Moment of grace number two. On a 13+ hour flight, this is a gift beyond measure. We were well-fed on the plane, and they tried their best to dim the cabin lights and encourage sleeping several times during the journey - but, when it's mid-afternoon for your Midwest inner clock, it makes sleeping difficult. We occupied ourselves with conversation, work, comedy shows, and preparations for our arrival. Our international transfer in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia was smooth and quick. No lines through security and a moment to exhale and get some water before boarding the final leg of our trip. Moment of grace number three.

After four solid hours of sleep on the plane (for me, not Bishop Martin, unfortunately - he is truly running on pure adrenaline these first days!), we arrived in Lilongwe around noon on Wednesday, stepped off the plane onto the tarmac, walked to the airport where we headed to immigration, found all of our luggage, and went through customs. There to greet us were Mphatso (my achimwene - my brother) and Derrick (my Malawian ababa/dad) and I knew I was home again. These friends have become my family over these last 8 years and I appreciate their joy, wisdom, hospitality, humor, and their ability to make us feel like an important member of their family. I am grateful for them.



As we drove from the airport, we made a quick stop at Mphatso's house where we were greeted by two of his daughters and his granddaughter. His kids are all adults now and I can't believe how much they have grown since the first time I met them. We continued through the city center where infrastructure seems to change every time I am here. So many more fueling stations, businesses, and housing being built in this sprawling city. The biggest surprise for me, though, is the trees - it's late spring here (not winter, as it is in the June-August months we typically visit) - and everything

is in bloom - jacaranda trees with purple and red blossoms, baobab trees with actual budding leaves, plumeria with pink and white and yellow flowers, so many more birds/critters, and much hotter temperatures. I am excited to see what else is new as we drive south this week.



When we arrived at the ELCM campus, I walked Bishop Martin around the grounds to help introduce him to the space, and as we peeked inside the cathedral, we were greeted by members of one of the choirs who were preparing to rehearse for this weekend's festivities.



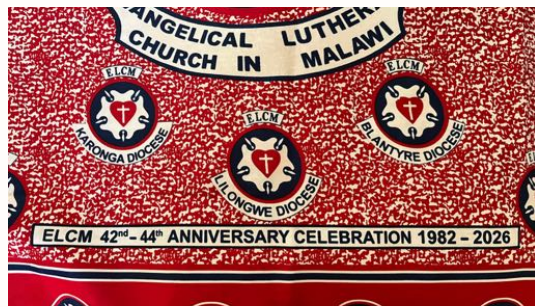
Chimwemwe, our cook while we are at the Lutheran compound, prepared our meals, and they were delicious - oh how much I have missed Malawian tea, bananas and cabbage. And, when the dining hall was without electricity, he made sure we could still see by placing candles throughout the space - we felt fancy!

I returned to my room to get ready for some sleep - and, I unwrapped my bed net to find a large, seemingly friendly spider (at least that what I'm

telling myself!) inside my bed net. Inside. INSIDE. While I love all of God's creatures, I certainly don't want to share my pillow with certain silent, creeping, eight-legged insects. Nope. I ask your forgiveness for what had to be done next. Afterward, I strategically tucked the netting under the mattress in an attempt to keep anything else out. Apparently, that did the trick for my peace of mind because I slept soundly for the next 6 hours, a few crossword puzzles, and two more hours of slumber later before waking up with the roosters.



Thursday morning so far has included breakfast with some visitors from Zambia and a formal reception/meeting with Bishop Bvumbwe, introductions from the ELCM Lilongwe staff, and an overview of what's to come these next few days.



My friend Agnes hooked me up with the new ELCM fabric – the perfect chitenje to wear during the celebration on Saturday. I love how so many African cultures celebrate these special moments and milestones with creative, colorful, wearable representation. It's the best, most functional kind of swag!

The visitors all divided up into a caravan of four vehicles driven by Moses, Derrick, and Stywell and Bishop Martin and I had the privilege of riding with Abusa Bertha Munkhondya with Chicondi as our driver. With a couple of rest stops along the way, we traveled south toward Blantyre which will be our home for the next couple of days. It was fun to watch Bishop Martin experience the topography and a bit of the culture as we drove, and our conversation with Chicco and Abusa Bertha was so very good. Although they were still hard at work preparing for this weekend during the drive, there was no shortage of good humor and they took good care of us and our questions along the way.

