

As I put my thoughts together for this newsletter, I reflected on the week in March several times and the phrase 'Alpha and Omega' just kept coming to mind. So before I sat down to write, I spent a little time in God's Word reading through the passages in Revelation with references to this phrase. Two stood out at me and I'd like to share them with you.

Revelation 21:6 'And he also said, "It is finished! I am the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End. To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life.'

Revelation 22:13 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.'

Why was I drawn to these verses and how does it correlate to the week of March 16-24? I think God was trying to remind me that through everything, He was in control. If you remember back to that week in March, there was a significant travel advisory in effect which caused us to push our trip back by a day. This, combined with a shipment of supplies that never made it to Haiti, created a sense of anxiety with me as I was worried about being prepared for the first day of clinic; especially since this would be the only day we held clinic at CrossRoads Church. So, the start of our trip was delayed, our flights on the trip down were late getting in, which eliminated our plans to spend a few hours preparing for the first day of clinic. Thus, we saw the Alpha part of who God is. Even though circumstances at the start of our trip caused some anguish, He was in control and proved it by giving the team everything we needed to prepare for a great start to our clinic week.

So, what about the Omega part? I'll save that for the end of the story!

First, let me introduce you to the team who participated in our fifth annual medical clinic. Once again, God put in place the right individuals who were flexible and had the stamina to tend to almost 2400 patients (approximately 10% over our planned number). I will begin with our three faithful providers, John Schmitt, Randy Varain and Roger Kimber. John and Randy have been with us since the beginning. Roger joined in year three. All three have been such a blessing and really demonstrate a caring approach to everything they do.

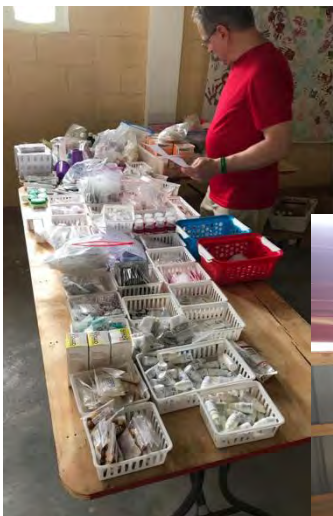
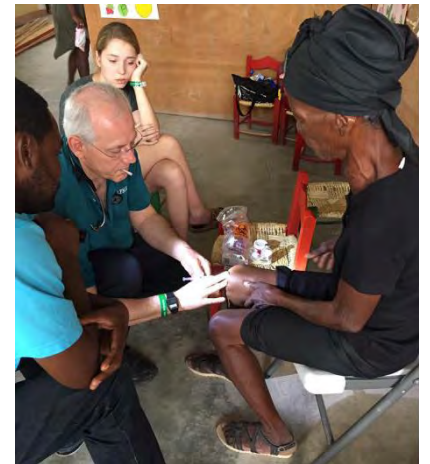
This year we also had two physical therapists join us for the week, Judy Jesiolowski and Melissa Swope. They were able to utilize braces, canes and other equipment to provide relief to many patients...as well as much-needed therapy massages not only to our Haitian brothers and sisters, but also to a few team members as well. Thanks Judy and Mel!



Rounding out our healthcare team was Daniel Schmitt, who did all of the specimen collection/testing. Daniel does everything with a smile, is always ready, willing and able to pitch in and we send our best wishes to him and his bride for their upcoming wedding in June.

And as they say it takes a village...it takes a team to support our healthcare professionals in Haiti and we had several veterans with us (Bill & Mary Lou Neidig, Dannel Wissler, Donna Soders, Grace Heidelbaugh, my husband Mike Tims and I along with Jeff & Terri Swope), plus a handful of 'rookies' (Mikayla Fry, Paige Borcky, Lynsey Wissler and Bryianna Pannell). All the 'rookies' except Briana have been to Haiti before on VBS trips, but this was their first venture with the medical team. Mikayla also gave flouride treatments to many of the children at the various locations.

I'd now like to share some photos and turn it over to the team to give you a little more insight into the week in review. Let me start with some thoughts by Dr. John Schmitt. *Once again, we had a wonderful trip to Haiti serving the people of that impoverished country. What always impresses me is how the CrossRoads team of volunteers comes together to share the love of Christ through these medical clinics, taking care of the sick of all ages, often in areas that have no other access to medical care. Sometimes our patients aren't that ill, just have some aches and pains, maybe some worms or rashes; what we look at as simple "cures", but to them we are their only chance to feel better and have some relief. Often our reward is a smile, a simple "Merci"; but knowing that for the moment we made a difference is what it is all about, our human way of showing WWJD (What Would Jesus Do). Our team worked hard with such joy, humor (and sweat!); doing so many things to have these clinics, held in CrossRoads–built churches in seven different locations. They all worked so smoothly; counting thousands of pills, bagging and tagging medications, patiently explaining the use of the meds with our wonderful translators; even earlier trips to Haiti to purchase meds, prepare them and be ready for our work. So many little details taken care of; all so humbling! I cannot thank everyone involved enough, from the team of doctors, to the physical therapists, volunteers, donors, translators; to the previous teams working to build and paint the churches; the list goes on! Thank you all!*



From Dannel. *Once again it was a real privilege to serve the people of Haiti with our medical team. Each year we arrive in Haiti ready to give only for me to be quickly reminded*

of how how much I have to learn, and how much working alongside the determined men and women from this beautiful country is an honor.

