December 10, 2013

Dear Friends of Mustard Seed Project,

I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! The following is a brief summary of the current “State of the Ministries” of Mustard Seed Project for year ending 2013.

MUSTARD SEED BABIES’ HOME – HOIMA UGANDA

Once again, I am pleased to report that because of your loving kindness and generosity, the Mustard Seed Babies’ Home in Hoima Uganda has continued to be financially stable throughout 2013. Our prayer is for that to continue into and beyond the New Year.

Our first mission in Africa, The Babies’ Home will celebrate its twentieth year of operation in June of 2014.

SONRISE SCHOOLS – MUSANZE RWANDA

By scope and size, Sonrise School is our Primary Mission. Despite the wide spread cost cutting that Bishop Laurent Mbanda has implemented over the past several months, the operating budget of Sonrise Schools in Rwanda has continued to lag behind financially throughout 2013. Overall giving to non-profit charities has been down since the US economy has been in decline and this has certainly had an effect particularly on our Child Sponsorship Program at Sonrise. Of our three African Missions, Sonrise is clearly our greatest financial need at this time.

PASTOR DEO’S STREET CHILDREN’S MINISTRY – KIGALI RWANDA

Our third African Mission, Pastor Deo’s Street Children’s Ministry in Kigali Rwanda, while struggling, has been able to successfully maintain its goal of feeding the children three day per week in 2013. Our prayer for this

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ministry is that the Lord will provide adequate funds and/or frequent flyer miles which will allow Pastor Deo to visit the United States for a Preaching/Teaching Mission in 2014. This mission will be two-fold: first, to raise awareness of the ministry and increase the feeding to four days a week. While at the same time, Pastor Deo will be teaching us about true reconciliation. Please join us in prayer.

On behalf of our Ministry Partners, Bishop Mbanda and Pastor Deo in Rwanda and Bishop Nathan in Uganda and the children they so lovingly serve, I thank you for your ongoing love and support. Please know that you are always in our prayers.

I humbly ask that you kindly remember our needs in prayer and as you consider your 2013 year end giving.

God Bless you!

Terry Thornton - Chairman
Mustard Seed Project Board of Directors
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YOUR LOVE AND KINDNESS IS MOST APPRECIATED BY ALL THE CHILDREN WHOM GOD HAS PLACED IN THE CARE OF MUSTARD SEED PROJECT.
In a common way there is not very much in common between Christmas in the United States and Christmas in Rwanda: Different cultures, different customs, different weather, different foods, different spending capacities. True…. both our countries have lots of red poinsettias—but the poinsettias I saw in Rwanda grew wild-like as shrubs along building walls, not like the hoards of tidy poinsettias I saw for sale on Black Friday at my local Home Depot.

But in an uncommon way, in the only way that really matters, Christmas in Rwanda and Christmas in the United States are just exactly the same for Christians in each place — and for that matter, for Christians in every place on our planet. Christmas for Christians is imbued with the power and mystery and sure hope in the baby born to die. The baby who is the Word made flesh, come to live and die among us (John 1:14). The baby who is Creator of poinsettias and all the starry hosts. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” (John 1:1-3).

At Christmas we sing carols and hymns, hopefully with true hearts of thanksgiving and joy. The best carols are good poetry, and poetry has the capacity to take fundamental ideas or experiences and give them an emotional depth that standard sentences or ways of communication cannot achieve. This Christmas, I offer for your meditation a lovely Christmas poem by G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936), the prolific, original, humorous, and often enigmatic Christian author whose works strongly influenced C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Charles Williams. This poem helps us see the Christ child as both Word made flesh in Mary’s arms and (in the last verse) King of the universe, and Creator of all the flowers and all the stars of Heaven. Joy to the world, the Lord has come.

A Christmas Carol
G.K. Chesterton

The Christ-child lay on Mary’s lap, His hair was like a light.
(O weary, weary were the world, But here is all aright.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary’s breast
His hair was like a star.
(O stern and cunning are the kings, But here the true hearts are.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary’s heart,
His hair was like a fire.
(O weary, weary is the world, But here the world’s desire.)

