



Following Jesus to bring
Hope and healing

You and your
church can help
change lives
and even make
history!

Transforming lives

9 out of 10 people living in sub-Saharan Africa don't have access to safe surgery.

It's time we changed that.

Everyone has the right to medical treatment, but lack of access to safe surgery kills 17 million people each year — the equivalent of a crowded football stadium dying every day.*

Mercy Ships is working to change this. We bring free, accessible surgery and vital medical care to people living in unjust poverty via our two, charity-run hospital ships. We are also creating a legacy of sustainable healthcare, investing in renovating operating theatres and mentoring local professionals. This means we'll make a lasting impact – long after our ships depart.

Vision

Mercy Ships uses hospital ships to transform lives and works in partnership with African nations.

Mission

Mercy Ships follows the 2000-year-old model of Jesus, bringing hope and healing to people without access to safe surgery.

*Report by The Lancet Commission on Global Surgery





“Act justly,
love mercy,
and walk humbly
with your God”

Micah 6:8



History makers

Christians making history

Down through the centuries, following Christ's example, Christians have made historic breakthroughs and medical advances...

The first hospital was founded by Christians living under Roman rule. In the UK, St Thomas's and St Bartholomew's hospitals were founded by monastic orders, and Great Ormond Street Hospital was set up by a Baptist. Today, the Roman Catholic Church remains the largest non-governmental provider of healthcare and hospitals across the world.

In 1792 a Bermondsey priest, Reverend John Townsend, campaigned for the first public institution for deaf children, believing that education for these

children should not be for the wealthy alone. Braille for the blind was also developed by Louis Braille, a Catholic.

In the 19th century, Victorian Quakers, Anglicans and Methodists gave time and generous donations to help people who were in poverty, unwell or dying. This gave rise to modern nursing, thanks to the trailblazers such as Elizabeth Fry and Florence Nightingale, who founded the first school of nursing. It was around this time that William Booth inspired an army of Christian volunteers to care for those living in poverty. Today, The Salvation Army is still the largest provider of social care in the UK, after the Government.

**“Be kind and merciful.
Let no one ever come
to you without coming
away better and happier”**

Saint Mother Teresa

Christians have also made historic discoveries that have advanced surgery:

- Louis Pasteur discovered germs were the cause of infection.
- Joseph Lister, a Quaker, revolutionised sterile surgery.
- Humphry Davy and Michael Faraday, both committed Christians, pioneered anaesthesia in surgery.
- James Simpson was the first to use chloroform in midwifery.

Another name that would make the list of medical trailblazers is Don Stephens...



Left: Sira, orthopaedic patient, before and after surgery.

Above: Kadidja, after facial surgery.



Be inspired by stories of our volunteers. Follow us on Instagram @mercyshipsuk



How it started

Imagining the impossible

Don Stephens first imagined a fleet of hospital ships as a teenage Christian. He later founded Mercy Ships in 1978, inspired by a meeting with Mother Teresa and the birth of his son with additional needs.

Don laid the foundation for Mercy Ships with a huge step of faith – the purchase of the *Anastasis* hospital ship. He lived onboard the *Anastasis* for ten years with his wife and four children.

As unpaid volunteers, sometimes they had to work in the darkness and cold, when they struggled to fuel the generator.

“We operate a world class hospital on a ship – it’s a powerful tool!”

Over 40 years Mercy Ships has operated five hospital vessels, visiting nearly 600 ports in over 55 low- and middle-income countries, providing services.

Working in Africa

Why ships?

More than 50% of the world's population lives within 100 miles of the coast. Put simply, a ship is the best way to deliver a state-of-the-art hospital to places where clean water, electricity and skilled medical workers are non-existent.

Our flagship, the *Africa Mercy*, started life as a rail ferry. The conversion in Newcastle-upon-Tyne was the largest refit project of its kind in the UK. The hospital covers most of the old rail deck, which now boasts five operating theatres, an X-ray unit, a recovery suite, an intensive care unit and 86 ward beds.

Our brand-new ship, the *Global Mercy*, enables us to double our impact, both with life-changing surgeries, and through education and training of local healthcare providers in Africa. The world's first, purpose-built charity hospital ship has 6 operating theatres, 200 beds, a laboratory,

general outpatient clinics and eye and dental clinics. It also contains the latest training facilities, so we can make a lasting impact.

When both ships are in full service, Mercy Ships can perform:

- more than **5,000 surgeries**,
- more than **28,000 dental treatments annually**,
- and **train more than 2,800 medical professionals**.