Randy also shared his thoughts. *I always enjoy the trips to Haiti. The people in the group are all very good and caring people... the trips to Haiti with your group are fun and rewarding. I*



experience new hope for man kind returning from these trips. Everyone in the group are fun to be around and they all work very well together. When I think of Randy...the word 'magician' comes to mind. I doesn't matter what

situation we are faced with, he pulls something out of his bag to help with the moment. On day two one of our first patients was a pregnant lady with contractions about two minutes apart. Since we were almost two hours away from the nearest hospital, we prepared to give birth at clinic. Out came Randy's backpack with an OB kit and amazingly enough, a plastic tablecloth to drape over the mattress someone was able to secure. He is amazing...even though he had me believing we needed to boil some water...just like in the movies! (Note – we didn't have to deliver her in the mountains. She was able to travel to a hospital on the back of a motorcycle to deliver a healthy baby girl!)



Mike Tims observed what a blessing it was to have shared an outstanding week with his favorite mother-in-law! She brought toys to give to many of the small children.



From Judy. *This team is unique. I was in awe when I experienced everyone "jumping" right in, using their individual gifts and talents to transform these churches into medical clinics, able to care for close to 2400 people. I feel so blessed to have been asked to serve on this medical mission team which consisted of individuals so willing to share God's love. This team was unique in that everyone had so many different "gifts" and talents to offer, when all combined, made the medical clinics successful. I am humbled by the needs of the people of Haiti and am happy to have been able to give a little of myself to them, to help alleviate some of their pain, if only for a short time. I received so much joy from my interactions with the Haitian people and from the new friends I made. I just loved those beautiful smiles. We worked hard and I think that brought us all closer as a team. I enjoyed our evening "wrap up" of the day, exchanging thoughts and ideas and sharing a daily devotion with Jeff. It was hard to come back home! God willing, I hope I am invited back next year to be a part of the medical mission team of 2018.*



From Melissa. *Through our six days of clinic I had the amazing opportunity to use my gifts as a physical therapist to help treat hundreds of people, in whatever capacity I could. The majority of those I saw had neck and back pain due to the lifestyle and physical labor they endure daily. The doctors would prescribe the necessary medications/muscle rub, and then in PT we would give them a massage and stretches they could continue doing on their own. On the last day of clinic a four year old orphan who appeared to have Cerebral Palsy was brought in and ended up taking a piece of my heart with her. She was carried in by a "cousin" who had told the doctor that she couldn't walk or stand secondary to her legs collapsing. We had no pediatric braces or walkers with us, but after looking through the braces we had, I found two adult wrist splints that fit her tiny legs perfectly. I gently lowered her to the floor, testing the durability of the braces, and she surprisingly stood on her own two feet for the very first time! She still needed support under her arms, but it*



didn't take her long to take off, and her smile lit up the entire church! She quickly got tired, but didn't want to sit in fear of not being able to get back up. Through our translators we found out that she had a walker she had never been able to use. Once brought to the church, she quickly learned how to use the walker and her braces to walk independently. The biggest blessing as a PT is improving patients quality of life and helping them regain independence, but not many moments in my career have topped that one! Through the help of a friend who is a pediatric PT and her employer Easter Seals, CrossRoads will be bringing new braces to this little girl in July to help her continue to be independent and ambulatory. God is good!"



Which brings me to the Omega part of the verses I shared at the beginning. We ended our week on such a high with this little girl who had a smile that brought such joy, and a few tears, to our last day. Once again reminding us that God is with us from the beginning to the end, always faithful to guide, direct and protect us.

One final thought from Mary Lou Neidig who shared a poem she wrote on her return called 'Helping Hands'.

Hands that are for healing
Hands that prepare the pills
Helping hands that dispense the meds
Hands that hold a tiny baby
Hands that were used to heal broken bodies
Holding hands helping little legs learn to walk
Healing hands that massage aches and pains
Hands that touch a heart
Helpful hands thankful to serve
Loving hands and hearts praising God
For our dear friends in Haiti
We pray we left helping hands.



Prayer Praises and Requests

Praise for the success of our March Medical Trip. We saw God's hand in abundance every day.

Prayer for Jeff and Bill as they head back to Haiti in May to finish up some loose ends at the churches built earlier this year and look at some additional church planting opportunities for the board to discuss.

Praise for the faithful support of so many; for standing beside us; for praying with us; and for your generous financial donations.

Prayer for the team from Providence Church who head to Haiti in July to conduct VBS in many of our church communities.

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