

**Kent & Amber Brantly**  
**Mukinge Missions Hospital**  
**Mukinge, Zambia**



Dr. Kent & Amber Brantly, along with their children Ruby (11) and Stephen (10), returned to the medical mission field in December 2019. They are serving at the Mukinge Missions Hospital in Zambia.

COVID-19: I can imagine most of you are tired of hearing about it. This pandemic has affected every aspect of society, from church and school gatherings, to the way business is done (or not done), to grocery shopping, to travel, to the way you greet your neighbor. And that's just here in Zambia! It's hard for us to imagine what many of you are facing in your corners of the world. We know some of you have been affected personally by the illness, and some have suffered with loved ones who have been infected, and all of you have been impacted in numerous ways by the public health measures being employed around the world to help slow the spread of the coronavirus and mitigate the risks to those most susceptible to harm. Thank you for doing your part to protect the most vulnerable among us! We know that caring for the vulnerable and the weak is at the center of God's heart:

*He will rescue the poor when they cry to him;  
he will help the oppressed, who have no one to defend them.  
He feels pity for the weak and the needy,  
and he will rescue them.  
He will redeem them from oppression and violence,  
for their lives are precious to him.  
- Psalm 72:12-14 (NLT)*

Here in North-Western Province, Zambia - aside from some social distancing, cancellation of gatherings, and travel restrictions - life up till now has continued with many of the familiar routines. I (Kent) still get up every morning and go to work at the hospital. Amber still does everything imaginable to keep our household functioning and our family fed - everything from administering our pets' vaccines, to cooking a roast in the dutch oven over the fire in the back yard. And our children still carry out their daily school routine with Ms. Stone, sitting around the table on the screened-in porch at the back of the house.

My work in the hospital has been busy. My main responsibility during normal work hours is to manage the patients on our maternity ward. Most of the normal deliveries are carried out by our great staff of nurses and midwives, and we work together very closely to take care of all of the antenatal (still pregnant) and postpartum/post-op moms and babies. Initially our nursery/NICU was also under my



purview, but thankfully, since we have been so busy, one of my colleagues, Dr. Missy, has been covering that service. You see, despite our successful efforts to decrease the patient census in the rest of the hospital in the face of COVID-19, there is just no way to slow down the flow of patients into the maternity ward. It's like trying to stop the waves in the ocean - they just keep coming. Last week alone, we had 49 deliveries, including 15 c-sections. And our c-section patients routinely remain in the hospital for 7 days after their delivery. So you can

Imagine how it is that our ward has remained at near capacity for the last few weeks. Would you pray for these mothers and their babies, those born and those not yet born? Would you pray for their well-being and safety as they walk the long journey of pregnancy and childbirth? Would you pray for our staff of nurses and midwives who work tirelessly to care for the mothers and babies of the many communities surrounding Mukinge Mission Hospital? And would you pray that as we care for these women and children, that they would encounter the living Christ and experience his grace and mercy and comfort during their time under our care?

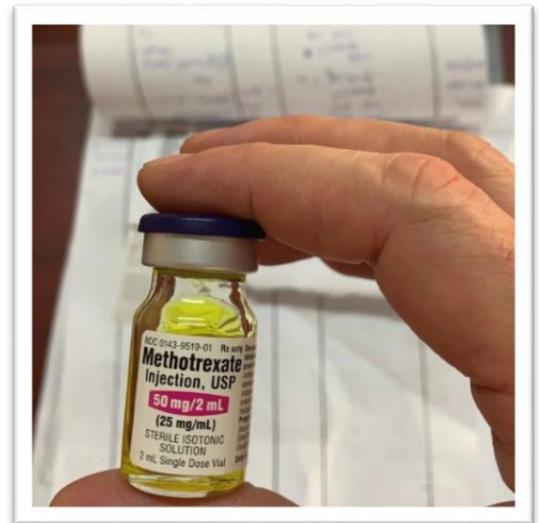
Our daily routines, however, continue to change as COVID-19 cases moved into our province. This means even fewer interactions with our teammates outside the hospital. The kids can no longer play with our neighbors. And visits to the vegetable market are to be well-planned, brief, and infrequent. One routine that we have developed during this time of social distancing will continue. We have enjoyed the new normal of worshiping at home together as a family, with communion, followed by Sunday Brunch and a family game. This is one change we may hold onto for a while.

Thank you for partnering with us to care for the poor, to have compassion on people in need, and to participate in the coming of the Kingdom here on earth.

### Story of Hope

Her true diagnosis would be easy to miss. It looked so similar to a much more common problem. A woman is thousands of times more likely to present to the hospital with a miscarriage than she is to show up with choriocarcinoma - a type of cancer in the uterus. But she *just happened* to seek care at Mukinge while we had a visiting specialist who caught the subtle signs and made the right diagnosis. Unfortunately, we did not have the medication needed to treat her condition. So our patient was discharged from the hospital without treatment, in hopes that we could find the necessary medication.

Our visiting obstetrician-gynecologist was able to get the medication delivered to a surgeon who would be coming out in a few weeks. Our patient *just happened* to return to the hospital three weeks later, two days before that medication would arrive on a small mission flight bringing the surgeon to Mukinge. This gave us the opportunity not only to administer the first dose of her weekly chemotherapy regimen, but also to explain her condition to her all over again. And to learn more of her story - she is her husband's third wife. Not consecutive; simultaneous. And it gave us the opportunity to pray with her.



She will continue to come to our hospital on a weekly basis for the next 4 or 5 months until her treatment is complete. We are praying for complete healing and eradication of the cancer from her body. We are praying that her weekly visits have an impact on her physical health, as well as making an impact on her spiritual health in her journey towards Jesus.

God has given us a calling to serve the poor, to have compassion on people in need, and to participate in the coming of His Kingdom on this earth. Every day at Mukinge Mission Hospital, you help us live into that calling. In this season of Thanksgiving, we are thankful for YOU and your partnership in the Gospel. May you seek first the Kingdom of God above all else wherever you are today, trusting that the Lord will provide everything you need.