



Project Rehema Ministries

178 Saddlebrook Court
Dakota Dunes, SD 57049
E-mail: JKSOLS@aol.com
Cell: 712-251-4759

August 2018

Dear Friends of Project Rehema,

Thank you so much for your support! Mission Trip 2018 was May 17-28 and was yet another amazing trip with many things accomplished. It was a unique trip as I had seven Morningside College football players come along as well as a Morningside College nursing student. We were also blessed to have our Project Rehema Treasurer, Maryann Backman, go along again and also a parent of one of the football players, Rick Niles. They were all a huge help in the success of the trip. The names of the 2018 team members are: Kelli Solsma, Maryann Backman, Jen Gaffney, Rick Niles, Trent Solsma, Connor Niles, Jake Katzer, Joel Katzer, Seth Roberg, Seth Maitlen and Chase Reis.

We began construction of our 10th new house! This house is for Mama Theopista and the children she cares for. Mama Theopista cares for five orphaned and vulnerable children and was living without the most basic of necessities. Truly by the hand of God, Project Rehema was brought into contact with Mama Theopista and her kids. God bless our generous donors who make our project possible!

Building a house in Tanzania and building a house here in the states are completely different. There is no local cement truck that pulls up and unloads cement. Instead, the team had to hand mix all the cement but first had to fetch water with buckets from a nearby stream to do so. Nothing is ever easy in Tanzania. Digging a latrine hole was no simple chore either. They spent countless hours doing that. However, the camaraderie and cultural exchange between our team and the Tanzanian crew was amazing. By the end of the week, they were all brothers. The sweet children who showed up daily at the worksite to watch and also get in on a little soccer with the team were also inspirational.

Activity Day out in the beautiful village of Monduli Juu was also an amazing time! The Morningside Football players showed the Tanzanian children how to play American football. Clearing the playing field of both animals and children so they could play the game was challenging but the mission was accomplished. There were approximately 300 or so children who showed up for this event. The smiles on all of their faces were priceless. The day ended with the village soccer team challenging our team to a game of soccer. The village team won. It is a day I am sure the team and the kids will never forget. Many soccer balls and soccer shirts were given out over the course of the week. The blending of two cultures through sports was inspirational.

Upon our arrival in Tanzania, Mama Halima's house was completed and ready to move into. We borrowed a few football players from the work site to help move what little she had. New curtains, beds and sheets were purchased as well. The three year old twins, Baraka and Zawadi, ran from room to room. I can still hear their laughter with excitement about their new house. We forgot to tell Mama Halima that we were also installing a solar panel so imagine her surprise when she saw lights and light switches for the first time in her life! She cried tears of gratitude and kept praising God for the blessings He has given her. Project Rehema also praises God for the blessings He gives to our organization so we can bless others as He has blessed us.

Upon our return back home to the states, we were informed that one our Project Rehema kids, Thomas, was severely injured when he fell from a tree while collecting firewood. Thomas broke his arm, hip and leg and had lacerations to his chin. Thomas is doing well, all things considered, but please keep him in your prayers as he continues to recover.

HIV continues to ravage Tanzania, taking lives and leaving orphans in its wake. The loss of our dear Mama Shayla in December 2017 to this devastating disease will forever leave an imprint on our hearts. Please see the tribute to Mama Shayla included in this newsletter.

We are so incredibly grateful for our generous donors. We could not accomplish what we do without your support. It means the world to our families. A special thanks goes out to Maryann Backman and John Nash for giving our website a major facelift (www.projectrehema.org) and to Rick Niles for taking literally thousands of amazing pictures and videos documenting our trip.

Peace,

Kelli Solsma
President, Project Rehema Ministries



A Tribute to Mama Shayla

Project Rehema took Mama Shayla and her three children into our care in 2016. Our In-country Director, Adam, told us if we didn't intervene at that time, Mama Shayla would die. Mama Shayla was found by another one of our Rehema mamas, Mama Theresia, dying from tuberculosis due to HIV. Not knowing how financially we could do this, we put our faith in God that He would provide and He most certainly did. A donor stepped forward and agreed to feed not only her family but also two other HIV families that we took on at the same time.

When I first met Mama Shayla she was living in a tiny room made of mud and cow dung approximately 10 ft. by 10 ft. with four other people. I seriously have no idea how they all lived in that one room. Our goal was to get them out of that tiny mud room so they could thrive. Wonderful donors again stepped forward to help build a new house for her and her children. This house was made out of concrete and bricks instead of dirt and dust which irritated her already compromised lungs. Her house was finished in June of 2017 but unfortunately that was about the time Mama Shayla's health went into a downward spiral. Mama Shayla continued to battle HIV. Unfortunately, it took her life on December 6, 2017. However, she was able to see the completion of her new house and her last days were spent there. Mama Shayla was at least able to pass away in peace knowing that her three young children would be cared for.

The physical devastation and stigma around HIV is very real and very painful for the thousands of people living with HIV. It has opened my eyes tremendously to the pain and the suffering they so needlessly deal with every single day. **Where** you live shouldn't determine **IF** you live. Please pray for the many people affected by this disease.

Mama Shayla, the hurt and the pain are over and now you rest in the arms of angels. Until we meet again.



Trent Solsma and Chase Reis having fun with the kids at Activity Day.



Chase Reis and Trent Solsma with one of the many kids who came to watch at the worksite every day.



Connor Niles making friends with the children after church.



Seth Maitlen giving "high fives" to the neighborhood kids at Bibi Anna's.



Jen Gaffney and Trent Solsma blowing bubbles with the kids at Mama Ibra's



Maryann Backman, Jen Gaffney and Seth Roberg with the kids in front of Mama Halima's new house!



Twins, Baraka and Zawadi, with twins, Jake and Joel Kazter.



The crew at the worksite. Strangers on day one. Brothers by day two. Amazing camaraderie.



Maryann Backman, Mama Halima, Jen Gaffney, Kelli Solsma and twins Zawadi and Baraka on moving day into Mama Halima's new house.



Isaac enjoying his sucker. He is adorable!

Mark Your Calendar!

9th Annual "Sing For Africa" Concert

When: Monday, November 12, 2018

Where: Bishop Heelan High School
Fine Arts Auditorium

Time: 7:00 P.M.

Cost: Adults-\$15.00, Students-\$10.00, Children under 5-Free

Call Kelli at 712-251-4759 for more information.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

For as little as \$30 per month, you can sponsor an orphan in Tanzania. You can also make a one-time donation. Please make checks payable to Project Rehema Ministries.

Donations can be sent to: **(PLEASE NOTE NEW ADDRESS)**

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C/O Kelli Solsma

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Donations can also be made via our website

