

News from Missy in Conakry, Guinea West Africa September 2018

It's now 3 weeks today that we arrived back into the country of Guinea, West Africa. It's been 5 years since we were last here, where much has taken place during that time. In 2014 we were meant to return, but due to the Ebola virus, we needed to change plans until the Ebola Outbreak was declared over.

The desperation and lack of hope in the people was great in 2012/2013, and now returning....that desperation I feel is greater.....When I walk from the port through town to go to the market.....the side of the roundabout is filled with a group of handicapped people begging for money or food.....children begging..... pot holes filling the paved streets.....partial dirt roads still found within this large city.....streets flooded with rain water.....people's homes scatter the sides of the road through town.....which much more resemble a shack than a house.....men, women, children, dogs, cats, goats, chickens, etc.. going about their daily lives.....the people selling fruit/veg/fabric/herbs, etc. in the market to earn the money needed to put food on the table later

....Through my eyes (my Western culture eyes) I see the extreme need, the physical poverty very much in my face everywhere....the physical lack.....it hits me deep in my heart.... (within my thoughts, I ask myself "how do the local people see themselves? Do they think they are lacking? What would the greatest need they say they have?") I want to fix what I see

Yet.....there is such a beauty here within the people... when engaging with so many of the people as I walked.... the men, women, and children.....I was met with some of the most beautiful, welcoming smiles, greetings, and kindness.....(greetings are huge here)....establishing and maintaining relationship.....huge.....shopping in the fruit market the lady selling me fruit remembered my name today and I learning hers.....I am once again a learner in this West African culture and where here Islam is 95% of the population.....less than 3 % Christian.....what a privilege to be the hands and feet of Jesus here

We have been having cultural briefings on Thursday nights, gaining more understanding of the ingrained Islamic culture and religion among the people. We had a former Muslim man who came to faith in Jesus share his testimony Thursday night. It was very powerful!

Guinea is indeed on the high end of being one of the poorest countries in the world.....the human development index ranks Guinea as 183 out of 188 countries

I think here, the injustice of poverty and lack of access to healthcare amidst one of the top countries of corruption is what gets me upset.....the disparity between the poor and rich is wide



On August 11th we sailed into Conakry, Guinea.....amidst a heavy rain shower. That did not detour from the excitement of the arrival.....this being our 4th time we've served in the Nation of Guinea!

Entire team who helped with the pre-screening event on the 21st of August!



Thousands came that day to stand in line in hopes that the condition/problem they came with was one that we could treat with our specialty surgeries



I had the privilege of being one of the pre-screening nurses on the 21st of August, where just over 6,000 people came.....we arrived to the location with a scene of real desperation as so many all crowded at the main gate, unable to bring themselves to stand in a line.....after a couple of hours went by with the help of the local police, groups of people were brought into the compound and filed through many snaking lines to have a chance to share what brought them there that day.....I can say that every person was engaged with.....valued and honored in the brief moments we had with them.....even as I proceeded to say 'no, I'm sorry' hundreds of times that day.....as it was just something that was not correctable by surgery, not something we treated, or a medical condition. It was an exhausting day.....emotionally draining.....yet I didn't do it alone....we were a team supporting each other and the Lord was at the center of it all. I did say 'Yes' some as well, and I am thankful that they now have spots in our surgical schedule, after the surgeon screenings have taken place this week.

We begin surgeries this next week.....Tuesday Sept 4thvery exciting

In addition to the setup and events taking place off the ship, with the dock side setup, Hope Center, and Dental Clinic, the ship and crew onboard have continued to work over these past 3 weeks to ready the ship and the Hospital to receive patients on board. We will have our first admissions Monday afternoon and begin surgeries Tuesday.

Our day crew began just over a week ago, 225 Guineans providing translation and other work around the ship. We're already getting to know them and building relationship within our teams.

I am doing well.....I've settled back in.....soon I will be able to get into a routine.....small groups will start within the community soon.....my involvement with being on the worship team and leading worship will be more regular.....

Prayer requests as we begin:

1. For the OR team.....for a great unity and collaboration with each other as we change members of our team every week.....that we keep Jesus at the center of everything we do
2. We still need more patients for some of our specialties.....that they would come forward.....the need is huge here.....but finding the patients sometimes is hard (4 interior screenings will happen in Oct/Nov time)
3. For some continued critical needs for staffing within the OR for immediate period as well as the 2nd half – Biomed technician, OR central sterilizing technicians, and an OR Clinical Supervisor
4. For these next weeks leading up to the end of November when I plan to take a few months furlow away.....plan to take back my responsibilities as OR Manager around the first of June 2019
5. For our patients, care givers, crew and guests throughout the field service to experience Jesus.....and desire to know more if they don't know Him.....for many seeds to be planted

How to contact me: E-mail

missy.brown@mercyships.org

By Mail:

Missy Brown
Mercy Ships
M/V Africa Mercy - Hospital
P.O. Box 2020
Lindale, TX 75771-2020

www.mercyships.org

Beautiful Sunset here in
Conakry, Guinea

A bit of adventure on Kassa
Island

