



## Living Waters International, Inc. Winter Newsletter – 2011

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### **The Changing Seasons** by Stephen Zimmerman, President

As we enter the winter season here in northern Wisconsin and I reflect upon my recent sojourn in East Africa, I realize once again how our lives are affected by the changing of the seasons ... especially those whose lives are so closely tied to the land.

November and December mark the beginning of the monsoon season in much of East Africa. People plant and spend much time tending their crops. It is the time most domestic animals give birth to their young. The pastoralists, the *Masais*, *Wanyamwezis* and *Wasukumas*, devote much attention to tending their herds of cattle and goats. They travel many miles in search of fresh green pastures. Nighttime groups camp together in the bush, sing songs and play their drums while keeping watch for their animals.

The Christmas season is a time of scarcity and material poverty for many. Their stocked grains have dwindled; their animals are lean and are not yet yielding much milk. People openly exposed to the outdoor environment often get malaria. But, even though it is a season of many hardships for the indigenous peoples, the birth of the Christ Child is celebrated by those practicing Christianity.

For me, Christmas December 2010 was spent at St. Francis de Sales Parish at Ngurdoto village. Christmas morning Mass was quite a lively celebration! The choir sang traditional African Christmas carols with much exuberance. Young children participated with traditional dance and song adding color to the liturgy.

Although Christmas is not commercialized as in the United States and Europe, the Christmas meal does take a prominent role. In many villages, a community celebration takes place after the Christmas Mass. People sit in groups around a platter of rice and roasted beef or goat meat. People commonly eat the meal with their hands. The Masai girls at Enyorrata School told me that the best part of the Christmas meal was having soda pop to drink, British style chips and meat! They rarely got the latter at school; and Masai **love their meat**. After the meal, there is more singing and dancing as the children entertain. Many of the adults often drink 'pompai', a fermented local brew prepared from corn.

Unexpectedly, the morning after Christmas at Ngurdoto, a woman, apparently under the influence of an evil spirit, was brought to the steps in front of the church. Her behavior was eccentric! She protested violently to being brought into the church building. One of the MSFS priest then laid his hands over her head and prayed



over her. Eventually, a seeming calm came over the woman and she seemed more normal again and at peace. It was an eerie experience, but the power of Jesus to drive the apparent *shetani* (demon) from this woman was miracle enough for me giving reconfirmation of the peace of Christmas. This, my dear friends, is my wish for each of you this Christmas season: Peace in your hearts, your personal lives, and in our world.

Three very happy young boys in front of the crèche on Christmas Day.

**SPOTLIGHT** by Eileen Hartl, Board Member

This issue's spotlight is Sylvia Komuzuni, sponsored student of Danielle and Thomas Quinlan of Antigo, WI.



Soon to be 16, Sylvia attends Holy Cross Secondary School in Kikyusa, Uganda, under the direction of the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross.

Sylvia comes from a family of nine children and fortunately for her, both parents are alive. They are renters with no land of their own. Her father is a driver, but employment is irregular. Her mother is a housewife and digs in neighboring gardens to cultivate food. At this time, none of her siblings attend school and this is a great concern for Sylvia, she knows how blessed and privileged she really is. In her last progress report, Sr. Lisa Mudoor noted, "Now that she has joined secondary school, she is serious in her studies, more reasonable and mature in her behavior; she also takes responsibility."

Sylvia's favorite subjects are English and Geography. She loves to sing and dance, so during the holidays she joins in the choir at her local parish church. For Sylvia, the holidays are simply a time to celebrate and experience God's presence in this world, while helping around the house, tending to her younger siblings and in the garden with her mother, to cultivate the food crops.

Coming from the states, it's difficult to imagine life without an education. You'll note from her picture that Sylvia is growing into a beautiful young woman. It was her smile that caught the attention of the Sisters and the Quinlans. In East Africa, simply by virtue of receiving an education, a girl feels even more beautiful! Sylvia's no exception. The following is an excerpt from one of her letters to her sponsors last year:

"I'm writing to inform you the way now I live. I was in boarding school it was good peace, there is good life. We eat well and have preps 7:15 – 10:30 PM, then prayers, then sleep. I thank you for paying for me school fees because some children at school can't spend the all term sending them back home for school fees, but me, I study until the term is over without sending back home. And God loves those who help each other. Will you come to Uganda any day or time? I want to see you, I am waiting for you. God loves you and me."



