

Ethiopia, Africa Adventist Medical Mission 2010



Twenty-three volunteers joined this year's medical mission team to touch the lives of Ethiopians medically in Jesus name. With the help of supporters & donations, we:

- Provided 29 gynecological surgeries
- Treated over 1300 people in village clinics
- Installed 26 water filter systems
- Distributed blankets, shoes, clothes and financed schooling for 62 orphans
- Installed three television satellites; two in hospital, one in Dongoro school
- Rebuilt the brakes, shocks, and bumper of hospital's ambulance
- Collected and distributed 50 donated dresses for women after gynecological surgeries
- Donated a brand-new digital dental x-ray. (\$20k value). Completed staff training
- Successfully arranged and held a soccer/track competition community event
- A team member volunteered to adopt an abandoned baby born while we were there
- Continued to build the Dongoro School
- Distributed 10 laptop computers for the school
- Donated 20 new hospital bed mattresses
- Donated funds to finish building the 20 room medical guest quarters at hospital
- Sponsored 10 new students for annual school fees
- Gave gifts to four new Ethiopian graduating nursing students
- Donated 12 new soccer balls to local school
- Donated 160 new sport jerseys for school athletics
- Donated an entire new supply of surgical equipment
- Donated to hospital \$50k of medicines
- Distributed 110lbs of iodized salt for goiter projects in three villages
- Provided about 100 "Plumpy Nut" vitamin enriched sachets to villages
- Distributed vitamin A for an eye project in villages
- Provided donations to Holstein dairy development herd
- Donated over 100 lbs of vegetable/flower seeds to start garden projects
- And, six team members even donated blood at all hours of day/night for emergencies☺



A Miracle! Upon arrival in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia we entered Customs. This is where the country's corruption starts. Many volunteer groups bring free items to distribute to the people of Ethiopia, but Customs will either take it away from them (to later sell) or they will make the person pay 80% tax of the value of the item. This year, Dr. Lunt (my dentist) was bringing a \$20,000 hand held x-ray to donate to the dental clinic (see photos). He personally carried it in his back pack to Africa.



The customs agents were forcing everyone to open their back packs to see if there was anything of value. It was getting intense as they were yelling and watching us all closely. Dr. Lunt asked me to put my back pack on the ground, and he sat his on the ground too. We walked around them and then he asked me to put his on my back, and he'd take mine!

I started to get really nervous about that because it was so valuable and now I was responsible. He snapped me out of my fears and told me to PRAY! He said, "You are the little girl with the biggest faith! Pray and walk out of here!" I was the next person to be checked...the nurse in front of me was being yelled at to remove contents in her bag. My heart was pounding, and I was short of breath knowing I was next. Doc whispered loudly again, "Go Jerusha!" I closed my eyes and whispered a one sentence prayer in desperation "**Lord, make me invisible!**"

I turned away from the line, walked right past the man yelling at the nurse...walked right past two other customs officers, and walked past another entire group of custom personnel. I had about 60 feet to go. Our leader, Dr. Oksenholt was at the custom exit with his eyes fixed on me! I calmly kept walking towards him and I whispered that I was just going to keep walking out...he said "**Keep going! They don't see you!**" (He didn't know till later that I prayed to be invisible. That was awesome affirmation!) I walked right out the doors, turned around to make eye contact with Dr. Lunt still back in line. He had tears streaming with Joy! The x-ray machine made it out free and clear! Praise God! I think God loves one-sentence prayers! In the photos (above top), we're celebrating that not one item in our group was taken...unlike last year! This year, everyone remembered to pray for their bags! Also, in the next photo, you can see the x-ray training. It was incredible to be part of this faith-building experience!



12- Hour Journey to Gimbie, Ethiopia:

We spent one day in Addis Ababa loading up groceries, hospital mattresses, TV satellites, water, and anything else we'd need in Gimbie. I couldn't wait for a hot shower after traveling 32 hours. My room had cockroaches but no water pressure or hot water. This was the first day of many cold showers. Some days my "shower" was just baby wipes. Early the next morning, we loaded up a caravan of about six vehicles and drove off to Gimbie. It was a dusty, bumpy ride - some parts with pavement, others with pot-holes and gravel. I reminded myself it's all part of the fun adventure! 😊



In the city, the majority of homes were made out of tin shacks. Once outside the city, the majority of the homes were grass huts. It was beautiful. To me, this was Africa! We had to be careful driving. Bulls, donkeys, dogs, and people all walked right in front of the vans.



Elephantiasis: We stopped to stretch our legs and met this man with one of the worst cases of elephantiasis the doctors had ever seen. He had chronic Filaria, causing elephantiasis. That means he had Filaria worms in his feet that he probably picked up walking in wet places or even just on the dirt perhaps near animal feces. We were instructed to spray bug repellent on our feet if we wore any sandals. At the end of the trip, we were all de-wormed just in case.

