

MISSIONARY news

from Kenya, with love Winter 2018

"IMPACT" (CONTINUED)

Agape has several missionary applicants requesting to join the ministry, and several will be making visits in 2019 as they prayerfully consider God's call. We still need missionaries and a great deal of financial support to reach our goal of eight new campuses in the next ten years. Maybe your church would prayerfully consider supporting all or a portion of a new campus.

Multiplication will involve offering encouragement, training, and support to other missions currently using an orphanage model with limited impact, to making the change to the "Agape Model" with unlimited impact. The Agape Model allowed us to move from impacting 200 children over the first fifteen years to more than 2,000 children over last ten years. We want to share this model, given to us by God, with others who want to have a greater impact for the Lord Jesus. In 2019 Agape will begin to train other organizations in the "Agape Model" of responsible reintegration using the four R's. We are partnering with Chosen and Dearly Loved to provide the training that could see the Agape Model impact children around the world. The first training conference is scheduled to begin the week of January 26, 2019. We have eleven organizations registered to date. Praise the Lord! Please pray that our model is communicated effectively and these ministries can make this worthwhile change.

We have reworked our website to better communicate the mission and the Agape Model. It includes videos and stories of Agape's impact on families in Kenya. Please check it out and share the site with your church, family, and friends. agapechildren.org

Thank for your prayers and financial support for the rescue, redemption, rehabilitation, and reintegration of so many children! With your continued support we look forward to what God will do through Agape Children's Ministry in 2019.

Blessings,

Wesley Corbitt

Executive Director in 2019

THE GIBBS

Over the past nearly sixteen years, we have written lots of newsletters. In them, we have tried to share with you glimpses of the incredible journey the Lord has taken us on during our time with Agape.

It has been a journey marked by much joy and happiness; by daily challenges and obstacles; by great victories and triumphs; and by occasional sorrow and sadness. It has never been boring! It has been a journey that pushed us to our limits only to find that God was there to carry us beyond those limits.

It has been a journey that has humbled us as we have seen the Lord's ever-present goodness and mercy, power, and might at work in our lives, in the lives of our missionaries and our Kenyan staff, and, most importantly, in the lives of the children He has called us to serve.

When we believed the Lord was leading us to join Darla at Agape, we had no idea where He would lead, what He had planned for Agape, how He would change Agape from what it was then to what it is today, how many children's lives He would transform, or how He would make Agape a model others seek to learn from and follow.

We have been honored to serve the Lord through Agape. It's been a remarkable

journey, and we are grateful to Him for allowing us this privilege.

Of the many newsletters we've written, this may be the most difficult, because it will be our last. We will be retiring from Agape at the end of the year. We can't begin to tell you how grateful we are to each one of you for your faithful prayers, your generous support, and your steadfast love over all these years. Thank you. We praise the Lord for you. And, we pray His richest blessings on you and your loved ones.

We will not disappear entirely, but will continue to represent Agape at churches and mission conferences around the country. For those of you who have supported us financially, we ask that you consider transferring future donations to Agape's General Fund. We are excited about the future the Lord has for Agape as Wesley Corbitt takes the reigns of leadership. With our remarkable Board of Directors, missionaries, and amazing Kenyan staff, and with all the Lord is doing, Agape's future looks bright indeed. To God be the Glory!

Blessings to you. We love you.

Blake & Esther

AGAPE PAGES

Merry Christmas!!! We hope that everyone is having a wonderful holiday season! We enjoyed an awesome Thanksgiving here in Kisumu. Recently, a new grocery store opened up in Kisumu that carries some American and European foods, and Tammy was able to pick up a 10 lb. frozen turkey for our Thanksgiving lunch, a real treat for our family! Later in the day, we continued our Thanksgiving celebration at a cookout with friends; we even played a pick-up game of "real" football!

In January, Agape will host a weeklong workshop in Kisumu, at which leaders from around 100 children's institutions around the globe will come to learn about Agape's model for Family Reunification. There is a growing push internationally to remove children from orphanages and place them in loving and safe families. God has uniquely positioned Agape with over ten years of experience in reuniting children with their families, and we get constant requests in Kisumu and Kitale from other institutions asking how to "transition" to the Agape Model. Please pray that through this workshop more children will be able to return to loving families and that we will be faithful to share the Gospel with such a large, diverse audience.

Thank you so much for your love, prayers, and support; we are so fortunate to have friends and family who love the Lord and partner with us in this work!

