

Newsletter # 4 – December 1, 2013

Well, it's been another long but wonderful month here in Cameroon! We are heading into the dry season now so it's raining less and getting much hotter. With each new day I am finding myself more and more at home here half way around the world. I am continuing to learn French and figuring out how to get around on my own. I hope all of you are doing well, and I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. This was the first time I've ever spent Thanksgiving in another country without my family; I had a great time, in spite of the absence of my own family (who would've gladly joined me if they had the opportunity!). This is most definitely a time of year to reflect on things we are thankful for. It wasn't until I moved full time to a 3rd world country that I could honestly say I was thankful for things I used to take for granted. Water, electricity, plumbing, internet, transportation, air conditioning, and even ice cubes...these things are sometimes difficult to find here. And yet, as I celebrated Thanksgiving with my new friends, (these included some Cameroonian women), I have learned that while it's good to be thankful for material items such as these, it is most important to be thankful to a God who loves us so much He saved us from our own destruction.

Allow me to take a moment to describe my Thanksgiving. I had been assigned to cook the gravy and a dessert for a Thanksgiving get-together with some friends. I began the day by making the gravy from scratch; I wouldn't have been able to find premade gravy mix here even if I'd wanted to. I didn't have any chicken or turkey stock so I had to make country gravy (if I'd wanted stock I would've had to buy a chicken and make that myself). It isn't safe to drink the milk here straight out of the carton so we always buy the milk powder. I had to use that to make the cream base for the country gravy, then I added the spices and cornstarch, etc. That was the easy part. For the dessert I decided to slice some apples up and bake them (don't worry, the pumpkin pie was already covered by someone else). Easy, right? Not when you have to walk 20 minutes (one way!) in the heat just to get the apples. And, not to mention the fact that the man at the apple cart on the side of the road only spoke French, so through a series of hand gestures and what broken French I could remember in the heat of the moment, I bought 10 apples and headed home (20 minutes in the heat...uphill this time). I finally made it back to my apartment and was now almost set, right? Not quite. I had to rinse the apples off and then soak them in a bleach solution for 20 minutes to kill all the dangerous germs and parasites. After that, I tried peeling them with a peeler and discovered that the blade was too dull/rusted and it would take too long. So I broke out a sharp little knife and peeled the old fashioned way. Then I had to slice the apples, without the luxury of an apple slicer, but with the knife and a cutting board. Alas, I was prepared to bake the pie in my gas oven. So I, as always, said a short prayer before lighting it to bake two trays of apples! It was a ten minute walk to the apt. where the dinner was being held so I carefully picked up two full trays of apples AND the gravy and headed out the door. I tripped on my rug as I walked out and spilled one of the trays of baked apples onto my porch...face down. They were completely unsalvageable! So, I cleaned up the mess and off I went.

I got to my friend's house and we all had a good laugh about my adventure trying to get out the door. My fellow missionaries understood all too well. There were about ten of us gathered, including some Americans, Canadians, and Cameroonians we'd invited to celebrate with us. We ended up having Thanksgiving dinner by candlelight because the power had been out all day. When we told our friends from Cameroon that people in America do candlelight dinners on purpose they laughed and wondered why in the world we would do that when there was perfectly good electricity at the flip of a switch! During the dinner we all went around the table and said what we were thankful for. Many of us were thankful to God for friends to spend the holiday with, and I was among them. Afterwards our Cameroonian friends told us it wasn't a party unless there was singing and dancing, so we all stood up and sang songs of joy and thankfulness and took turns dancing before the Lord, as David did. One young woman from Cameroon told us she was thankful that she began working with our organization because prior to this she didn't think she liked Americans. She based her opinion of us on what she saw in the media. According to her we were all scantily clad, with loose morals and foul mouths, etc. But the Lord opened her eyes to see that we are not all bad. She realizes now she can trust us, laugh with us, cry with us, and live with us as *people*. Not just as *Americans*. And for that, I think we should all be truly grateful!

