

THE WARNOCKS' ESCAPADES

Carla's Stories

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Ted's Advance # 13030Z

Ted's E-Mail: missionsted@gmail.com

Carla's Advance # 13031Z

Carla's E-Mail: carlanursemgr@gmail.com

Dear Friends and Family, I hope you enjoy Ted's has exciting stories of mission and ministry and his beautiful photographs. Sometimes, compared to him, my mission as the nurse /coordinator of the Missionary Health Ministry Wellness program (Wellness) may seem dull. Let me share with you the importance of having a wellness nurse and team for the missionaries.

When you are isolated by distance and technology, it can be very difficult to be sick and wonder what to do. Even minor health issues seem critical. I remember the first time I had Dengue fever in Haiti and was convinced that death could be a reasonable alternative; I had to rely on Ted to figure out what to do.

Our missionaries know they can call, e-mail, fax, and/or Skype me and any member of the wellness team anytime they have a health issue. The wellness team consists of the medical consultant, the pastoral care counselor, and me. I am the office nurse to the MD consultant, the records keeper, the employee/occupational health and faith community nurse all rolled into one.

The wellness program is a virtual one focused on encouraging our missionaries to work on being healthy, get regular preventive checkups. We encourage our missionaries to be followed by a healthcare provider for chronic health issues. We want them to keep in touch with the pastoral care counselor. And, address new health issues early before they become big health problems.

We also are responsible for the pre-service medical clearance of missionary candidates as well as to participate in their training program. This is where I am as I write this. In August, the pastoral care counselor and I spent three weeks in Stony Point, NY with 25 young adult missionary (YAMs) candidates guiding them on holistic health care, prevention, and understating of the stresses of serving in mission. We even had the opportunity to place the anchor cross on several of the YAMs during their commissioning. This week, we are with 10 adults who will be commissioned next week.

Missionaries are people, like you, ranging in age from 21 to 70. They have children and grandchildren. They get baby shots and many travel vaccines. They have sports injuries and arthritis. They get the flu and Malaria. They have gall bladder and heart surgery. They are in excellent health and some may have high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol,

osteoporosis, and cancer. There are new births, and sadly, occasionally deaths. These are my patients, my congregation, my peers, and my friends who live and work around the world serving God in mission and ministry. I hope that every day I can serve God by helping them through health challenges and with education and advocacy.

Photographs from the GBGM website: <http://new.gbqm-umc.org/>



Some of the YAMs at Commissioning



2011 Fall Missionary Class

While less glamorous, I do a lot of computer and paperwork to keep accurate records, receive and communicate information, and help GBGM review and develop policies and procedures for missionary health, wellness, disability, and benefits. I help our benefits coordinator with specific aspects of missionary health benefits. We believe that our missionaries have enough stress and should not have to fret over getting their healthcare insurance to work correctly for them. I am sure you all can relate to that!! It is a team effort using skills, knowledge, experience, faith, prayer, humor, and determination to support our missionaries through the challenges they face.

Family Update: We have been able to help out with getting the grandboys to some after school activities and provide some free time for our daughter, Casey. Our son-in-law Sam will be home next week and the boys are very excited about Halloweening with their mom, dad and Pops I give out the candy). Sam leaves in a few weeks for Afghanistan where he will command part of his reserve unit. We will bring Ashley to Virginia Beach for Christmas - this will be a very long ride for her, but she will get to see her sister, nephews, and hopefully her grandparents.

I am volunteering several days a month at the Beach Health Center as a nurse. They are a busy, multi-faceted clinic with all volunteer providers and a few paid office staff and charge nurses. One remarkable activity was meeting with the ladies prior to their mammograms and talking with them about breast and women's health. I will be volunteering drawing the labs over the next few weeks as the regular (retired Navy) nurse volunteer and Deacon in the Catholic Church is on an amazing cruise throughout early Christian locations - with mostly Methodists!!

Thank you for your love, support, prayers, and covenant relationships that support me as I serve God in mission and ministry with and for our UMC missionaries. None of us could do what we do without folks like you! Blessings, Carla