

News from the Greggs

Serving with the mv Africa Mercy in Newcastle.



Moving to Texas

Dear Friends

It has been amazing how quickly and simply things have worked out for us. Following a brief visit to the International Office of Mercy Ships and lots of discussion, we decided to say yes to the request for us to transfer to Texas and for Chris to take up the position of Chief Information Officer for Mercy Ships.

In 2 weeks time, we have to go to the US embassy to formalise our visas and then we leave on 12th October for Van, Texas! Mercy Ships has organised temporary housing for us on the base and we were offered the last place at the local preschool for Stefan which is great. Now we are busy sorting out things like bank accounts, health insurance, shipping personal effects and all the practicalities that come with a major re-location.

Vicki's visit to the Anastasis in

Ghana was really timely as it once again renewed her vision for what Mercy Ships is all about. She had felt somewhat isolated from the work on board the Africa Mercy as children are not allowed in the shipyard so her involvement very limited. Hearing about the organisational politics, interpersonal struggles and some of Chris's frustrations but not having the balance of seeing the ministry in action was difficult. Experiencing the work on the Anastasis was such an inspiration and made us realise that we still wanted to be part of Mercy Ships and were prepared to further our commitment by taking on the new role in Texas.

It has even been agreed that Vicki can spend some time each year working on the frontline in Africa and that Chris will have time off to care for the children to enable this to happen. We are also hoping that we will be able to spend 6 weeks or so on the Africa



Mercy next year as a family, which will give Chris the chance to see the fruits of his labour in action!

We hope to come 'home' each year in July (the hottest part of the year) to see our family and friends, update our church supporters and have a rest! It will be good for Stefan and Rebekah to spend some time by the sea (we will be 7 hours drive from a beach in Van) and have an opportunity to speak *real* English!!

Thanks for your continued interest in us, sorry if the news has been rather slow in getting through and please contact us if you'd like to know any more!

With love from Vicki and Chris

Meeting Enyonam



Whilst in Ghana I had the privilege of meeting Enyonam, a 10 year old girl who we have been sponsoring through World Vision. It was great to visit the project and visit her village and family. Her parents died when she was little and she was taken in with her baby brother by an Aunt who already had an aging mother to look after and 5 children of her own. They live in a mud thatched hut. I was touched by their warm welcome and their kindness to me. Enyonam even presented me with a gift - a necklace and bracelet she had made herself. How is it that those who have least to give are always so generous? The villagers sang and danced in celebration of my arrival - as a World Vision supporter I was an honoured guest. I also had the chance to see Enyonam's school and the local health post. All in all it was an amazing and humbling experience. Child sponsorship comes highly recommended.

Africa Mercy

For the first time in about 6 months Vicki went on board the Africa Mercy for a prayer meeting. It was incredible to see the change. Things are so very nearly finished!

To the untrained eye, (like mine) you might wonder why we are still stuck in shipyard as it really looks ready to become a home and sail away! The reality is unfortunately, that there are technical details that still need addressing before the ship can become fully operational. Things such as the fire detection system, ventilation, computer cabling and the public address system still remain incomplete.

The frustration is the 'same old story' - disputes with the shipyard over money. This time it is not between Mercy Ships and the yard but instead the major subcontractor and the shipyard who are failing to work out financial differences and once more the yard workers are almost inactive.

This whole conversion process has been such a battle that we cannot help but wonder about the incredible impact that this ship is going to have in the future. But progress *does* continue to be made, albeit slowly, and we can see that the battle is in the final stages!

The hospital looks amazing. I felt such an excitement as I stood in one of the wards imagining it full of patients, translators, nurses. The cargo hold is all ready to be filled, the

bridge on standby, the school is crying out for some children. Even the laundry with it's machines still in plastic casing, has an air of expectancy. It feels like Christmas eve on the Africa Mercy and we waiting for the promise of the new day to come...



Anastasis

Vicki had a wonderful time back on the Anastasis, it felt like 'coming home.' Although there had been a huge turnover of crew and many changes, God's presence was still so evident there and great things are happening.

I was housed in C1 (a notorious part of the ship) and was on the front-line during the screening days. Both proved to be great experiences. Being in C1 with new short term

nurses was great fun and screening went very smoothly. Pre-screening has been quite stressful in the past - it is like a triage system and literally everything is thrown at you. Thankfully I had a good translator and it went really well and we scheduled lots of patients for surgeries.

It was really great to be back in Africa too, I had really missed it!!

*VICKI HAS WRITTEN A REPORT OF HER VISIT TO ENYONAM AND THE WORLD VISION PROJECT IN GHANA
A COPY IS POSTED ON OUR WEBSITE www.greggs.org*

Thank you to all our sponsors who make our work with Mercy Ships possible. If you would like to know more about sponsoring Chris and Vicki's work at Mercy Ships, or would like to review your current donation, please contact us for a leaflet.

www.greggs.org

We would love to hear from you!

Tel: 0191 483 4277

email: chris@greggs.org or vicki@greggs.org

29 Elmfield Road, Hebburn, South Tyneside, NE31 2DY