



KRB Update #2187 – Community

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Greetings from the nation of Guinea, West Africa. One of the very unique and powerful aspects to life serving in world missions with Mercy Ships is our community. Our community is both trans-generational (from newborn babies to those in their retirement years) and trans-cultural (crew coming from up to 40 different nations and so many different cultures). Some other traits of our community are: people chose to belong to the community, community is constantly changing (up to 100 new crew arrive monthly on field service – and as you can imagine not really possible to know everyone by name, we have the added assistance as you are required at all times to wear your identification badge), a group of people with common goals, there is a sense of belonging and being a safe place, a place where everyone has his or her place, working side by side, a place where we can be real, agree to disagree, participate in things you'd rather not do for the good of the whole, and a place of supportive growth and learning. Our community's foundation is Jesus, faith in God, God as our focal point, a place where spiritual growth takes place, a group of people expressing who Jesus is, focusing on the Kingdom culture versus the individual cultures, we need to each be all that God created us to be so we can help one another to become all God intended, coming together as one body of Christ. We have our regular times of prayer, praise and worship and hearing from God's word. At Easter and Christmas, we celebrate these two holidays in amazing and special ways on board – they are the only two holidays recognized on board officially. We celebrate birthdays and we also cry with friends during times of loss. Please note that most but not all of our crew are followers of Jesus. I also do not want to forget our amazing day crew (local workers who serve with us in many aspects on board).

As a community, we have a Crew Handbook which details many different aspects about life in this community. These range from maritime matters and law as we all are crew members to our chaplaincy department who also look out for our community. You might be surprised to know that we have a curfew for safety and security reasons – usually around 10:30pm everyone has to be on board the ship unless you have special permission from the captain. Our Code of Conduct includes details related to alcohol, dancing, smoking and the favorite of many our dress code.

There are various areas on the ship for our community – common areas/lounges, dining room, and Starbuck's Café (area sponsored by Starbuck's and yes there is Starbuck's coffee available <only one in West Africa>, though since I don't drink coffee doesn't excite me much except for my friends). There are services available from our library, hair salon, laundry room (which is open 24 hours a day – but you only are allowed one load per week due to water restrictions), ship shop, academy (for the children of our long term families – with 50 + in attendance), crew bank, and post office.

Hopefully you have a bit more of an idea of the community here. I have been living in community since I joined Mercy Ships in 1989, on the ships: m/v Good Samaritan, m/v Anastasis, m/v Caribbean Mercy and now the m/v Africa Mercy and at our office locations in Texas and England. I am very thankful for this community.

Please pray * All of our patients heal and are ok for discharge from the hospital

Serving Together, **Keith**

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Mercy Ships Mission Statement: Mercy Ships follows the 2000-year-old model of Jesus, bringing hope and healing to the world's forgotten poor.

Mercy Ships Vision Statement: Mercy Ships uses hospital ships to transform individuals and serve nations, one at a time.



Celebrating Josie's birthday – I have known her since she was 18 months old.