

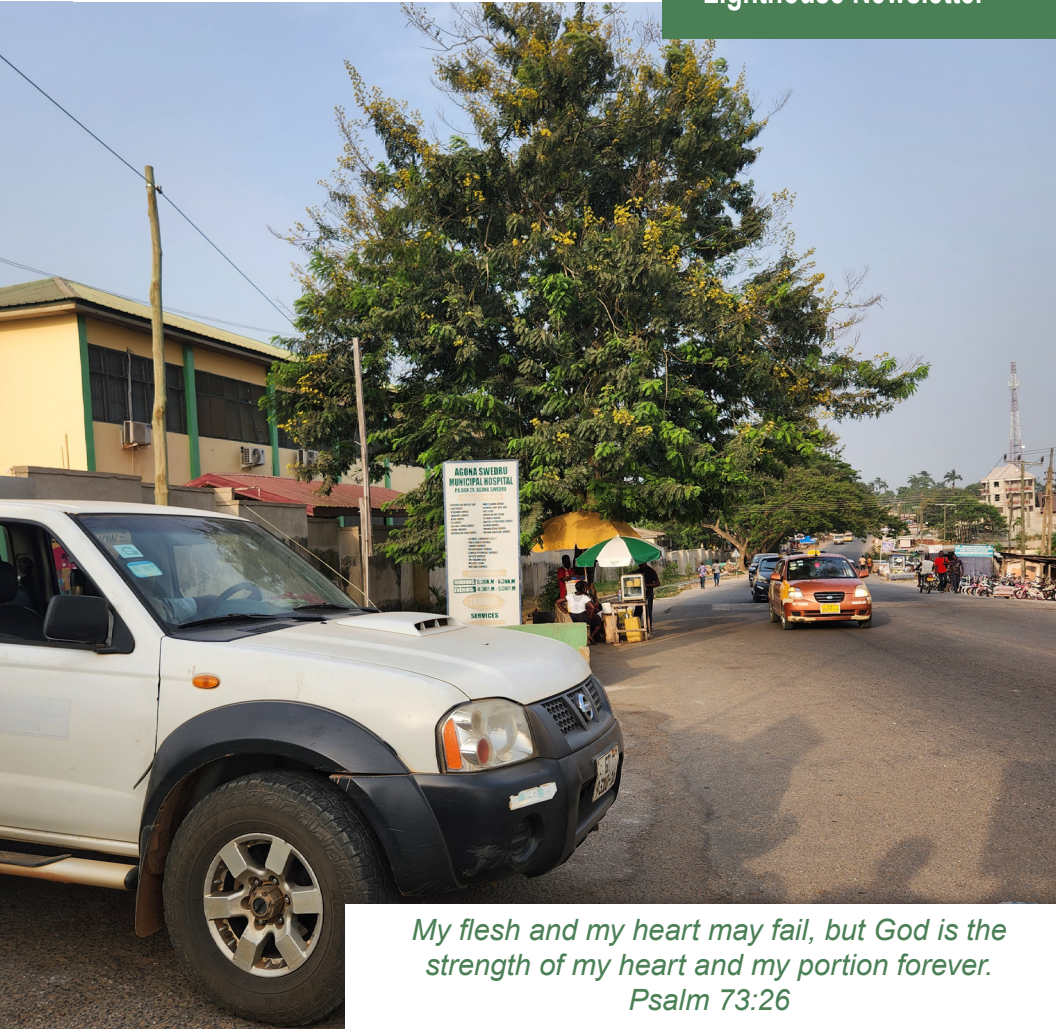


LIGHTHOUSE

MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

66th Edition
Spring 2024

Lighthouse Newsletter



*My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.
Psalm 73:26*

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Board Report

Greetings in Jesus name.

Recently I have been looking around me at all that is happening locally and all that is happening in Ghana and I've kept coming back to one thought, humble service.

I hear about Joyce in Ghana who has up to 60 children in the Leaf program presently and is hoping to reach 100 children, not for any personal gain, but that more children could be cared for and given a brighter future.

I hear of many others in Ghana completely throwing their lives into serving their fellow man. Some caring for young single mothers and their babies, some travelling to schools and spending time singing with the children and pointing them to Christ, some giving aid to elderly who are in need.... Many of these people are those who would have the education and skill to be the wealthy in the country but instead have been moved by the needs they see around them and have chosen to lay down their lives for others.

