Dear Family and Friends,

Planes, trains, and automobiles for transportation...in Kenya it's buses, motorbikes, and walking to get from here to there, but more on that later.

A lot has happened since the last time I've written I'm not sure where to start. The Sunday school training that took place on the 28th went well. It was fun to watch a room full of adults learn the motions and sing children's songs! While Beka was teaching I was visiting and playing with the children that go to school there. They were on break and I took a picture of them. After which I was mobbed by children wanting to see themselves on the camera. They all circled around me yelling "mimi" which means "me, me" as they tried to grab the camera. Once that settled down I convinced one of the older kids to write down a couple of simple Swahili phrases I could use. So I learn "Anitwa nini?" which is "What is your name?" and also "Una miaka gape?" How old are you?" So I went around the rest of the day finding children and saying "Anitwa nini?" I got laughed at a lot, but it was fun.

Sunday the 29th was a crazy adventure as we ended up going to two different churches that morning. First we went to the Bible school church and did Sunday school with the children. Beka ended up doing the story cause I wasn't ready, but I filmed it so she could translate it for me. After Sunday school, Pastor Wilson met us and we drove another hour to the Busia church. The church is also an orphanage with about 50 orphans. I helped in Sunday School again, after which we did medical care for the children. Beka went to school for nursing, so she showed me how to clean out and take care of a tropical ulcer, which I found very interesting. Children weren't the only ones needed medical treatment, there was also a line of adults that came for help. Once that was done I again went around and visited with the kids. I've discovered that a main part of this ministry is just interacting, playing, and showing love towards these kids. This is the part that I'm good at. It's really easy to get the kids to smile at me, I just open my mouth and talk.

So last week, Beka and I went to Nairobi. Now I thought it was going to be a bus trip to Nairobi, and someone was going to pick us up and bring us to her sisters house. I was wrong, but that's ok I got a good taste of how transportation works in Kenya and my first experience of the bus system in Kenya. They scan you and your bag before you get on the bus to make sure you aren't carrying a bomb. I was like "well that's reassuring…" We left Kakamega at 8pm on Monday night and arrived in Nairobi at 3am. We stayed in the bus station until around 6am when it was light enough and safe enough for us to go outside and find a ride to Beka's sisters house. Well the matatu got us about a mile away from her house. From there we walked some more and finally we found a motorbike that gave us a ride the rest of the way. So I made it to Nairobi by bus, van, motorbike, and my own two little feet!

While there, we went and visited another orphan girl that Beka helps, Jane. Jane has Cerebral Palsy and is staying at a place that helps disabled orphans. She is a very sweet girl and while there, she was content to hold my hand and smile at me. She thought my name was Jane too, so that made her very happy. On Thursday, I went with Beka as she took Nasibu to school. Nasibu is starting high school, but it's a boarding school. So it was kind of like dropping off a freshman in college and helping them get moved in and settled on their first day. Nasibu looked scared, but she is doing all right. The rest of thursday was a crazy day, as Beka and I packed our stuff and left for town at noon (Our bus wasn't leaving until 8) because that was when the ride into Nairobi was leaving. If you miss your ride, you have to walk which is not fun. We ran some errands when we got there and because of where we were dropped off in the city we had to hurry across town to get to the bus station. While walking, we were about to cross the street and we had to cross in front of a bus. Well I was so focused on the fact that I didn't want to get hit by the bus that I didn't see a cement post sticking about a foot out of the ground. My ankle found it though and smashed very hard into it. But, there was no time to stop so I hobbled across the street and kept walking. The sad part about all of this is we were just a little to late and all the buses were sold out. So here's me, Beka, and the baby standing outside the bus station with the sun setting trying to figure out what to do. So I prayed as Beka thought. Finally, we decided to ask for help. A nice guard informed us that there were shuttle vans across the street. So we tried there and another nice man (God was really helping us out) found us a shuttle to Kakamega. Once in the shuttle I had to do some makeshift first aid on my ankle as I had a nasty gash in it that was bleeding. Thank the Lord for Hand sanitizer and toilet paper! Now a shuttle is a van that they cram 11 people into and drive 6 hours. It was actually better than the bus and I found that I had more leg room. Although the gentleman sitting next to me would fall asleep against the window, and then we would hit a bump and he would fall over onto my shoulder. I didn't really care though. God was looking out for us though and kept us very safe. When we got to Kakamega it was about 3:30 in the morning. We asked the driver to let us off at a street that was about a 10 minute walk from the house. The driver and two other passengers wouldn't hear of it though and insisted on driving us closer so that we would be safe. They let us out about a block from the house, which was another answer to prayer!

After a day of rest we were back at it on Sunday going to church in Muroki. Muroki was the church I went to my first week, and it's down one of the worst roads I've been on in Kenya. It's a very bumpy two hour drive. So Beka and I took up singing on the way there and the time went quickly. After church, I went out and played with the children (this is one of my favorite things to do). A game that is universal in America and Kenya is one where you chase little children and the mock scream and run away from you. These kids had me wore out pretty fast though. Every once in a while I'd catch one and then everyone watching or playing would laugh. It was fun, and I love seeing the children smile. I even had the older ones smiling.

God has blessed my with a week of rest this week as Bible school is being held. We have two pastors from the states staying with us, so that is fun. This has been my week of accidents though. Earlier this week I burned my hand and three of my toes while on the fire that was burning the backyard. It was my fault because I didn't have shoes on, which was dumb on my part. I've been much better about remembering them now. The day after that though, I dropped a padlock on the two toes that weren't burnt. All of my toes are doing fine now, and the gash on my leg is healing, but I'm pretty sure it's infected. I suppose it was about time that my klutziness kicked in over here.

For those of you who are wondering we have not eaten Fred yet. We're waiting for him to get bigger. We did get another chicken earlier this week whom the girls named Tick-Tock. Beka and I butchered Tick-Tock on Tuesday, and he became chicken and dumplings. It was very good. I think that I might have to kill Fred though, now that i know how to kill the chicken, we'll see about that one though.

The next three weeks to a month are looking pretty busy. Next week, I will be celebrating my birthday in Uganda! We will be there for about six days, and then back home. Afterwards we will be in Nairobi for a week or two helping Beka's sister with a building project. There's a team coming from the states to help as well. From Nairobi we're leaving for Mombasa which is on the coast and I think we will be there for a week. So lots of traveling, but lots of adventure and fun as well that God has planned.

Prayer:

Pray that God will continue to show me ways that I can serve while I am here

Pray for the orphan ministry and that the pastors will continue to help them

Pray for quick healing for my injuries

Pray that I will not get frustrated with the language learning

Blessings in Christ,

Jen