Mercy Ships has also trained almost 50,000 local health professionals, leaving a legacy in each nation.

Don was awarded the International Humanitarian of the Year Award from Variety International for his sacrifices and achievements.

Don is still dreaming impossible dreams.

Mercy Ships continues to bring hope and healing, transforming lives just as Don imagined.



Above: The *Global Mercy* and the *Africa Mercy*.

The fleet



Anastasis 1978 - 2007

Length: 159m
Breadth: 20.73m
Gross Tonnage: 11,701
Engines: 8,050 BHP



Island Mercy 1983 - 2001

Length: 52.7m
Breadth: 11.6m
Tonnage: 998
Engines: 1,100 BHP each



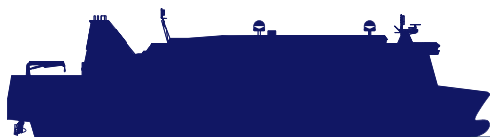
Caribbean Mercy 1994 - 2006

Length: 80m
Breadth: 12.2m
Tonnage: 2,125
Engines: 3,670 BHP



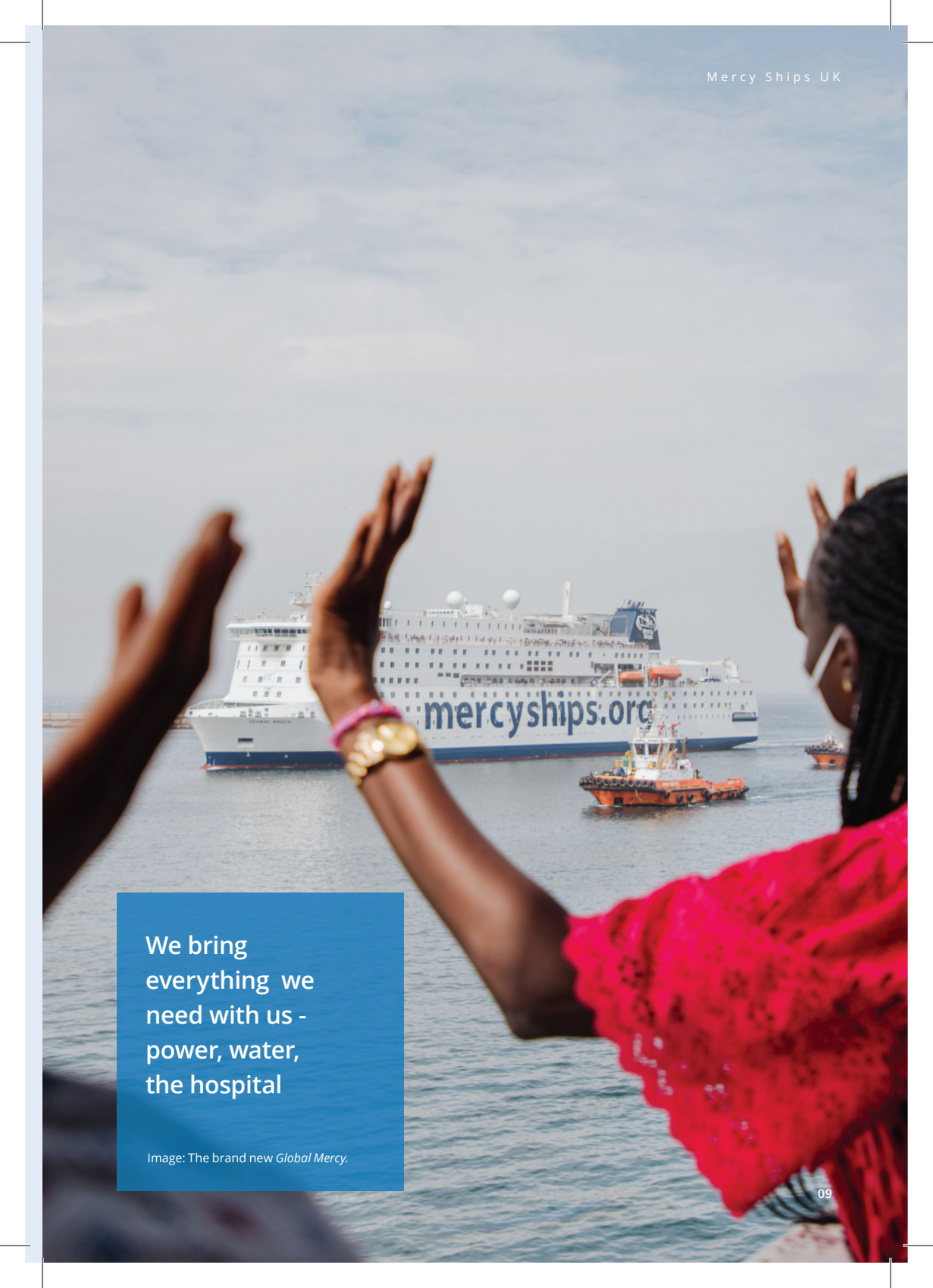
Africa Mercy 2007 - present

Length: 152m
Breadth: 23.7m
Tonnage: 16,572
Engines: 3120 kW each



Global Mercy 2022 - present

Length: 174m
Breadth: 28.6m
Tonnage: 37,000
Engines: 4 x Wartsila 6L32 w/
2 x ABB Azipul Pods



We bring
everything we
need with us -
power, water,
the hospital

Image: The brand new *Global Mercy*.

Transforming families

Changing one life at a time

Aliou's story

Aliou was just three years old when his blanket caught fire while he was sitting close to a fire, severely burning his upper body. His father thought his son wouldn't survive, but his grandmother Bintou didn't give up, determined he would live.

Amazingly, Aliou did survive, but as his burns healed, his arm contracted and became immobile. Surgery was the only way that his arm would move again, but there was no way the family could afford it.

The awful accident brought Aliou excruciating pain. He could no longer write. For his grandmother, Bintou, seeing her grandson go to school was a priority, she wanted to him to have a bright future. She was determined that this wouldn't be the end of his story and sought to find healing for him.



Left to right: Aliou before and after surgery onboard the *Africa Mercy*.



One day, Bintou heard on the radio that the *Africa Mercy* was coming to the port of Dakar to provide free surgeries and training for medical professionals.

