

Victory

magazine

Hidden With Christ Ministries
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2022: Go Through the Gates

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Treasures of Africa Children's Home are
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Hidden With Christ Ministries
P.O. Box 745
Forest, VA 24551
USA

Hidden With Christ Ministries
P.O. Box 383
Moshi
TANZANIA

We would love to hear from you!

Please email us at:
info@hiddenwithchrist.org

Or call our U.S. Office Phone:
(714) 665-0407



We hadn't been on U.S. soil for 48 hours when Benny arrived in Virginia on his holiday break from ORU in Tulsa. It was a great reunion for all of us. I hadn't seen Benny in more than a year, having spent 99% of 2021 in his homeland of Tanzania while he studied in Oklahoma. But Raymond, Ester and Jesca hadn't seen their TOA brother in several years and were overjoyed to see him once again.

It seemed surreal to be in the States for the holidays, having missed Thanksgiving and Christmas last year. But it felt especially strange to be bundled up and expecting snow. We had just left the oven-like heat of Tanzania and entered the freezer! I could only imagine how the girls were feeling having never experienced cold weather. Raymond had briefly encountered cold, snow and ice during his successful ascent to the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro as a young teen, but that had been seven long years ago.

The whole scene seemed to speak of CHANGE happening in 2022. For Benny, it would mean finishing his Bachelor's Degree in finance at Oral Roberts University and moving to Virginia to start work on an MBA. For Raymond, the brand-new world of Aviation Mechanics beckons at the School of Aeronautics at Liberty University. For Ester and Jesca, the wonders of studying at an American Christian school whose teachers speak English with a southern accent is culture shock for sure.

People often resist change because human nature longs for the familiar and the comfortable. Change is always unfamiliar and often uncomfortable! As we enter 2022, I sense much change on the horizon that will come with or without our permission. Yet for those who have placed their trust in God, there is nothing to fear but much to anticipate with joy and excitement. When God starts "stirring up the nest" you have been living in, it is because He has a higher and better purpose for you.

That expression "stirring up the nest" comes from the life cycle of a baby eagle. When the mother eagle prepares the nest in which she will lay her eggs, the foundation she builds is full of rocks, sticks and thorns. But on top of that she places feathers, down and every soft material she can gather. When the chicks emerge from their eggs, life is soft and warm. But at the right time, as the baby eagles are maturing, the mother eagle begins "stirring up the nest." Piece by piece, every warm, soft, familiar item is removed. The discomfort increases day by day until the baby eagles can hardly stand to be in that nest and are longing to fly. Which is exactly what the mother eagle intended. She wants them to soar.

You may have experienced more and more discomfort in your nest over the past year or two. Don't be discouraged – it is a sure sign CHANGE IS ON THE WAY! And it is for your good. God has plans for you that you know not of – but one thing you can count on – He knows – and they are good plans! If you will embrace the change God is bringing into your life in 2022, you will marvel by year end at how far you have come and how different life is for you. Just say "Yes" to God!

***For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord.
"They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.***

Jeremiah 29:11 NLT

The Day **COMPASSION** *Conquered Bedbugs*

**A story
from our
Rehema
Projects**

Though it was early morning, the sun was already beating down mercilessly. Despite the heat, we were excited. We had been planning this day for many weeks. It was the day we drove the Hidden with Christ Ministries pickup truck full of brand-new mattresses to a Home for the Elderly (Nyumba ya Wazee) in a humble neighborhood in Moshi, Tanzania.

The Nyumba ya Wazee is a place for the forgotten elderly of the community, run by the local government on a very meager budget. In Tanzanian culture, elderly parents are respected and cared for by family members until their death. But for those who have no family, this home for the elderly becomes their only refuge.

The Hidden with Christ Ministries office in Tanzania had previously been made aware of the need for a washing machine at the Home for the Elderly to help them fight a relentless bedbug infestation. Because the elderly clients are not able to hand wash their bed linens regularly and the few staff cannot keep up with the laundry, a washing machine was a desperate need. Hidden with Christ's generous donors helped us purchase a brand-new machine and hire both an electrician and a plumber to do the necessary modifications to the building to allow for the installation of the machine. The simple cement block building was neither electrified nor plumbed for a washer. The hiring of professionals to deal with that issue was a necessity.



