

Newsletter #5 – January 1, 2014

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Or, as we say here in Cameroon, “Joyeux Noël et Bonne Année!” I pray this letter finds you all well and blessed. It has been another whirlwind month for me. Three full months here and I’m really getting into the swing of things. As I mentioned in my last newsletter I helped out at the school during their Joint Learning Session (JLS). This is when children from homeschooled families come in from the surrounding villages to learn with the other children at the elementary school here in Yaounde. I also made my first trip to the market...read more about that in a minute! And, I have now begun leading a bible club for some local children!!

Christmas was a bit difficult without my family. Thankfully, I was able to call and talk to my parents and my grandmother on Christmas Eve and that helped. Also, I was invited by some other missionary friends of mine to stay at a place on the beach, a three hour drive for us. We were blessed with safe travels to and from which is a miracle given the road conditions and traffic. (I have watched a two lane road turn into a four lane road in less than a minute). Plus, we Americans are often pulled over and asked to present our paperwork of legal residence in the country. The facility we stayed in was “interesting” to say the least. And, there was no internet where we stayed so I couldn’t communicate with my family for a few days.

We had a pastor with us and so we put together a last minute Christmas morning service which we held on the patio overlooking the beautiful Atlantic Ocean (where I spent most of the 3 days we were there!). The pastors daughter, who teaches music at the missionary high school here, and I were asked to lead worship for the small service. We invited those staying in the rooms around us to join the service. It was wonderful to celebrate the birth of our Savior, in Africa. Incidentally, on Christmas Eve we visited one of only two places on earth where fresh water flows directly into the ocean over a waterfall! It was amazing. (See pictures below.)

Our accommodations were nice, but not what you would expect in America. We had running water, (cold only), no internet, a ceiling fan but no electricity to run it, and we had to bring our own bedding. I have some pictures of our accommodations below. In the bathroom you’ll notice that there is no shower curtain or shower head, just a hose coming out of the wall. And if you look closely you’ll notice that the black dot in the corner is actually a giant roach! It’s funny how my ideas of what is normal or acceptable have changed in the last three months. I shared this room with a friend of mine, also a missionary, who works as the financial assistant for a mission organization here. While the accommodations would’ve made some people wince a bit, I have learned to look at what really matters...friendship, good conversation, good food, and getting to build a “snow” man on the beach Christmas Day (pictured below). These are things that matter more than what your surroundings look like.

As I mentioned I was honored to be asked to help with the Joint Learning Session (JLS) at the elementary missionary school. JLS happens four times a year. It is a time designated for the missionary families that work out in the villages and remote places to come in with their children (who are usually homeschooled or attend local schools where they live) and learn with other children. I helped with Kindergarten – 4th grade math. They also offer swimming lessons during this time and I taught level two swimmers, using the Canadian Red Cross Swim Kids curriculum. I love swimming and this was a great time to teach these kids how to swim safely. For some of them this is the only time they get to swim so they really look forward to it!

Being an American around here can be a bit dangerous at times. And, as a woman I never go anywhere alone at night. The first time I ever went to a major market I learned that some people believe it is good luck to touch an American... who knew I was a good luck charm? The people selling their items will practically knock other people over to grab you on the arm and sometimes even try to physically pull you to their area. If you aren’t careful you could actually get hurt! Thankfully, on my first visit, we had hired a taxi man who is well-known in the missionary community to drive us to and from the market that day. He was very kind and went into the market with us, to make sure we stayed safe.

Safety really is a big concern around here. Just a few days ago I was out with some friends when we encountered several rough situations. First, we were pulled over by a police officer for not using our blinker. Funny thing is no one else was using their blinker either. We had to show the papers for our car and he kindly let us go without any other trouble. Then, a few minutes later we were stuck at a very busy intersection and a group of men came over to our car and started to harass us. Our doors were locked, thank goodness, or we might have had a real problem! I can't repeat the things they were saying to us and asking us to do, but I'm sure you can imagine. A lot of people would get upset about it, as did I. But, I was upset for a slightly different reason. I was upset because, it would appear, Satan has been winning in their lives. As a Christian I am angry when I see that the devil has a stronghold on someone. We can easily get very angry over the things people say to us, or how they treat us. But are the words of the enemy really that important? *Our enemies need prayer; it is important to remember that most of them are just victims in disguise.*

Well, to end on a more positive note, I helped start, and co-teach, a bible club for some local children. There are about twenty of them so far! I have included pictures below. I'd love for you to take a close look at the children. These are the lives that are being affected because I have people like you encouraging me! I can't do this without your prayers and support. So, take a good look. You may recognize some of these faces in Heaven one day.

I want to thank each of you who gave a little something extra at Christmas to bless me in my ministry here in Africa. I also wish to thank one very special person who sent my parents some stamps to help with the mailing costs for those of you who don't have email and receive these letters via my parents in North Carolina and the US post. What a blessing you all are to us.

As always I love hearing from all of you! If you'd like to email me you may do so at:
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And if you'd like to write to me you may use the following address:

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I pray for each of you, by name. And, I pray that God will continuously bless you as we work together for His Kingdom!

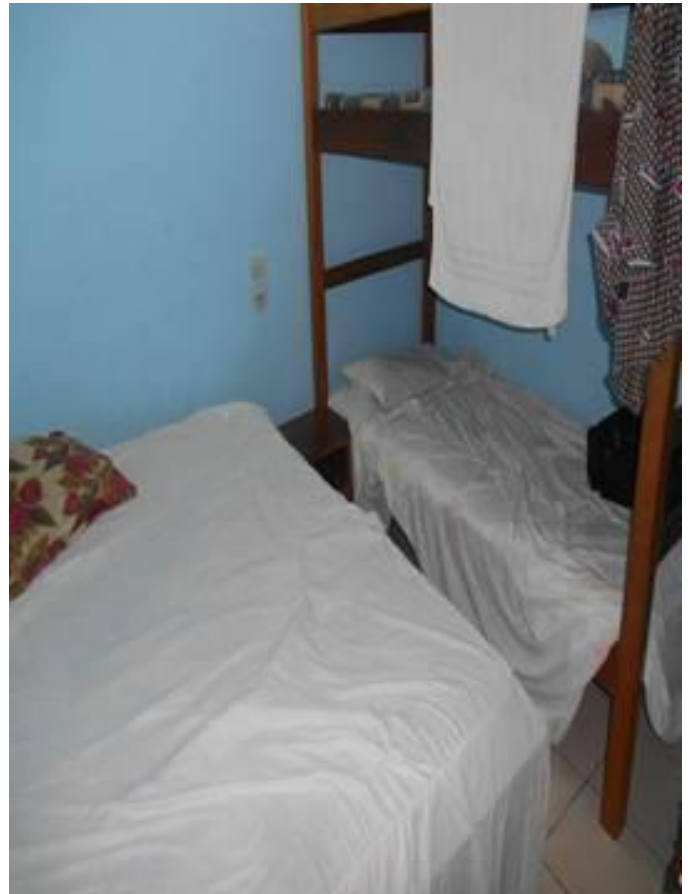




These are some pictures of a path I walk several times a week.



Our accommodations over Christmas





Trying on hats, and building “snow” men at the beach!



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“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

Romans 10:14,15