Together with Aliou, she embarked on the four-hour journey to bring her grandson to the hospital ship that would straighten his arm.

When Bintou saw Aliou healed, she realised that all those years of searching and bravery had paid off.

"Mercy Ships opened the big door to Aliou's future," she said.

Once Aliou had recovered, he received therapy to recover the motion in his arm before returning home. It's a critical step in ensuring the work done by the volunteer surgeons would last a lifetime.

Today Aliou's future has been unleashed.

"Everything he could not do before, he can do now," she says, "... and soon he will go back to school!"

Thanks to churches like yours, Aliou received life-changing surgery.

"Everything he could
not do before, he
can do now"



Leaving a legacy

Making an impact

Mercy Ships partners with African nations and seeks to leave a legacy in each country it visits.

Take for example the story of Dr Abram Wodome.

He was working in an eye hospital in Lome, Togo and looking for a way out. After growing up as one of 16 children to a carpenter father and fish seller mother, Dr Wodome believed his best chance of a successful future was to save enough money to move to the West.

A chance encounter with a Mercy Ships eye surgeon would change everything.

After a series of events that he attributes as divine, Dr Wodome found himself walking up the gangway of the *Africa Mercy*, to join the Mercy Ships ophthalmic surgical training programme. Through months of intensive training, Dr Wodome mastered a complex cataract surgical procedure known as the Manual Small Incision Cataract Surgery (MSICS) method.

This cost-effective technique is uniquely suited to low-income countries and through the onboard medical capacity building programme, Dr Wodome learned not just how to perform the procedure, but how to teach many more professionals to do the same.

His training with Mercy Ships gave Dr Wodome more than just a fresh perspective on a new medical procedure. It renewed his sense of purpose and potential and transformed the way he saw his own calling:

"I began to see clearly that I had something to do there in Africa... that God had given me a role to play in the fight against cataract blindness in Togo and that change was really possible."



