

Just us... serving and loving people



Dear Friends and Family,

Here we are in Maputo... 5 months. In some ways it seems longer and in other ways as if we just got here. In May we arrived here without a home, without any possessions except a vehicle and our bags of clothes. Now, 5 months later we're in a furnished house, own a puppy, we are 5 months pregnant, and in daily ministry at the Central Hospital of Maputo.

In all of this... God is not done.

We are far from seeing the greatness of His presence in our lives and ministry.

You have yet to see and hear and experience the works of His hands through us and you.

Thank you for praying, supporting, loving us here. 5 months is a speck on the timeline of God's great plans.

### now

Welcomed with warm hugs and joyful shouts, we have returned to our ministry in the Oncology ward at Maputo Central Hospital. We are so thankful that the Lord has considered us worthy to serve in such a manner. We have developed new relationships with precious individuals, witnessed the painful passing of lives so dear, and come to know Christ and His love in a more tangible way. He has been found in the kicking of a soccer ball with a shy boy, in the squeezing of a tired, weak hand, in the pouring of water into a weary mouth, and in the laughs of a lonely person, longing for friendship... and in it all we have found that He is good.

Jon has been able to start a small Bible study with a handful of men, who are currently living at the hospital and unable to return home between treatments. A few are fathers of children on treatment, meaning they sit, day in and day out, with little to nothing to do. They are currently working through the book of Romans, discussing, challenging, and praying for one another. It has been encouraging to watch the men open up and share more each week.

We are also excited to announce that we have started visiting in the Dermatology ward. Due to other volunteers in the Oncology ward, we had only been visiting Monday, Wednesday, Friday, leaving us Tuesday and Thursday open. After talking and praying, we decided Dermatology is where we would like to spend those days. The staff and patients have embraced our presence, making the new transition seem so natural. Our eyes have been opened to a building full of more people, sick and lonely, in need of the love that only Christ can provide.





## from layne's journal:

Maybe it's been the Lord. Maybe I've been too busy to think about it.

Maybe tumors weren't scary, weren't contagious... I don't know, but suddenly it was there: **Fear.**

Fear planting images in my head of me with each skin disease I saw. Fear making me wonder if I caught that man's Tuberculosis as I prayed with him. Fear to touch his deformed hand covered in warts. **Fear.**

But when a voice whispers, "I am thirsty," how can I refuse to touch his face and pour water into his mouth? When the weak boy says, "I am hungry, but I don't have the strength open my orange," how can I not get close and help him eat? When the coughing man looks lonely through his one open eye as we visit all the patients around him, how can I pass his bed?

A mighty fortress is our God, a sacred refuge is Your Name. \*

Visiting in Dermatology has yanked me out of my comfort zone, called me to a new dependence on the name of Lord. There is balance between wisdom and faith that I find myself in constant search of, even more so with Anaya coming to join our family, our ministry. I take refuge in our God, who has put us in this place, and who guides our every step.

\*Christy Nockels song 'A Mighty Fortress' the Passion:Awakening album

## from jon's journal

I'm lying here in a quiet room, thinking my thoughts and praying my prayers. My beautiful wife sleeps beside me, my dog snores away on the floor. My daughter is growing silent and constant... her heartbeat as strong and insistent as the sun that is slowly making its way around the far side of this earthen orb.

What is this great barrier reef of emotion that pushes my groaning prayers forth in desperate cries to the Savior to save my daughter? Do all fathers tremble so at the thought of my sin passing to her?

What a beautiful and poetic tragedy it is that at once life seems so perfect and so terrifying.

Perfect in the love and smile that my wife gives me every day. Perfect in the knowledge that she will pass those to my daughter. Perfect in the baited-breath, pins-and-needles, hair-pulling, stomach-lurching, toes-tingling anticipation of seeing her fingers curl around mine.

Terrifying in my failings, my mistakes, my pride and my sin all coming down hardest on the two women I love more than life... my wife and my daughter. Terrifying in the unknowns that I face with the lives of my wife and daughter fated upon my decision and resting in the steadiness of my hands. Terrifying in knowing that I will stand before a righteous judge and account for how I lead these angel-women.

So my prayers flutter up to a compassionate ear. Mumbled thanks and pleas for help seem to fill most of them.

Missionary father indeed.

*First to my Christ and to His glory all my efforts and might.  
Then to my wife, my family, kept safe and secure through the night.*

*What's left to the stranger, the orphan, the widow. To love but one is worth the fight.*





## next

When looking ahead at our lives, sometimes it feels like there's *too* much that we see coming at us.

First and most importantly, we are joyously awaiting the arrival of our baby girl in February. Anaya Hosanna is growing healthy and strong in Layne, and we daily pray for her and for the Lord's wisdom in raising her. Being father and mother to our little one is so much more important to us than anything else we plan in our lives.

Second, we are advancing our vision to use our home as a place of refuge, a place to take in the sick and the needy. We have begun submitting documents to ensure that we are covered legally. Just like any other country, Mozambique has laws and structure put in place to care for the sick, and we need to make sure we are fully supported and endorsed by the system here.

Our heart in this project is to offer a place to stay, free-of-charge, to patients we meet at the Central Hospital who are waiting, sometimes up to 3 months, without treatment and have nowhere else to go. Many patients, who have quickly become our friends, simply sit in a bed all day every day awaiting their next round of treatment. We would like to offer a safe, comfortable, healthy, God-centered place to do that. The second part of our vision goes deeper. The costs; financial, emotional, and time, are great. For those whom the hospital can no longer care medically, who are fatally infected with cancer and sickness, and who cannot return to a distant home, we wish to offer a quiet, comfortable, dignified and love-centered place to spend last moments. We have had to say goodbye to men, women and children who died in a dirty hospital bed surrounded by the peering eyes of strangers and in the cold and sterile environment of a hospital. Our hearts break knowing that there was nowhere else they had to go. We want to welcome these people into our home and offer a cold drink, a warm smile, a gentle touch, a supportive shoulder, and the love of a Savior.

## finances

We need some help.

With our daughter coming soon, and with the renovations to our house needed for this project, we don't know how to continue financially. We understand that most people who read this newsletter already do help us financially and we are honestly not asking you to contribute any more. This is just a plea to those who maybe read and pray and have enough to give as well. Recently a supporting family had to make the hard yet correct decision to stop supporting us because of their financial situation. While we completely support their decision, it was a large donor and we are hoping that some of the people who may read this can help fill the gap they left.

Before you consider supporting us financially we want it to be said that your family is much much much more important to you than we are. Please ensure that their needs are met before looking to give to us.

If you can help, you can go to [http://jonandlayne.com/?page\\_id=302](http://jonandlayne.com/?page_id=302) to read about how we are supported. You can also support us via credit or debit card there if you'd like.

Please help if you can.

If you wish to support us please email us or Vicki Heller (who is in charge of our finances) at [spartacusheller@gmail.com](mailto:spartacusheller@gmail.com) or [vickiheller@yahoo.com](mailto:vickiheller@yahoo.com) and we would be happy to get you more information regarding how you can become involved in the team that is sending us. If you have any questions at all about the ministry we are involved in please do not hesitate to contact us. You can always see our latest news at our website [www.jonandlayne.com](http://www.jonandlayne.com). You can subscribe there to our blog and receive an email whenever we update it.

Jonathan and Layne Heller

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