



The East Africa Project Newsletter

‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’



This was late March. The walls are all up now waiting on the roof!

We all have heard these words from the prophet Jeremiah to the nation of Israel while they were in captivity in Babylon. While acknowledging that they were going to be exiles for quite a while longer (70 years to be exact), he told them to go ahead and settle in and live life. “Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce... Marry and have sons and daughters... seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you...” In other words, life goes on, so make the best of it and remember that the Lord has not forgotten you. That message was needed then and it is needed now. And it is especially poignant for the group of widows that meets outside Kakamega in Kenya.

If you have followed along the last two newsletters you know that God has provided money through your support to build a widow’s center. Well, I’m pleased to let you know that the walls are up, the well has been dug, latrines built, and the roof will go on soon! Within a couple of months, the very first vocational classes will begin. Rebecca and Hellen will coordinate a year long seamstress class. This class will teach each lady how to use and maintain a treadle sewing machine and how to make many basic items of clothing. They will have Bible study each day to learn the Word of God. They will be taught ‘table banking’, which is the Kenyan version of a savings club. Then, when they graduate, they will be given the sewing machine they learned on so that they will have the means to start their own tailoring business.

In time, the widow’s center will be self-sustaining. We’re estimating the cost for one lady to attend the seamstress course to be around \$500. This includes the sewing machine they will use during the course and will keep upon graduation. The ladies will pay whatever tuition they can afford. The center will make school uniforms and other items for sale as part of the class curriculum. The Posho mill on the premises will grind meal and grain for a small profit. There are future plans for additional classrooms to teach classes in other skills such as chicken and pig farming. And throughout all of the enterprises, the Word of God will be proclaimed and taught and Jesus’ name will be uplifted!

James exhorts us in his letter: *‘Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.’* The mission of The East Africa Project is to “manage development projects designed to meet specific, short-term development goals that will lead to long-term outcomes, primarily focused on educational programs, poverty alleviation, resource development and partnerships, medical care and spiritual growth.” This project will help meet several of those needs and your partnership and prayers are so appreciated. Susan and I have been overwhelmed by the Lord’s provision through you. To God be the Glory!



“To Whom It May Concern:”

The container (TEMU 328539-2) shipped on February 26, 2021, sealed with seal # 21493649 from Butler, IL contains 1,793 packages of used Christian and educational literature and other items as listed on the invoice. These items have been donated by organizations and individuals in the United States; and is being sent to our sister congregations in Kenya for their spiritual and educational benefit and free distribution.”

This is the first paragraph of the “Deed of Donation” letter that accompanied a packed-to-the-brim shipping container on its way to Nairobi. Don’t pass over that number. One thousand, seven hundred ninety-three PACKAGES of Christian literature. A package could be a box of Bibles, a shrink-wrapped package of Bible study books, a strapped bundle of children’s literature or a box

of commentaries. There are at least 2 full **pallets** of New Testaments! Thanks to Steve Smith at Love Packages (www.lovepackages.org) and our friends Lee Dickson here in Memphis and Baron Muga in Nairobi, this dream is now a reality. Many of you have partnered to defray the importing and distribution costs. There are still logistical details to work out once the materials arrive at the IMB compound in Nairobi, but by the end of April thousands of our Kenyan brothers and sisters will have Bibles and biblical teaching materials in their hands! Pray for the shipment to arrive undamaged. Pray for there to be no issues with customs or unreasonable import duties. Pray for Baron and our Kenyan partners as they unload, sort and distribute the material. And pray for Steve Smith at Love Packages as they do this for dozens of other organizations. If this shipment goes well there is the possibility of a second!