Dr Wodome



55

Developing nations visited



601

Port visits by our
ships



2.85

million lives impacted



105,520

Life-changing
surgical procedures
provided



6,611

Healthcare
professionals trained
to train others



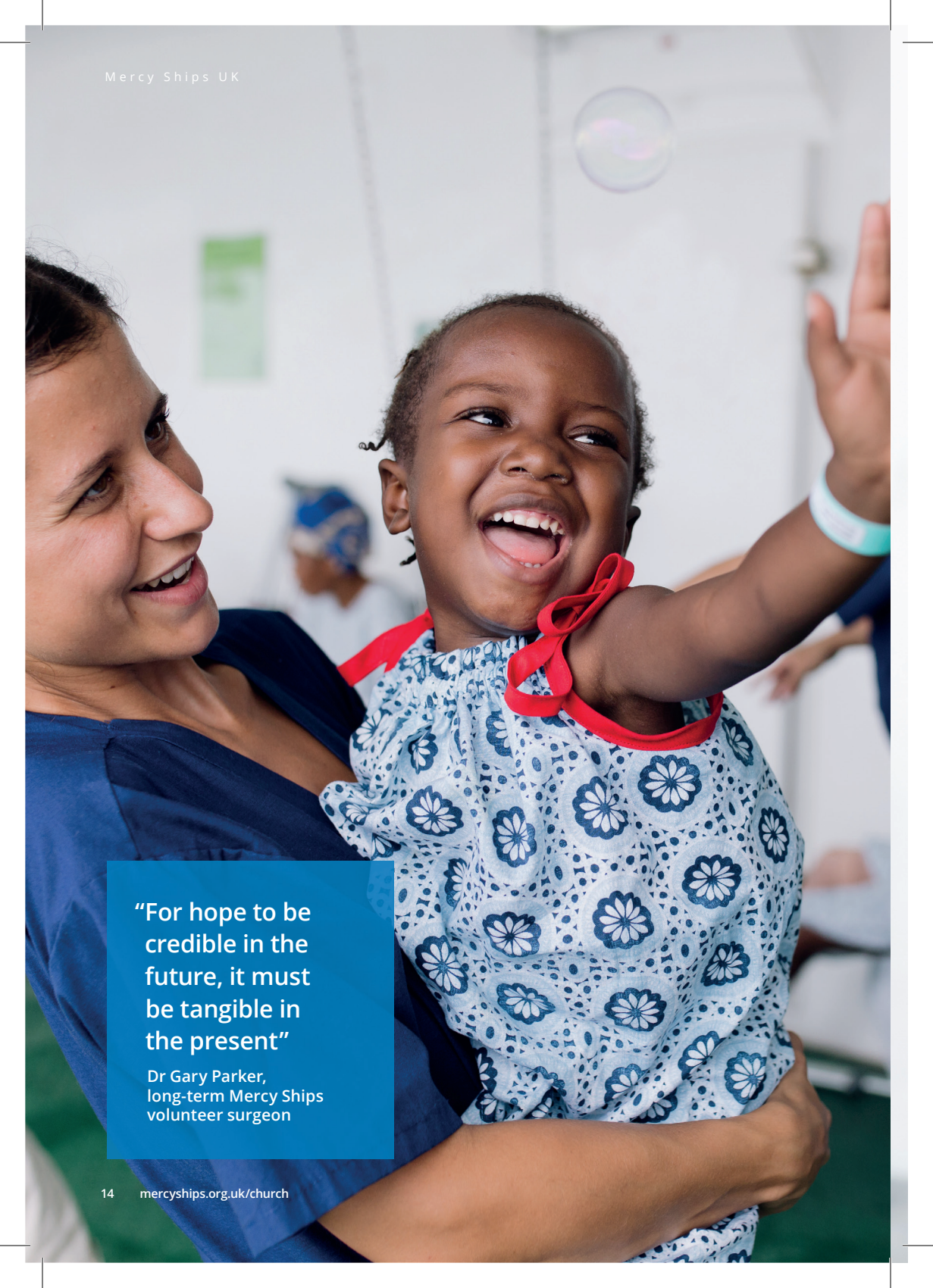
489,317

Dental procedures provided



49,133

Professionals trained in
their field of expertise

A woman with dark hair, wearing a blue top, is holding a young child. The child is laughing joyfully, looking up and to the right, with their right arm raised. The child is wearing a light blue patterned dress with a red collar and a red bow on their shoulder. A light blue hospital band is visible on the child's right wrist. In the background, a large, iridescent bubble floats in the air. The setting appears to be an indoor space with white walls and other people blurred in the background.

**"For hope to be
credible in the
future, it must
be tangible in
the present"**

Dr Gary Parker,
long-term Mercy Ships
volunteer surgeon

Houleye was born with a tumour on her neck. Surgery aboard the *Africa Mercy* restored Houleye's confidence, and she now plays happily with friends.



