

The Sounds of Our Summers by Justine Hayes

We sit outside listening to the Cicadas at Nani and Papa's house, in Houston, Texas. The sound of a Texas Summer. They are fascinating, as foreign to us as monkeys are to our friends who live in America. Giving birth and raising children in Malawi has given me and my children the opportunity to learn to grow in wonder at the world around us. This fascination and wonder grows as we encounter different biomes while on furlough. We examine the cicada shell and watch videos to understand how a mature cicada makes noise.

Our Malawian summers have much different sounds. The familiar buzz of a mosquito at night. Branches swishing as monkeys swing from tree to tree, in search of guavas, papayas, mangos and edible seeds. We are lucky if we get to the fruit before they do. They swing onto our homemade treehouse, and slide down the slide as if it was the most natural thing in the world for a monkey to do.



A Familiar Monkey

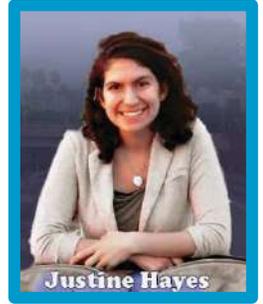
Both Becca and I homeschool our children and get to explore the wonders of the natural world around us. We are always learning about different types of snakes, spiders, birds, and other animals. In our yard alone we have been able to learn to identify "harmless" snakes such as the brown house snake, from the

more venomous kind. We have enjoyed our resident mosquito eating orb spiders, that craft their webs on the rafters and bushes outside of our house.

Our homes are near to the botanical gardens of Zomba, where the sound of rushing water reminds us of the Mulunguzi River that flows from the top of the Plateau, a source of life for both our animal and human neighbors. We watch Malawian children wash their clothes in the river as we walk along the mountain road at the base of the Plateau and hear laughing and eager chatter.

One of our favorite spots as a family is what we call the "climbing rock," or the "burnt rock." While we don't have parks and playgrounds around, we love to "climb" to the top of the rock before rainy season hits, when the little paths that we discover will be grown over with brush. Later on in the year, this brush will be burned, along with the empty maize stalks around it as people prepare for the next planting season. Even little toddler feet are able to grip the rough face of the rock, as we explore our natural "playground."

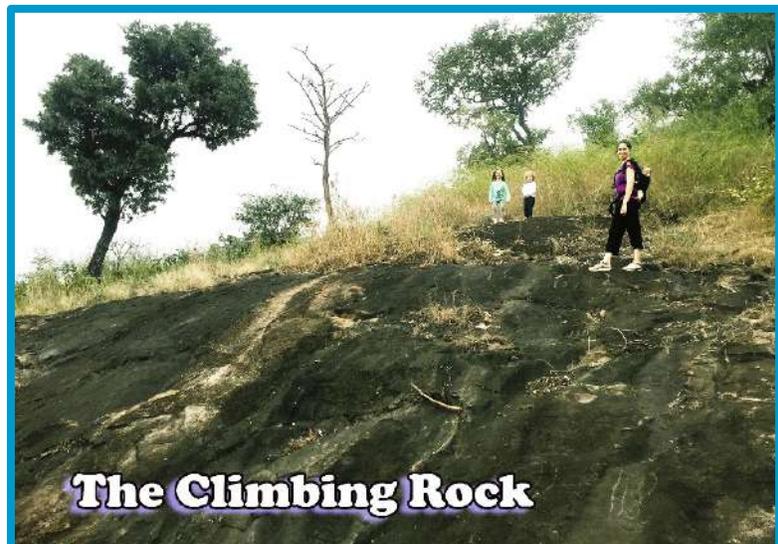
While these are some of the sounds that we normally hear during our summer, we enjoy identifying new sounds in a growing awareness of the diversity of the natural world around us here in the United States. These are the sounds that we will call to mind after we return home to Malawi, remembering the sounds of the places where our family live, and where we call home for a short while.



Justine Hayes



Mosquito Eating Orb Spiders



The Climbing Rock

THE ROAD TO MARKET by Styford Blazio

The Namikango VSL program looks for ways to help improve the living standards of people both physically and spiritually. What a blessing it is to move from being the poorest in the area to financially independent.

