

MALAWI MISSION – 20-YEARS PARTNERSHIP WITH NKHOMA SYNOD

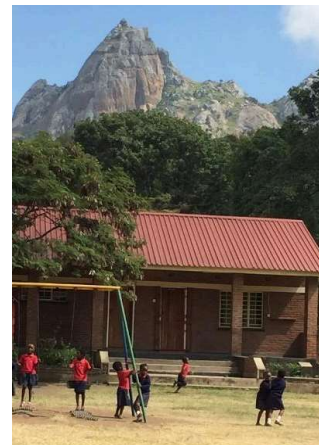
2004 -Mission work in partnership with Presbytery of Western NC and Nkhoma CCAP Synod (with more than a million Presbyterians) **began when our Presbytery sponsored Pediatrics and Internal Medicine trained Dr. Barbara Nagy and family to go to Malawi.** Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world, and the hospital is located in a rural area where people have no other access to health services. Mother and child death rates were high and at that time the life expectancy in Malawi was 35 years.

Generous support from PWNC supplied emergency medicine needs, outfitted a laboratory, started providing food for hospitalized and malnourished children (5 Cents a meal funds). Much hard work and the collaboration of many enabled Nkhoma Hospital to reduce mother and child death rates by 95%, garnering national and international attention for quality of care and disseminating best practices throughout Malawi and beyond.

2009 – Ebenezer Full Primary School (grades PreK-8) was begun with strong support from PWNC including several WNC families very committed to education and missions—the Matthews, MacKenzies and Provosts. First Gastonia built the first classrooms for max of 30 children taught in English, now 400 students are in the school. A donor added a library, chapel, and staff housing, bus, and more.

Pre K was a new concept for Malawi and English language instruction was critical to having students score high on the Primary School leaving exams, the gateway to secondary education in Malawi. This school was critical for retention of hospital staff at Nkhoma as health workers strongly valued a good education for their children.

Nkhoma Hospital's health centers, spread over the central part of Malawi, were assisted by PWNC and funds were raised through the Building Hope Fund which has established running water and electricity in each of ten centers. Improvements were made and are continuing to be made to clinics and staff houses. Health care at all ten health centers and Nkhoma Hospital reach approximately one million people.



The Hospital asked for a mobile health unit. Funds from Building Hope sponsored a network of primary health sites with an ambulance which would take health workers, vaccines, food, prenatal care, TB and HIV care out to many communities on a monthly basis. Healthy talks, Bible Study, family planning and preventive health messages are part of each visit. This

program prevents families walking 10-20 km to access basic health services.

Over the years of our partnership, growth at Nkhoma Hospital, Synod, Nursing School, a new university, and several primary and secondary schools stretched Nkhoma's water resources to the breaking point. Yearly lapses in water during the dry seasons threatened health and greatly impeded the work of the hospital, especially surgery. A generous donor from FPC Gastonia sent 100,000 dollars to replace and duplicate parts of the Nkhoma Synod's water system, doubling or tripling the amount of water available. With continued growth of institutions, water and sanitation systems remains a problem.

Nkhoma Synod asked for support of seminary graduates with Study Bibles, clerical shirts, dresses for spouses, and later we realized the need for bicycles. Now incoming students also receive a Study Bible. Most of the seminary graduates are appointed to rural congregations, often scores of churches and prayer houses for a single pastor, and they need some form of transportation to serve them. At the time this program was started a graduating seminary student might not have a personal Bible.



2022 -Synod asked that we help implement the “Men in the Mirror” (MIM) program for pastors and ultimately men in their churches. MIM used Jesus as a model for men, bringing positive changes in relationship with wives, families, and women and also in churches. One church added women elders and deacons. More than 100 pastors and 1,000 men in churches have been trained. 100 couples are now using a “Couples in the Mirror” devotional. The Synod has voted that all pastors would be trained in the program. Kevin Frederick, retired pastor in PWNC was the author of this program and taught the first pastors.

2022/24 - Synod asked for support for seminarians because there were not enough pastors. One pastor may serve a church of several thousand members, plus a number of prayer houses with several hundred members in each. Still there are not enough pastors for all the churches. It costs only \$1,300 per year per seminary student for each of the 4 years.)

2023- With Hospital support, PWNC brought washable reusable menstrual pads to highschoools to keep girls in school and support women. These products are either financially or physically unavailable in many rural communities and girls were failing in school due to missed period days. With each packet of menstrual products, underwear and a small storage bag, a healthy talk has been given by Nkhoma Hospital nurses. The recipients' response with joy that someone actually thought of their welfare and education. There was happiness on every face! PWNC churches are making the Pads to give out to schools and the Hospital. Come join them.



The exciting, most essential, most blessed, full of joy and sadness are the relationships that are built in a good partnership. Every year except during Covid, a mission team from this presbytery has gone to Nkhoma. Every year, there are people anxiously looking forward to renewing friendships like going to a family reunion and people for the first time looking forward to building relationships. Hosting our friends from Malawi has been an honor and also been a way of getting to know people better. (Rev. Vasco Kachipapa, Mrs. Agness Nyanda, Rev. Richard Kapada, and Chrissie Mbewe) It is special and wonderful.