

CHRISTMAS - Here & There



As they waved us Good-bye with big smiling faces, our families all called out 'And have a Happy Christmas'. We stopped in our tracks. It was 7th November! Even in Africa Christmas comes early. We hadn't given Christmas a fleeting thought. There hadn't been a single sign of it anywhere, nothing to direct our minds to it. As soon as we arrived in England the next day, however, we were aware of Christmas everywhere. Festive foods already filled the shelves in shops. Christmas Craft Fairs were being

advertised. The lights were being switched on in Oxford Street and on television all the glitter of Christmas was being portrayed at its most resplendent as shops try to persuade us their products are the essential gifts to we have to give our loved ones in order for them to have a happy Christmas!

Our minds drifted back to the bare, empty, make-shift shacks we had left behind in Kenya. To bare, muddy floors, to children drenched to the skin by torrential rain, having walked to school

wearing only thin, flimsy clothes. For some, like Lucy, the journey had taken an hour and a half. What will Christmas be like for them? What would they think of our Christmases? Yet those children will understand better than we ever will just how low our Saviour, Jesus Christ stooped when He came to this world to save us. He was born amongst the animals – and He had no bed. He was born into a pauper's family and grew up with several half brothers and sisters. When we realise the living conditions of our Lord were not unlike those of our Kenyan families it adds so much more meaning to the message of Christmas and we will worship Him this year with greater awe and thanksgiving for His amazing love and humility.

**May He bless you
all with His peace
this Christmas.**



MY TURN!!

Our trip was as enjoyable and as rewarding as ever. Our mums visited us with their usual list of requirements soon after we arrived!! This has almost become a ritual but apart from giving out food parcels and urgent needs we now limit the amount of families we help each time to about ten. This way we can help those quite substantially rather than spreading our resources too widely and so not providing enough benefits to a family. The mums seem to accept this and are quite happy to wait until 'next time' because they know by now we keep our promises. It can be quite amusing as, like children continually asking how long until Christmas, the ladies will ask us when we are coming back and we can see them gleefully counting up mentally how many months it will be until they get their new floor, roof or whatever it is they need!!



OUR THANKS TO YOU

Many, many thanks to all our faithful sponsors and donators. Also to all those who have raised funds for us since our last Newsletter.

- ✦ To Rayners Lane Baptist Church Rock Solid Youth Group who held a Breakfast Car Wash and raised over **£100**.
- ✦ To Mike and Marion Richardson who dedicated their 70th birthday celebrations to Abigail Ministries and raised almost **£1000**
- ✦ To ten stalwart runners and walkers who took part in the Hydro Active Women's Charity Event and raised **£1600**
- ✦ To Lindsay, Beccy and Sarah Smith who all valiantly completed the 10 mile Great South Run through freezing, lashing rain to raise **£1500**
- ✦ And, of course, thanks to all of you who supported and sponsored all these events.

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

Can you Help?

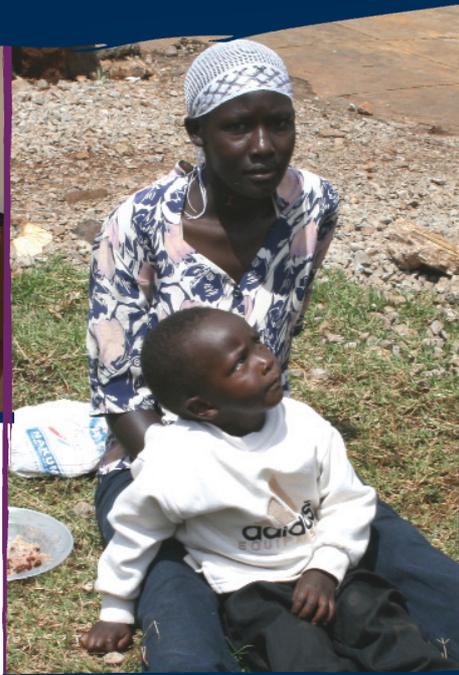
George, Grace and Phyllis are all bright students who work hard and deserve the chance of High School education. Unfortunately, their families cannot support them and without help George will have to drop out of school with just one year to go, Grace with 2 years to go and Phyllis may not be able to even start her 4 years of High School. If you feel you would like to sponsor one of these teenagers for the appropriate length of time, please let us know asap as the school term starts in January. You can either pay the school fees in advance for the year, which is preferable, or you may pay by the usual £15 per month sponsorship scheme if this is easier for you. Further details on request.



