

December 2014

Christmas Miracles

Our first Christmas miracle is that the container with things from America arrived two days before Christmas. There has been a petroleum workers strike in Gabon, so there was no gas in stations in the capital city. Even though the container had made the trip across the ocean, it seemed impossible to arrive here before Christmas.



The second Christmas miracle is related to the first. Usually, each week in Sunday School the children color a picture related to the lesson. The copier we've used for the last six years died the week before Christmas. It had lasted all this time, despite jungle ants making a nest in it, and dying on the inside. The church in Lockport, NY had sent a new copier for Sunday School in the container. It arrived at exactly the right time! They sent other things for children at the hospital and for me, and it was such a blessing to open the boxes. The girl with the bandaged arm, coloring in this picture, has been in the hospital for a long time because of a non-healing ulcer of her arm.

The third Christmas miracle was for a man in the hospital with a heart attack. Here we see a lot of people with TB and HIV, but not many people with heart attacks. This man *happened* to be here at a hospital with an EKG machine, and an American doctor. Months ago, someone *happened* to send us several bottles of IV nitroglycerin. Where else in the jungle could he get IV nitroglycerin and IV blood thinners, etc? Despite the treatment his chest pain lasted a long time, because we don't have the "clot buster" medicine or catheterization to open the blocked arteries. I wasn't sure if too much heart muscle would be damaged or if he would have problems with his heart rhythm, which would cause his heart to stop suddenly. He did well and was able to leave the hospital.

Bongolo Christmas

Our jungle Christmas may not be white, but it's still Merry. The Christmas Eve service in the Bongolo church often goes until after midnight. This year it was packed, and I didn't stay until the end. On Christmas morning the Sunday School students sang songs and recited verses in church. In the afternoon, the missionary family had dinner on the porch I share with my neighbor. (24 people eating comfortably at 2 one-bedroom apartments may be another Christmas miracle.) Here are pictures of the kids singing and us about to eat.



Praises

- The week I taught about Christmas in Sunday School, I talked about how the old testament tells us a little of what the Messiah would be like, so people could recognize him when he came. Then we talked about how different people from the Christmas story knew that Jesus is the Messiah, and how just knowing facts about Jesus is different from knowing him as Messiah and Savior. Three boys decided they want to know him as Savior.
- This is Alain, the day after Christmas when he left the hospital. He spent most of the 6 months of his TB treatment in the hospital with a tube in his chest attached to suction because the tuberculosis had collapsed his lung. When the medicines were finished he had surgery to fix the problem in his chest. After the surgery, he did not initially wake up and start breathing on his own. The surgeons breathed for him for quite awhile, praying at the same time. We are thankful that God intervened.
- Praise God that 1735 people decided to follow Jesus at Bongolo Hospital in 2014.



Prayer Requests

- There have been some political demonstrations in the capital city, and one person was killed. Pray for the end of the demonstrations.

Thank you for praying.
Blessings to you in 2015.
Renée



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Thank you for contributing to the CMA's **Great Commission Fund**. Your gifts to the **GCF** make it possible for the Alliance to send me to Bongolo and to show God's love around the world. Here are some ways you could designate a gift: **Support of Renée Valach**- goes to the Great Commission Fund toward allowance, etc. **Work of Renée Valach**- for special work projects related to my ministry **Bongolo Hospital HIV/AIDS Treatment**- toward HIV treatment, particularly the pediatric patients



The kittens love Christmas. They seem to believe I have put a tree full of cat toys in the house just for them. So far, the score is: kittens 3 and Christmas tree-topper angel 0.