“I had no idea that those little steps of obedience to the Lord would lead to this bigger step. I know I’m supposed to be entering into this place where there is so much unknown and I need to be clinging to the Lord even more.” - Lauren M

***Start where
you are***

***Use what you
have***

***Do what you
can***

I would like to partner with The East Africa Project:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

Amount: _____

Ways to Donate:

- ❖ Online at www.theeastfricaproject.com/donate
- ❖ Make checks out to: “The East Africa Project” and send to:
 - 9160 Hwy 64, Suite 12-262, Lakeland, TN 38002
- ❖ Bill pay through your bank’s online service
- ❖ PayPal/Zelle



*Lauren in her 'Happy Place' -
For the next 2 years she'll be
doing a lot of this!*



CURRENT PROJECT PRAYER LIST

- ◆ \$1,000—buys chairs and tables for the widow's center.
- ◆ \$500—pays for tuition for one widow to attend tailoring school and receive a sewing machine
- ◆ \$200—pays one month's salary for the widow's center director/lead teacher
- ◆ \$100—provides electricity for the center for 1 month.
- ◆ Phase II of the widow's center will include 2 more classrooms, an administrative office and training space for raising chicken & livestock. God has plenty!

A picture may be worth a thousand words, but someone has to be there to take the picture!

Little girls love pictures! One Christmas a dozen years ago a little 9-year-old girl named Lauren got a "little blue camera" and was so excited. She became obsessed with learning how to take photos and trying new creative techniques. A few years later she got her first video camera and soon after was learning the ins and outs of video editing and filming 'B-rolls'. At 15 she started volunteering in the media department at Bellevue and began putting together professional looking videos in her spare time. Little did she know what God was about to do in her life!

Around the same time that Lauren got her first camera, Susan and I were privileged to lead our first short term mission team to Kenya. It is really hard to explain to people what life is really like over there because words just fail. You hear people talk about cute little children with huge smiles, but it's hard to convey the context when you don't also see the open sewer running in front of their homes. A "dirt floor mud hut" has a quaint little sound to it until you see the outside toilet, the pot of boiling water sitting on three rocks over an open fire, or the Kenya momma bent over at the waist washing clothes in red-tinged water carried there from 2 kilometers away. They say a picture is worth a thousand words, but someone has to be there to take those pictures. Ten years later He sent that now grown-up little girl with the heart of a lioness (Lauren has a thing for lions!) with us on one of our trips. The storyteller's story began to take a turn!

Late last month Lauren stepped onto a flight to Nairobi (remember airplane travel?) to begin a two-year stint as an International Mission Board (IMB) Journeyman. IMB Journeymen are recent college graduates under the age of 30 who are sent by their churches as missionaries for a 2-year term through the IMB. A Journeyman's primary responsibility is to engage in the missionary task by sharing the gospel, making disciples, and helping plant churches. Lauren will join Bellevue's own Baron and Jackie Muga along with several other IMB missionaries in Kenya. Her main focus while she's there will be to disciple students at the local university, but a large part of her job will be media and promoting the training center at the IMB compound. She will also be part of the communications team doing cultural photography and video. When Lauren began volunteering in the media department, it was a little step of obedience. She says "I had no idea that those little steps of obedience to the Lord would lead to this bigger step. I know I'm supposed to be entering into this place where there is so much unknown and I need to be clinging to the Lord even more."

Will you commit to pray for Lauren? A biblical storyteller invites us to reflect on God's purpose and on His goodness. They inform us in so that we may connect with the characters and the culture in the story. Lauren wants you to know how God's story is being played out in the lives of everyday Kenyans. Pray for God to use her mightily. Pray that God will allow her to see and experience things in ways she's never dreamed and that she will experience Him do things that defy explanation. Pray for boldness, provision, protection and peace. Pray for God to use her mightily. Pray for her family here in the US as she will be 9,000 miles and 9 time zones away! Pray for the storyteller. She may not be the Bard of Avon, but she is Lauren the Lioness!

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The East Africa Project

THE EAST AFRICA PROJECT NEWSLETTER

Last February these ladies celebrated the purchase of land for a widows center with this scripture: *"And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus."* (Phil 4:19). This summer they will celebrate the construction of the main meeting center and the start of the first training class! How firm a foundation!



FAITH IS THE FOUNDATION!