This man wouldn't let me take a photo unless I paid him...I gladly paid just to help him. This is often caused by walking barefoot on the dirt which many people do because they have no shoes.



Orphanage: We stopped at the Ambo Orphanage (the same one we visited last year). I recognized many of the children and wanted to adopt all of them! They greeted us with flowers and a song. We left supplies and gifts for them. It was good to see them, but hard to say good-bye.

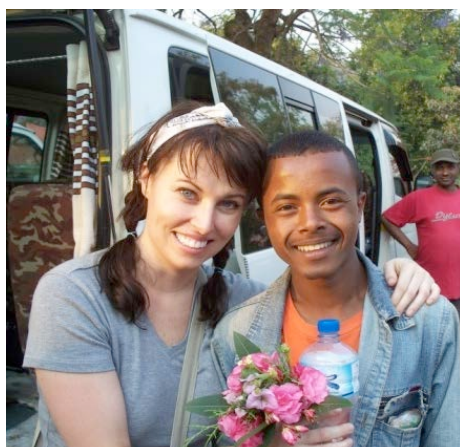


Hospital: When we finally arrived at the Gimbe Adventist Hospital, it nearly made me cry just seeing it again. It was so special to be back here for a second year. It was great seeing the staff and it was an honor to work with them again. This 70-bed hospital serves 2-million people!

Bulti in 2009



Bulti in 2010



My “Adopted Son” Bulti:

When we arrived at the hospital, Bulti was there waiting with a crowd of people. He saw me and ran beside the van till we stopped. I cried when I saw him. He looked like he grew a foot and matured emmensly over this last year! I thought he was about 11yrs old, but found out he’s actually 17yrs old! He was just extremely malnurshied. I brought him some gifts including a couple of pounds of candy. He didn’t know what bubble gum was. I had to make sure he understood not to swallow it, very cute.

After long days at the village clinics, I’d return to him waiting to walk with me and enjoy some fresh-squeezed juice. It cost only \$300 a year, but having his school, clothing and food paid for really made a difference. If anyone would like to support a child, there are plenty more that are begging for assistance. Email me for more information. Thank you.

Hospital Happenings: I’ve been working in Glendale, CA this last year. The Glendale Adventist Medical Center is across the street from my work. They generously donated about 50 sets of scrubs for me to take to the Gimbie Adventist Hospital. A set of scrubs cost the equivalent of a nurse’s annual salary in Ethiopia. They were absolutely thrilled to receive them. The California hospital is now going to ship Ethiopia all their scrubs...12 boxes are already on their way!



The hospital is so busy. A crowd of people waited outside for a bed to open to receive help. No toilets, no TV, and a stench that is unforgettable. It is always shocking to see the reality of it, but the beautiful part is that it helps so many people. Our team did install one satellite at the hospital for television. It’s the first TV the hospital has ever had. This only happened thanks to donations and the engineer on the team.

Hospital Happenings, Continued:



On Valentine's Day, this little girl named Rahel was born at the hospital. Later, a hospital employee heard a baby crying in a closed closet. Baby Rahel was found yet the mother was nowhere to be found. She had run away. Two people on our team immediately volunteered to adopt her. Six other families were also hoping for her. She's a very blessed baby to be wanted by so many. Most unwanted babies are left out in the wilderness to die. Since she was born at the hospital, she will live and she'll have a family. Many more babies are still awaiting adoption.



This woman was waiting in pre-surgery. She had one of the largest goiters we saw. It was absolutely unbelievable. It looked like three, giant goiters grown together. A goiter occurs when the thyroid reacts to a lack of iodine in the diet. Iodine is leached from the soil by overgrazing and poor farming practices. When we visited villages, we saw many patients with goiters. We brought 110lbs of iodized salt to distribute to patients to help prevent goiters.

Dongoro Church and School:



We visited the village of Dongoro, where we held a clinic, as well as attended church. The Ethiopian choir sang many traditional songs that sounded more like tribal tunes. A few of us sang "How Great Thou Art" and many sang along in their own language. It was beautiful!



When we visited last year, the boy's dorm was just being completed. This year they've finished the foundation of the girl's dorm and are making cement blocks for the building and walls.