"For we are God's
masterpiece. He has
created us anew in
Christ Jesus, so we
can do the good
things he planned
for us"

Ephesians 2:10



Our volunteers

Could you volunteer with Mercy Ships?

There are over 200 different jobs onboard.

If you've always wanted to use your unique talents and skills to transform lives and make your mark on the world, we've got a volunteer opportunity for you.

The work of Mercy Ships impacts the lives of many – patients, families, and volunteers. It's a transformative experience that enables personal and professional growth, and we're looking for you to join us.

Without skilled volunteers like you, surgeries and essential medical training could not be provided free of charge. Plus, only half the roles are medical.

We offer opportunities for professionals from all backgrounds to join the team on one of our ships. We also have opportunities to volunteer in the UK.

Get in touch to find out more!
Visit mercyships.org.uk/setsail





Skill Sunday

**Do you ever wonder what skills and talents are hidden
in your church family that could help others?**

We've put together a free Skill Sunday church pack filled with songs,
prayers, sermon ideas and stories that you can use to inspire your
congregation to serve and volunteer one Sunday.

Download your free Skill Sunday pack today

mercyships.org.uk/sunday

Get involved

You can make a difference

£150

A gift of £150 could pay for a nurse training course.

£300

A gift of £300 can help provide a week's supply of sanitation products like gloves, gowns, bed sheets, and antiseptic cleaners.

£600

A gift of £600 could remove a tumour, saving and transforming a life like little Houleye's. Or, £50 per month for one surgery per year.

£1,000

A gift of £1,000 could pay to sponsor an operating theatre for one day's surgeries.

£2,000

A gift of £2,000 could pay for a Maxillofacial training course for a surgeon. So, they can remove life-threatening tumours.

"If we can change the world for one person, that makes a big difference"

Jane White, Volunteer Nurse

Church partner

There are lots of different ways your church can partner with Mercy Ships

- Choose Mercy Ships for an Overseas Mission gift.
- Make Mercy Ships your charity of the year and request a speaker to come along to a Sunday service.
- Why not hold a Lent lunch or request our Lent Kindness calendar for other Lent fundraising ideas.
- Celebrate Harvest time with an offering for Mercy Ships.
- Host a Christmas coffee morning.

Pray

Your prayers will help change lives

Why not request our monthly church email, with inspiring stories and prayer needs from the ships.

To ensure you don't miss out, or to ask any questions for your church, just email:

churches@mercyships.org.uk



mercyships.org.uk/church
01438 727800

Mercy Ships UK
12 Meadway Court,
Stevenage SG1 2EF



[mercyshipsuk](https://mercyshipsuk.org)

Help transform lives

Together we can bring hope and healing, following the model of Jesus. Thank you for your kind support.



Single gift

I would like to give a single gift of: £

☐ By cheque/charity voucher made payable to Mercy Ships UK

Or please debit my:

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ CAF Card

Card no

Start date

Expiry date

Maestro issue no

Name on card

Signature

Date

Regular gift



I would like to give a regular monthly gift of: £

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

Please debit my account each month starting on:

☐ 1st or ☐ 15th of the month

To: The Manager Bank/Building Society

Branch address
(please complete)

Postcode

Name(s) of
account holder(s)

Bank/Building Society

Account no

Branch Sort code

Please pay Mercy Ships UK Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Mercy Ships UK and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society.

Signature(s)

Date

Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions from some types of account.

Please complete and return this form to:

Mercy Ships UK
12 Meadway Court
Stevenage
SG1 2EF

Your details

Title

Full Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone

We will only ever use your phone number for administration purposes.

May we contact you by email?

If yes, please provide below

Email

If you would like to update your details at any time, please contact donor.care@mercyships.org.uk or call 01438 727800

☐ Tick this box if you would not like an acknowledgement.

We will never share your details with another charity for fundraising and marketing purposes.

giftaid it

Make every £1 you give worth 25p more, at no extra cost to you.

☐ I'd like Mercy Ships to claim Gift Aid on this donation along with everything I've given in the last four years and all my future donations. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature

Date

Please notify Mercy Ships if you want to cancel this declaration, change your name or home address or no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

- ☐ Please send me the free **Sunday Service** resource called **Skill Sunday**.
- ☐ Please send me information on **Mercy Acts**, with fundraising ideas.
- ☐ I would like to know more about volunteering in the UK or on a ship.
- ☐ I would like to find out more about leaving a legacy gift in my will.

For Christian resources or to give a gift, visit:
mercyships.org.uk/church

Thank you

