



MALAWI MISSION PARTNER COMMUNIQUE

By Missionary John Holtz

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"A Most Beautiful View"

John and Nancy
Roebke now call
Malawi home.

Visit them and you'll
notice right away that
they live with a most
beautiful view.

Stunning. Splendid.
Spectacular.

The kind of view that the camera can't capture and
words can't express.

It steals the breath and dazzles the eyes. The mind
can't comprehend it, one's brain can't even soak it
all in.

But one can experience it and that's what John and
Nancy are doing. They are living right in the
middle of a superb view...and loving it.

They moved to Malawi in May 2017. Mind you,
this was no move just across town. It was half way
around the world. 8,474 miles to be exact: from
Huntsville, Alabama to Lilongwe, Malawi.

But pulling up stakes and driving them into a new
land is nothing new. They did it in 1994 when John
graduated from the Seminary and received his first



Call. For nine years,
from 1994-2003, the
Roebkes served as
WELS missionaries
in Bulgaria.

But the Lord wasn't
done. He then
picked up and
packed up the
Roebke tent again.
This time he set it

down in Wautoma, Wisconsin. Then the Lord felt
that another move was in place for the Roebkes so
He led them to Alabama.

But He still wasn't done.

Now it's Central Africa.

But at this stage in life, it didn't just mean saying
"good bye" to a congregation; it also meant, for the
first time, leaving behind their two daughters,
Chrissy and Liliana. To be sure, they are in
Nancy's prayers and she humbly begs yours, too:

*"It is hard to live separated from the kids after 20
years of being a "hands-on" parent...please pray
for us and may God help our family – parents,
siblings and children, as they continue to live in the
United States serving God where they are."*

And the Roebkes are serving God *where they are*.

Nancy hopes to put her background of history, language and education to good use. She shares some of her aspirations: *“I hope to develop my talents here in Malawi by encouraging women and families to grow in their love and knowledge of the Bible whether in English or the local language, Chichewa. I enjoy studying the Psalms and leading discussions as a way to do this.”*

While Nancy is busy in her corner, John is busy in his.



John Roebke in the Book Store at the Lutheran Bible Institute

“I’m here to help coordinate the production of printed and electronic media for use by congregations in Malawi and in other countries where WELS has a connection with local church bodies (Zambia, Nigeria, Cameroon, Ethiopia, etc). I also have the responsibility to take responsibility for outreach to WELS members in the USA via social media, newsletters, personal visits, etc. I’ve created a Facebook page for One Africa Team, as well as a weekly blog called, “WELS Friends of Africa” (sign up at www.oneafricateam.com).”

Who knows, you might just find John and Nancy some day at your church or in your home talking about their work and their most beautiful view. Because really, both the work and the view go together because both are about Christ.

Yes, the work is all about Jesus, but the view? Ah, yes, the view.

I’m not talking about the location of their house or for that matter any scenic landscape in Malawi. Oh,

don’t get me wrong, there are plenty amazing places to see! The sprawling tea estates are spectacular, the mountains are majestic and Lake Malawi sparkles like stars, but there is a view far more stunning than any of those.

I’m talking about God’s mercy in Christ. If you want to see the spectacular view, just read the Scriptures! What will you see? God’s undeserved love in Jesus! Oh, how wide and long and high and deep it is! (Ephesians 3:18). And how beautiful! By faith we can live in it and experience the wonder!

Exactly what John and Nancy are enjoying.

When I asked John to tell me one of his favorite passages he shared one with me from Romans 12:1,

*“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, **in view of God’s mercy**, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship.”*

He explains, *“Whether you are in church on Sunday or at work on Tuesday, whether you preach in a pulpit or post pictures on Facebook, everything we do in faith is an act of worship that is acceptable to God. Our life’s value is determined by what Christ did for us, not by what we achieve in the short time available to us on earth.”*



Nancy wrote out and framed Psalm 107:1

When I asked Nancy the same, she referred to a couple of Psalms (107, 136) and expressed the recurring theme of those two Psalms:

“Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good and his mercy endures forever!”

John and Nancy know where they stand in their relationship with God and the view is grand.

Stunning. Splendid. Spectacular.

Nothing more and nothing less than God’s mercy in Jesus Christ.

It becomes the catalyst to accept a Call; it gives the strength to be able to leave behind one’s children to live where God wants you to be; it is the reason one can pull up stakes and move to new lands; it is the motivation to take the opportunity to serve God wherever one is.



*Nancy, Liliana, Chrissy, John
Crown of Life Church in Lilongwe, Malawi*

Wherever YOU are.

See? It’s not just about John and Nancy. Think about where *you* are and where *you* can go and what *you* can do in your own God given little corner of the world. And when you think about it, it’s really not about you or me either. It’s about *Jesus*.

God of mercy, God of grace,
Show the brightness of *your face*.
Shine upon us, Savior, shine;
Fill your Church with light divine,
And your saving health extend
To the earth’s remotest end.

- CW #249:1

To some, Malawi may seem like “earth’s remotest end.” But to others, Malawi is home.

The Warm Heart of Africa is just one place of a world full of places to “offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God.”

Wherever you call home, and wherever you happen to be, with the love and mercy of Christ in your life, like John and Nancy, you too have...

A most beautiful view.

Sincerely,

Missionary John Holtz
Your Malawi Mission Partner