



Capstone Ministries



Restoring Children! Strengthening Families!

"The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone" Psalm 118:22

A prayer letter from Dan and Patty Schmelzer, Kisumu, Kenya

July, 2015 Volume 10 Issue 7

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The number of
street boys
reconciled with
family by Capstone
Ministries to date:

318

4 went home in June



**Check out Capstone
on Facebook.**



You can donate a portion of your premium for a policy from Thrivent Insurance. Learn more about steps you need to take to ensure you can take full advantage of this program and continue your support of Capstone Ministries through this program. Step by step procedure given on p. 4

"The angel of a child"

"See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven." Matthew 18:10



As Jesus begins his parable of the lost sheep, he makes the striking statement above, confirming a long held belief. Children are precious to the Lord, so precious that they have an angelic link to God the Father. A child's value is emphasized in Jesus' words by saying that each has an angel before the face of the Father in heaven. So we should take care that we do not look down on or neglect the value of children in the church or society.

However, we live in a society that devalues children every day. Unicef estimates that 50% of 21,000,000 victims of human trafficking are children. Unesco estimates that there are 150,000,000 children living on the street in the world. The Guttmacher Institute estimates that world wide more than 40,000,000 abortions have been committed every year since 1980. We are not a society that values children. In fact, the facts state quite the opposite.

Capstone Ministries is established and founded on the basic principle that children do have value. As a supporter of this work, you do too. The day to day activities of Capstone demonstrate consistent love and value of children. We reach out to the most vulnerable children in western Kenya: street kids. The intent is to reconcile these children with those to whom God gave them at conception: a family. This month four children from the streets of Kisumu were reconciled with family: Dominic, Derek, Dennis, and Boniface. Pray for them.

Each of those children has an angel standing before the throne of

Transportation Need in CA

Dan and Patty will be traveling to California on October 28 and need reliable transportation until December 8. If you have an extra vehicle they can borrow please consider allowing them to borrow it for this time period. Feel free to spread the word in your church as well. A “gift in kind” letter will be made available to the donor for fair rental value.

Capstone Ministries Achieves RSO Status in LCMS



Photos of the Month

A few more pictures from the Day of Prayer held at the Kisumu ELCK Cathedral on June 20th.



the Father. So do your children. So do all children. Every year Capstone organizes with several congregations of the ELCK Lake Diocese, Kisumu Region to gather the children for a Day of Prayer. The purpose is to value children: They play games, hear the Word, sing, perform dramas, recite the poem of the day written by Pastor Isaiah **AND** pray.

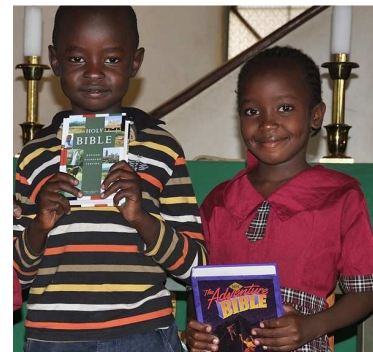


They pray hard and play hard! Note the sincere devotion of the children above and the intense expressions on the girls in a tug of war below.



The volunteer Sunday School teachers from the 10 invited congregations chose some of the students for their great attitude, sharing and cooperation as well as their performance in competitions. Two are pictured below.

Each congregation chose children to lead them in prayer. They prayed for children in Kenya, Nigeria, Sudan, Europe, Asia and America. With a heaven's eye view, you would have seen angels gathering around the throne of the Father sharing the concerns of these tender hearts. And God the Father smiled!



When Helping Street Children Hurts
-from the blog of Derek and Penny Oliver (Derek and Penny are volunteering at Capstone Ministries in 2015. Written May, 2015.

Sometimes, through a genuine desire to help another in need, people can actually prolong problems. Actions with good intentions can, in reality, be a bad idea. We are seeing many examples of this among the street children of Kisumu, Kenya. Actions that on the surface look good (and do offer some short-term benefits) can unfortunately, especially after continual application, allow street children to stay exactly where they are. In this context the actions of the good Samaritan are known as ‘enabling’ behaviors.



During a weekly staff meeting, a Capstone Welfare Officer recalled a recent brief encounter he’d shared with some of the street children in our city, Kisumu. Upon introducing himself to a small group of street children, one of the street-boys turned to him and said, ‘We don’t have time to talk with you now. We are going for our daily lunch!’ – the Welfare Officer was shocked!

... going for their daily lunch!? Had he heard correctly?

Another Welfare Officer then shared how, when offering a street kid a chapati (a Kenyan flat-bread), the street boy threw it to the floor saying, ‘I want meat or fish, don’t bring me this bread!’ – to which the Welfare Officer thought to himself, ‘even my own family doesn’t get to eat like that?’

It’s shocking, isn’t it? Street-life is no place for a child. It is a place filled with untold dangers; dangers that we can’t even imagine. A harm-filled place.