The Christ-child stood on Mary’s knee,
His hair was like a crown,
And all the flowers looked up at Him, And all the stars looked down.
MISSION OF HOPE PART II

Hi Everyone!

It’s my pleasure to keep you, the readers up-to-date on MOH-Part II, a team of eight, leaving for Rwanda on January 20th. The MOH-Part II team will separate the morning of the 20th and board a plane for Rwanda. While there, we will visit the Village of Reconciliation, Pastor Deo’s ministry of feeding the street children of Kigali. The next day, we move on to Musanze and the home of Bishop Laurent and Chantal Mbanda. Our hosts will take us to Sonrise School, Mother’s Union, and Home of Hope (a small orphanage run by Chantal).

The reason for this trip is to “go and see what the Lord is doing.” Every member of the team is dedicated to supporting and listening to the needs and to prayer. We ask ourselves: “God, what would YOU have us do”? May our eyes and hearts be opened to His desire for future ministries.

We leave for the states on January 23rd for the long flight home. I am confident there will be more to share when we get home. Keep watching for Rev. Kathy’s and my report in February!

Thank you Lord for calling us to do the work you have given us to do. Being an ambassador for Christ is such a privilege.

Blessings and love,
Dorene Freese

LIGHT


“The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.” —Isaiah 9:2

“Let there be light,” we demand at Christmas. And in every household that celebrates Christmas and in every store that sells to Christmas shoppers, there is light. Homes and malls are decorated inside and out with blinking bulbs of all kinds imaginable. Many people mark the days in Advent using a wreath with four candles, lighting one candle each week of the four weeks before Christmas.
Christmas in every country and in every time has included light—candles and fires, burning logs, or electric wonders. Light is the essence of life and the symbol of joy and safety. It is no accident that Jesus is called the “Light of the World,” nor is it an accident that His birthday is marked by a universal display of light.

The study of the nature of light has occupied the greatest minds that humanity has known—Galileo, Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein and many, many others. Their studies explain so much, yet leave so much that is not understood. To know a little about light is to know a little about time and space, energy and matter. To know about light is also to know a little about what God is like. Light is the symbol the Bible uses over and over to describe Him.

The New Testament book of I Timothy tells us that God “lives in unapproachable light.” Those words suggest that we cannot know all there is to know about God or approach Him as equals. The mysteries surrounding the God of Light are represented in the mysteries surrounding the nature of light.

Light is the fastest thing there is. It travels at a speed of 186,282 miles per second. (That’s equal to about eight times around the world in one second). Scientists have concluded that if people could travel at near the speed of light, time would slow down for them and they would get heavier. Knowing the truth of these astounding possibilities doesn’t make it any easier to understand them. Our everyday ways of understanding nature are not enough to explain light. How then can we possibly expect to explain all there is to know about God?

Experiments have also shown another surprising characteristic of light. Light acts like two completely different things. It moves like a continuous wave, similar to the steady ripples that come from a pebble dropped in a pond. Light is also totally unlike a wave, moving in little bits similar to a line of individual bullets shot from a machine gun. We can accept the truth of this seeming contradiction because it explains the observed facts about light. In the same way, Christians accept the spiritual mystery that God can be both a human baby and the all-powerful God at the same time.

Anyone who has seen a rainbow after a storm sees the individual colors of light as it passes through the raindrops in the sky. This is the light we can see. But there are other kinds of light just as real, the X-rays and cosmic rays that can destroy, the radio waves that carry our favorite song, the microwaves that cook our food. All of these are light energy. We know they are real by their actions just as we know the reality of our invisible God by His activity in our lives.

Light is the source of life itself. Light warms our body with the heat that makes our very blood flow and our muscles move. The sunlight that shines on our green planet enters leaf and plant where it is changed, by the miracle of photosynthesis, into the living food energy that every animal and human must have to stay alive. So we can say that light is in every life giving bite of food that we put into our mouths. The Bible tells us that “God is light,” and that “in Him we live and move and have our being.” (I John 1:5; Acts 17:28). He is, in a sense, the light that keeps us alive.