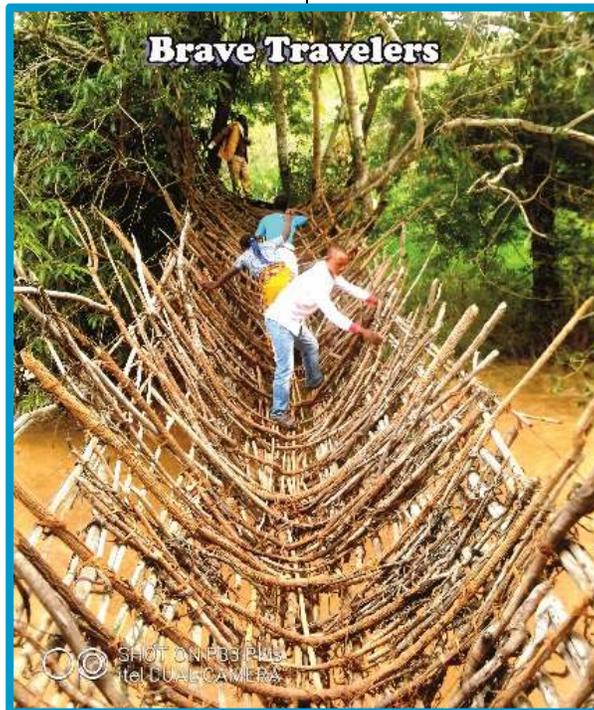
On December 14, 2019, a team from Namikango wanted to visit the VSL group in Kavukuvuku Village. We parked our vehicle along the tar-mac road and walked about 100 yards to the river. We were shocked to see a long, hanging bridge made with some tree branches, ropes, and other things. Whenever the villagers want to go to the market, to the maize mill, to the hospital, or to other important facilities, they use this bridge.

People in the Kavukuvuku Village live in poverty. Many lack adequate food, shelter, and clothing. They grow maize (corn) and tobacco, but roads and supplies do not make it to the villages here. This village is located in hilly country on the other side of a huge Rukuru River, so it is very difficult to access the village. This makes it difficult for them to take their crops to market to sell, since going around the river makes the journey too long. The current bridge is very minimal. As a result, their trading ability is very limited. For a business to be successful, there are a number of factors that must be considered: they need capital, access to good roads, and marketing skills, to mention a few. The

people in this area do not have any of these things and the result is they suffer trying to market their crops. Even a standard, slightly larger, handmade bridge allowing minimal transport of supplies and social services across the river would be beneficial towards such business success, but it has been impossible for villagers to put together the funds for such a project.

While each one of us was slightly scared to cross the existing bridge, it was obvious the only way for the team to get where we needed to go was to cross that bridge ...and . . . we did! Our meeting with the VSL team was good. While we were with the group, they shared a number of other ideas they had that could help their area. They want to multiply the number of VSL groups in the area, as they believe it is one of the best ways to get the community to work together. With several VSLs they could join efforts and build a better bridge. They also have ideas of buying their own maize mill, reducing the long distances travelled, and the cost spent almost every day to have their maize ground for food.

Members of the group thanked Namikango Mission for reaching out to the area with the VSL program. This saving practice has already helped to change their lives in ways both physical and spiritual, and it has helped them organize for future developments.

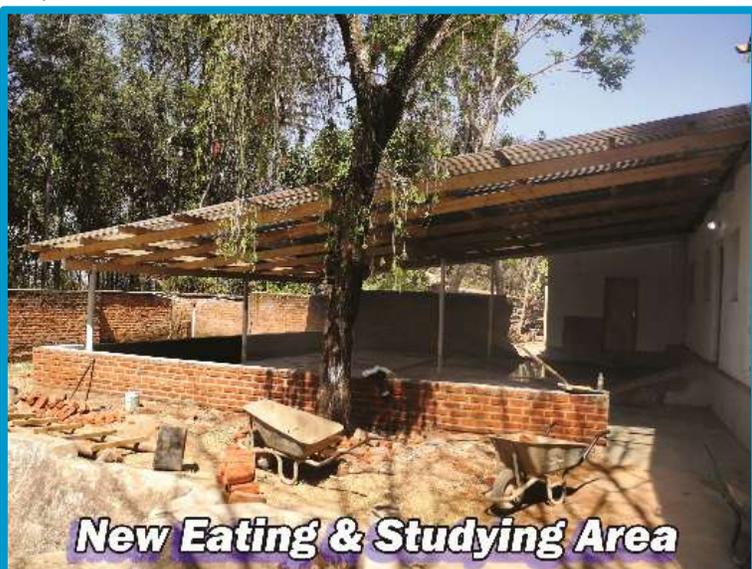


Preparation for the Discipleship School

Towards the end of last year as we finished the work on the Admin Building, we moved towards landscaping and renovating some of the existing structures to prepare for DTI (Discipleship Training Institute) to start in the Spring of 2021.