I think of humble service and I think about Jesus. Jesus lived and taught humility as in John 5:41 & 44 where He says " I receive not honour from man. How can he believe, which receive honour one of another, and

seek not the honour that cometh from God only?"

Thinking of all He gave up coming to earth, living only for others yet being hated, mocked, spit upon and crucified by those He loved. What a perfect example for us who so often fail , seeking the approval of men and pleasure for ourselves.

Sometimes living for Christ gets over-complicated and we need the simple, refreshing direction from James 1:27 " Pure religion and undefiled before God and the father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world "

So maybe you find yourself thinking your world is boring and you ought to be doing something BIG for God. I encourage you that God loves faithfulness and that whether it's flying across the world to fill a need or it's visiting the elderly neighbour for the 15th time or it's doing the most mundane task for your employer, do it for God and you will be blessed.

We thank you for your continued support and wish you God's blessings as you serve those around you and give to enable those around the world to serve their fellow man.

Jeremy Wideman

Ghanaian Hospital Tour

Have you visited a hospital recently? Maybe you've been the healthy one, cheerfully visiting the 'sick and afflicted'. You might be the one that avoids setting foot inside a hospital at all costs; you have a strong aversion to the smells and sterile walls that seem to close in on you. Perhaps you spent long days and painful nights 'resting' in a hospital bed; praying for healing. Possibly the very word 'hospital' brings flashbacks of trauma you experienced or witnessed in that space. The place may remind you of a season of life spent waiting and watching and wondering and worrying. It is a place we associate with the miracle of birth and the finality of death. It is a place of pain and parting but also of healing and hope. As with any



organization or institution we can find flaws, inefficiencies and corruption in the system. Regardless of our experience, most of us are thankful the medical system exists when we need it but hope we don't require their services!

I invite you to come with us on a tour of a hospital in Ghana.

The hospital is a compound of different wards. Each ward is in a separate building creating a small yellow and green village. The wards are connected by covered sidewalks where doctors and nurses bustle from ward to ward, lizards crawl at will, a hen and her chicks scratch in the dirt, flowering shrubs bloom and a baby sleeper hangs drying on a bush.

In the ER, there are patients in various degrees of suffering and consciousness. The nurses are doing their rounds checking each patient's vitals with the only blood pressure cuff and pulse oximeter available in the ward; whenever it is needed elsewhere for an emergency they have to share and wait until it is returned. The results are recorded with the single red pen in the department. A young child is nestled in a crib, having spent the last week there because it is the only ward with an oxygen tank. An elderly man appears to be unresponsive during vitals and it is duly noted without much surprise that he has passed away without anyone noticing. Another young boy is laying on a cot, in pain, obviously suffering from an unknown

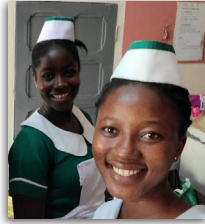


illness but not receiving urgent care. His mother is sitting beside him and we offer to pray for the two of them there. An hour later when we step back into the ER we are sobered to find that the boy has also died.

In the maternity ward, we have the privilege of holding newborn twins.

In the pediatric ward, there are several large rooms with numerous beds. Children sit there bored all day on thin mattresses. Their eyes light up at the sight of crayons and colouring books. A little girl lying there is so weak she barely acknowledges our presence. In a small room at the end of the hall is a young boy and his family, waiting to be released after spending several weeks there. He is still wearing bandages on the burns he got when a cooking pot on the fire





overturned, scalding his arms and legs.

If we group together outside and sing familiar hymns the staff will go by humming by and the occasional visitor will stand by and join in.

Inside the wards, there are people suffering from sickness and injuries. The leather mattresses are worn and tattered, there are corners that could be cleaned and their resources are somewhat limited. But the staff work hard and do the best they can with what they have.

Many people don't have medical insurance and can't afford the care they need. As a result, many people wait too long before they come for help.

It's not a place that anyone wants to need to be. No one wants to see their child or family members sick or in pain.

In a small room in the pediatric ward there are eight cribs. On a day when it was especially crowded with children and parents, a father



commented, "We are not family. We aren't friends but circumstances have brought us together."