Presenting the gift of new mattresses to the Home for the Elderly - From left - Faith Kaluse and Rita Langeland from HWCM, Duncan Mgati from the Social Welfare Office with the facility Director, Mr. Derek.

But after that task was completed, we realized putting an end to the bedbug infestation would require an even greater commitment of time and money. All the old mattresses in the Home for the Elderly needed to be disposed of and new mattresses had to be procured to replace them. The government budget for the Home had no allowance for such an expenditure. But we were determined to see this problem solved.

After an appeal to our HWC donors in a previous Victory Magazine, generous donations were received designated toward the purchase of mattresses and for the hiring of a pest control company to spray the entire premises. New mattresses were ordered. Heavy duty mattress covers were custom made, and sheets, blankets, pillows, and pillowcases were all purchased.

When the day came, we loaded up all the new items along with a trunk load of cleaning supplies. A small army of volunteers came to help clean and sanitize every single room. We also made a stop at a local bakery to pick up some delicious treats. These were passed out with bottles of water to the elderly clients while they sat outside under the shade of trees, watching the transformation of their humble abode taking place.

It was a long day filled with hard work but also lots of smiles and laughter. When the cleaning was finished, and the new mattresses installed in each room, every bed was lovingly made up with fresh sheets, blankets, and pillows. Surveying the scene, one elderly lady resident commented, “This will be the best night of sleep I have ever had.”

This was the day compassion conquered bedbugs.

We are so grateful for all donations given toward our REHEMA PROJECTS. (Rehema is the Swahili word for MERCY) These gifts touch the lives of vulnerable children, young people and the elderly in the Kilimanjaro Region of Tanzania. We have two more projects we would like to undertake at the Home for the Elderly. The first is to build some indoor bathrooms. The only toilets available in this facility are outhouses. These are separate from the rooms in which the elderly clients sleep. Can you imagine your grandmother trying to find her way to an outdoor outhouse in the middle of the night? The second project is the building of a dining gazebo so the elderly can gather outside to sit and take their meals in the fresh air. You can donate online at www.hiddenwithchrist.org and help us bring a blessing to these precious elderly people in the loving name of Jesus.



HWC Administrator Faith Kaluse putting finishing touches on the new beds in the Home for the Elderly in Moshi, Tanzania

Karibuni **Treasures of Africa** **KIDZ** **Annual Christmas Banquet**

When we closed the doors of Treasures of Africa Children's Home to give all our children the opportunity to experience "family life" in a nuclear family setting, one concern was the likelihood of the kids losing touch with one another. They had grown up together as brothers and sisters, and now they were scattered in different towns and new schools. It was decided that each year we would hold an ANNUAL TOA KIDZ CHRISTMAS BANQUET so that they could reconnect and catch up on each other's lives. That event was held last month on December 11th.

A large white tent was erected on the grounds of the Uhuru Hotel and tables and chairs were arranged underneath, creating a festive setting. The foster families with whom the Treasures of Africa children are now living, escorted them to the banquet. Since all are former Treasures of Africa staff members, it was truly a "family reunion." Pastor Kioko led those assembled in singing hymns and Pastor Eli Kiwelu prayed over the students.

Without a doubt, the highlight of the event was hearing from our three "guest speakers." Each one of them had grown up at Treasures of Africa Children's Home and all are now studying at the University or post University level. They gave such profound encouragement and advice to the younger students, that the Board of Trustees, who sat listening, were amazed. They could see the fruit of this important work in the lives of those who are now young adults, preparing for leadership in Tanzania.



A joyful "family reunion"

Irene, a Law School student, was the first to speak. She encouraged the young students to trust God for their future even when things don't look good. She testified from her own experience, **"God can make the impossible, possible."** Narrating her own journey from begging on the streets to her acceptance to Law School, she told the students they could reach to where she is now and even beyond. The younger students sat riveted as she explained that "Treasures of Africa" was never a building, *it is what they are*. And they must choose if they will continue to live as "Treasures of Africa" or destroy their lives through bad decisions which will cost them their future.