We made a stop at the ELCM guesthouse in Zomba where several guests would stay for the weekend, and were greeted with tea and hospitality from Mama Bishop. She is always such a source of joy! The rest of us continued on to Blantyre where we checked in to our hotel for the night. Stuffed full of tasty food and pineapple/orange Fanta, we are ready to crash.

Tomorrow will be a day of rest, and we hope to walk down to the neighborhood and explore a little bit of this large unique city.



I am reminded today how challenging it can be for us to be guests when we live in a culture that thrives on transactional or consumeristic behavior – even in relationships sometimes. So many of us are comfortable being the host – preparing food, welcoming people to our home, church, events, etc., but it can be uncomfortable sometimes to accept the gift of being hosted – to not clear a table or offer to do the dishes....to have a driver or a cook or a translator, or someone to help with your bags... it can feel strange to us to simply be a guest – to accept with gratitude the gift of hospitality being given to us without the expectation of anything in return. Grace. This defines our last four days – simple, unequivocal grace. For those who have been to the Warm Heart of Africa, you have experienced this, too.

I pray for us to be open to meeting new people, seeing new places, and learning new languages and cultures so that we can more clearly understand and appreciate the world around us, and I pray that we can not only think about grace, but embody it, receive it, and share it in ways that can change hearts and minds. Amen

Tiwonana mawa, friends.

(See you tomorrow, friends.)

October 27, 2024: Celebrations, Friends & JOY!

Muli bwanji, anzanga!

Whew! We have had a VERY busy last few days here in Blantyre, and, fair warning, there will be SO many photos in this entry! (I DID narrow them down from the hundreds that Mphatso and I took, but there are too many that I just had to share!)

Friday was a rest and prep day for Bishop Martin and I, partially since we spent so long traveling here on Thursday, but mostly so the ELCM staff could have the day to prepare for this weekend's events at the new Blantyre Deanery Center. So, we decided to do a bit of exploring in this neighborhood of the city. For those who enjoy celebrity connections, Madonna has 4 adopted children from Malawi and decided to build a children's hospital here in Blantyre in 2017 through her charity *Raising Malawi*.

Although we did not travel near the hospital, we did find a lot of local shops selling everything from wood carvings to auto parts, to fabric, to office supplies and even chicken at a Malawian KFC. It was fun to experience the unique urban culture of Malawi's second largest city with a population of just over 900,000. We picked up a few local goods and headed back to the hotel for a bit of relaxation.

That night we met Themba, a South African serving as the ELCA Regional Representative for Southern Africa. As we ate dinner together, we learned about his studies, family and work; among many other responsibilities, he has been doing a lot of education around gender justice – a current ministry initiative in the ELCM as well. He is a wealth of information and I am thrilled that he is willing to stay in touch and share some of his resources with me!

Saturday morning after a good breakfast (including a couple of cups of good Mzuzu coffee!), I tied on my special anniversary chitenje and we drove to the deanery center for the 42nd anniversary celebration of ELCM. We arrived at 9:45 to a bustle of activity and anticipation. When the "official" ceremonies began, the bishop and I participated in a procession of the Lilongwe Cathedral band followed by the church women, the deans and pastors and the bishops.



We danced all the way to the top of the hill and paused for a demonstration of ministries – each of the deaneries has projects they create/sell as fund raisers for their deanery – as a part of the celebration, they invite Bishop Bvumbwe and the visiting Bishops to learn about and even sample some of their projects. They vary from homemade soaps and plastic upcycled goods to



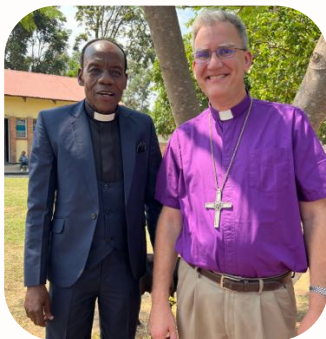
honey, beans and spices, to hats and brooms and fabric. After seeing all the booths, we finished the procession which took us to our seats and the assembly was warmly welcomed by the Bishop.



After a brief history of the ELCM was shared, the day was filled with music shared by choirs from nearly every deanery. Each bringing their own style, the assembly showed their appreciation and excitement by dancing with them, shouting, or waving special fabric around. The event even included a Malawian celebrity, Princess Chitsulo, a gospel singer whose support and encouragement of the church was filled with enthusiasm and a performance of one of her hit songs.

