



International Faith Missions

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Life as a Missionary

Wow! I can hardly believe how fast the past two years have gone. But yet, in some ways, it feels like forever when I reflect on how young and unprepared I was when I first came to Haiti in June of 2013. A lot has changed in my life since then, and I pray that it has been for good. God is faithful and when we choose to follow Him, He will walk with us and protect and guide us in ways we cannot imagine. To any young person out there, if you feel that God is calling you into service somewhere, anywhere, go for it. I promise you will be changed. For me, life in the field was not what I had envisioned it to be, but that's okay, because God's ways are higher than mine. I'm going to try to break down the past two years in a few words.

The first three months were amazing! I was learning a new language, making new friends, and just doing all kinds of amazing things. I was a missionary! But then came the next three months- sure they were still good, but there was this not so little feeling called homesickness. I never knew a feeling could hurt so much. The rest of the year I spent learning. Learning about relationships, life and death, mechanics, responsibility... Did I mention relationships? Life on a compound is all about relationships and the things about relationships are not always black and white. They depend on trust and many other things I'm afraid I still don't understand. If there's one thing I've learned in Haiti, it is that life is relationships- with family, friends, church, and ultimately Jesus. That's why He died, to restore broken relationships. After 14 months, I went home to South Carolina for the month of August. The ensuing months up until now have really been a blur, mostly because life here has become normal and normal is very hard to write about.

As I'm preparing to go back to the states, I have really struggled with the question - did I make a difference? Did my time here really count? I think we all ask ourselves that question when we close out a period of time in our lives. But what I have come to is this prayer "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference." (Author unknown) I'm learning to let it all go into the hands of the Potter.

~ Levi Kauffman ~

Praise & Prayer

- ♦ Praise God for the help He provided through the work teams this spring and winter. They work hard and a lot was accomplished.
- ♦ Praise the Lord for the new converts in the church.
- ♦ Praise the Lord for willing hearts as He continues to call people to fill the needs of the mission in Haiti.
- ♦ God's faithfulness in prompting people to support our mission with both prayer and finances.

- ♦ Pray that God would send helping hands to fill the need for staff on the field.
- ♦ Pray that the light and love of Jesus would shine through the staff as they go about their daily tasks.
- ♦ Pray that God's Spirit would move in the hearts and minds of the people in Haiti.
- ♦ Pray for the staff and volunteers working in Haiti and the Dominican Republic as they make challenging decisions daily.

Staff Needs:

House Parents—Immediate!

For this position, we are looking for a couple without family responsibilities to serve as house parents for our single staff and provide hospitality for visitors and work teams. This couple will be tasked with caring for young people and mentoring them. We desire to provide a safe and spiritually uplifting environment for our young people to serve in. If God is calling you to this position of service, please contact us, we want to work with you!

Mechanic—Immediate!

We are seeking for a single fellow to fill the responsibility of Mechanic. This position would also include general maintenance. If you feel the calling to take on this position, please contact us asap!

Pharmacy worker—Oct. 2015

We have need for a young person to serve by working in our clinic pharmacy. Training is provided. Attention to detail imperative.

UPDATE ON MICHELET DORT

It has been a year now since Donna Weaver, my wife and I brought Michelet Dort to Michigan for treatment at the University of Michigan Mott Children's Hospital. Mich has a rare genetic bone disease called Osteogenesis Imperfecta (O-I) or in layman's terms, Brittle Bone Disease. There are two common forms and six forms that are rare. Of them, he has one of the rarest.

Mich came to the I.F.M. Children's home at the age of nine months with a broken femur bone. Within the next four and a half years he had several additional breaks, plus with each fracture his femurs became more deformed, and had a rainbow curve in them. This did not allow him to walk because of throwing him off balance.

Donna Weaver worked as an advocate for us and obtained O.I. specialist appointments at the U of M. Hospital. After working for nearly six months we were finally granted a one year medical visa for him.

Our first appointment was May 15th. We saw a genetics doctor who immediately referred us to the O.I. surgeon and specialist. She scheduled surgery for August 25th. The lengthy difficult surgery involved taking a wedge of bone from each of three cuts so the bone could be straightened. She inserted a rod in each femur from the hip to the knee. After six weeks the v-soft casting was removed and we began physical therapy twice a week. Everything was going fine and he was taking up to twelve steps on his own without any help. Then he began complaining off and on about his right leg hurting. We suggested to the Physical Therapist that something needed to be done. After x-rays it was discovered that he had a broken hip, which required emergency surgery and two screws to hold the hip bone together. They put him into a reclining Spica cast (body cast from the toe to mid chest). Two weeks later they found that due to the lack of bone density and the screw placement the screws had not held. Another emergency surgery was needed! Four weeks later the second cast was removed with almost complete healing. The doctors were very pleased with the success of the second surgery.

We are currently traveling to Ann Arbor, Mi. again twice a week for physical therapy.

We have no idea when or how the hip broke as he would still walk with his walker and some on his own. The doctors said it likely broke on its own, and even a stronger muscle could cause a break for someone with O.I.

During all of this time of casting it took two people to care for him. Bathroom was especially difficult to accomplish with all the pain of movement and trying to keep him in a comfortable position.

We have applied for a six month extension to his visa but have received no determination from Homeland Security yet.

Please pray that the extension would be granted and for expense funds until we can return him to Haiti.

We thank all who have called, visited, sent cards, gifts, financial support and especially prayed during the past year. It means so much!

In His Service,
Merv & Lois Sommers



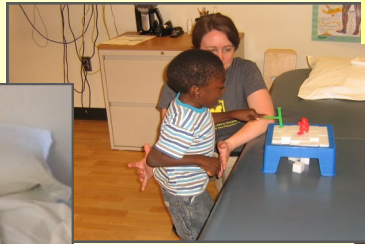
Pictures and latest update included on next page...