God showed Himself to Moses in a burning bush. He led the Israelites through the desert by a pillar of fire. The apostle Paul found his Savior in a blinding flash of light. Christ’s birth was announced by angels in a glory of light, and the wise men followed the light of a star. God is light. And just as every child cries for the light that will take away the night fears, so every human heart longs for the light of God’s love, every mind searches for the light of God’s truth and every spirit cries for the salvation to lighten its darkness.
Real Identity: Crossroads: Where Bible and Life Meet

Follow the way into deeper devotion, where truth becomes real.

Author Thaddeus Barnum leads his readers through engaging devotional reflections into the soul’s most personal crossroads—those profound occasions where the Bible intersects a life. In each four-page reading, Barnum artfully connects the truth of Biblical story to his own (and ours), revealing and modeling the way of an authentic disciple.

In Real Identity, Barnum guides us at our own pace through key passages of Genesis, asking us to think deeply on some of life’s biggest questions: Who is God? Who am I? And why am I? Likewise he challenges us to consider the implications of life’s biggest answers: God hears. God cares. God acts on our behalf.

Begin the journey into an authentic holiness by discovering who you were created to be; and in the process find your own allimportant intersection, where what you know meets how you live. For those who are tired of a superficial belief in God and the Bible, this transparently crafted book shines the light of Scripture upon a well-worn path, for all disciples who would be real.

“Real Identity: Crossroads: Where Bible and Life Meet
(Crossroads Deeper Devotion) Perfect Paperback

$12.00 Paperback * Discounted price, while supplies last, when purchased through call2disciple.
Available Late October 2013!
Call 1-203-383-9320 to pre-order yours today!

“Thaddeus Barnum is senior pastor of Church of the Apostles in Fairfield, Connecticut; and a founding board member of the Mustard Seed Project.

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“There is a great deal of healthful Christian reality in these pages.”
- J.I. Packer, Board of Governors’ professor of theology, regent College, author, theologian

“The distance between knowing about God and actually knowing God is infinite. In wonderfully readable prose, my friend Thad Barnum helps us see what it means to know God and live the real life he intended for us when he made us. It’s actually possible, and since it’s also the most important thing in the universe, I’m thrilled to recommend this book.”

“As I read Real Identity, my eyes became moist with tears and my heart was moved toward longing for more of Christ. Every chapter left me wanting more, wanting to meet the people in the stories, wanting to walk more closely with the God of the story.”
- Nancy Guthrie, author of the seeing Jesus in the old Testament Bible study series

“It’s so refreshing to hear someone ask the hard questions about God and life, which Thad so ably does while encouraging us with the news that the answers are out there.”
- Julia Duin, former religion editor, The Washington Times; author of Quitting Church: Why the Faithful are Fleeing and Days of Fire and Glory: The Rise and Fall of a Charismatic Community
The Mustard Seed Project Is A US Not-For-Profit Corporation Formed In 1993 To Provide Acts Of Mercy And Mission In East And Central Africa.

The Ministry of The Mustard Seed Project is to: LOVE THE CHILDREN - REACH THE SOCIETY AND PREACH THE GOSPEL!

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The Mustard Seed Project

OUR GREATEST NEEDS!

• Pastor Deo’s Street Children’s Ministry
We need a great deal of help with funds to buy food for the children. Lately, we have struggled even to provide 3 meals per week when our goal is to feed five days and ultimately everyday.

There are currently 100 children enrolled in Deo's Ministry and it cost less than $3.00 per meal per day to feed a child. Please help us feed the children by sending a check to:

Mustard Seed Project
1305 Merchant St.
Ambridge PA 15003

or: you may make an electronic donation via our web-site: www.mustardseedproject.org click on DONATIONS and follow the prompts to give a gift to feed Pastor Deo Gashagaza’s Street Children’s Ministry in Kigali Rwanda. On behalf of the children, THANK YOU!

• Sonrise Primary and High School
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