

Mwaua buti!

Hello friends! It's been a little while since my last update. A lot has happened. There have been many emotions to face, but it has been a blast as well!

I spent the past week in the village/bush of Zambia called Mucumba. It is probably what most people would picture as Africa with huts and thatch roofs and 8 year olds with babies on their backs. While there we taught Bible lessons to some older orphans (6-16), hung out and played sports with them, and organized/shelved a library.... or at least put a dent in it. It was one of the most incredible experiences of my life.

I came back to the orphanage after being gone for a week, and I got to see a miracle. The two babies, Courtney and Elain, that were fighting for their lives in my last update, were smiling and happy. They were moved to the special needs unit of the orphanage, and are being cared for well. It is truly a testament to the power of God because they were legitimately dying. Courtney's eyes were so sunken in her head, and she was too weak to move. Unfortunately, when I got back, I had to hear the tragic news that one of my favorite babies, Hunter, had passed away. He was a beautiful 2 month old tiny premature baby. When I left, he wasn't sick. It hit him suddenly, and he died in days, although we will never be sure what the sickness was. I was devastated because a week earlier I held him, burped him, fed him, and sang to him. This shouldn't happen, but there's no way to stop it. There is another baby named Lushomo (Tonga for trust) who is currently also fighting for life. Today I fed him with a syringe and an NG tube. It was heartbreaking, and I will hopefully never have to deal with that again. PLEASE pray for Lushomo who a week ago was a thriving, happy baby and now is skin and bones too weak to cry.

Last week, right before I left for the bush, three girls came in from Southern California. They're here for 3 weeks total. Then another group from West Michigan came on Wednesday. One girl even goes to my school and is a part of the ministry I'm involved in there. It's been great to have people my own age here!

Tuesday, we went to dinner with a Zambian family. They live in a house about the size of my bedroom that is in this compound that most people live in. It's comparable to Detroit and we couldn't walk alone, even in the day, but it was absolutely incredible. The people we visited were so humbled that we ate with them that they started crying and thanked us. Us coming to their place was the equivalent to the president of the

United States visiting your home.... the neighbors stared and shared their jealousy. Apparently, most white people wouldn't be caught dead there. A rat ran up the wall while we ate and a cockroach crawled on my leg, and it was my favorite night that I've had while being here. There is something about Zambians.... they are very friendly and very welcoming.

I have learned so much since being here.... the picture most people have of Africa is often not correct at all! Can't wait to tell you all about how so! I miss you all, and I feel very disconnected from home, so please tell me how you are doing!

Love you all!

Kathryn Wickman