



Dear Family and Friends,

It's been a few weeks since you've gotten an update from me, as it's been a very busy 2 plus months here since returning after spending Christmas with my family. But it's been a very rich time as well! I am doing great!!! I'm in a small group on Monday nights, with a group of amazing ladies. We're walking through a study by Rolland and Heidi Baker, "Living in His presence/with His presence". Just getting together, having a time of worship, study and praying for each other is so important in our faith journey.

The OR department has remained busy since January, even with the adjustment in the surgical schedule to do more general surgery weeks while we looked for more Women's Health patients, that has gone well. I can't believe it's the middle of March already, as time just goes so fast. In the OR, we have continued to welcome new staff on a Monday and farewell staff on a Friday, a constant turn over in some staff in the OR every week. Most Mondays it's like a family reunion, as alumni return year after year, many OR nurses, surgeons, and Anesthesia. We truly are one great big family that just changes some members each week. This week we counted 17 different nationalities represented in the OR staff alone, so exciting the diversity we have. I figure at any given time 50% of the OR staff speak English as a second language, so clear communication within the department is so key.

With 8 weeks remaining in the surgical schedule, and really 10 weeks in the field service, there is now an urgency/stirring of sorts that people feel inside, including myself. It can be a LT crew member feeling excited to see their family in the summer, already thinking about those plans, or our patients on the ward who are still healing from their surgery but it's taking longer. The question runs through their mind, how much longer will I need to be here? Will I need to stay up to the final days the ward is open? Will my wounds heal? For those LT crew who are leaving after a few years of their life onboard the ship, the question, "What does it look like to go back home now.....when home has been the ship.....transition time.....can be very hard" Many hard good byes coming!! Some 'see you later's,' but others the next time unknown. For our 200+ day crew who have worked with us for 10 months now, the question they ask.....will I be able to get a job after the ship leaves?"

The ending to a field service for sure is a time to embrace as well and reflect, because of all the answers to prayers, miracles of patients surgeries and their healing, lives transformed spiritually as well, now knowing Jesus for the first time or a renewed faith and growth. Many crew, day crew, guests, caregivers, Cameroonian officials, and so many others impacted in some way. His light is shining brighter in Cameroon!! And yet there is grief as well to go through, for those we couldn't help, many, many 'no's' to get the 'yes'. A hard REALITY!! The goodbyes as well are hard, because your heart has loved deeply, it hurts but healing comes.

When I think on this further, in every aspect of this field service, the great things, the challenging, and the sad things, God's faithfulness never wavered!! HE IS FAITHFUL!!! Even when my trust has lacked, His hasn't!! He just kept showing me, providing, whatever it was, He was there all the time walking this through right by my side, nudging, whispering, calling me out to higher. That's how awesome and loving God is!!! If you don't know Him well, then pursue Him!! He's waiting for you. Just an encouragement!!

I want to once again thank all of you so much for your faithful prayers and support that you provide on an ongoing basis for me to serve with Mercy Ships. It is such a privilege and an amazing adventure to be on with the Lord and Mercy Ships.

Recently the below verses were read out as a blessing after an evening service! These verses ring so true right now, as it feels like I'm in a race sometimes that doesn't slow down, especially as we come nearer to the end, one country coming to a close while the next is in full planning, and even a 3<sup>rd</sup> country on the horizon. I have to be reminded of Who's I am and who the race is for. It's eternal!!!

Blessings, Missy

1 Corinthians 9:24,25

"Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever."





This is Dr. Patricia Eyoup.....She was our first mentoring surgeon within our Ophthalmology program this field service, training for 3 months in the first half up to Christmas. She now is fully trained in the MSICS technique for cataract removal, which requires much less instruments and equipment, but still achieve the same outcome as a cataract removed in the West. She will reach her own people now in her clinic with the skills she's learned. Our medical capacity building program continues to grow.

### Exciting opportunity!!!!

I have the privilege to attend once again the **AORN Global Surgical Conference and expo in New Orleans, LA this year.** I will leave the 21<sup>st</sup> of March and return to the ship on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March, just before Easter.

One additional bit of news that I am very excited about is that I am one of the education speakers at the conference. I had submitted a proposal last May, was accepted in Sept, so of course I accepted the invitation.

I have a 30 minute power point presentation prepared, the topic "Volunteering as an OR Nurse Aboard the Africa Mercy. What an amazing experience it will be!"

I speak on **Wednesday morning the 28<sup>th</sup> of March, 0915 to 0945.**

#### Prayer concerns:

- Sustaining energy and strength for the crew – OR team these final weeks of the field service – myself
- Final 8 weeks of surgery left – safety for the patients – good wound healing
- Continued preparations for the next field service in Guinea beginning in August 2018
- Advance Team leaves for Guinea April 21<sup>st</sup> – Team of 10 people from the ship
- For the over 200+ day crew who have been employed by Mercy Ships this field service to find jobs after we leave
- For more to come to know Jesus in the final weeks of this field service....and testimony to spread as patients return home.



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