



KRB Update #2230 – Maintenance Period – Ship Community

Keith R. Brinkman with Mercy Ships

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You may wonder why we are on field service in Africa for ten months and then have to go to a shipyard for maintenance, repair and inspections for the ship. These inspections are required in order for us to continue to operate the vessel. The maintenance and repairs are managed by our Technical departments – Deck and Engineering. We are always thankful for the Project Team volunteers who come in to help it all to be accomplished. For the *Africa Mercy* the two primary shipyard options are: Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain and Durban, South Africa. We will be back in the same shipyard next year between the Guinea and Senegal field services.

So am I involved with the repairs and maintenance of the ship? No, you could ask my Dad that I don't have many skills in maintenance and repairs. As a kid and teenager my Dad tried, but often I was only good for handing him tools and always hoped I got him the right ones. My role as Programs Administration Manager continues year round. During the period between the field service, I am working on reports, project expenses vs. budget, supporting the Advance Team and taking some time off for rest. I create the final narrative report as a summary of all that happened. I have posted this report in pdf on my web site: www.KeithBrinkman.com if you wish to take a look. At the same time, I support the Advance Team in the next country as it is a busy season for them. For Conakry, Guinea, we have a team of 10 members doing all they can to make arrangements for the ship's arrival so that we can have a great start to the field service. We always want to maximize the time the ship has in country to love God and love and serve the people of Guinea. I will write more in my next update on Guinea.



Photo Caption: Map and Scripture from the local church we attend – we are pointing towards the Canary Islands off the coast of Africa

I would like to share some thoughts which I wrote for our community: *Our ship community is unique in many ways - there are not that many communities out there like a Mercy Ships community on a ship – whether that is the Africa Mercy, was the Anastasis, Caribbean Mercy, Good Samaritan or the Island Mercy. We hear the number of 1,000 crew volunteers coming through in a typical field service ~ 100 every month for ten months – that is a lot of hello/welcome and goodbyes. For me, it is hard to remember being a new crew member after serving on four of the ships and the US office over the last many years. But we as an entire crew need to remember and reach out to the others, especially new people arriving. Even in our community on this ship, there are people who are lonely. If you wish to interact with fellow crew members, hang out in the dining room, the café, mid ship lounge, or up on deck 8 under the canopy. Invite someone new to join you at your table in the dining room. Seat with others in the dining room and ask to hear some of their story. Check out the Programs Opportunities Sign Up binder and see what you may wish to join and be apart during your free time. There is also a binder called Social Activities – where your crew members are planning something and inviting other crew members to join. Let's make the Guinea field service an amazing field service for all involved.*

Please pray for

- * our upcoming sail to Conakry, Guinea – though it is not a long one – only six days as we sail along. Pray for a safe sail and arrival to Berth # 4 in Conakry for our ten month stay.
- * for the first surgical screening at the People's Palace on August 20, to find many of our surgical patients – there will be four other surgical screenings elsewhere in the country. May the people who need our assistance will hear the announcements and have the courage to come.

Serving Together, **Keith**

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