

What can I contribute?

by Guinevere Lissner

My first time traveling to Kenya, I wasn't sure what to expect and wasn't sure what I would even contribute. In this journey, I discovered wonderful people with intense faith, something that I so admire. It turns out that just being myself led me to contribute, and the intensity of the experience moved me out of my comfort zone in ways I wouldn't have expected.

I'm terrified of public speaking, but I felt moved to speak to multiple youth groups and sang for a whole congregation with my friends standing with me.

Are you considering going on an LWR mission? Donating to make a mission possible? In that case, you need to know that I saw what your contribution means. It is no small thing to be a part of something that changes you as you serve others.

Rewarded

My heart already wants to go back to Kenya. I felt so welcomed by the LWR team and the Kenya villages that we visited while traveling. I would like to continue building the relationships I was able to start while there. Additionally, I'd love to see the progress of LWR's work and continue supporting their goals.

I left with a sober impression that this is big. This is God's work. I would certainly encourage others to go on a mission with LWR. The connections you make to others, and the chance to authentically contribute to such a critical mission are invaluable for the giver and the receiver. My own soul left Kenya feeling a surprising joy, lightness, and hope. My body was exhausting, yet here at home, every day, I think of the people I had the privilege to spend time with and the many things I experienced while with them. I was challenged and uplifted, spiritually and emotionally.

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November Assam India Camp

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Director's Update

In September, I traveled to India with Pramod Mathews, my brother, and the longest-serving Love Without Reason Board of Directors member.

Even in a pandemic, children with clefts are born every day, and trafficking of these children happens every day. The trip assessed how to develop new strategies to host medical camps despite the Covid limitations worldwide. Our trip focused on Bangalore, Mumbai, Assam, Coimbatore, and Hyderabad. Through our work building relationships and networks, we have confirmed the continuation of partnerships.

We have the upcoming medical camp in India from November 14-19, 2021. The year 2022 will begin the journey of five medical camps in Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, India, and Tanzania. Each medical camp strives to complete an average of 50 surgeries. The cost of these camps costs **\$75,000** to operate. As we are coming to the end of 2021, we need all the support we can get to help make these surgeries possible. Each \$50 or \$100 matters!

Santhosh Mathews

Bangalore

Love Without Reason and Aster CMI Hospital have re-confirmed their partnership to continue providing cost-free cleft and craniofacial surgeries to our patients. We are grateful to the leadership of Aster CMI and Dr. Sathish to continue to work until the world is cleft-free. A mini-camp was held at Aster CMI. We interacted with many patients, some of whom had surgery over five years ago and some recovering from recent surgery. Their everyday lives are inspiring because of the love of so many to make these surgeries happen.



Mumbai

Project Butterfly has been working for 6 years in the red-light districts of Mumbai. Each week, dozens of women flow through this center and are taught how to read and write. Project Butterfly's mission is to equip women with skills and trades to help them be free from modern-day slavery. At the end of 2021, we will be launching a new product line of reusable sanitary napkins. The lack of access to clean water and sanitary products can block women from fully participating in society, which is an issue that impacts everyone. This product will support women in so many aspects of their life.

Coimbatore & Hyderabad

Connecting with local businesses, we shared the vision of Love Without Reason and began the conversations to create opportunities in the coming years.

Assam

Mr. Jagadish Solanki, Dr. Asolie Chase met with Pramod and me to finalize the plans to host an International Cleft Camp at the hospital from November 14 - 19, 2021. This new relationship with Baptist Christian Hospital has started in Tezpur, Assam, India. The medical team we are bringing will perform 50+ surgeries. Join us in transforming the smiles and faces of children in northeastern India.



Welcome

Elizabeth and Calvin Njenga

We want to extend a warm welcome to Elizabeth Njenga. The new Executive Director and Board Member of Love Without Reason-Kenya. 2019 began Liz's introduction to Love Without Reason. Salome, Liz's mother-in-law, had been inspired by her experience at our 2019 Zimbabwe Medical Camp and met and spent time with Philip Mathews. Liz was moved to volunteer her service for our 2020 Kenya Medical Camp. This team completed 75 successful surgeries and met 200 more patient contacts needing future medical camps. Liz and her husband Calvin have determined that they want to see Philip's Dream come true. We are honored, and we are proud to have Liz join the Love Without Reason family.



Heroes of the Past Heroes of Today

The 7th annual 5KRun4Love took place on the second Saturday in September, the 20th anniversary of 9/11.

The morning ceremony was spectacular as the U.S. Marine Corps members displayed the colors, Chattanooga Boys Choir setting the tone with a beautiful national anthem rendition.

An emotional day filled with communities taking a moment of silence honoring our first responders, heroes of the past who sacrificed all, and those who continue to serve others today.

The heroes of the 5KRun4Love raised funds to complete the cleft surgeries of 14 patients. Friends joined us from Florida, South Africa, Kenya, and Zimbabwe, and Chattanooga, Tennessee.

This year's sponsors need to know that they have changed the trajectory of 14 lives. We want to honor them by recognizing them. Thank you to Reagan Outdoor Advertising, Seed Biotech, Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics of Chattanooga, Buddy's Bar-B-Q, Mainstay Suites, Wonderful Day Inc, Eyear Optical, Desi Coolers, New Balance Chattanooga, Gloria Page, Joy, and Biji Abraham for their sponsorship.

It's never too early to bless others or save the date for next year's 8th annual 5KRun4Love race on September 10, 2022

...To be a part of the team in uplifting individuals and families is incredible. Even more touching was the time we were able to take with each visit to hear the stories of each family and the little ones' growth into who they have become or are becoming. Despite their hardships, there is great joy in many of these families.

Meeting Mary Bongo was one of my favorite moments. When Mary was born with her cleft, her father wanted nothing to do with her. He refused to send her to school and sold her as a child bride at age 15 to an older man who treated her poorly. After having 8 children, her husband passed away. She was left to provide for all her children while being cast out of society. Barely able to find work and working the most unwanted jobs, she cared for her children.

Mary lived mistreated by her community for 63 years! Then she had surgery to repair her cleft. Mary's daughter found a flyer for LWR's medical camp in 2018 and was selected to have the surgery. Later after our visit, Santhosh and Susan reflected on when they met Mary. She wouldn't look anyone in the eyes, and she would hardly speak. This is a far cry from the bright, peaceful, and warm woman that I met.

Mary Bongo, now 65 years old, lives in the home her daughter builds with her own hands in the green hills of Londiani. This Mary lives a life where she speaks openly and stands confidently. She is loved and respected by her community, as she so deserves. Mary is evidence of the healing that love can provide.



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