Mary, working on her Bachelor's Degree in Microbiology and Immunology, spoke about the importance of commitment to their studies in order to have success in life. "Don't wait until you 'feel motivated' to commit yourself to studying," she told them. **"You cannot conquer what you are not committed to."**

Raymond, now studying at the School of Aeronautics at Liberty University in the USA, was the last of the three to share his thoughts. He talked about the importance of working hard in everything you do because, **"You never know what person you may inspire by your example."**



Irene sharing her experiences

After a sumptuous feast, gift bags filled with special treats were passed out to each child and every family went home with a parcel containing traditional hospitality gifts of several kilos of rice, tea and sugar. The meeting was ended with a prayer of blessing for all the families represented.

We want to thank those who donated funds to help sponsor this Christmas Banquet, and we hope that next December, you will consider making a trip to Tanzania to be part of this important Annual TOA KIDZ event.

*The **TOA KIDZ Program** provides educational support to orphaned, abandoned and otherwise vulnerable children. All children who were former residents of Treasures of Africa Children's Home along with others in need, are*



being provided with education in private English Medium Schools as well as all school supplies, books, uniforms, and special needs required for those in boarding school. Additionally, every family that has taken in a TOA child, is receiving education support in a private English medium school for one of their children. If you would like to sponsor the continued education of these future leaders in Tanzania, please make a donation to the Education Fund on our website:

www.treasuresofafrica.org

Pastor Geoffrey Kioko greeting the gathered guests

While crisp Autumn air and golden hued leaves marked Thanksgiving week in America, the heat was on in East Africa. The thermometer registered 99 degrees Fahrenheit in Moshi, Tanzania that week, even though the town sits in the shadow of snow-capped Mt. Kilimanjaro. It was even hotter and drier out in the Maasai steppe, where the Maasai people live in simple mud huts and work hard to obtain the basic needs of their families, including clean water.

In 2007, Hidden with Christ Ministries drilled a deep borehole to bring precious water to the desperately thirsty land in Esilalei village, not far from Lake Manyara. The famed lake is one of a string of “soda ash” lakes in the region, home to hippos and flamingos but undrinkable for humans due to its salinity.

The hand pump we installed to draw water from that deep well worked wonders to bring up water from an underground river. The Maasai people who live in the area were so grateful when we drilled that well and installed the pump that they proclaimed, “We have slain the Lion of thirst!” Their young warriors performed the “Lion Dance” at the well’s dedication, something usually reserved to celebrate the killing of a lion that had been attacking their herds.

HWCM has repaired that well’s pump six times over these nearly fifteen years. But again, the pump had ceased to function, no longer bringing up that precious water. It was time to attempt to repair it one more time.

Our Project Coordinator, Sunday Joseph, took the long journey out to Esilalei with an experienced pump repairman to whom he had been referred by the local water district. As they got closer to the location, the man asked if this was the well near the church in Esilalei village. Sunday was surprised and answered in the affirmative. He had unknowingly found the very man who had worked on that well’s pump a few years before.

After examining the hand pump’s components, the pump expert knew exactly what needed fixing. He explained that it would be necessary to rent a crane capable of pulling out all the pipe that reached down into the depths of that well. The borehole is 481 feet deep, and the static water level is just over 200 feet deep. We had been told over and over again that a hand pump cannot bring up water from a well that deep, and yet for years it has miraculously done just that.

Generous donors to Hidden with Christ Ministries responded quickly to an email appeal for donations to fix the well and bring a “Thanksgiving Miracle” to the Maasai in Esilalei village. They gave the needed funds to repair that well, hire the workers, rent the crane, and replace the broken

WATER



*for a
dry land*

and rusted components. Once the costs were covered, Sunday coordinated all the necessary technicians, hired the equipment and headed back out to Esilalei village a few days later. They arrived at the well site before dawn.

In the early morning hours, as the men worked to dismantle the nonfunctioning well pump, curious onlookers appeared from the surrounding area. Most of them were women

carrying plastic containers to fetch water. When they realized the well pump was being repaired, they sat down to watch the progress and await the precious water

they hoped would soon come forth. They waited and watched all day long. As the day dragged on, elders from the Maasai tribe gathered as well, joining the growing crowd. As the shadows lengthened in the late afternoon, the women were still there. They sat waiting and watching, their bone-dry water containers placed hopefully on the ground nearby.

