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Showing Up in Jamaica



Dr. Ann Horstmann adjusting a young girl during a clinic in Jamaica.

*God's plan for me was to simply
decide to Show Up!*

My son just turned 25 yesterday. On my last trip to Jamaica with CCA, I was not feeling well because, unbeknownst to me, I was pregnant – and that's how I know how long it's been since my last mission trip to Jamaica! 2019 has been a year of change for me. After 35 years of practice in the same location, I sold my clinic property. My 45 years of running career in the same location came to a halt with knee surgery. So after raising my son as a single parent since age 2, homeschooling while maintaining my practice (it can be done), I went into semi-retirement in my home and watched my son receive his master's and move far, far from home. I was overwhelmed by change. Have you ever felt that way? On top of that, my relationships were changing; close friends and family members were passing away. I found myself reevaluating my life -- what I have done with the gifts God has given me. I began to feel discouraged, depressed, and doubting.

I am so grateful for God arranging the CCA convention in October 2019 in Pigeon Forge (my home!), giving me the opportunity to reconnect once again with Dr. Fred Vlietstra, who was the team leader on my first trip to Jamaica, and visiting with many other familiar faces. It also gave me the opportunity to get to know Dr. Mark and Mary Brett as I played cab driver for them to the airport. Mary asked me to pray about joining them in Jamaica (2nd STM team) after Thanksgiving. At first, I thought "YES!" Then, slowly, I began talking myself out of it since Thanksgiving was fast approaching, company was coming from out of town, (including my precious son), and some weren't leaving until Saturday. I thought there was no way I could leave for Montego Bay on Saturday....but I kept dwelling on what I was going to do that week after my son and the rest of my family left. I was falling into depression even before my favorite holiday was beginning! That's when I felt the Holy Spirit nudging me and saying, "Why not one day late?" So on Sunday, one day late, I flew into Montego Bay. My heart melted to see Dudley and Ena Graham again. The only team members I knew were Dr. Mark and Mary (*and I really didn't know them*). I had no idea what God's plan for me was in Jamaica, but I simply decided to SHOW UP!



Much has changed in the 25 years since my last trip to Jamaica. Dudley used to take us up into the mountains to all sorts of interesting places. It was always an adventure back then trying to avoid potholes that could swallow a Volkswagen; or staying on the one-lane road going downhill as cement truck drivers were racing to get to the local jungle saloon. (*They obviously were NOT concerned about fixing the potholes!*) We were broadsided by a very
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Jamaica, concluded,

large truck on one of our trips into the jungle, so I didn't make this up!!

In comparison, this trip was so organized and compact. We worked in 6 schools in the Montego Bay area in 4 days. We examined and treated over 900 students, teachers, and some of the locals working nearby. We had 5 doctors, 1 therapist, 2 teachers, and our mascot, Maycee! (*She wasn't really our mascot but the 12-year-old daughter of team members Dr. Tammy and Jereme Fimrite, and a delight to have with us.*) Dr. Craig Warhurst from Texas was on his first missions' trip ever! He treated a girl, whom he discovered through persistence, had been suffering from chronic seizures. I treated a young girl who had regular headaches since a car accident in May. With one adjustment, the vertebra was back in place and motion restored. I prayed with her and sent her on her way. What I enjoyed most was praying with some of these students and teachers. Sometimes when I pray, my heart feels ready to burst; I look up and see the person I'm praying with in tears, and I can't recall anything I just said. I don't have the gift of tongues, but I do feel the Holy Spirit at times giving me the words that pour out of my mouth. THAT is pure joy!

The biggest miracle of all was with Dr. Bruce Kniegge who came along to adjust a few patients here and there in a relief capacity. He has had health problems lately, but he ended up adjusting the entire time! Sometimes he saw more patients than I did. And Katie, his wife, shared the most amazing stories from their mission adventures. Dr. Bruce was shot in the eye in Honduras and was able to get himself and the others in the car out of danger by Divine Protection...with only one eye!! (*How many times have I told that story since I heard it?!*) We shared testimonies, childhood memories or had short Bible studies in the morning. I enjoyed that last day in the sun and shopping with my sister-in-Christ (and new best friend!), Mary Brett. What a great encouragement she was to me throughout the week. When she found out I celebrate the Jewish Sabbath on Friday evenings, she suggested we celebrate Shabbat for our last evening together. I offered the Hebrew blessing to open our evening; Jereme said the blessing over Maycee and all the offspring represented by those present. We read Scripture, had communion, and enjoyed a delightful last meal together.

Instead of one thing standing out for me from this trip, I sit back and

think of how God put a team together. I had been feeling emotionally and spiritually weak; Dr. Bruce questioned his physical capabilities; Dr. Mark is 81! But he never did question being too old to keep up. Dr. Craig was on his first STM. Dr. Tammy was leading the pack! Mary, Jereme, and Maycee proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ to over 2000 students in 6 schools. Jereme would skype his US students and let them share



Jamaica Team 2 (LtoR) Dudley Graham, Jereme Fimrite, the amazing - Maycee Fimrite, Dr. Tammy Fimrite, Dr. Ann Horstmann, Dr. Bruce and Katie Kniegge, Marry Brett, Dr. Mark Brett, Dr. Craig Warhurst.

in the classroom fun. Maycee started out shy and hesitant but was sharing her testimony with the students and winning so many hearts to Christ by the end of the week! We all came from different approaches to chiropractic, different backgrounds and denominations, but God used it all for His glory and honor, His purpose and plan. All we had to do was just "show up"!

And that is what I recommend to anyone thinking of doing an STM, no matter where you are in life -- old or young, just starting out in practice or retiring... don't overthink when the Holy Spirit nudges you...just SHOW UP and see what God has planned. I pray the Spirit convicts everyone reading this to step outside the comfort zone and join an STM team. It's fun; it's an honor, a blessing, and pleasing to the Lord Adonai! Amen. *See you on the mission field!*