Because Saturday was an anniversary celebration, ministry partners from all over the world shared stories, encouragement, prayers, and testimony for the ministry of the ELCM, Bishop Bvumbwe's leadership, and congregations who do so much to care for and love their neighbors. (Check the last page of the blog for a glimpse of the impressive global representation!)

Bishop Martin and I had the opportunity to share some words of gratitude for our partnership and a formal greeting from our synod/congregations. I am truly thankful for the inspiration and effort that was needed to establish this companion relationship. Experiencing the Warm Heart of Africa, learning about the work of the ELCM and, most importantly, meeting the people that I now consider my family has transformed my life in ways I never could have expected.



After around 5 hours of celebration, Bishop Bvumbwe ended with a few words and a blessing and we joined a recessional back to the church building. Along the way I walked for a time with bishop-elect Feston Phiri. We talked about his work with Greg and Diane Kaufmann, among others and he smiled as he reminisced. I asked him if he was ready for tomorrow (his installation) and he said, "not yet, but after some preparation tonight, God willing, I will be tomorrow!" The weight of this newly established office must be so heavy. He is certainly a strong, intelligent leader, and I am excited for him!

Dean Alex Etiyezi opened his home (which is directly across from the church) to us for a meal – the women washed our hands with a pitcher and basin (culturally traditional), and we enjoyed nsima, rice, potatoes, beef, chicken, beans and cabbage. It was truly delicious, and I was more hungry and thirsty than I realized after such a long day sitting in the sun!

While others finished their meal, I found myself wandering around a bit, just to take in the view of the mountains directly behind the deanery center. And, I found so many friends that I have not seen in a year or more! We greeted and had wonderful conversation, spoke about the current petrol shortage, the increased cost of goods (materials and food), we laughed about previous visits and shared hope for future ones, too.

I met Laughter, the choir teacher from Blantyre and quickly befriended ALL the children from the choir – I am now fondly known as Auntie Laura. They all wanted to come and visit Wisconsin until I told them it was only 13 degrees (Celsius) there right now....then I showed them a video of snow that I took in a 2022 blizzard ...they said “it’s so beautiful...but, too cold.” I agree friends. I agree.

After some conversation with several friends from Zomba, abusas (pastors) from across the country, Gertrude (our translator/coordinator in 2019), several ELCM staff and church women, as well as drivers (Derrick, Moses, Chico, and Stywell) and some of their family members, part 2 of the day began. The pastors, bishops, and deans processed into the church, but since there were so many of us present, many people sat outside where the service could be heard with the help of a large speaker.



This traditional liturgical service included the consecration of the new Blantyre Diocese, the location where the new Bishop Elect will be serving after his installation. During the service I sat outside (where it was MUCH cooler) with Gertrude and together we sang, danced, got distracted from the service and talked about our children, shared communion and the hope that it would not be another 5 years until we saw each other in person again. The day wrapped up around 7:30 pm and I hugged Gertrude four times before we loaded the minibus and drove with our other hotel mates

back to the city. Although I tried to process some thoughts on paper, I could not keep my eyes open and, instead, found myself asleep by 9:30 pm. (How old *am* I ??)

Bishop Martin and I have had the privilege of staying at the same hotel as a husband and wife representing the Swedish Evangelical Mission, a long-term partner of the ELCM. Peter is from Sweden and his wife is from Finland – they met as missionaries in Tanzania and have been speaking Swahili with several global partners this weekend. Also here is Themba (ELCA Rep) and Samuel, the Lutheran World Federation Representative from Cameroon.



Sunday morning, we all loaded the minibus - pastors and bishops in their clergy collars, albs and stoles. We arrived to the same site as yesterday to find all the choirs in fresh uniforms, women in their purple and gray, clergy vested in red, and congregants in suits and their “Sunday best!”

I bumped into bishop - elect Phiri again this morning and asked him once again if he was ready for the day, and with a smile he said, "Yes! I was not ready last night, but, today, I am ready!"

Because the installation today was a full liturgical worship service, the tent where we all sat yesterday has been transformed into an altar with space along the sides for abusas and bishops. I chose a different vantage point and sat with Mphatso so we could view the service clearly from another tent and take photos and video of this historic event.