After many hours of painstaking labor in the intense heat, the workmen began carefully reassembling the well's pump. Hundreds of feet of metal pipe were lowered by the electric crane back down into the borehole. Then the moment of truth arrived. The head technician instructed one of the young men to take his position priming the pump to see if the water would begin to flow again. All eyes were riveted on that young man as he worked the pump's handle, beads of sweat on his face bearing witness to the intensity of his efforts.

Suddenly a shout rang out, then another. Water – precious water - had begun

to flow from the well once again. The women, who had patiently waited all day, rushed forward with their plastic jugs to capture the life-giving liquid spilling from the metal faucet. All was right with the world once again.

Living in Africa has made me acutely aware of the need to give thanks for the simplest gifts in life – like clean water. I want to express thanks to our wonderful donors who generously share their resources to bless people on the other side of the world with these basic human needs.

You can be a part of touching lives and relieving suffering in Tanzania by donating to our REHEMA PROJECTS fund. (Rehema is the Swahili word for MERCY) Go to our website's DONATE page and on the drop-down menu select REHEMA PROJECTS. www.hiddenwithchrist.org



Repairs begin



Water flowing from the repaired well!

Faith That Moved Mountains

by Rita Langeland

If I have learned anything over the past 12 months in Tanzania, it is that the faith of a child is powerful. I gained this revelation as I watched two young girls (8 and 12 years old) and one young man (21) trust God to move mountains on their behalf.



Ray with Ester and Jesca

It all started when prompted by the Lord, I began to assist Raymond as he applied to school in the U.S. to study Aviation Mechanics at the School of Aeronautics at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia. Simultaneously, I started to pursue passports and student visas for Ester (8) and Jesca (12) to attend school in the U.S. as well. The dream was that we would all travel from Tanzania together in December 2021 for a school start date of January 2022. But the mountains that stood between us and that dream loomed immense.

Raymond prayed and trusted God every step of the way. Dealing with lengthy applications over the internet, online real time tests in English proficiency and Math, the process was long and challenging. But he prayed and tackled every hurdle head on. When it was time to face the final mountain, Raymond took his first plane ride to Dar Es Salaam where he had an appointment at the U.S. Embassy for his student visa interview. I knew from previous experience that a student visa candidate has to demonstrate strong ties to their own nation such as close family and property ownership, to convince the

Consular official that he has a compelling reason to return to his country after school is completed. Raymond had neither of these. I knew it would take a miracle of God's favor for him to be granted a visa. Ray was believing God for that miracle, and God rewarded his faith. He received his student visa.

Raymond then began to help me with the pursuit of passports and visas for Ester and Jesca. He chased down needed documents and accompanied the girls as we flew to Dar es Salaam twice, first for Immigration interviews for their passports and then a few weeks later for their student visa interviews. He ended up being interviewed by the Tanzanian Immigration authorities as a character witness for me, as they tried to discern if I was a good



Jesca & Ester with their "miracle" passports



Ray, Ester & Jesca ready to board their flight out of Kilimanjaro airport

person trying to help educate the girls, or a child trafficker with evil intent. His testimony about growing up at Treasures of Africa and being educated by Hidden With Christ Ministries turned the situation around and convinced them to grant passports to these two underage girls so they could travel outside the country for education in the USA.

During the whole process, 12-year-old Jesca (unbeknownst to me) had been fasting her school lunch and praying for their passports and visas. Both she and Ester would also pray at bedtime about them. They never

begged God in their prayers, but instead they simply thanked Him for getting those student visas approved. I marveled at their faith and was convinced God could not deny them!

When the day of their student visa interviews at the US Embassy arrived, instead of questioning the girls as I anticipated, the consular officer aimed her questions at me. After giving a thorough background of each child, an explanation of my relationship with them and our intended destination, the officer announced, "You are approved." When I turned to the girls to inform them that their visas had just been approved, little Ester blurted out, "The LORD IS MY SHEPHERD!" Ahhh... The beauty of childlike faith!

