

Bill Ardill

From: Bill Ardill [bill.ardill@sim.org]
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To: ardill-news@sim.org
Subject: stories

It happens every week but last week was one of the weeks when it seemed more than usual. In bed 8 in the general male ward, a young man lies with stool pouring out of his abdominal wound. He had two different "surgeries" in another hospital – for a hernia and for his appendix – and was finally sent to Evangel when stool started pouring out of his abdominal wound. Of course he was terribly malnourished by now with no money left and came with dehydration, anemia, malnourished and penniless. So we began to resuscitate him and now he can't even pay for the labs we need to measure his progress to see if he is fit enough for surgery.

Then there is the man who had surgery two weeks ago in the middle of the night and he was found to have a hole in his stomach and a large tumor in his stomach. The hole was closed but he continued to deteriorate and died. When his mother came to claim his body for burial, she could not pay the bill for the body to be released and begged the hospital for mercy. She had three sons and the two older sons had already died and this was her last son who had just died. Then the day before she came, her house collapsed because of the heavy rains. What was I to do?

In bed 9 on the male ward is a man who came from another "hospital" with all the skin gone from his entire left leg from his groin to his ankle from a "flesh eating" infection. He was also severely malnourished and penniless. We began to care for his wound and encouraged him to eat a special high protein porridge we have to help his nutrition and wound healing. Now he is so penniless he cannot even afford the food. Now what?

On Wednesday we found out about a 25 year old Fulani woman who had been in another clinic for over a week because of fever and abdominal pain. She was now in a coma with a distended tender abdomen and slow gasping breathing. I suspected she had perforated typhoid and was in septic shock. After trying to get her ready for surgery and in spite of no blood pressure, I took her to the operating room and under local anesthesia I drain 2 liters of pus and intestinal contents from her abdomen hoping it might help her. She died later in the day.

Last Monday a young woman was brought in who was several months pregnant but had been beaten by her ex-husband and the baby was now dead. She was also HIV positive. Her ex-husband denied beating her but the family was pressing charges against him. Talk about a crisis pregnancy in a dysfunctional home!

That was all last week. I think between the painful stories of tragedy and the obvious financial needs, it is easy to "get weary in well doing." I feel so sad when I hear the awful stories of suffering and feel so helpless. The hospital used to have a benevolent fund to help desperate patients but that has gone dry a long time ago. We cannot help everyone in need so it takes discernment to sort out who we should help. It's why we take breaks and go to Miango or someplace far away so we can recharge for the next round. Thanks for praying for wisdom as we face the challenges of trying to meet the physical needs to those who come to Evangel looking for hope.

On a brighter note, a patient I did a laparoscopic cholecystectomy on went home in 3 days with no complications. And then we had a restful weekend at Miango at the Hillcrest Staff Retreat. With only one meeting a day, we had plenty of time to rest, read, go on a hike and enjoy catching up with our friends. The scheduled speaker had to leave the country a week before the retreat so the pinch hitter speakers did well on such short notice.

Last Monday I did my "Prophet Pooh" lecture for the senior Bible class. I dress up as a goofy prophet who believes he has received a revelation from God in the form of the Winnie the Pooh stories. I then ask the class to challenge whether I am a real prophet and if the Pooh stories are really from God. It is a good exercise for them to learn how to discern truth from hogwash. Then I gave them their first test on Thursday and some did great but a few have a ways to go.

Dorothy is doing well and did a great job at the Elementary School Open House on Thursday. She and David are doing well together and have a good understanding. The girls are enjoying playing volleyball. Please pray with us for a piano teacher for Heather and Anna. We have asked everyone we thought might be willing to help and no one has agreed to help them. They are both doing well and we want to see them continue but it is

tough without a teacher who can take them to the next level in their playing. It seems Dorothy will need to be their piano teacher and she can't even play past Book 3!

Thanks for praying. We were also encouraged that several responded to our email last week about our low support. Thanks for being a part of our support team.

In Christ,
Bill Ardill

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