The Pages

WARN INK

And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one. Zechariah 14:9

The perfect gift is none other than the KING, the Lord Jesus Christ. Have you received the gift of God's Son? You don't want to leave this life without Him! 2 Corinthians 9:15 *Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.* And for a great back up; Romans 6:23 says *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Oh yes, we can't leave out John 3:16, 17 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

Life that is forever is what we desire for each one reading this newsletter and for each boy and girl on the streets of Africa. John 17:3 *And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.*

Other wonderful gifts from God are His Word the Bible, the fellowship of the believers, and, of course, prayer. Through prayer we connect with Him and also connect Him with our needs!

In fact, your prayers have kept us going all these years. THANK YOU for all the prayers that you have prayed for us and for these needy children. May God motivate us to pray even more: Lamentations 2:19 speaks loud and clear: *Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up your hands toward Him for the life of the young children, that faint for hunger in the top of every street.*

STAYING CONNECTED

If you have been following our newsletters or have heard us speak lately, you know that our role at Agape is changing. This month is our last regular newsletter and our last month to be full time employees with Agape. We will continue as volunteers by staying connected.

1. Coordinating the Agape Prayer Team

Since we wrote about our vision to match every child coming off the street with a prayer partner, many of you have responded. Our team has grown to 110, enough to cover each child during their one to four month rehab process!

Right now, between our two campuses, we rescue about fourteen boys and girls per week on an average! Our hearts leap for joy! It's a far cry from from the one or two per month thirteen years ago! How amazing is God to bring about that change! Many of these children are coming to Christ, and He is rewriting their stories. For instance, fifteen-year-old George comes from a broken family. His behavior became so defiant that his mother kicked him out in desperation and told him to look for his drunkard father. Even before that, he spent long periods of time on the street involved in drug trafficking, violence, and stealing. After some time at Agape, George gave his life to Christ. He shares that he has learned what respect is and also realizes that God has the power to make someone see. He praises God for restoring his broken relationship with his mother.

2. Leading Short-Term Teams to Agape

At the moment, we are putting together a 2019 work team to go to Agape to help in a building project and to minister to the children. If you or someone you know would be interested, please call us 209-622-3016 or email us at warnink@gmail.com. We may be

able to arrange some scholarships to assist those who have a passion but are short on funds.

3. Representing Agape Stateside

This coming year we will be representing Agape at Mission Connexion 2019 in Portland in January and CAFO in Louisville, Kentucky in May. We love getting the word out about what God is doing and it's always a joy to share His Word.

4. Traveling – Who knows, the Lord may provide for us to make another speaking circuit across the US.

PERSONAL NOTE:

We want to thank all of you who have supported us as a family in our grieving. Steve's mom, Arleen, is slowly adjusting to Duryea's absence after seventy-two years together. We count it a privilege to be present for her as much as she needs us.

We have a measure of excitement at this juncture in our faith walk, knowing that the Lord Jesus is the Author and Finisher of our Faith, and He is Faithful. It reminds of us of the years before we went overseas; He is our sole Provider, both to will and to do His good pleasure. We look forward to His future leading.

We are grateful for each and every one of you who have stood with us on this journey. For our adult children who didn't really have a choice but who have shared in our trouble and joys, we are proud of you; for our extended family who have loved us as only blood can; and for our Big Valley church family who, without fail even in "lean" years, have sent our monthly support for the past thirty-eight years! We are truly thankful!

Love & prayers,

Steve and Dianne

DOWELL HOME

It's truly amazing and humbling for us to look at all that God has done through Agape this year. Through the work of our amazing staff and with your support, God has enabled us to rescue more children than ever. Our rehabilitation staff provide a therapeutic environment for healing as our child welfare officers prepare home and finally reintegrate each child back with their family members. Every single year we are blown away by God's faithfulness and amazed by how much He loves each and every one of these children. This year, God opened the doors for us to move to Kitale and open a second Agape location, and the work we've already seen God accomplish here in six short months is overwhelming. He's already helped us found homes in impossible situations and brought healing to families where all hope was lost. We pray, as you read through this report, that you continue to lift up us and our staff in prayer as the work continues. We are believing that God has more in store for Agape in the coming year, and we continue to pray for and work tirelessly together in the best interest of each individual child that comes on our campus.

This month, we are fortunate to be able to be together with friends and family in the U.S. We arrive in Portland in mid-December and leave the first week of January to return back to Kitale. We are excited for the chance to celebrate the holidays with so many of our friends and family and would love to meet up with you, too. Send us an e-mail or let us know your availability, and we will make every effort to see you. Also, stand with us in prayer as it's always difficult for us to be away from our Kenyan home, especially as we are now running a location that is barely six months old. Pray that processes run smoothly and that our very capable staff won't encounter difficult obstacles while we are away. Pray for unity amongst the staff during our time in the States, and pray for a restful time with friends and family for us, personally. We are so grateful for your continued support of this ministry and look forward to sharing some fellowship time with many of you during our stateside visit.

In love,

The Dowells