THE HOSTEL COMES TO LIFE

The major progress we found at Daylove was the eleven children now very happily in residence in the Hostel under the care of Mary. It was lovely to have more life around Daylove into the evenings when the rest of the children and staff had gone home for the night. Peter, the night watchman, seemed to be particularly pleased to have the company. The nights used to be very lonely for him.

One of the girls, Monicah, took great delight in teaching Shena to cook an African meal one evening. The following week she came up to the flat where Shena taught her to cook an English meal. Monicah has a wonderful gift. She writes poetry about what it is like to be a child living in the slums. Pray that God will open a door for her gift to be used widely. We were able to buy all the children in the Hostel a Bible. They were overjoyed. Pray that God will draw near to them in a very personal way as they seek Him through reading His Word.



HEALTH CARE

As we get to know our families better, more and more mums are confiding in us about their medical problems. One mother told us she had been beaten with an iron bar by her husband. An X-ray revealed a damaged kidney. Another mother broke down when she told us she had discovered some time ago she is HIV+ve. She had kept the knowledge to herself, taking solace in alcohol until she finally managed to release her fears for the first time when she confided in us. Many other major and minor conditions were revealed to us this time and we foresee provision of health care becoming an essential part of ongoing care for our families.



UPWARDS AND ONWARDS

The buildings are coming along rapidly at New Hope with the second floor well on the way to completion and the girls are longing for the day when they will be able to take up residence there and have more space. The girls we sent on Apprenticeship Courses last year are all doing well and some of them want to continue for a second year to improve their skills. Hannah particularly excelled in her Hairdressing Course and hopes to open her own salon soon. Olivia discovered a real love for knitting so we are buying her a knitting machine so that she can produce enough goods to look for a market and earn some money. They will stay at New Hope during that time while we build them small homes built of sun-baked bricks on the piece of land we were given. We hope to also build a workshop there where they can work and sell to both local people and tourists. This will help them settle into a community and become independent.

It is always a delight to watch the children's faces when they receive presents. For most of them it is their first ever present. Sometimes they don't even know what to do and we have to explain to them that they need to unwrap the pretty paper and find out what is inside!!



Prayer Points

PRAISE

- ✚ Praise and thanks to God for His wonderful work and provision.
- ✚ We are confident the way has opened up for us to proceed with plans for a Workshop or Craft Centre
- ✚ The obstacles to building on our land seem to have been overcome and we can proceed with building baked mud brick houses
- ✚ Lindsay has raised the money for the Pump for the well. The engineer visited the site with us while we were there and we expect the work to begin soon.
- ✚ Thanks for a successful and safe trip for Roger and Shena

PRAY

- ✚ For perseverance on the part of the ladies working in the Soap Group and Tie and Dye Group while we iron out some minor problems. Pray they don't get discouraged.
- ✚ For all the teachers, helpers and faithful workers who care so devotedly for the children at Daylove and New Hope.
- ✚ For the next trip already being planned with a large group in August 2007.
- ✚ For all the sponsored children and teenagers at Schools, Colleges and on Apprenticeship Courses.
- ✚ For people to catch Abigail Ministries' vision and work alongside us in the UK.
- ✚ For one or two trustworthy Kenyans to work for Abigail Ministries full time in Kenya.



Abigail
MINISTRIES

26 Kingsfield Avenue North Harrow Middlesex HA2 6AT
T 020 8861 1674 F 020 8723 1331 E abiministries@aol.com

Registered Charity No. 1106824

DESIGN: KSD ASSOCIATES LIMITED

Ways you can become a fellow-worker with Abigail Ministries:

- ✚ Commit to praying regularly for a particular mum and her family
- ✚ Sponsor a child
- ✚ Become a regular donor
- ✚ Donate a food parcel (£10)
- ✚ Provide money for a micro-business (£75)
- ✚ Sponsor a new roof (£100)
- ✚ Give a one-off donation
- ✚ Organise a fund-raising event
- ✚ Sponsor a charity run

If you would like to get more involved with the work of Abigail Ministries, just fill in your details and the way in which you would like to be involved and return the slip to the address above.

Name:
Address:
Postcode:
Telephone number:
Email address:
Involvement:

Thank you!