

# MISSIONARY NEWS

*from Kenya, with love*

WINTER 2020

## AGAPE PAGES

Our past six weeks in the US have flown by in a whirlwind: visits with family, trips to North Carolina and north Georgia, updating churches on the latest with Agape, and catching up with old friends. We are so thankful for the opportunities that God has granted us in October and November! Tammy and the kids are all doing well. Sutton and Connor have been swamped with schoolwork, while the rest of the kids have been enjoying time with their cousins. In Kenya, we are still waiting for approval from the Kenyan government to resume operations on our campuses in Kisumu and Kitale. It looks like Kenya's second wave of Covid-19 is cresting, so please keep praying for Kenya's Covid numbers to come down. In the meantime, we continue ministering on the streets and in our reintegrated families' homes. Pray for the stability and safety of Kenya's children in this difficult time.

Our schedule for December continues to be busy. If we haven't had a chance to see you yet, we hope to see you in December before we leave for Kenya on January 2nd!

- December 5th: Agape US Board Meeting – Modesto CA
- December 13th: Varnville First Baptist Church – Varnville, SC



- December 14th: Port City Church – Wilmington, NC
- December 16th: Community Bible Church – Beaufort, SC
- December 20th: New Providence Baptist Church – Guyton, GA
- December 27th: OPEN
- January 2nd: Fly to Kenya

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*

## CHERYL'S LETTERS

Jesus, our Immanuel - God with us! Oh, how this truth has been the source of strength amidst challenges, comfort in losses, and peace for endurance. And beyond the assurance of his presence, this same God "does not slumber" (Psalm 121:3-4), but "acts on behalf of those who wait on him." (Isaiah 64:4)

Waiting on God with expectancy to move and act is the substance of faith. To me it feels a bit like working a "dot to dot" picture puzzle. At first you can't make out the picture, but as more dots are

connected, it begins to take shape. I love those aha moments when the eyes of faith connect all the dots, and you realize that God has orchestrated the unimaginable. We see that so often in the family tracing and reunification stories of Agape children. And I can't help but think it was probably a lot like this for Mary, beginning with the angel proclamation, "You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus." (Luke 1:31) God's plan for reconciling mankind to himself, dots fully connected through Jesus' death and resurrection!

As we close this year, there are many things for which we wait. For me, it's the Covid-related unconnected dots for Agape's full reopening and for my return to Kenya. How about you? May the Lord bless you with the peace that comes from knowing that Immanuel our God is with us!

Merry Christmas! With love,

*Cheryl Ansua*

## MCINTIRE MONTHLY

Christmas is well on its way as you read this newsletter. And the only word I can use to sum up our heart for you is "JOY." Joy to the world, the Lord has come. The angel told the shepherds, " I am here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody, worldwide: a savior has been born" (MSG Bible Luke Ch 2)

I hope that there will be a resounding reminder through the churches this year that even during challenge, hardship, and unexpected times the birth of Jesus is still joyous news!! We are people, with emotions, and yet we are people with a SAVIOR, who gave his life to not only die for our sins but to teach us through the way he lived.

Even in trying times, our gratitude for Jesus' birth, his entire life, and his death and resurrection can be a joy which nothing in this world can steal from us. For me, this JOY is not only an emotion, but also a place to which I can bring all my other emotions. Where I can remind myself of the greatest gift of all, Jesus. JOY is also an action, to take the gift, the life of Jesus we learn from

and are molded by and share that with the world around us. Joy is holistic; for us, our foundation is Christ the "great and joyful event that is meant for everybody worldwide." We are going to continue to challenge ourselves to keep our foundation on the joy of Christ and share it here in our corner of the world, Kitale, Kenya, and we invite you to join us in your corner. May your Christmas find you drawn into the joy and beauty of the birth and life of Jesus. May that joy grow in you as you share it with your world.

Merry Christmas, Friends! We love you! We stand with you in prayer for this joy.

Love,

*The McIntires*



## DOWELL HOME

Looking back over 2020 brings a wide range of emotions, as I'm sure it does for all of you. This year brought only the unexpected. Our goals, plans, and vision for the year were placed on hold along with the rest of the world. We spent a majority of 2020 in the USA, which was definitely not our plan, but we are thankful it was always in God's plan.

As a family, we learned and grew a lot this year, through the obstacles and frustration, through the unexpected blessing of precious time with family, through the ups and downs. What we thought we needed in order to find rest and balance was, in fact, not what we needed. But we serve a God who knew our needs every step of the way and brought rest and restoration in unexpected ways. And so, after seven long months in the U.S., God opened the doors for us to finally go back home. And, although we're elated to finally be home, our family knows that Jonathan isn't quite ready to jump into full-time work yet. Getting healthy is a process and journey, and our family recognizes that Jonathan needs some

time to step away temporarily for a sabbatical from Agape as we return to Kenya. His time in the US was FILLED to capacity (beyond capacity) with work and meetings and connecting with his team in Kenya, as well as important partners around the globe. So, while Andrea had time to unplug from Agape while stateside, Jonathan didn't have that same experience. It's a big sign of growth for our family that we are able to see the need for Jonathan to take a break in order to find some margin. Jonathan will spend the next couple of months getting our family moved to Kisumu and into our new home, preparing for the new baby, being a dad to Madison as she goes through all the transitions ahead, studying discipleship, and building intentional and supportive relationships with other missionary men in Kisumu and Kitale. That will be his focus for the next couple of months before returning to full time ministry with Agape in early 2021.

Our family also recognized that Andrea had different needs, and she was elated to jump into the role as Agape Model

Solutions (AMS) – Solution Delivery manager for a temporary time until the baby comes. This department is our team of amazing consultants who connect with, teach, train, mentor, and consult with organizations all over Kenya who are asking to learn more about family-based care and how to reintegrate children back with family. God is doing big things with this team and using Agape to help spread the message of reintegration. Andrea hasn't been able to be involved in AMS much up to this point, so she is excited to dive in and see what God is doing across Kenya.

This year certainly brought the unexpected. As we look ahead to next year, we've learned to hold our dreams and plans for 2021 loosely and simply rest in the fact that our plans, no matter how good they sound, are nothing compared to God's plans for our lives. Let Him direct our steps and our path as we move forward with excitement for what He has ahead for us in 2021.

In love, *The Dowells*