Sidewalks and a parking lot

These were added to connect the student living area and study space to the classrooms and administrative offices.



by Ben Hayes

Renovating the Mission House

We redesigned the existing Mission house and offices to accommodate the new Institute. With these buildings being deeply connected to the history of Namikango, to its ministry and missionaries, we wanted to centralize their use in this vision for the future. It is being renovated for use as a study hall and library.

The Kitchen

The existing kitchen is being expanded to accommodate the growth of students, along with adding an indoor and outdoor eating area.

Dorms

Following those renovations, existing dormitories will be renovated, along with the building of one or two new dormitory blocks.

Funding

Funding is not currently sufficient to complete the majority of the work needed to house all the students we expect to come, but we have begun slowly in order to meet our timeline for the start of the school. Several contributions have already been made towards the funds needed to prepare for the new school. To those who have contributed, we thank you! Partnering with us towards this project enables Namikango to carry out its core ministry in an exciting new way.



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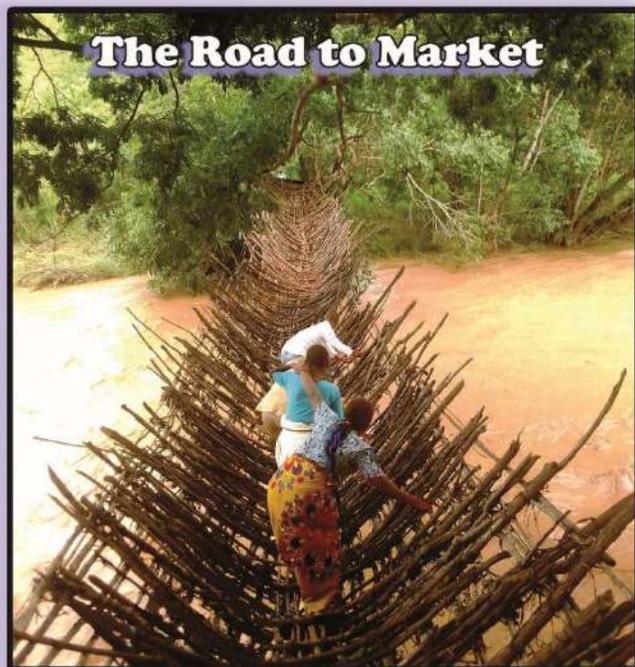
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To the Mission Faithful,

We want to introduce and welcome **Cameron Mayhill** to our Namikango Mission team. He will be working as an outreach partner to assist us in securing funds for completing our work toward Namikango's newest educational program, the Discipleship Training Institute [DTI or Institute], and for the future vision of the Mission.

The DTI, which we are just beginning, will be the fulfillment of many dreams for outreach for God's Kingdom. This is an exciting time for all of us: we can be involved at the very beginning of this work. We will need considerably more accommodations to house and train the leaders of tomorrow in Malawi as they attend the Institute. We rejoice that Cameron is onboard to spearhead this effort.

Cameron Mayhill has served Restoration Movement mission efforts for the past 20 years, with a degree from Purdue and studies at Cincinnati Christian University. He has worked with

churches and missionaries in over 20 countries during these 20 years of cross-cultural leadership experience. He served alongside many national and international leaders and ministries, bringing together resources and strategies to increase the Kingdom impact, whether baptizing new believers, serving in medical clinics, training a mission team, or providing the resources needed for Kingdom work!

Cameron is married to Jennifer and they have two daughters, Anna (18) and Katie (16). Jennifer oversees a prayer-focused ministry called Arrowlight. They are a homeschooling family and have a variety of interests, such as volleyball, piano, missions, theater, and art.



They have been able to serve on several mission trips together. Anna is starting her senior year and Katie is a sophomore at their home school - HopeHills Academy.

Welcome Cameron and Godspeed!
Sidney Vaughn



Historic First

Malawi's June Presidential Election by Ian Shelburne

In June 2020, Lazarus Chakwera won the election as the new president of the Republic of Malawi after months marked by episodes of public unrest and political uncertainty. Rewind to May, 2019, when Peter Mutharika defeated Mr. Chakwera to begin another term as president in an election that many believed was far from free and fair. After legal challenges to 2019's electoral process ran their course, a Malawian court nullified that election and ordered a re-run that resulted in Mr. Chakwera's victory.

Non-partisan observers referred to this second contest with words like "peaceful" and "transparent." This was only

the second time a court in an African nation overturned a presidential election. It was the first time that after such a ruling, an opposition candidate defeated the incumbent president. As friends and supporters of God's work through Namikango Mission in Malawi, let's join our brothers and sisters there in praying for a lengthy season of peace and stability for this nation, her leaders, and all her people.



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