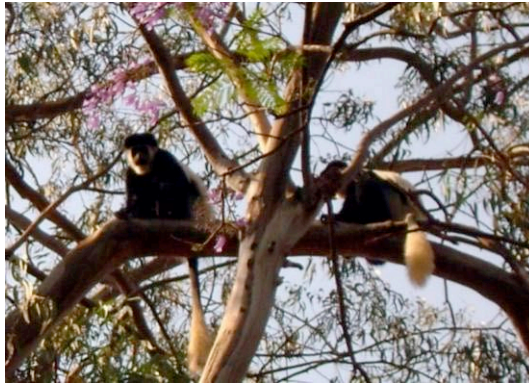


To the left, is the "really nice" home the school teacher gets to live in as part of the salary. It truly is nice compared to the mud-grass or mud-cardboard houses most others live in. There isn't any electricity in it, but it does have a couple windows. This house has been around many, many years. You can see how heavy rains have washed the ground away from the foundation. It was very humbling to see their living conditions again.

Village Clinics:



Our team divided into groups to work at the hospital, to staff village clinics, help in the orphanages, or do maintenance projects. This year I helped in village clinics assisting my dentist, Dr. Ray Lunt, as well as assisting the ER doctor, Dr. Raj Bauman. Valentine's day was our first day at the clinics, so we all wore hearts on our scrubs to celebrate the day.



It could take a half hour to two hours to get to the village clinics. The roads were bumpy and dusty. We all watched eagerly for baboons and monkeys. They were hidden up in the trees

everywhere. It always amazed me to see them! I kept thinking, "Wow, I'm really in Africa!" Every time I saw the monkeys, I quietly thanked God that I had the opportunity to experience these unique sights on this incredible journey.



Another thing that always amazed me was how many people were waiting for the medical team to arrive! People migrated in over night and slept on the ground waiting to receive help. They knew they'd be served in the order they arrived...so many spent the night there to ensure receiving help. We would stay and work until everyone was cared for. Each morning a line would form. In one week alone we saw over 1300 people.



I was quickly reminded how to give oral injections. Remember, I have NO medical training. Just doing this was a miracle. The other miracle is that, though I'm sort of a germ-a-phobe, I remained calm and composed in the midst of blood and body fluids. It was absolutely a miracle to be ok with it all... I loved it! 😊

Village Clinics, continued:

Once again, we were astounded by some of the dental patients. One lady had an extra tooth growing behind her front teeth...we pulled it. Another lady came in wondering what this large, hard mass was behind her bottom teeth...it was the largest plaque build-up Dr. Lunt had ever seen! He chipped it off! Another boy came in with his four front teeth rotted to the root. Probably from eating sugar cane. We had to pull all the broken pieces and roots out. He'll never have front teeth. No dentures or implants in Ethiopia. Also, we totally forgot to bring a Sharps container for the infected needles! Doc drank the last of his water, and then turned that into the Sharps container. I thought that was pretty clever!



Again this year, I had the joy and privilege of dumping the bloody “tuffi” (spit) buckets and sterilizing the instruments. The funny part was that even though it was so disgusting, I was still so happy to be helping. These people need help, and I truly love helping anyway I can. What a joy!

However, this was not a joy... that hole that I'm dumping the blood and teeth into, was also the toilet. One has to “hover and aim”. I always kept my mask on because of the smell. We actually preferred going behind the trees instead.



This is the “jungle doctor”, Dr. Raj Baman. He's served on so many of these trips with Dr. Erling Oksenholt that he's practically seen everything! He enjoyed having a rookie like me see some of these illnesses for the first time. He would have me first feel the patient's sore areas, and then tell him what I'm thinking the diagnosis might be.

A little boy came in with a swollen, stomach ache. Dr. Raj had me put my hand on his belly and push in. I said that it feels like he's having a muscle spasm, I could feel it move under my hand. Dr. Raj laughed and said this little boy isn't having a muscle spasm, its worms in his bowels. He gave him a bed pan and a worm pill and asked him to stick around two hours. Sure enough... he passed worms in his stool! I will never forget that. People get worms from eating dirty foods and having dirty hands. Even we de-wormed before we came home. No one had worms, thank God!

We saw a couple people who had Malaria, and a couple people with Polio. We also saw many little children with goiters just starting to grow in their necks. The majority of people had worms or parasites either in bowels or feet, or blindness and/or cataracts due to lack of vitamine A, or goiters in their neck. I really enjoyed working in ER. What an eye-opeing experience!



This beautiful lady came in to get foot cream for the parasites and worms in her feet. There's nothing she can do about her feet other than to try to keep them as comfortable as possible with fungus cream. Notice in the photo how one shoe doesn't even cover her entire foot. Sadly, this condition creates an awful foot odor as well.