There is much sadness but there is also joy and blessing.

There are patients who rejoice that can go home to their family today and joy at the miracle of new life. There is beauty in everyone working together and caring for each other through struggles and through rejoicing!

Time well spent takes on a new



meaning here. Although it can be frustrating when nothing happens on time, it can also be a good thing. Instead of hurrying all day to get all our work done, there is time to slow down and take time for each other.

By Sandra Bauman and Carol Horst

Spreading Joy

The Ghanaian sun shone brightly through the scant shade of the palm tree over thirteen-year-old Cojo's head. The day stretched on ahead of him with no sign of it lessening. The big brick building beside him seemed to radiate heat. The cardboard below him seemed to become thinner each evening he tried to get comfortable on it for the night.

Cojo was staying at the hospital in case his aunt Maria needed medication. She lived with Cojo's mother and himself in their little house just outside the city limits. They had to go into the city for their water and work. Maria had a little shop where she sold fresh fruits and vegetables to the people as they passed. Cojo's mother didn't have a job, yet, but they all knew it would help if she could bring in some money as well.

Then Maria got sick.

First she tried to tell them it wasn't bad, but as she struggled to walk the distance home from the shop, Cojo and his mother knew something had to change. Cojo's mother took on the work at the fruit stand. Cojo went to the hospital with his aunt, helping her over the rough spots, and letting her lean on him as she staggered the many miles to the hospital. Cojo carried a small bag with the little bit of money they had saved and some personal belongings.

The wait was long. The sun was as

hot then as it was now. The pavement seemed to collect and radiate the heat. No birds sang. No breeze blew. The palm tree wilted as it waited for the rains to come. Eventually a nurse had come to check her over. The doctors had decided to do surgery as soon as they could. Cojo had to go to the druggist to pick up the ether and the painkillers she would need. On the way back to the hospital he saw a piece of cardboard a merchant had thrown out. More people would be looking for things to sleep on so he knew he must take it while he has the chance.

Coming back to the hospital, Cojo gave the doctors the supplies. Then he settled outside to wait. That first evening he had worried. What if the surgery did not go well? What if the medicine was not what they needed? He wished he could know which room she was in so he could talk to her through the window.

The next day Cojo needed to get more supplies. This time he found out which room she was in and was able to set up his belongings outside the window. This way he was ready to go get anything she needed. The surgery went well, but there was still a long time until she would be able to leave.

The hours dragged by. Cojo did not dare to leave for fear he would be needed. Most of the other windows had a relative sitting outside as

well. They were just waiting. Waiting and thinking. Thinking and waiting. Cojo thought about his mother and wondered if she was doing okay by herself. He hoped the fruit stand was busy and that his mother was able to find cheap fruits to sell at the stand.

One day Cojo heard a beautiful sound. "Was it angels?" he wondered? He watched the other people who were sitting there waiting, too. Their faces brightened and they watched around the corner of the hospital to hear what was coming their way.

"Obronee!" A two-year-old sitting with his mother cried out the words, "White people!"

They came with smiles on their faces. The natives with them were also singing the familiar carols. "Lord I want to be in that number, when the saints go marching in." Cojo knew the

song. He remembered his mother singing it when he was little. "My father loved the Saviour, What a soldier he has been, but his steps will be more steady, when the saints go marching in."

The length of the day faded away, and Cojo joined the singers.

He didn't have much money left over. He was trying to eat only a little rice each day to make the money reach as long as it would. Here were people who brought smiles to the place. They sang a few more songs and prayed. First the white person than the local and Cojo could feel a strange presence surround him.

After the visitors left the feeling stayed. Cojo knew that whatever happened everything would be all right.

By Lois Bowman



Aid for Abraham



At a year old, Abraham was severely malnourished, weighed only 7.5 lbs and so weak that he could not sit on his own. Kind strangers visited his village, and upon finding him, took him out to a hospital for help. The elder of the village was so sure that the boy would die that he wondered why these strangers want to get involved

and then be responsible when the baby dies. By the grace of God, there was massive improvement after the child was in their care and in less than two months he gained another 7 lbs. Abraham is now a smiling happy baby with a brighter future.

Thank-you to you as supporters for your part in bringing aid to Abraham.

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