"Inasmuch, as ye have it to one of the least of these my brethren; ye have done it unto me..."
Matthew 25:40

UPDATE ON MICH CONT...



In Hospital after 1st Surgery...



Physical Therapy...



Last Minute Info . . .

On May 17th. we discovered that Mich had a broken femur within the rod area of his right leg. He had been complaining for a few days about his knee hurting so after x-rays it was confirmed that his leg was fractured. Surgery was necessary again. This time the doctors removed the previously placed rod and replaced it with a larger longer rod since he had grown, and the first rod had become too short within his leg. Surgery went well and was shorter than expected. We were home again on the second day. He is healing well, and the soft cast has already been removed P.T.L.

Also, after applying for an extension to his visa we received notice on May 27th. that a six month extension was granted. The doctors at the hospital are saying that he needs to stay in the States due to his fragile and unique situation. Consequently, we are now working on trying to get him a permanent legal status in the States. Your prayers for this change in status would be greatly appreciated.

Merv Sommers

A special Thanks to Merv & Lois for all the time and effort they have put forth in helping Mich. They have been a tremendous blessing to the mission and also to Mich in an outstanding way. Mich is very blessed to have been under your care in the last year.

May God Bless you for all your work!

A note from the Director

We are blessed to have the opportunity to know Christ as our Savior. So many people in the world have not had the opportunity to even hear of Him. It may be because no one has taken the Scripture to them yet or they may be blinded by their current religion and Christ's witness has not yet broken through.

The realization that we are privileged with the Gospel, needs to compel us to share it with the world. "The world" may look different for each of us. For some it is simply those right in our home communities. (Yes, there are people in your own areas who haven't heard of Christ.) For others it is some other place in our home country, for others it is some other place in the world. Regardless of what part of "the world" God has called us to, let's be busy doing all we can to share our privilege.

Durwin Miller, Director



A NORMAL DAY

Normal day, normal life-- how does that express itself in my life? Who is to say what is normal?! Especially when my normal is more than likely very unusual for you.

As I sit here and reflect on what normal is, thoughts cross my mind of how my "normal North American" comfort zone has been replaced with that which was once unknown and frightening to me and has now become my new normal. It's difficult to describe what normal is like when it's, well, so "normal" for me; but, I will attempt to share some of the treasures God blesses me with while I'm working at the clinic-- such as...

- Dr. Alexis bursting through the pharmacy door asking for a "cocktail" (which is a pill of this, that, and another of that type) for a patient who has severely high blood pressure or blood glucose levels
- those afternoon rushes when lab tests are finished, the doctors have read the results and have written prescriptions, and the patients swarm to be first in line for their prescriptions to be filled
- the excitement that rushes through us when another shipment of medicine and clinic supplies is received/purchased and we anticipate opening the boxes to examine their contents
- the sweet and innocent smiles, timid stares, and calls of "blan" (pronounced "blah") from children as they peer in the pharmacy window
- interactions with the staff who work alongside us... and the joys and challenges of relationships and understanding each other with cultural barriers
- poking our heads over the door to chat with whoever might be occupying the hallway
- when a familiar face of a regular patient peeks over the door or cheerfully calls out to us because they are happy to see us again and are wondering how we are doing
- when a patient, whose wounds we have cleaned and bandaged for days, comes back to thank us and show us his/her recovery progress
- those long, busy days that fly by and we don't have time to catch our breath. The last patient's prescription is filled and you realize that you really just did hand out meds to approximately 150 people
- when a doctor summons us into his consultation room to show and explain to us an interesting patient case, such as: malnourished children; accident victims with burns or wounds needing bandaging or sutures; various skin maladies; the young sisters who were stricken with diphtheria and needed medical assistance ASAP before it claimed their lives; or the incidences of hydrocephalus- the heartbreak when a child desperately had needed treatment but it was too late, or the joy of seeing another child who had received treatment years ago and is now thriving.

There have been so many opportunities to learn hands-on during my time of working at the clinic. It's not only just medical experience, but there have been challenges with relationships and growing pains in relating to people in another culture and learning a new language. I am so thankful for the grace of God and His faithfulness as He continues to walk with me and help me find my feet again when I stumble.

I want to strive to continually find the treasures God has blessed me with in my normal activities each day; and, I challenge myself with the following thoughts. How frequently do I let my thoughts get consumed in myself-- what I am doing, the task at hand, or what wish I could be doing instead; how I am feeling (physically, mentally, emotionally); or, my worries and fears about current or future affairs-- that it steals my peace, my joy, my love, and my care for others? What about those treasures- no matter how basic or simple they are- God has placed them in my life for me to learn from, to love, and to be blessed with?! I don't want the frustrations or disappointments of the moment to cloud my vision, drown my passion, and pass me by as I search and long for that "rare and perfect tomorrow".

~ Delphine Keupfer ~

"Normal day, let me be aware of the treasure you are! Let me learn from you, love you, bless you before you depart. Let me not pass you by in quest of some rare and perfect tomorrow!" (Mary Jean Irion)

INTERNATIONAL FAITH MISSIONS

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where needed most.

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I would like to help
those who cannot
afford the medical care
they need.



\$_____ monthly
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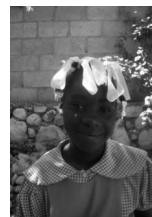
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I am enclosing \$_____ as my
initial payment and understand
that I will receive a picture and
more information.



CLINIC

I would like to help provide quality medical care in Haiti.
\$_____ operating expenses
\$_____ where most needed



*Any sponsored donations received over the
present need will be used for a similar cause.
All donations are tax deductible.*