She didn't have enough money to buy the foot cream from the pharmacy, and the hospital had already giving beyond their "free" budget. I felt a strong need to pay for her cream. I discreetly grabbed her hand and said in her language, "Jesus en Jalada" which means "Jesus loves you" and handed her enough money and some extra to pay for her cream. She started crying and praising God out loud. I asked the translator what she was saying. He said she was thanking God and praying a blessing over me. I asked the translator to tell her that the money came from many people back in America who love her and sent money to help her....that was you, the supporters of this mission. She was overwhelmed, and thanked you and prayed a blessing for all of you. **(Thank YOU so much for giving to this mission!!!)**



A father brought his four-year old son into the village ER room and through a translator asked what was sticking out of his arm? He said it had been like this two weeks. I lifted his son's sleeve and I saw his arm was swollen and terribly infected. I looked closer at the white, sharp object....and realized it was his bone! He had a

compound fracture! We were two hours away from the hospital but insisted they ride with us back to the hospital where they could do surgery. The doctors on our trip thought his arm might have to be amputated, but for now it was saved. I had another strong feeling that I needed to give him money to pay for the surgery. I slipped the father a roll of money and told him in his language that Jesus loves him too...(that was all I knew how to say in their language, but figured that was all he needed to hear). When he looked and saw the money, he started crying and saying Thank You over and over. **(Thank you again for giving to this mission and to these people!)**

Village Clinics, continued:



This lady came into our clinic with a large goiter. There was something about her that struck me, like I was being prompted to help her. Through hand motions and attempts to speak her language, I asked if she wanted to make the two hour trip back to the hospital with us and have the surgery. She did want to, and brought her mother and husband along as well. I felt

the need to pay for her surgery and asked one of the local doctors what it would cost....about \$250 dollars American.



Having already given so much money away, I still had that feeling come over me like I need to pay for it. I checked my money belt...and it was as if I had given no money away! Almost like the money kept reproducing in my belt! It didn't make sense how I could give so much money away, but still have enough money to keep helping these people! I think that was another miracle! The money never ran out!

Through a translator, I shared that a friend gave a red envelope with \$5 towards the mission trip, and now that \$5 will turn into \$250 to pay for her surgery. Placing the money in her envelope, her mother broke out into loud sobs and raised her hands in the air, pushing them towards the sky. I asked the translator what she's saying over and over....he said she was praising God and praying that all who gave for the mission would be greatly blessed because she and her family have never been so blessed. I told the translator I was blessed simply by watching her praise God. **(Again, this was your money...she did get the surgery and has a new life again. Thank YOU for giving!)**



People with goiters were never ending. I don't recall ever seeing a man with a goiter. Just women and children. These women also received referrals for surgery. They were eager for help, but not eager for surgery. They needed it most of all. These were the biggest goiters we saw! Absolutely unbelievable! Hopefully they will chose to have surgery.

Gimbie Town Athletic Competition...Provided by Our Mission Team!

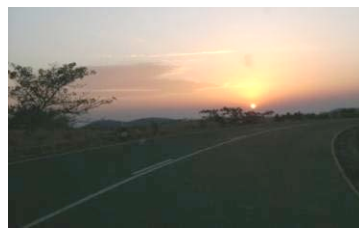


This was an awesome part of our trip! Our very own Dr. Janice Radcliff, who works at the University of Oregon, arranged a big track competition for the town of Gimbie. The university donated several medals and free uniforms for Gimbie and Dongoro. It felt like the entire town arrived. I was shocked and started to get tears when the runners passed in front of us. I noticed most didn't wear shoes and also ran in their every-day clothes. We are so blessed in America, yet so often forget all we have.



It is so rewarding to give and serve. However, there came a point when the cold showers, the "toilets" and filth made me pull my braids and laugh in hysteria! Everyone laughed along with me and could really relate. Sometimes its best to not get mad, but just laugh. My hair was so dirty from the red dirt, and the showers were so cold, that I would often take baby wipes and run them through my hair trying to clean it before bed. Impossible. The laughter was good and I kept reminding myself it was all part of the adventure! ☺

Time to Leave Ethiopia, Africa:



The morning came when it was time to leave and that was really hard. I didn't want the mission to end. We gathered early in the morning and said good-bye to our friends at the hospital. Bulti was there to help me carry my bags to the van. There were no plans to return to Ethiopia since we went there twice. So saying good-bye was extra hard and extremely emotional. I gave Bulti a few more gifts and lots of hugs and kisses. We also said good-bye to Dr. Lunt who stayed two more weeks on his own to further train at the dental unit of the hospital. We loaded up and drove 12 hours on a bumpy, dusty road back to Addis Ababa.



(There's a new road near the hospital where baboons have already made it there favorite hang-out area.) Many were excited to return to western civilization. I had mixed emotions. I wasn't ready to return yet...I actually wanted to stay longer. I'm at-home in the mission field. I remember silently crying on the plane as I looked out the window, so thankful to have seen and experienced all I did. It was life-changing and forever will be. I am absolutely in-love with medical mission trips and helping people. Thank you God, for this mission and opportunity!