There have been times when I have been walking down the street and noticed people, men in particular, looking at me. That is the reason we are not allowed to go anywhere after dark by ourselves but always travel in groups. Now before you go getting angry with the men here, perhaps you should think about this; all they know of American women is what they see in the media! Objectively watch a television program for a few minutes. If that was all you saw of American women, you'd think the same thing too! It's really a shame that American women, and men for that matter, are portrayed in this fashion. We aren't all like that! So when we pass a group of men around here as we're walking we often make it a point of saying "bonjour" (hello) to them. It humanizes us and forces them to see us as more than just "loose American women." When we speak, we are suddenly human beings, and the looks on their faces are priceless! We are slowly helping to change their minds and attitudes; none of this would be possible without your support!

And on a lighter note, earlier this month I went to the grocery store and almost bought a can of cat food. I thought it was tuna! Good thing I double checked before I paid for it!

There is an elementary school right behind the building I live in. It is run by missionaries and is for missionary kids. They teach kindergarten – 6th grade. There are three classrooms so the grades are combined into kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd in one room, then 3rd and 4th, and finally 5th and 6th grade together. I have lunch with the ladies who work there most weekdays and they have asked me to teach arts and crafts one day a week! For those of you that don't know, I have a degree in Special Education from ECSU, so it is pure joy to be teaching. These students are the children of missionaries who hail from all over the world – parts of Europe, Asia, and America! They are wonderful children!

In a couple of weeks the elementary school will be doing a Joint Learning Session. This is where all the missionary kids from remote villages, who are usually homeschooled, come in for two weeks to learn in the classroom. I have volunteered to help with the swimming lessons during this time. So for two weeks I will be teaching the level 2 swimmers! I am really looking forward to this.

I have one last new thing to tell you about! I have been recruited to co-teach a Bible Club for local children! The other teacher also teaches at the elementary school, and we have two people who will translate for us. One of them is a local woman who makes dresses for a living, and the other is a student at Rain Forest International School (a high school for missionary kids). We meet once a week and teach the children about people in the Bible. Right now we are going through the story of Moses. I wasn't able to get any pictures of these precious children yet; we were unable to meet last week when I was going to take photos. But, I will take some pictures and put them in the next newsletter.

If you, your church, or other organization has any left-over Bible study or arts and crafts supplies you would like to donate to a worthy cause please email me. We have many children who will be blessed by your gifts! Please check with the children's teachers in your church.

I want to thank each and every one of you for your ongoing support. Without your financial help I couldn't be here today. Several of you donate to my ministry on a regular basis, and I am truly grateful for that. Currently my monthly support is at the minimum of where it needs to be. If it drops too much lower I'll be in trouble. Thank you to those of you who faithfully give on a regular basis! If you have not begun to give yet, might I encourage you to make a small monthly donation? Even \$5 a month is helpful. No amount is too small. People need the Lord now, perhaps more than ever. Your support helps save souls! And you wouldn't believe how much more expensive groceries are here. A can of tuna costs about \$5! To donate to my ministry online click on the following link and follow the simple instructions. <https://give.wycliffeassociates.org/p-1018-holly-emmerich.aspx> or donate by phone at 1.800.THE.WORD (843-9673). To send a check by mail write HOLLY EMMERICH M10622 in the memo line and mail to:

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As always I love hearing from you! Feel free to send me an email anytime, it feels great to stay connected!

Prayer Requests:

- *Always remember to pray for those who are preparing to go into the Mission field across the world.
- *Pray for safety of the missionaries serving in the far north region of Cameroon. For security reasons I can't go into great detail, just suffice it to say they are in danger.
- *The dry season is upon us. This means hotter weather and less water available!
- *Please pray that our internet and phone connection will continue to get more and more stable. I rely on both of them for work!
- *Pray that the little children in the local Bible Club will have open eyes and ears to hear about God.

Praises!

- *A water well was just repaired in a village here in Cameroon after being broken for two years! Some local people have also been taught how to repair the well in the future!
- *God continues to bless me with new friends to make me feel more and more at home.
- *I have remained healthy thus far, only a short bout with a really bad cold or possibly a flu. Other than that I am healthy!



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“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

Romans 10:14,15