

Hello from Phebe Hospital in Liberia. In my last letter, I told you that Phebe's portable X-ray machine was out of commission after being plugged into an outlet with the wrong voltage. Good news - it is now working again. We enlisted the aid of some expert advice from some technicians from the Bangladeshi camp and after 24 hours of charging, it is working once again. Now we just need some film - seems like it hasn't been available in country. We haven't been as fortunate with the generators, the copy machines, the Internet connection, or the computers at the hospital. The generators won't generate, the copy machines were either out of toner or had become homes for rats, the Internet connection took weeks of calls and emails to Nigeria and Canada, and the hospital's computers are full of viruses. As I said last month, in Liberia, "It isn't easy."

I made a lot of trips to Monrovia and a couple of those trips were totally without any A/C in the car. It is hot and it is humid, so I always looked forward to the car trips as a cool place to rest, but the repair for the car's A/C is too expensive for Phebe right now. There were a lot of meetings in Monrovia - meetings with USAID people to get financial help, meetings with officials from Cameroon to try and get a visa to visit there, and interviews with prospective students for the new Masters of Nursing Education program which will be starting in the fall. That program now has 17 students and we seem to be full speed ahead! I am still trying to recruit nursing professors with PhDs - if you know someone - I'd love to be in contact with them. It is such a wonderful opportunity!

The Palm Sunday service at St. Luke's Lutheran Church where I worship is even better than the Easter service. This year I got to preach and I tried to emphasize the importance of every day of Holy Week - not just Palm Sunday and Easter. I must have gotten through to some people because attendance was up at all of the daily services during the week. On Maundy Thursday, Pastor Moses and I washed 100 pairs of feet.

It was the nicest Maundy Thursday service I have ever attended or participated in. The Good Friday service included the seven last words of Jesus and it was good too. The Easter service was filled with music from the children, the Kpelle Choir, and the English Choir, Pastor Moses' passionate sermon, and ten baptisms.

I have also made a couple of trips to Zorzor and Curran, the Lutheran hospital there. The road is very bumpy, and once rainy season comes in earnest, it will only get worse. The hospital compound at Curran has power from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. during the work/school week and on the weekend, the electricity is on from 9-11 a.m. and then again from 6:30 p.m. until 11 p.m. I was there for the graduation of 31 students - all mid-wives. I also had time to relax with Edna, a nurse who has been there for almost six years. She always feed me well when I visit, and we have spent many an evening solving the problems of the world.

Phebe is finally online again and we are working on ridding the computers of viruses and getting their anti-virus programs updated to prevent the invasion of any more nasty bug. We have borrowed a generator to keep the power going while Phebe's generator was repaired and then another generator developed problems. I got one copy machine to work, but the other had been remodeled too extensively by the resident rats and that machine has been retired. Two steps back and two steps forward.

It wasn't easy, and it will be some time before anything is easy for the people of Liberia.

When you read this, I will be on my way back to Vellore, India, by way of Yaounde, Cameroon. My visa came through at the very last minute, so I was able to go there and do some logistics work for the three doctors from India who will be coming to the hospital there this summer.

After a few days in Nairobi and a few in Yaounde, I will be back in India until my home leave this summer. I look forward to visiting the churches and meeting the people who have been supporting me with fund and with prayers. Until then, keep praying for me and for the people of Liberia and India. Prayer is an important tool in the work I try to do.

Peace, John Lunn