Beginning this processional were my new friends, the children from Blantyre's youth choir. Dressed in their green and orange polka dot dresses, carrying balloons and dancing their little hearts out, they made their way forward toward the front. Following them were the church women and finally the abusas and bishops. Although much of the service was in Chichewa, I had a program with printed text and could follow along with most of the service. Bishop Bvumbwe's sermon was lovely and as he spoke it in English for the sake of international friends, Abusa Mphalasa translated it for the congregation.



As we transitioned to the service of installation for Bishop Phiri, I was surprised to see so many familiar elements of installations in the ELCA. But, I was also delighted to witness new things - as the scripture verses were read, we heard them spoken in several languages by bishops from around the world - English, Chichewa, Portuguese, Swahili. And, every time Bishop Phiri vowed to honor a responsibility of the office of bishop and said "I will and I ask God to help me," the congregation shouted and cheered. So. Much. Joy.



In the ELCM, bishops are gifted with a cope (chausible), a bishop's ring, a mitre, a Bible, a crozier, and a pectoral cross. It was such a special moment during the installation that Bishop Martin could place the cross on Bishop Phiri.

After the official installation, he and his wife Lydia walked the loop in front of the tents so they could greet people. I am so thrilled that the wives of bishops, pastors, etc. are lifted up so beautifully in the ELCM - Bishop Bvumbwe recognized Lydia yesterday, telling the assembly how important it is to understand that the bishop does not do this work alone - he does it with his wife partnered by his side, assuring people that the spouse has a unique role in the office of bishop.



The assistant to the bishop - in this diocese it will be Abusa Grevison N'gombe – was also installed by the new bishop, and they receive a green cope to signify the office they hold. They also play a significant role as a leader in the diocese, as each bishop only has one assistant.

After the installations, in traditional Malawi fashion, there is a presentation of gifts! Groups, deaneries, staff, and visitors take turns coming forward to present thoughtful gifts to the bishop, assistant, and their wives. It was a delight to watch people dance their way to the front with envelopes of money, a new mattress, bamboo mats, blankets, fabric, live goats, chickens and even a cow. Then the ELCM presented the Bishop Phiri with a new vehicle – a generous symbol of support for the ministry that will take them to all regions of the south as they lead and shepherd the abusas, evangelists, and congregations in the region.



After a full, joyful, and meaningful six-hour installation service, I started to gather my things and was joined by a couple of my new youth choir friends. Mercy and Janny and a few others took some photos with me before I headed down the hill to greet people. Again, the dean opened his home to us and we enjoyed an early dinner before heading back to the hotel. Although I missed saying goodbye to a few people (many had long drives ahead of them tonight) – it was nice to get back a bit earlier than yesterday.

As we stepped out of the minibus and said thanks to Moses for the ride, Bishop Martin suggested seeking out some ice cream (we spotted a shop nearby during our walk on Friday!).

We extended the invitation to our new acquaintances from Sweden, Cameroon, and South Africa, and, after a quick refresh in our rooms, we walked a couple of blocks to order some scoops and sat on the balcony of the building to enjoy our treats and the cooler night air. We shared stories of stars, and snakes, and the longest worship services we've ever attended (if you're wondering, today's installation was the longest for most of the group!), and walked back to the hotel for some much needed rest.



After getting to my room, I called Nik and the kiddos at home to check in - I always love catching up with them while I'm away - I miss them and want them to be right here to experience these friendships, too. For now, I am happy to share the details of my day.

Tomorrow we begin the long ride back to Lilongwe where we will spend a couple of days at the ELCM campus. I will certainly be processing all of the events and activities of this weekend along the way.

Our schedule will not be as full this week as we typically experience during our visits here - the ELCM staff will still be working to transport international guests to airports and finishing up details from this weekend's events. This means we will have a couple of local days in Lilongwe where we can immerse ourselves into the culture of the largest city in Malawi. (I wonder if I can convince the Bishop to try grasshopper??). Later this week we will be visiting the Mzimu Woyela Feeding Center and the Kasungu Deanery Center - it will be good to see some of the ministry programs that are so important in the ELCM and have such an impact on the community.

Today I pray for the ELCM, for their continued faithful work with social justice through food and water programs, education, health care, disaster relief, agriculture, and gender justice. I pray for the continued encouragement and empowerment of young people, both in Malawi and in the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin. And, I pray for the continued recognition of the church across the globe - that we might remember God is hard at work beyond our borders, assumptions, and imaginations, and continues to inspire people to share, learn, and love. Amen.