We flew on KLM Royal Dutch Airlines to Amsterdam, where we caught a flight to the USA. We arrived in Roanoke, Virginia on December 15, and Raymond kissed the ground as we exited the airport. We all laughed and cheered. If the December temperature hadn't been so cold - I would have kissed the ground myself! It had been a long journey to get there, but faith had moved every mountain out of the way.



Raymond ready to start classes



Arrival in the USA



Lessons from a BarbeQue

by Marcia Chang Vogl

Every Thanksgiving Day for about 20 years, we have held a large gathering for family and friends with the traditional turkey dinner. I learned that roasting a turkey in a Weber BBQ takes about 3-4 hours with no mess in the kitchen. Too many coals at the beginning would just burn the edges of the food. Too few coals will leave the food undercooked or cause the cooking to take much longer.

I fire up only 10 briquettes with my electric lighter. When they all are partially lit, I cluster them in a single layer in the middle of the briquette rack of the BBQ. Then I add a single layer of cold briquettes around the hot ones filling the briquette rack to the edge of the cauldron.

By making sure each coal is touching another one, I insure the lighted ones will ignite the cold ones and those, in turn, would start the ones touching them. Eventually, the first ones burn out, but the ones they lit, continue to light those in the outer ring. This method provided constant heat for at least two hours.

After about two hours, I add ten more briquettes, making sure they are touching the ones already burning. The cooking heat can be prolonged by adding a few briquettes each hour until the food is cooked. I have done this many times and each time come out with a beautifully BBQ roasted turkey.

This process can be duplicated for an “on fire” church. If you want to be on fire with the Lord, you need to gather with other people who want to be on fire too. Find somebody or a few people who are already “on fire” and hang out with them. Pray with them. Study with them. Worship with them. And, prophesy with them. Even if you are not on fire YET, you will be ignited by touching their fire. Eventually, you will be “on fire” for the Lord and accomplish your purpose, and ignite others in the process. Once you have fulfilled your destiny, you will turn into an ember that enables others to carry on.

***And the twenty-four elders, who sat before God on their thrones,
fell on their faces and worshipped God...***

Revelation 11:16

Marcia Chang Vogl is an ordained minister with many years of experience in Bible teaching and Biblical counseling. You may access her materials and resources on her new website: www.marciachangvogl.com

**USE THE LORD'S WORDS
AS YOUR PILLOWS.
EVERY PROMISE IS OURS
IF WE WILL BUT LIE DOWN UPON IT
IN RESTFUL FAITH.**

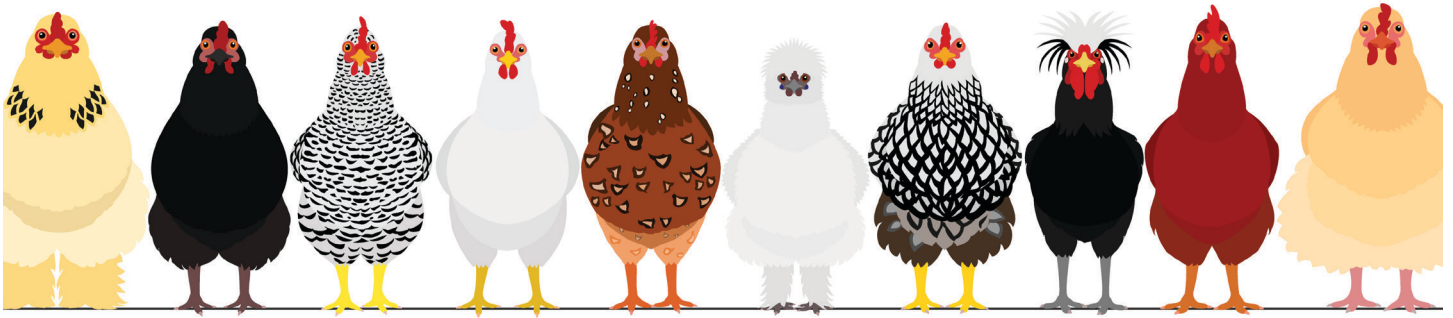
**Charles Spurgeon
1834-1892**



*For all of God's promises have been fulfilled in Christ with a resounding "Yes!"
And through Christ, our "Amen" (which means "Yes") ascends to God for his glory.*

2 Corinthians 1:20 NLT

HWCM Faith Quotes 2022



Love, Family, and Chickens

Anna and Eliya represent a true Treasures of Africa love story. Anna was hired as one of our very first caregivers in March of 2007, the very month we opened the doors of the Children's Home. She was a young widow desperately in need of a job, and we were happy to have her sweet spirit in the house. Eliya came to work at Treasures a few years later as a Security Guard. They became acquainted and eventually Eliya asked Anna to marry him. The whole TOA family rejoiced over this match made in heaven.

