

Dok Elma's E-musing  
September 2010

In the candle-lit bathroom I was sitting like a queen when saw something black moving. I calmly went out and asked my fellow missionary, "what kind of spiders should I be worried about here in Africa?". Of course they got all excited and decided to kill it. Kill it but document the big hairy visitor first. This was my first night in Ganta. Good thing I'm not afraid of spiders, only frogs!

Part of my preparation in coming here is taking anti-malarial tablets 2 weeks before arrival, and make sure I have my own supply to last for a year. Malaria here is no joke. It's the kind that is not killed easily and it goes straight to your brain. And I thought HIV was my problem.

Ganta United Methodist Hospital is a 150 bed capacity hospital that serves as a referral center for other hospitals nearby and from Guinea. There are 4 doctors - a Liberian GP/surgeon, a Congolese obstetrician, a Liberian eye doctor and me.

Electricity is run by generators, there is no running water and no telephones - only mobile phones. But there is internet!

Of the very short time that I've been here I have repaired 5 hernias, delivered by C-section a baby girl, amputated a leg, dealt with an ectopic pregnancy and perforated intestine due to Typhoid, and the usual appendicitis.

By the way, I function as GP here and you must pray for me on this. This is new to me.

With all the patients that I have opened, I noted they all have big liver and spleen. This is again due to malaria! From birth each person has been repeatedly infected - it's like having a cold! Almost all have anemia. You see, the

malaria parasite lives in the red blood cells, destroys it and gets sequestered by the spleen. The liver is slowly destroyed by the strong medicine, other bugs that infect it, alcohol, or fungus.

Maybe we shouldn't have killed that big hairy spider so it could help control mosquito population.

I have a 16 y/o girl who came in because she can't breathe well, when she eats she feels nauseous, her legs are getting fatter. Ohh, her tummy is growing too. Clearly she doesn't need surgery but what's making her swell? Praise God for the donor of the portable ultrasound. Yes, I need to learn how to use this too. I did a quick scan to make sure there isn't a tumor, then stuck a needle in to drain fluid from her abdomen (paracentesis).

We drained 3.2 liters intermittently and she is feeling so much better. But I needed to explain to her and her family that this is temporary measure, that she needs to eat well and fight whatever is destroying her liver. She appreciates your prayers.

Two churches have expressed intention to support my need of surgical gloves. Thank you for your generosity. But I'm good for now, but really my wish list is growing. Just today (Saturday) I spoke aloud, "my God shall supply all my needs according to his riches and glory!" Indeed, it hasn't been 2 days since I verbalized my urgent need of a power drill (for fixing bone fracture) and a covenant church has answered the need.

I have been truly blessed by so many covenant churches who love the Lord and his worldwide church. I thank God for all of you. If you have been praying for me when I was in Nepal, you need to double the effort. Please.

GBGM is coming up with this exciting live online event during which you will see and hear firsthand about United

Methodist Church ministries around the world. Starting on October 10th you can watch webcasts, participate in video calls, follow along with online demonstrations, and learn how lives are being changed for the better.

We here at Ganta will be featured on October 18: Healthcare in Africa 3:00 p.m. EST: Missionaries Sue Porter, Victor Taryor, Dr. Albert Willicor, and Dr. Elma Jocson talk about the work going on in Ganta Hospital in Liberia, Africa. I will be happy to see you.

**Visit [www.10-fold.org](http://www.10-fold.org) for more info.**

Bye for now.

Elma

**This is from an email received from Elma on October 5<sup>th</sup>.**

I need your prayers. This place is so frustrating, but I'm also suffering from culture shock. What emergency room has no O2 (oxygen) support, penlight, suction machine and some provisions to elevate the head of an injured child? These frustrations shall pass, but I need to raise the bar so we can serve better. Please pray for me more. Thanks.