



# 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

April, 2020 Volume 15 Issue 4

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The number of  
street boys  
reconciled with  
family by  
Capstone  
Ministries since  
2005

# 562

*6 went home in  
March, 2020*



Check out Capstone  
on Facebook.



Capstone Ministries is an RSO of the LC-MS (Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod)

## "Sufficient Courage"

*"Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, for I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death." Philipians 1:18b-20*

All of us have learned to identify with St. Paul as he wrote the words above. Self-quarantined in his own house in Rome, he describes the ordeal in Acts 28:14-31. For two years, he remained in that circumstance. All of us can identify with the isolation he must have felt. Yet the letter he wrote to the church in Phillippi is often referred to as "A letter of joy." Quarantined, yet joyful; that is Paul's circumstance and state of mind. Does it strike you as amazing? It does me. I just finished 14 days of self-quarantine and I felt stir crazy after a week. Imagine 2 years!

There is a sense of confidence in his words. He says things like: "I **know**" and "**will** turn out for my deliverance." He doesn't say, "I don't know" or "it might turn out well." Does that leave you wondering where that confidence came from?

He tells us in that opening sentence that the Christians in Phillippi had been praying for him. They also had been sending Paul financial support so that he could maintain himself while in house-prison. He says as well that the Spirit of Jesus Christ had been helping him.

There is much that is unknown as I write these words. We are uncertain as to the containment of COVID-19. We are told that in the US, the peak of is still two weeks away. But no one knows for certain. Those are estimations based on human medical wisdom and hopeful conclusions to this pandemic. Here in Kenya, a dusk to dawn curfew has been imposed, international passenger travel shut down completely as of March 29. We have 42 cases as I write this on March 30, one death and one recovery. All cases are in isolation and their close contacts being sought for testing. I can report as well that we have had no cases in Kisumu and the public has been urged to observe social distancing.

At Capstone, we have sent all our social workers home

(Cont. p. 2 left column)

for the time being and encouraged them to remain safe. We have not reduced their salary and trust that we will be able to re-open as soon as possible so that the work can continue. For now, their health is our chief concern. Most of their work is normally done in close contact with boys on the street or traveling in close quarters on public transport. For now, that is not possible.



**A staff member of Kenya's Ministry of Health sprays disinfectant in the Gikomba Market in Nairobi.**

I have decided to remain in Kenya instead of returning to the US. It didn't seem wise to subject myself to international travelers in multiple airports and then quarantine again upon arrival. I am just praying that this pandemic does not get out of control in Africa. But like Paul, I eagerly expect our deliverance from this scourge.

During my time in the house, I was able to record on video a sermon for the Kisumu Cathedral last Sunday. The ELCK has suspended public worship just like the rest of the world and the pastors have been taking turns putting sermons online for the congregation.

In closing, let me encourage you to remember Capstone in your prayers, Patty and me, and all our staff. I am well aware that the economy has been severely strained as well as personal budgets. We trust you to make the right decisions for your church, your family and the missions your support. Let us not give into fear but follow Paul's encouragement to have "Sufficient Courage" so that Christ will be exalted. God bless you.

## Prayers for Patty

Many of you know that Patty has struggled with some physical challenges since October. Here is a brief update: Upon arriving here in Kenya, Patty suffered another relapse and started Prednisone again as we made plans for her to return to California and to fly with me as I was headed for Phoenix for the Best Practices Conference on February 19. She has been at our home in Escalon since then and has added Promacta to her medication regimen while tapering off Prednisone. We are hoping this new drug will restore her system to normal.

Meanwhile I have returned to Kenya to encounter this COVID-19 pandemic. I self-quarantined for 14 days after arriving. Patty is doing the same indefinitely as her medication suppresses her immune system and puts her at high risk.

Patty will remain in California until both this pandemic passes and her immune system resets and no longer needs medication to maintain her platelet count.

Please do keep her in your prayers and add her to your church prayer list. God bless you.

## Rescues in March 2019

Capstone Ministries rescued six children in March. Five are pictured below from left to right: Simon, Felix, Ian, Steven, and Kofi Anan. All were rescued before Capstone staff were sent home. Pray for them