When our former Assistant Director Eli and his wife Rosa moved out of the TOA Houseparent apartment to go into fulltime Pastoral ministry, Anna and Eliya were asked to become the live-in Houseparents. They accepted the new position and the children loved them. Their son Ebenezer came along, growing up and going to school alongside the TOA kids.

When the time to close the orphanage approached, Anna and Eliya stepped forward to take one of the TOA children into their home. They became foster parents for two-year-old Mark Thomas, and that little boy could not have been happier. He fit into their family seamlessly.





They moved into a modest home they had built on a small plot of land in the town of Boman'gombe. Eliya already had a side business of a motorcycle Taxi service. With his severance pay he was able to upgrade to a Bijaji – a three wheeled taxi which is a very popular mode of transportation in Tanzania. Anna wanted to start a chicken business at their home, and bought herself a few chickens to start, keeping them in the bathroom at night to protect them from predators.

Hearing about Anna's humble start to her business, we knew we had to help them build a chicken house and get those birds out of their bathroom!

Because of the generosity of HWCN donors, we were able to build a substantial chicken house. It is a very secure enclosure with brick walls half way up and thick steel mesh wire for the top half. It has an excellent roof and solid steel door that will prevent thieves from breaking in or wild animals from penetrating. In addition, we purchased a starter flock of 20 chickens along with water and grain feeders, chicken feed and medicine. Anna and Eliya's love story continues...now they share love, family and chickens!



If you would like to donate toward another micro-business start-up for our former orphanage staff, please write your check to HWC Ministries and write "Micro-business Project" in the memo section. To donate online, go to the website: www.hiddenwithchrist.org and on the DONATE page there is a dropdown menu where you will find "Micro-business Projects" as a menu item.

Looking Back with Thanksgiving

By Pastor Geoffrey Kioko



Looking back on the last two years, we can clearly see that the Lord has done great things. It is said that grace is when God gives us good things that we don't deserve. Mercy is when he spares us from bad things we deserve. Blessings are when he is generous with both. God has truly blessed us in many diverse and awesome ways. This season was a time of great and somewhat difficult transitions for Hidden with Christ Ministries work in East Africa. It was a season of phasing out and phasing in which was characterized with the grief and joys, the high and lows and the ceasing and beginning of things.

We thank God for these miracles to mention just a few:

- Hidden with Christ Ministries was able to send all the children of Treasures of Africa Children's Home to Fit Person (foster) families with the assistance of the Moshi Municipal Welfare office. It was sad to know that we would not see these treasures on a daily basis. But looking at them now, they seem to be happier in their new families. We therefore continue to rejoice for them and with them.
- We also laid off the majority of our orphanage staff members without any labor court case. HWCM liaised with the Moshi labor office which in turn guided us in planning and executing the retrenchment process. In fact, most employees went through the Fit Person training and took in some of our treasures into their homes.
- Some of our treasures sat for their national exams and passed well and are now in various high schools and colleges.
- During this transition, HWCM was also able to be a blessing to other organizations by donating furnishings and equipment from the orphanage to assist them.
- This season fell squarely during the covid time zone. In the spirit of Psalms 91 we can report that no staff member or treasure died of Covid. God has been so good to us. All honor and glory belong to Him.
- This transition period is now paving the way for HWCM to serve in ways it has not done in the past.
- All in all, the Treasures of Africa Children's Home was successfully wound up and all the children sent to fit families.
- These among many other things evoke the spirit of thanksgiving in our hearts.

