

Dec 2019

Family,

As I know all of you are doing, we are looking back at 2019 and wondering where it went. So much has happened over the past 12 months, some of it incredible blessings, and some, well, let's just say did not feel like a blessing! But in all things we know God is in control and we strive each day to leave it in His very capable Hands.



At this point, since we started MpM eight years ago, we have rescued 223 precious little ones. Of those 113 have been adopted, and 65 have been reintegrated with biological family.

While back in the US for our furlough, we had a special, but very hard adoption, when little Jadon Ahab went home with Jesus. We want to thank many of you who lifted us and our staff up during the very difficult time of his passing. But we celebrate that we got to love on him for a short time until he had the best Daddy of all take him into His arms.



These three amigos are still with us. Eve, Mary, and Shaddy (along with some others) are still waiting on their Forever Families to come forward.

We have had some adoptions, reintegrations with family, etc., and Shaddy often asks at prayer time where his mommy and daddy, or aunt and uncle, or grandmother are, and when they will be coming for him.

The adoptions we have had are the “wrapping up” of those approved before all Kenyan adoption agencies lost their license. Overall, adoptions are still closed and we do not see that changing in the foreseeable future as political games continue.

For the little ones that have no biological family known, adoption is about their only option. For those that do have biological family, the push by the government is to get them reunited with family as soon as possible.

We have had several return to family, and while we do not always feel it is the “best” option, the government and court here insist many times that this is the path that has to be taken.

When possible, and when there is a way to hold them accountable, we do assist for a period of time with things like supplies, medical needs, etc. This is a fine line as abuse of this type of system is very common. (Supplies get sold instead of used for the baby)

Something we had never done before was to directly enable a mother to take her “once abandoned” baby back.



On August 1 our staff got a call to come and collect a baby girl, age around 15 months who was abandoned at the police station. Rhoda had clear signs of malnutrition, and appeared to have “something” else going on with her.

Because of Jen’s personal experience with it, she soon suspected a thyroid issue, so tests were done to see if that might be the problem. The bloodwork confirmed that her thyroid was not functioning correctly so Rhoda was put on medicine to help stabilize that issue. She started improving right away and we saw some positive gains in weight and development.

In the last couple of months our social worker was able to track down the person who took her to the police station and had reported her as abandoned. As it turned out it was the mother herself who took her daughter to the police.

She had taken Rhoda to many doctors and had many tests run trying to determine what was wrong. None could define the issue, although many “test medicines” were attempted. The mother only knew that her daughter was getting worse and she feared for her life.

So as a last ditch effort, she took her baby to the police in hopes that someone would take her in and be able to nurse her back to health.

After hearing the mother’s story, we agreed to work towards getting mother and child back together. So Patricia, the mother, started coming to MpM a couple of days a week to care for Rhoda and learn how to provide the care she needs. It was quickly clear that this mother loved her daughter and wanted to do all she could to care for her. Patricia had a job as a nursery school teacher, although pay was less than \$50 a month and the school is closed four

months out of the year. So she had little means of taking care of herself, let alone her daughter.

As it became clear Patricia was quite repentant of her previous actions and was a hard worker ready to do what is needed to provide for her daughter, we offered her a full-time job as a cleaner/caregiver. We are trusting that by mid-January Patricia will be in a position to take her daughter home with her.

Situations like Patricia's are not uncommon, and we are thrilled that, at least in this case, we are able to benefit her with a job, and also hire someone who is looking to better their lives.

And most importantly, allow Rhoda to go back to her home with a loving mother who will provide for her.



We continue to be quite concerned about our special needs kids. While there is hope that adoptions will one day open up again, it is still unlikely Kenyans will adopt any of them. So our prayers continue to be for not only adoption opening up, but specifically International adoptions so these extra special kids can get a home.

Currently we have seven who fall in to this category, and while our hearts ache for each of our babies to get a family, it is especially hard when these seven's future seem so unclear.

With the above mentioned kids getting older, and with the need for focused therapy for others, it was an extra big blessing earlier this year when a partner made our dream of having a therapy pool come true. We ended up with a much larger pool (which provides therapy for big people also!) than we had planned, but in His Wisdom, God knew exactly what we needed. It has been incredible to see the difference water therapy has made for them.







It has also been a year of “going solar” as we added a solar unit to supplement our power supply. Electricity costs here are much higher than in the US, and as you can imagine keeping everything going here takes a lot of electricity! Our monthly bill had been in the \$600 range, so it made sense to try something to bring it down. With a special designated gift from one of our partnering churches, that “something” came to pass. We are now seeing our electricity costs below \$400 a month, and we anticipate it going even lower as the system is completed.

And the lessening of being reliable on the “grid” is also a plus as attested by a stretch of over six days in December when the power was out. Kenyan utilities do not have quite the same standards as the US ones. But we were reminded to praise God for our generator which really got a workout this month! (150 gallons of diesel later!)

Many have asked what our monthly expenses are, or what specific expenses they might be able to help with. Some have expressed an interest in sponsoring a particular expense we have each month. This has always been tough to pin down as it can vary so much. But, to come up with as accurate numbers as possible we have taken an average of the past 24 months.

During this period our monthly average number of babies under our care has been 25. We have been as high as 31 and as low as 21.

Perhaps there is a certain item here that you, your family, your Bible study group, etc., would consider taking on in whole, or in part over the next year.

In no particular order, here are some of the **monthly** average expenses:

<u>Formula</u>	<u>\$1,164</u>	<u>Food</u>	<u>\$ 684</u>
<u>Milk</u>	<u>\$ 194</u>	<u>Diapers</u>	<u>\$1,322</u>
<u>Baby Wipes</u>	<u>\$ 421</u>	<u>Cleaning</u>	<u>\$ 175</u>
<u>Medical</u>	<u>\$ 693</u>	<u>Physical Therapy</u>	<u>\$ 375</u>
<u>Electricity</u>	<u>\$ 322</u>	<u>Staff</u>	<u>\$3,500</u>
<u>Telephone</u>	<u>\$ 35</u>	<u>Transportation</u>	<u>\$ 792</u>
<u>Farm Produce upkeep \$ 238 (chickens, turkeys, fish, rabbits, garden)</u>			

## Prayer Requests:

Sometimes it is tough to come up with what prayer requests to list here, the needs can be so overwhelming at times. But here are the ones that seem to top our list when we slip into our quiet time before our King.

- Lift up the whole adoption process here. The politics continue to present a huge hurdle and an air of uncertainty with the entire process. One day we will get a glimmer of hope, only to have it dashed the next day. Pray that God opens the hearts of those politicians who have the final say when, and if, adoptions will open back up.
- Pray especially for our three year olds, it is tough on them knowing that “some” babies were adopted, so why not them?
- We continue to have some cases where we are trying to determine if babies can be reunited with biological family as the government is pushing for. In some cases, it simply is not a safe situation, and often a parent who abandoned a baby does not really want them back, but will take them to gain favor with the court and avoid arrest.
- We selfishly ask prayers for our family. This has been a very stressful year on us all. Pray that we seek God’s Face first, and remember that our first “mission” is to our family. This can be a challenge when the needs of the babies are so great.
- For the upcoming year, we ask prayers that God reveals Himself and His Will for this ministry and for these little ones placed in our care.
- Finally, we ask you to join us in a prayer of thanksgiving for you, our partners, that make this ministry possible.

Thank you for making a difference, one life at a time.

Striving to serve Him,

Dave, Jen, Ethan, and Selah

***Merry Christmas!!!***

