



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

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

562

***As of April,
2020***



Check out Capstone
on Facebook.



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

"The feet of a deer"

"I stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord. Renew them in our day, in our time make them known...The Sovereign Lord is my strength, he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to go on the heights." Habakkuk 3:2, 19

Paralyzed, confused, frightened, powerless. Any or all of those words could be used to describe how he felt. He had been a faithful servant. But the current domestic moral decline was more than he could handle. Corruption, lawlessness, abuse of power and social injustice were rampant and commonplace. He complained to his superiors and they commiserated over the decay of society. It had infested even the highest corridors of politics. There was a complete lack of respect for the rule of law. The public no longer respected spiritual leaders.

He was driven to his knees in prayer, but even on his knees there was no peace. His prayers quickly turned into complaints, ***"How long, O Lord?"*** This was his opening salvo. Then came the answer and it would be an understatement to say it surprised him. "Shocked" is closer. "Flabbergasted" hits it on the nose. ***It will be "ruthless and sweep across the whole earth, like a vulture swooping to devour, like a desert wind, gathering prisoners like sand."*** (Selected verses of Habakkuk chapter 1)

The man is the prophet Habakkuk. The time is about 605 BC. The circumstances are just as described. The saying comes to mind, ***"Be careful what you pray for."*** The Lord would respond to the spiritual decay, the corrupt administration of Jehoiakim. (609-598) The sweeping judgment would come in the form of the Babylonians, fresh off their slaughter of the Egyptians and Assyrians at Carchemish. The Lord himself calls them ruthless, dreaded, and fierce. And as the century turned, they would lay waste to Judah, attacking multiple times, destroying sites sacred and profane alike. The very temple Solomon built some 300 years earlier would lie in ruins. All gone. Everything. Everyone. Proud people, even the faithful are either killed or made slaves. And Habakkuk would live to see it himself.

Finally in humility the prophet recalls the deeds of mercy and deliverance of God. In the midst of his fear and complaint, he remembers that God is good. In boldness he prays, ***"O Lord, renew them."*** 3:2 Do it again Lord. Rise! Save! Deliver!

Then, as if the idea was a spark of hope in his head, it begins to fill Habakkuk and energize him and he concludes his prophetic three chapters with a description of the Ibex of En Gedi. ***“The Sovereign Lord is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer.”*** (3:19) It was pointed out to me when I visited En Gedi in Israel some 20 years ago that the Lord often doesn’t change circumstance but gives us feet to traverse the challenging environment, just like the local Ibex. Pray for ***“feet like a deer!”***

At Capstone, we are adjusting to the new environment. The country has been under travel restriction and a curfew for almost a month. Some of those restrictions are gradually being lifted as I write. Our staff are now assigned to a limited schedule, with one staff reporting each weekday. They spend the time making follow-up phone calls on families of reconciled children. We hope to begin a regular full time schedule soon.

Calvince Odhiambo happily receives a supply of food stuffs for his family.



It has been discovered that a number of our vulnerable families are even more challenged now. Heavy rains have sent some fleeing flooded homes. We have identified the neediest families and have organized some food stuffs to help them cope. Staff are organizing to meet with several families and distribute the food stuffs...and to ask God to ***“renew his deeds in our day.”***



The family of Moses Ochieng (center) were overjoyed to receive a food supply that should last them for two weeks.

Habakkuk writes timeless words, fitting for today. I am not implying or suggesting that COVID-19 is some modern Babylonian judgment from God. I’ll leave His judgment of our godless society to Him.

But the prayers and reaction of Habakkuk are similar. Pastors and all Christians have been on their knees pleading that the Lord would be merciful and “renew his deeds.” In Habakkuk’s case he didn’t change the circumstance. He sent Babylon and Judah was wiped out. But he gave the prophet “Feet like a deer.” May he give us the same.

God bless you for your continued support of Capstone Ministries. The BOD of Capstone Ministries met via “Blue Jeans” video conference in April for our regular quarterly meeting. All 12 members were in attendance. At the meeting it was approved to continue to pay 100% of the salaries of all 14 staff of Capstone, including Dan and Patty.

Prayers for Patty

Patty continues to recover and receive treatment for ITP in California. She has maintained a consistent “sweet spot” platelet count now for a month, tapering off Prednisone and is only taking Promacta which stimulates her body to maintain a normal platelet count. We hope and pray that as travel restrictions are lifted, she will be able to return to Kenya. Dan, who is still in Kenya is scheduled to fly to California on June 1.

Travel Schedule

- June 7 Good Shepherd Lutheran, Turlock, CA
- July 5 Trinity Lutheran, Mequon, WI
- July 12 Zion Lutheran, Bridgeport, CT
- July 18, 19 Our Savior Lutheran, S. Windsor, CT
- August 2 Trinity Lutheran, Toledo, OH
- August 9 Scranton, PA
- August 16 Victory Lutheran, Medicine Hat, Alberta
- August 29, 30 Risen Savior, Franklin, WI

(This schedule is subject to restrictions on large gatherings by officials -- local, state and province)