

Hope Community Center Newsletter of Feb, 2020.

By Irene Hamm

Once more, I was privileged to be part of the family at Hope Community Center the end of February 2020. It was wonderful to be picked up by Mama Lucy along with 2 other women who arrived from the Toronto area. The children greeted us at HCC entrance even though it was dark when we arrived. Their songs were full of joy and praise to God.

African mornings are serene with the sun sliding above the horizon, the birds waking up the neighborhood in flight, and the freshness of a new day begins. There are always new physical changes to behold. This year, it is the building of a technical school on the HCC grounds. The plan is for it to be ready to operate by August, teaching students the craft of welding, carpentry, dress-making and hair dressing. Mama Lucy is excited to be able to offer this teaching to her students and to make it possible to supply needed wooden beds, tables, or any other structure to the surrounding community, some of them too poor to purchase them from stores. Her plan is to receive orders which her technical students will build. It is a win/win situation! This technical school will allow those who are not intellectually inclined, to have a way of earning a living plus fulfilment in their own life.

Hope Community Center is recognized as one of the highest achieving academic students in her county. Their world revolves around studying. As a result, 85% of her university and college students' costs are covered through scholarships. That is huge! Praise God for that provision!

Mama Lucy has a new vision that is becoming part of Hope Community Center. Over many years, while on safari with visitors, she befriended the Maasai tribe who have a village situated close to the safari hotel. Some of the Maasai men had asked her for a job and so she offered them the role of being her night security guards. They are now on rotation, being at HopeCC for a few months, then back home for a month. Then last year, she had 12 Maasai high school students join her big family. This year, there are 70 Maasai students living at HopeCC. Some of

them knew no English yet are persevering in learning the English curriculum, with some additional help on the side. Wow, is all I can say! They are happy to be there, learning the ways of living in a civilized situation with toilets and all. They have big smiles! Mama Lucy has the plan to bring Jesus into the Maasai community. She is excited about it. She hopes to rent some land within the region of the Maasai and teach them how to grow crops. The Maasai are a nomadic tribe with strong traditions, feeding mostly on milk mixed with blood, and also meat. Her ultimate vision is to plant a church there, igniting worship of our Lord.

While I was there, the high school boys' basketball team played a tournament and won! The other school students refused to go to their classes and Mama let them cheer. What cheering there was! This was the first time that HopeCC hosted a tournament and it was a grand success. The girl's team also played their very first competitive game and lost, but as they gain confidence and skill, that will change. The following 2 weekends, there were more tournaments and the boys' team were the champions!! We are so very proud of their endurance, skill and also their attitude of gratefulness to God.

It has been a tough agricultural year for many in Kenya including HopeCC. There were many months of drought, then in January, much rain. All their planted potatoes rotted. The prices of food has increased greatly. Yet Lucy is full of hope that God will keep on supplying what is needed. The children get three meals a day, starting with a healthy porridge of milk and sorghum. During my stay this time, they had mostly beans in broth along with either rice or ugali (made of milled maize). They mill the wheat and maize themselves, and the cook bakes 60 loaves of bread every few days in the wood-heated oven. It is a two-hour art of baking the loaves to perfection. They taste wonderful.

HopeCC's cows, bulls, goats, and sheep are increasing in number. During our stay this time, two calves were born as well as twin lambs. The lambs and goats have multiplied quickly with the birth of twins. The steers are kept for two years before sold for a good price. The chickens continue to lay daily, filling a five-gallon pail $\frac{3}{4}$ full. They are big eggs with tough shells. We ladies enjoyed eating them every day as our food.

It was my joy to have a daily hour-long session of teaching regarding God's trustworthiness, forgiveness, anger, healing of pain, etc. The students were attentive and one evening, I spent close to two hours in answering their many questions. I really enjoyed that time. On our last weekend, I had the privilege of baptizing 17 students and one lady that came along from Canada. The children's singing always fills our hearts with celebration of the love of our God. They are a wonderful family.

I would ask for prayer specifically for Mama Lucy. She has a huge organization in motion. There are headmasters of the high school and primary school, which frees Lucy of that responsibility. A former teacher is now her righthand man, helping her with various responsibilities. Her board of 12 support her, giving her direction and advice as she needs it. These local adults - lawyer, social worker, education specialist, doctor, health department, etc - cover all aspects of potential and real challenges. Pray that God will give Mama Lucy strength, wisdom, perseverance, courage and rest in the midst of all the happenings. Above all else, that the Spirit will fill her inner being with His love – for God above all else, for others and her workers, for herself, for her community, for the Massai people – and that God will keep on directing her and guiding her in His will. Thank you for your prayers! God hears them and is answering them. Phil.1:3-6 = Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue His work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.