When God performed the miracle of dividing the Red Sea, Miriam and Moses sang praises to the Lord when they reached the other side. Whether we are phasing out or phasing, in it is important to thank God in everything.

Rejoice always and delight in your faith; be unceasing and persistent in Prayer; in every situation (no matter what the circumstances) be thankful and continually give thanks to God; for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 TPT

This scripture does not tell us to give thanks for everything that happens to us, but in everything. That means that in every situation we can acknowledge that God has not necessarily caused it, but we can give thanks because we trust in His love and character. When the above-mentioned Bible verse says, "it is the will of God for you" it is not referring to the situation but referring to your response of thanksgiving toward Him. God did not send Paul and Silas into prison but in prison they sang praises to God. They were not praising God for being in prison, but they praised Him because in their situation they trusted in God's attitude and character. So, when you look back on 2021 – you can praise God (as we are doing) that He brought you through it all, and He will successfully bring you through 2022 as well.



Looking Forward with Faith

by Rita Langeland

The year 2021 brought a radical shift to our work in Tanzania, prompted by a leading of the Lord. In 2022 we feel confident we are following the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we prayerfully undertake new ways of helping orphaned children as well as taking on some new and different projects. Here are the projects we are praying into for 2022, and we ask you to pray with us for great wisdom and God's provision.

TREASURES OF AFRICA KIDZ – During 2022 we will be supporting 56 Tanzanian students with full educational scholarships from preschool through University level. Four of these students will be studying in the USA and 52 will be attending private English Medium Primary and Secondary schools, colleges and Universities in Tanzania. You can participate in this important investment in future leaders for Tanzania by donating to our Education Fund on our website www.treasuresofafrica.org

REHEMA PROJECTS – These important projects express the love of God to the local communities in the Kilimanjaro Region through acts of mercy. (Rehema is the Swahili word for mercy.) From buying a wheelchair for a woman whose leg was amputated, to paying for emergency surgery for a man injured in a motorcycle accident, we have seen people respond to the Gospel when the God-inspired compassion of strangers met their need. You can help us be prepared to answer emergency needs (which are often referred to us by the Social Welfare office) by giving to our REHEMA PROJECTS FUND on our website www.hiddenwithchrist.org

AFRICAN CHURCH DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS – We seek to undergird and uplift the African church by offering Church Leadership Training, Pastors Conferences, assistance with Evangelistic Crusades and practical help for Tanzanian churches. In July 2022 we are planning to sponsor both an evangelistic outreach to the Maasai tribe along with a Pastor's Conference aimed at ministering to Maasai pastors who often labor in very remote areas with little support. We also hope to do some practical ministry this year by helping with church buildings in need of repairs and renovation. You can sow into the African church by donating to our Church Development Projects on the website www.hiddenwithchrist.org

WILDWOOD CONFERENCE CENTER PROJECT – We believe that 2022 is the year we will begin to develop the WILDWOOD CONFERENCE CENTER in the United States. This is a vision from the Lord to prepare a place of Rest and Restoration for the Body of Christ. We are currently seeking God's direction for the location of the property where this vision can be developed. The plan is to have a retreat center, prayer center, meeting rooms for Bible teaching conferences and a Rest and Refreshing House for missionaries on furlough. The full vision can be found on our website. If you would like to sow a seed into this vision, you may donate on the Hidden with Christ website. On the DONATE page you will find a dropdown menu where you can specify the "Campaign" to which you are donating. Choose WILDWOOD CONFERENCE CENTER PROJECT. www.hiddenwithchrist.org This is dear to our hearts because we sense WILDWOOD will be a place of preparation for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the end times as prophesied in Joel 2:28-29.

GO THROUGH

THE GATES



by Rita Langeland

2022

*Go through, Go through the gates! Prepare the way for the people;
Build up, Build up the highway! Take out the stones,
Lift up a banner for the peoples!*

Isaiah 62:10 NKJV

We have left the year 2021 behind. It was a year in which many people “hunkered down” and waited for the year to pass by, hoping for things to return to “normal.” But God is saying that things will never return to normal. A new era is upon us. We must be ready to go through the gates of 2022 and embrace the NEW which God is bringing, without allowing fear to dictate our steps. This will require courage and a determination to walk by faith and not by sight.

