

MISSIONARY news

from Kenya, with love Winter 2017

Blake and Esther Gibbs

As usual, our ministry with Agape has kept us very busy throughout this past year. Part of that has been the result of our extensive travel schedule.

The later part of March and early April, we had the privilege of being back at Agape in Kenya. It was a treat to be with our missionaries, our Kenyan staff, and the children. We were able to get a lot of work done on projects ranging from sewing nightgowns for the girls, to major facilities projects aimed at enabling us to bring our Agape Girls to live on the Kisumu campus. (We figure you can probably pretty accurately guess which projects were Esther's and which were Blake's!)

For parts of June and July, we were traveling in the Pacific Northwest, visiting churches and supporters. It was great to make new acquaintances and to re-connect with a number of long-time friends.

Virtually the entire month of October we traveled through the south, up the east coast, and then west through Pennsylvania to Ohio. What a beautiful time to visit! The trees were changing, and the leaves were absolutely spectacular. Reds, oranges, yellows, and golds that defy description. How blessed we are as human beings to be able to enjoy the wonders of God's creation so magnificently displayed.

Thank you for praying for us throughout the year. Thank you for your generous financial support. Thank you for loving us and encouraging us no matter where we are or what we are doing. You are a blessing to us. We couldn't be missionaries without you.

We pray the Lord will grant you and your loved ones a wonderful, Christ-filled Christmas and a great New Year. We are excited about all He has in store for us and for Agape as 2018 unfolds.

Blessings to you,

Blake & Esther

Steve and Dianne Warn

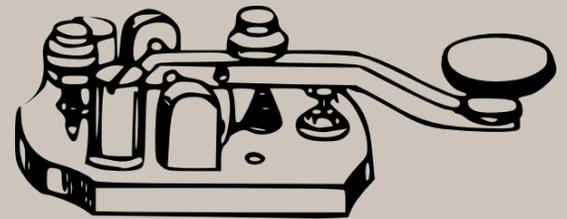
In the early days of telegraphs, William Booth wanted to encourage Salvation Army workers around the world. One word came to his mind, "others."

He sent it to all, and all received the message.

As the years roll by, it's still a great message to pass on. Others. When all service on earth is done, we shall sit down with the Lord Jesus Christ, who sacrificed HIMSELF so that we might spend eternity feasting with Him on the Love of GOD.

God, who is always pro-life, gives abundant life and forgiveness. When we were all far from Him, He drew near to us in Emmanuel, and though our nature wants to run and hide because of sin, He provided a way for us to be forgiven and close to Him, in fellowship through His Redemption. May God move us all this year to offer the invitations to others so they will enjoy eternal life. The invitations continue to go out to all who will believe.

Steve and Dianne



Prayer Group

You will be hard pressed to find a significant work of God that is not backed up by prayer. Watchman Nee once said, "Our prayers are like the rails of a train. A train may travel to any place, except it must run on rails. The train has tremendous power just like our God. Nothing is impossible for Him, but He chooses to allow our prayers to pave the way!"

Having said that, our vision at Agape is for every child who comes on campus to have at least one person praying for him/her the first crucial month or two.

It's been exciting to see how you, our supporters, have responded to this vision and are actively involved in seeing life-changing results in the lives of these needy children. We now have 60 active members praying. If you haven't joined and would like to, please contact us and we will send you a prayer request for an Agape child. You can make a difference!

"Lord, you know the hopes of the helpless. Surely you will hear their cries and comfort them. Psalm 10:17

Dianne Warn



Jonathan and Andrea Dowell

In our last update, we shared that we had to close Agape once again due to some political unrest in Kisumu that made staying open too dangerous for our staff and children. We stayed closed for just under three weeks, but we are happy to share that we were able to open up Agape again on November 2nd. Since that time, we've welcomed over 45 children back onto our campus to continue in their rehabilitation processes. It was a huge answer to prayer to be able to return home to Kisumu and see our staff again. We are thankful for God's continued provision and protection over our Agape children, our staff and their families. In late November, the Supreme Court ruled to uphold the second election results declaring Uhuru Kenyatta the winner. This news was not met with a favorable reaction in Kisumu, so please continue to keep the nation of Kenya in your prayers. It's a time of a lot of uncertainty and unknowns, but we are praying that God will allow all of us to continue moving forward and remain open throughout this season.

We are thrilled to be able to share that we are just days away from welcoming our sweet baby girl into the world. In the last few days of November, we traveled to Nairobi so we could be closer to the hospital for the birth of the baby. We are blessed to be able to stay in the house of some missionaries who are in the U.S. on furlough. We will continue to use this time to work on long-term projects for Agape as well as to prepare for this huge life change we are about to experience. Mom and baby girl are both doing so well, and we cannot wait to be able to share with you some pictures of our sweet Madison Joy when she arrives. Our plan is to stay in Nairobi for about 1-2 weeks after the birth of the baby to have some time to rest and heal as well as begin to process her paperwork (birth certificate, U.S. passport, social security card, etc.) Our prayer is that we can

travel to the U.S. in late February for a few weeks to introduce Madison to her extended family in the U.S. We are anxiously awaiting her arrival and can't wait to meet her!

We are all wishing you and your family a wonderful Christmas season! We are so thankful for each one of you and how you pray for us, support us, lift us up, check in with us and are such an encouragement to our hearts. We couldn't be here without you, and we are praying that you and your family enjoy some wonderful memories together during this Christmas season. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from our family to yours. We are excited for all that God has in store for 2018!

In Love,

Jonathan & Andrea



The Page Family

Thank you for all of your prayers! We finally made it back to Kenya, but what a journey to get here!

I've shared over the past few months about the political situation in Kenya that originally delayed our return date to November 8th. Well, on November 6th, we had finished all of our packing for our return trip to Kenya, so Tammy decided to go to the doctor for a routine checkup. During the exam, the doctor found a 2 cm nodule on Tammy's thyroid and ordered a blood panel and ultrasound to investigate further. Yikes! So, on the morning prior to our departure date, Tammy had an ultrasound on her thyroid. While awaiting the ultrasound results, Tammy and I prayed that God would clearly show us what we should do about our scheduled departure to Kenya the following day. Immediately, we received a call from her

doctor . . . the ultrasound showed that a biopsy of the nodule was necessary. Yikes, again! But, praise God for answered prayers! We received a definitive answer that we needed to delay our return to Kenya.

On the morning of the 8th, a doctor performed a fine needle aspiration (FNA) biopsy on the nodule on Tammy's thyroid, and we sent out an emergency prayer request to friends and family all over the world. Then, we began the waiting game to find out the results of the biopsy. Meanwhile, British Airways very graciously placed our flight reservations on hold and even waived the change fees when we rebooked (Praise the Lord!). We also began the application process for obtaining health insurance through a special enrollment in the Health Insurance Marketplace (if you live overseas, you do not have to keep U.S. health insurance). After five days of waiting, we finally received word from Tammy's doctor; the nodule was benign! Even better, Tammy's thyroid levels were normal, so no medication was necessary. God is so good!

With a clean bill of health, we proceeded to rebook our return trip to Kenya, and we arrived back in Kisumu on November 30th. Whew! A big THANK YOU to everyone who prayed with us during this tumultuous month. It was so wonderful to be back in the U.S. with all of you! Thank you for partnering with us in this work!

The Pages: Chris, Tammy, Sutton, Connor, Seth, Lyla, Cole, & Emma

