

Update from Georgia – August 18, 2010

The first phase of my service with Mercy Ships has come to an end. On the night of July 31 I flew out of Lome, Togo and, by way of Paris, arrived in Atlanta on the evening of August 1. The *Africa Mercy* is now on her way to Durban, South Africa for some upgrades and maintenance. I was blessed to have this opportunity to serve, and I am looking forward to the opportunity to continue that service over the coming years.

I hardly had time to get my feet on the ground and back in my basement apartment so graciously furnished for me by my wonderful friends Dave & Dianne Christian when I was off again!

This time I was headed across the country to Portland, Oregon to attend the wedding of my youngest daughter, Amanda to a wonderful young man named Paul! I was accompanied on the flights over by my middle daughter, Michelle, and my granddaughters Shania & Grace, and joined in Portland by my oldest daughter, Rebecca. Amanda & Paul had a whole schedule of activities planned for us and the other family members who were able to come for the brief ceremony at the Washington County Courthouse. We all had a wonderful time!



So what's next?

I've now entered into the second phase of my service with Mercy Ships. Between now and January of next year my focus will be on additional preparation for long term service on the *Africa Mercy* and raising the necessary support to make that happen.

Preparation will include the training provided through Mercy Ships in their "Gateway" course. That program includes classroom instruction in cross-cultural missions and working with the poor, as well as maritime basic safety training designed to help keep us all safe on the ship and respond appropriately in the event of an emergency. The program concludes with a 2-1/2 week field service in a developing country – in this case Haiti. I am scheduled to attend this course from mid-September through the first week of November.

Preparation also includes getting a bit of training and coaching in some of the areas of the lab in which I haven't worked recently, but need to be refreshed in for my service with Mercy Ships – most notably microbiology and parasitology.

Raising Support will be the second focus of this second phase. When God calls someone to go and serve Him, He doesn't send them out alone. He also calls others to support that individual or family as they go. Not everyone is called to be the one to go, but every Christian is called in some way to support those who are going. You may be called to be a prayer partner, an encourager, or a financial partner.

I don't expect everyone who reads this update to partner specifically with me in any of these roles. Every day I get appeals for ministries and good causes, and I cannot support all of them. But each of you has touched my life at some point and I only ask that you consider and pray about whether God is calling you to partner with me in this ministry. I can't, and shouldn't, do it on my own; and when God calls, He also provides. Let me know if you would like to have more information about my plans, my needs, or about Mercy Ships in general. You may even have a small group, Bible study, club, or civic organization you think would like to hear about this ministry. As my schedule allows I'll be glad to speak with individuals or groups who want to know more. There's also lots of good information at the Mercy Ships website: www.mercyships.org. If you're new to this email list, you can also find my previous Newsletters and Updates on my website: www.hisfamily.com.

Phase 3

Lord willing and all going well over the next few months, I will be returning to the *Africa Mercy* in mid-January before she sets sail from Durban, South Africa, bound for our next field service in Freetown, Sierra Leone. I am very much looking forward to continuing to serve the poor of West Africa through this ministry.

A big THANK YOU to all of you for your prayers, encouragement, and financial contributions that allowed me to spend June and July onboard the *Africa Mercy*.

Claudia

Note: If you'd prefer not to receive these updates, rather get them at a different email address, or know of someone else who'd like to receive them, just let me know! Feel free to pass this on to others who might be interested, too.