(...Keep scrolling for more photos!)



*Retired Bishop from
South Africa*



Bishop from Botswana



Bishop from Tanzania



*Bishop from
Mozambique*



Bishop from Zambia



*Representatives: Swedish
Evangelical Mission*



*Themba, ELCA Rep for
Southern Africa*



*Samuel, Lutheran World
Federation*



*Bishop Emeritus from
Kenya (& his wife)*



*Presiding Bishop Joseph
Bvumbwe*



*Bishop of Karonga
Diocese: Rev. Alick Msuku*



*General Secretary
Rev. Bertha Munkhondya*

ELCM Choirs



November 2, 2024: Rest, Sustainability, & Empathy

It's November, anzanga (friends)!

Although, truth be told, it's difficult to believe it's November while being in Malawi.... here in the southern hemisphere they are nearing their summer/rainy season so we've been experiencing temperatures around 90+ degrees this entire trip. And the evenings don't bring much relief from the heat, only decreasing slightly most nights. It's amazing how much you can sweat while sitting still! But, after seeing photos of the frost and snow that Northwest Wisconsin received on Thursday, I think I'll take a few more days of heat!

Due to a schedule change, lack of drivers/vehicles, and a massive fuel shortage all over Malawi, Bishop Martin and I had Monday "off," a built-in sabbath day where we could rest, read and have some fantastic conversation. We have shared stories of childhood, college, families, and dreams for ministry – it has been a gift to have this time!

Tuesday, we left the ELCM campus and drove to Mvuu Camp – we arrived at dusk, took a boat across the river to camp, and were welcomed by Chifundo with iced tea and a quick overview of the next 24 hours. Since we arrived later in the day we did not do a traditional three hour evening game drive, however, Chifundo was kind enough to take us out in the jeep for a bit to see what nocturnal creatures we might spot at night. We were lucky enough to see a genet, a pride of lions, and a few hippos before heading back to check into our chalets and enjoy dinner.



I continue to be impressed by the conservation and sustainability efforts of this place, particularly since they see so many international visitors each month. There are very few things on site that need disposing of – even our water carafes and drinking glasses are upcycled from gin and soda bottles.



The next morning we were escorted from our chalets at 5:00 am for a quick cup of coffee and then we loaded the vehicle and headed out to the bush. I am certain that having Bishop Martin along created some unusual luck because we saw things even Chifundo had never seen before. Perhaps because it is warmer and later in the season, there were herds of so many creatures out and about – zebras, impala, kudu, sable antelopes, warthogs, bush hogs, and elephants.

But the two things that even surprised our guide were the hundreds of water buffalo moving in a herd, and the pride of lions, among which the mother tried to warn a crocodile that was coming too close to her three cubs.

After breakfast, we took a boat out to the river for a glimpse of the wildlife near the water – crocodiles, birds, hippos, and so many elephants trying to stay cool as the temperatures here continue to rise.

We cleaned out our chalets and took the boat back across the river to meet our friends and drove back to Lilongwe. The roads here in the southern part of the country have changed a lot these last few years – so much erosion, and large pieces of blacktop totally gone creating highways peppered with potholes, very difficult to avoid without swerving and slowing down often. Simultaneously, we were on diverted roads for a lot of our travels this week as they pave a new M1, the main highway that weaves its way from northern to southern Malawi. There are also some impressive new roadways in the city of Lilongwe – space for two lanes in either direction, exit/entrance ramps, overpasses – it seems as though they are trying to match the infrastructure with the increasing number of vehicles on the road. Many people here credit the current President, Lazarus Chakwera, for this progress.

We arrived back to the ELCM guesthouse and had dinner served by our long time friend, Lazarus, and checked in with family back home – they shared photos of the snow and frost that had landed on the Midwest, and we enjoyed sharing those photos with friends here. We get the same comical reaction to our cold temperatures: “that’s too cold.”

On Friday, we experienced a more typical ministry visit – we drove to Kasungu to see the deanery center there where a well (sponsored by the late Bishop Berg’s family) was sunk in 2014. It was wonderful to see it still in great working condition. The evangelist who showed us around the church property told us that the well is accessible by anyone in the community, and that, reciprocally, the community agrees to pitch in if and when the well needs maintenance or repair. The well has been a gift, and has allowed them to build a church building on site (lots of water is needed for molding bricks, so having easy access makes the construction of a building much, much easier).