Here, we hear Sylvia's voice, softly echoing gratitude, single-heartedness and faithfulness ... and what gushes forth? "... good peace ... good life." Despite these times of a poor world economy, major cutbacks and high unemployment rates, there seems to be a strong undercurrent of goodwill, sacrifice and generosity on so many levels ... an even greater and genuine concern for people all over. We at Living Waters want to thank our many sponsors and benefactors that continue to partner with us, sharing our vision of a world where every child gets an education and the goods of the earth are rightly distributed.

"Heri ya Sikukuu ya Noeli - Heri ya Krismasi"  
Wishing you Happiness for the Holiday of Christmas  
in Swahili, the common language of East Africa

Living Waters has entered the realm of social media! Search for us on Facebook under the name; *Living Waters Int!* and we'll keep you posted with tidbits of news and information on a weekly basis.



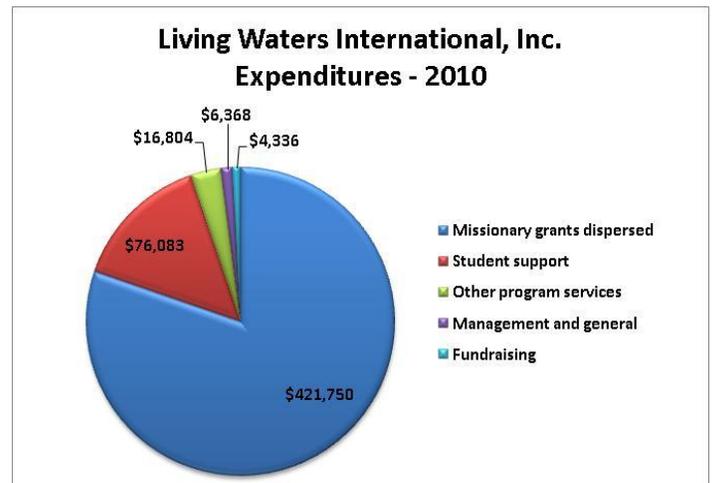
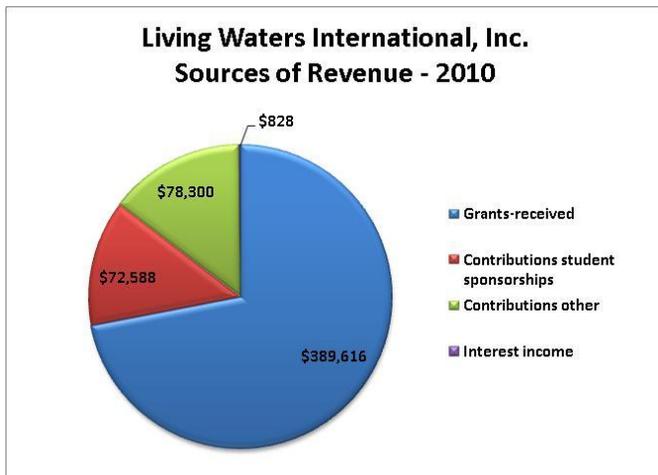
## Living Waters International's Successful Fundraising Efforts Reflect Strong Stewardship

By Brian Prunty, Treasurer

The directors of LWI take their fiduciary responsibility seriously. In short, we want to be good stewards of the financial gifts provided by our benefactors, and one of the best ways we can accomplish this is to be transparent in our financial dealings.

2010 was our most successful year ever! Last year total revenue was \$541,000, with the biggest portion, \$390,000, coming from grants we received from charitable foundations. These grants are the results of hard work by Stephen Zimmerman, LWI's president, who writes dozens of grants each year. While we are certainly grateful to our charitable foundation benefactors, we are equally grateful to the hundreds of other individual contributors who provided an additional \$150,000 in support.