If you take a “wait and see” attitude before you make any forward motion in 2022, you will end up walking by “sight” and not by faith. God has always required His people to MOVE FORWARD BY FAITH in His Word, not by the appearance of outward circumstances. ***For we walk by faith, not by sight. (2 Corinthians 5:7)***

When I asked the Lord about this new year, the answer I heard was crystal clear. GO THROUGH THE GATES! I immediately searched for scriptures containing those words and quickly discovered Isaiah 62:10. (See verse at the beginning of this article) Instantly I noticed the double repetition used in this verse. This literary device is used to bring emphasis to a theme or concept. So, it is vital we do not miss what God is trying to emphasize! Let us examine Isaiah 62:10 line by line.

1) Go through, Go through the gates! This phrase is an intense exhortation to MOVE FORWARD! Don’t hesitate or wait for better times or circumstances. GO THROUGH THE GATES of 2022 without reluctance or delay. God is the author of perfect timing. And if He is saying to move forward in your business, education, ministry, or personal life decision – don’t miss your moment!

2) Build up, Build up the highway! What highway is being referred to here? There are multiple scriptures that use the word highway as a metaphor for a person’s manner of life or lifestyle.

Proverbs 15:19 tells us plainly, “...***the path of the upright is a highway.***”

Proverbs 16:17 similarly likens a highway to a lifestyle when it states:

The highway of the upright is to depart from evil; He who watches his way preserves his life.

The most familiar verse regarding a highway in the Bible may well be Isaiah 35:8.

A highway will be there, a roadway, And it will be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean will not travel on it, But it will be for him who walks that way, And fools will not wander on it.

All three scripture verses above use the metaphor of a highway as a manner of life. Specifically, it refers to a godly or holy lifestyle. A person who walks on the “highway of Holiness” is someone who consistently chooses the ways of God for his life. There is a purity in his life in thoughts, words, and deeds. ***The unclean will not travel on it.***

So, returning to Isaiah 62:10 – how do we ***Build up, Build up the highway?*** While the world is pouring out a flood of filth through the media to influence the world, believers must be committed to building the “highway” of holiness in their own lives and families.

This exhortation bids us to increase our resolve not only to walk on that highway of holiness ourselves, but to encourage others to do the same. We are living at a time in history when Christian ideas and lifestyles are being mocked, vilified, or “canceled” by the media. But this is not new – this has gone on for centuries. With such negative pressure aimed against Christians and Christianity, many are tempted to lay low or keep their faith underground. But it is not a time to hide. We must not back down or retreat in any way. Instead, we must enter 2022 with a determination to ***Build up the highway!***

3) Take out the stones...This is a clear directive to remove anything that would stumble another person or prevent them from traveling on that road. A common reason people avoid church and want nothing to do with Christianity is because at some point in their life they were offended by someone who claimed to be a Christian. The behavior of the offender stumbled them and gave them a reason for wanting nothing to do with Christians or their faith. If you know of an unbeliever who is offended at you – even for what you may feel is a ridiculous reason, it is vital you make a genuine effort to restore that relationship with an attitude of humility. Take out the stones that are stumbling that person. If you will do so, then the time will come when you will be able to invite them to join you on God’s highway. But without relational restoration, they may remain offended at you and by extension – God – until the day of their death. Don’t be the stumbling block that keeps someone from the Lord.

4) Lift up a banner for the peoples! The word “banner” used in this verse refers to a sign, signal or warning lifted up conspicuously for all to see. Many Christians today keep their beliefs “private” in order not to offend others. It is good to have a heart that desires not to offend others, but not at the cost of someone’s eternal life. Jesus never worried about offending people when He walked on this earth. He desired for everyone to be saved and have a relationship with His heavenly Father. He shared the truth with love and grace, and we are to do the same. Let 2022 be the year that you share God’s love and offer of salvation as if it was the last opportunity you ever have with those in your sphere of influence. Don’t keep the good news you have received “private!”

Go through the gates of 2022 boldly and full of faith. God has new and unexpected things for you, and He will give you the grace and strength to embrace them. Let Him use you to be a sign to this generation through your love and godly lifestyle. It will speak volumes to those around you.

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