(cont. next column)

The problem is this: If we make life comfortable for the street-children, by freely providing their needs whilst on the street, what motivation is there to seek help and face up to the challenge of returning to their family and community?

For many street children, home represents a place of hurt – each child has their own unique story and reason for exchanging home-life for street-life. For them to make the choice to return home, and face that hurt, requires great strength and bravery.

It’s not about a quick fix. It’s a healing process, and healing takes time. And, sometimes, we have to endure a little pain now to allow for healthy restoration.

The latest reports from the Capstone Ministries Welfare Officers however, is that their work is becoming more challenging. Regularly the street boys are saying, ‘what can you do for me? You say home is the best place, but look, here on the street I am fed and nobody is telling me what to do!’ The good intentions of others, whose actions are enabling the street children to stay put, is frustrating their efforts. In fact, the Welfare Officers were reporting just this week that they have seen an increase in the number of street boys being drawn from the rural areas to the city. Could it be that they are being ‘pulled’ to Kisumu at the promise of free food?

We all share the same vision, to love and help the street children of Kisumu, Kenya, but let’s not lose sight of our responsibility in how we help. This is not about making us feel good – it is about *empowering*, that is, giving power to the one that we are helping.

In spite of this recent growth in enabling activities being adopted by some projects, we are encouraged by the work of organizations, such as, Capstone Ministries, and their unswerving commitment in reconciling street children with their families and communities.

Helping and loving street children can be difficult, and it’s getting tougher, but with every single success we see that it’s definitely worth it! To date, Capstone Ministries have successfully reconciled 318 street boys.

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THRIVENT FINANCIAL FOR LUTHERANS?

If so, it is easy to designate your Thrivent Choice dollars for the work of the Capstone Ministries!

Online:

Step 1 – Visit **Thrivent.com/thriventchoice**.

Step 2 – Click on **“log in”** at the top right of your screen & enter your MyThrivent user ID & password.

(If you haven’t registered on Thrivent.com, click on **“register now”** to register for full access.)

Step 3 – Look for your designated Choice Dollars on the right side of the screen.

Step 4 – Click on **“Direct Choice Dollars”** on the Thrivent Choice box on your MyThrivent page.

Step 5 – Search the catalog of organizations to find and select the “Capstone Ministries”

Step 6 – Click on **“Direct Choice Dollars Now”** to direct your designated Choice Dollars to benefit the reconciliation of street children with God and family!

By phone:

Step 1 – Call **1-800-847-4836** and when prompted, say, **“Thrivent Choice.”**

Step 2 – When prompted, say, **“Choice Dollars.”**

Step 3 – Say or enter your Social Security number.

Step 4 – **Press 1** to direct Choice Dollars or **press 2** to hear the Thrivent Choice program terms and conditions.

Step 5 – A representative will then work with you to direct Choice Dollars for Capstone Ministries.

Prayers, Praise and News

1. Praise for the safe return of Dan and Patty to Kisumu. Dan returned in early June from two months of travel and fund raising in the Midwest. Patty returned from a personal visit with family in California.

2. Thanksgiving for Derek and Penny Oliver who filled in while Dan and Patty were traveling. They spent two months with Patty learning the various aspects of the ministry and then took over for the one month she was away. They will be returning in September to be interim oversight for Capstone while Dan and Patty travel on the East Coast and California.

3. Below is the schedule of visits Dan and Patty will be making Sept-Dec this year. If you are near we welcome you to come and hear more about Capstone Ministries.

Sept. 6 – Christ Lutheran, Scituate, MA

Sept. 13 – Redeemer Lutheran, Gorham, ME

Sept. 16 – Scituate Rotary Club

Sept. 18-19 NED Pastor’s Wives Retreat

Sept. 20 – Lutheran Church of the Savior, Bedford, MA

Sept. 25-27 – Immanuel Lutheran, Danbury, CT

Oct. 4 – St. Paul’s Lutheran, New Hartford, CT

Oct. 11 – Fairfax Community Church, Fairfax, VA

Oct. 18 – Island Lutheran, Hilton Head Island, SC

Oct. 25 – Our Savior Lutheran, S. Windsor, CT

Oct. 25-27 NED Pastor/Teacher Conf, Enfield, CT

Nov. 1 – Peace Lutheran, Fresno, CA

Nov. 8 – St. Peter’s Lutheran, Elk Grove, CA

Nov. 15 – St. Peter’s Lutheran, Lodi, CA

Nov. 22 – Grace Lutheran, Modesto, CA

Nov. 29 – Our Saviour’s Lutheran, Patterson, CA

Dec. 6 – St. Andrew’s Lutheran, Stockton, CA

Donation: For Capstone & Dan and Patty Support

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Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Email: _____

Donation Amount: _____

Specific Designation? _____

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