They also have dreams of building a parsonage and a house for the church women. And, the very large piece of property they own has potential for so much more – the elders and church leaders will be making decisions on what’s next for them and they are hopeful that these dreams will be accessible.

As we met inside to share some information about the congregation, the evangelist, a woman in this congregation, lead the conversation – a sign that this community is supportive of women leaders – and, like so many other women in Malawi, she is confident, strong, and knowledgeable. I am excited for the future day when she will celebrate her ordination as a pastor. As we engaged in discussion, two small kiddos found their way to my lap – before too long, one of them was fast asleep. I seem to have that effect on children here! But, their presence always makes me smile.

From this place we drove toward Madisi, to Mzimu (Holy Spirit) Congregation. We receive the warmest, most hospitable welcome of people and singing as our minibus drove up to the building! The church leaders quickly whisked us off, explaining that this very rural community, which experiences extreme poverty, has some programs in place to assist.

First, we saw their goat project – the congregation received a couple of goats one year ago, and they have been working on breeding them – once they have been bred, a young goat will be given to a family in the congregation. They will be used for milk, and for breeding future goats for their households. Eight have already been given to families and the hope is that in another year all households will have received their own. Roaming around were also chickens, pigeons, pigs, and ducks.



This congregation also has a feeding center where they provide vulnerable children ages five and under with food a few times a week. When the supply of donated resources runs out, the community often collaborates to collect any extras they may have during the few months when food supplies run low. This feeding station also encourages good life skills, with toilet facilities, a hand washing station, a kitchen where volunteers make the maize porridge, a dish washing/drying station, and a rubbish station to encourage good community habits. They have been planting trees and they also have some land to grow crops.

After the tour, we gathered inside their small church building where people filled the space and many more listened from outside. We were introduced to the evangelist, church elders and the village chief, and learned more details about the facility. We brought our own greetings and words of encouragement, and in between the speaking, the church choir shared several songs for us. I am consistently impressed by the sound of Malawian voices and the way they utilize music for social messages, learning, profession of faith, and inspiration. I thanked them for this powerful gift.



These two communities, like so many in the ELCM, overflow with empathy and try their best to work together to serve their neighbors, particularly the children. The ways they embody love and compassion is transformational – I wish I could bottle it and open it up at home when my own selfishness becomes too loud. There is no individual here – just people working together, walking together, and leaning into hope together.

We eventually said our goodbyes and headed to the ELCM guesthouse for dinner and some sleep. On the journey I learned that goats who don't have shelter on a farm in rural Malawi will often climb the rock faces at night to avoid hyenas. Who knew?!? After receiving incredible hospitality from the staff at the Midisi guesthouse, and having some wonderful conversation about families and travel with Mphatso and Stywell, we loaded up the minibus and made our way back to Lilongwe. Our first stop was to the city market, a lively place of chaos and noise and people. We walked down devil street and weaved through the narrow spaces to find the fabric vendors. Bishop Martin and I found several colorful pieces to take home with us as a reminder of this beautiful place.



We arrived back at the ELCM campus in the early afternoon and has some time for rest before dinner. There is always a day during these trips that I feel sad knowing there are very few days left here, yet also sad because I miss my family and want so badly to see them and hug them. This was that day. Every time I am here I become more familiar with my Malawian family, making it more difficult to say goodbye. But I am overwhelmed with gratitude for the massive amount of work the ELCM staff has done these last two weeks to prepare ALL of the guests for the anniversary and installation last weekend and then jump right into assisting us with the rest of our itinerary. It's not easy in the best circumstances, but even more so when there is a fuel shortage, difficult road conditions, and programs and activities are geographically so distant. I truly hope they get a holiday next week when we return to the states!

Tomorrow we will be worshipping at the Lilongwe Cathedral where Bishop Martin will preach, translated by Abusa Bertha Munkhondya. It is sure to be a wonderful morning of praise and community. I will do my best to post one more time before we leave Malawi!

Today I share an ongoing prayer – that we might pay closer attention to the real life needs of our neighbors and respond with empathy, a redistribution of resources, and share the time it takes to implement real change so that no one would know thirst, hunger, violence or injustice of any kind. Amen.