The graphs below breakdown the sources of revenue and how we spent the money. Regarding expenditures, the bulk of the money was used to provide grants to dozens of missionary sites primarily in East Africa. You may find it interesting that the grants were used for things like classroom construction, school furnishings, student housing, clean water projects, new chapels, and even a windmill for electrical generation. We are very proud that LWI forwards almost 95% of all money raised directly to religious Catholic Missionaries. For more information, check out our audit report posted on our website, [www.livingwatersinternational.org](http://www.livingwatersinternational.org).



### Book Review: *In His Outstretched Arms* By Rev. Kurian Kollapallil, M.S.F.

*In His Outstretched Arms* contains life stories and simple truths etched out of a missionary priest's experience of serving the Lord on three continents. The seven streams of the book, namely; *The Blessedness of Africa, A Walk in Faith, Waiting in Hope, Love in Our Life, God at the Center, Fully Human, and What the Prophets Foretold...A Light for All Time*, gives food for thought for everyone. They contain messages of hope, discipleship, service and God's providence.

Fr. Kurian Kollapallil is a missionary priest of the order of the Missionaries of St. Francis de Sales, East African Province.



Each chapter's title page is beautifully illustrated by Harvest Crittenden, an internationally recognized lettering artist. Ms. Crittenden specializes in Sacred Art work, calligraphy, illustration, and illumination. To order a book, see enclosed form.

**AND NOW, A WORD FROM OUR SPONSORS** - We 'adopted' our child, Nyagudele, from Tanzania in 2008, when she was just 5 years old. Just as we look forward to seeing pictures and hearing about the activities of our three grandchildren in California, we enjoy the letters and hand-drawn pictures that our sponsored child sends. It is a joy to see the changes that have taken place as she grows in knowledge thanks to the Sisters at the Holy Cross Convent. She looks healthy and happy and is so proud that she is doing well in school. We are proud of her, too. Living Waters International is a grassroots organization operating on a shoestring budget and doing wonderful things one child at a time. Tony & Kay Sollitto, Antigo, WI



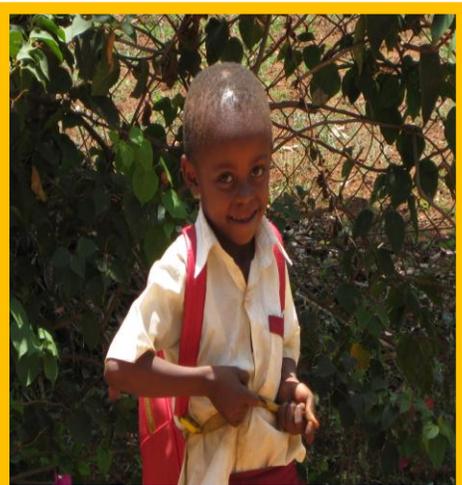
SS Mary & Hyacinth Rosary Society sponsors a Baked Potato Salad Luncheon each September. Part of the profit is used to sponsor our student, Sylvia, from Uganda. Her letters that we receive once or twice a year are read at our meetings and the ladies really enjoy them, plus we've seen progress in her writing skills over the years! We also remember her April birthday with a card and a gift of money. Joyce Sharon, Treasurer, Antigo, WI

Our "son and daughter" we sponsor through Living Waters has been a truly enriching experience for my husband and me. The amount we send to our "children" in Africa is minimal, paid quarterly and benefits the children tremendously in their education. We know who our "children" are because we have received pictures and letters from them letting us know how they are doing and they are ever so grateful for our help. Living Waters is a wonderful organization and they make it so easy to help our "children" in Africa. Please consider sponsoring a child from Africa through Living Waters International. The benefits that you and your "child" will reap from this experience are very rewarding. Dan & Brenda Bradley, Green Bay, WI



## Living Waters International – Your Donation Counts

### STUDENT SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM



Give a gift that lasts a lifetime. Sponsor a student's education in East Africa!

In the part of Africa hardest hit by AIDS, many children are denied even the most basic necessities of life. Your sponsorship of \$25/month will help one of these children to a brighter future. Your contribution provides support for school tuition fees, books and school supplies, clothing, food, shelter and health care.

*To sponsor a child or make a donation contact us at [www.livingwatersinternational.org](http://www.livingwatersinternational.org) or 866.220.8981 or see enclosed form.*



