

MISSION MESSAGES

DMA & GSA Newsletter

A SEASON OF REFLECTION

The Christmas holiday season is often a time of reflection. It can be filled with many different emotions, memories, and activities. Recently our mission community has celebrated the lives of two individuals: Jerry Daly and Sharlene Hayton.

Jerry was one of the founding associate directors of the Global Health Institute (GHI). He had a heart for making a positive impact and shaped our office with many “wows from the warehouse” ideas. Sharlene was a long-term missionary with her husband Ryan and their three boys at Malamulo Adventist Hospital, Malawi. With the consistent rotation of visiting students, residents and other visitors, she connected well with each person and created a home away from home where all were welcomed.

One of Jerry’s “wows from the warehouse” ideas was to include several boxes of canned vegetarian favorites in a shipment to our first LLUH Global Campus to give them a little taste of home. The Hayton family was one of the recipients of this gift. Sharlene had the creative vision for a unique expression of gratitude – documenting the exciting travels of a can of Big Franks through safaris and other adventures in sub-Saharan Africa.

These intertwined stories remind me of a few others we’ve laid to rest over the last few years. Dr. Bill McGhee served as a long-term missionary himself, and then dedicated many years to advocating for and leading the DMA program. Shallenga Crouse openly shared her faith journey throughout her battle with cancer that brought me to tears but also left me so inspired. Their legacies have each left special imprints on our hearts.

This period of celebration, marking Christ’s human entrance to Earth to save us from sin and ourselves, is the greatest reminder that we have been given the gift of changing “good-byes” to “see you later.” Wishing you peace and joy, for Jesus came and promises to come again!

~ ANGELI YUTUC

FROM PREPARATION TO PURPOSE

DMA FEATURE

Our lives together have been lived in finite chunks of time, always with an end in sight and a clear next step to move on to. Wilson did 4 years of college, 4 years of medical school, and 3 years of Pediatric residency. A similar timeline for Danika, but with a Master's in Education instead. Then, after all the preparations, our 5 years of mission service began. In 2017 we moved to Makwasa, Malawi to work at Malamulo Adventist Hospital. This had been our vision and our goal since our first date together when Wilson said, "I want to be a doctor in Malawi and if we are married that means you must want this too."



Wilson, Danika, Levi and Apple Thomas

The hospital work was pretty clear cut at first. There were highs and lows of moving our two young children and settling into our host culture. As time went on though, life got more and more complicated. From being the Pediatrician, Wilson stepped into the Medical Director role, and eventually found himself as interim CEO. Danika worked with a donation from LLU auxiliary and built an elementary school on the mission. God blessed our time and our efforts as we wore many hats and stepped into roles we did not expect, but happily fulfilled. They say that with children, the days are long, but the years are short. We found this to be true of mission service as well. The problems, struggles, and frustrations are never-ending, but the feeling of purpose and the satisfaction that comes from serving God make it not only possible, but well worth it.

Our whole Malamulo mission family had a big decision to make in the early part of 2020: with the spread of this new, scary, worldwide pandemic, do we stay in Malawi, potentially trapped for an unknown length of time? Or do we do as the US embassy encouraged us to do, and return to our home country? Most humanitarian groups in the country pulled their people out. Malawi, extremely dependent on foreign aid, NGOs, and humanitarian workers saw expatriates leaving in droves nearly overnight. Resources dried up. But the missionaries at Malamulo chose to stay. By God's grace, the hospital doors remained open and ready to serve those in need.

Our next big decision came toward the end of our 5 year term of service. We realized that we were not ready to leave. There was no final exam or graduation at the end of this time period of our lives, as there had been in the others. There was no logical next step. Our work at Malamulo was not done, so we stayed. We continued to work in Malawi for 2 more years, and finally moved back to the USA in 2024.

Looking back from this side, there are many mixed emotions. We were extremely blessed during our time in Malawi. The experiences we had and the relationships we formed have shaped who we are forever. Once you set foot in the "Warm Heart of Africa" it becomes a piece of your soul and shapes you in ways you never expected. We learned so much about resilience, reliance on others, leading with blind faith, and compassion. Many days were tough beyond what we thought we could handle, but God brought us through it all. One question we have been asked is, if looking back now, would we choose to do it again? The answer has never changed: Absolutely we would!

~ WILSON, DANIKA, LEVI AND APPLE THOMAS

HOLIDAY TREATS

SWEET ROLES RECIPE

Malamulo Hospital is located near the beautiful Mulanje mountain. Mulanje is known for growing delicious, sweet pineapples. Every pineapple season we would eat to our hearts content and fill our deep freezer with juice and pieces for smoothies for the year. Our family would bake these sweet rolls every Friday and we would often find children on the mission making their way to our kitchen and grabbing a freshly baked roll as they strolled into our home.

1/2 cup pineapple juice
1/2 cup milk
4 tbsp melted butter
2 eggs lightly beaten
6 tbsp sugar
1 tsp salt
1 packet instant yeast
4 1/2 cup flour

Combine all ingredients and knead until a smooth ball of dough is formed. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 1 hour. Divide dough into 15 equal balls and place in a 13x9 pan, letting rise again. Bake at 350 degrees for 30-40 minutes!



HOLIDAY CRAFT

CREATE A SNOWMAN

Materials:

1 White sock
1 Sock in color for the hat
Rice
Rubber bands (or thread)
Colorful buttons
Ribbons
Glue gun (or glue dots)
Black marker or black paint
1 Orange pom pom



Instructions:

Start by filling your white sock with rice. Once you're happy with the amount and size of your sock snowman, tie the top with the rubber band. Take another rubber band and place in the middle (more to the upper side) of the rice-filled sock to form the head shape. Now glue the buttons to the bottom side by using a glue gun (or glue dots). Draw the mouth and eyes with a black marker or black paint. Next, make the nose out of an orange pom pom and glue in place. Add a ribbon for the scarf and cut off any excess white sock, or you can simply tuck it in the hat that you'll be making next. For the hat, cut the top section (the cuff) and the heel of the sock. Roll it a bit and place it on the head of your snowman. You can leave it as it is, or secure it with some glue.

Enjoy as an added decoration for your home or as a gift to make someone else's season bright!

DMA & GSA NEWS

UPCOMING EVENTS:

MIG Vespers with Dr. Jeffrey Cho: Jan 17, 2025

LLUH Homecoming: Feb 27-March 2, 2025

Global Healthcare Leadership Academy: Oct 14-20, 2025

Submit a Prayer Request: <https://ghi.llu.edu/prayer>



CURRENT DMAs & GSAs:

Visit Us & Share Your Mission Story
Accommodations in Loma Linda provided

What is Provided:

- Two weeks of accommodations on or close to campus

In Exchange For:

- Public Relations activity - video recording, etc. or
- Event Speaker (MIG vespers, Oak Glen Fellowship, etc.)

Contact the GC Loma Linda Office to coordinate at least one month before visit by calling 909-558-7747 or email gc@llu.edu



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY
HEALTH

Global Health Institute