

New Hope for Children

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Registered Charity No. 1124015

Dear Friends,

April 2021

Colossians 3:23-24 tells us ⁴²³ ***And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, ²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.*** What a great guide and blessing! When we, as believers, give the best of ourselves, we are showing our gratefulness for the reward of salvation that is to come! We have seen so many times how the Lord also blesses and rewards our hard work here on earth.

OUR CHILDREN ARE BACK IN SCHOOL, PRAISE GOD! I am so proud of our team; they have worked so hard on the extensive biosecurity protocols and to get all the appropriate safety measures in place. WE ARE AMONG THE FIRST APPROVED SCHOOLS IN BOGOTA! Many other schools with approved protocols have had to wait for an inspection from the Health Department, however, Praise God we were approved just on the strength of our protocols. Another victory for our team and reward for their hard work. At present, schools are allowed only 35% of their pupils in on any specific day. We have one group Mondays, another Tuesdays, and another Wednesdays. On Thursdays, children are not allowed to attend school to help keep down circulation on public transport. On Fridays, the children who will most benefit from additional face to face teaching join us for a second day. Jeanene and I were at school to welcome each of the groups back, and the children were jumping for joy, and so were we! The school is looking fantastic, gleaming clean and specially decorated to welcome the children back! For the children that have had to endure such difficult conditions this is a real breakthrough. We will monitor how the situation progresses in school during the month to come and assess when the homes can be safely reopened. We are continuing to give out hundreds of food bags along with homework packs every two weeks to help our families and other needy people, however it is great to return to some resemblance of normality!

It is fantastic to see when God blesses the hard work of our children. The government here has begun offering what they call the "Generation E" (E stands for excellence) university scholarships. There were 10 awards offered here in Bogota, a city of 9 million people, and the student must come from absolute poverty. We are proud to announce that one was won by "D", one of our graduating students. This is an amazing opportunity for him, and he has now begun his studies in International Business at one of the best universities in Colombia. He was also awarded the equivalent of a monthly minimum wage to cover his transport and other study costs. Praise God for such an amazing award for such a hard-working student. "D" (16) wrote us a letter of gratitude, *"Dear Mama Jeanene and Papa Richard, I am grateful for your example, you motivated me to learn and do my best. However, I cannot deny the reason of why I feel I won this amazing award. I love the Lord with my whole heart, I read his word every day and I have dedicated my life to him. I knew I would NEVER be able to go to the university, I have siblings and the funds are few. You taught us to pray and do our best, I did, and **God answered Me**".* God has truly blessed "D's" hard work!

We have the privilege of working hard to distribute God's provision for many needy people. We know food is important to God and we hope this story blesses your heart: We are convinced that, just like in the Bible stories of the fish and loaves, God multiplies His provision, because our numbers just don't add up! We had given away 6,000 bags of food in 2020 and there was one **final** large box of food left in December, **when we counted there were 46 food bags left in this box.** A pastor called requesting help for 30 families in need - we gave them 60 bags, then 10 bags were given to the neighbourhood bible study group and several to those who knocked on our door, **so that is more than 70 bags that were given away from that box. The best bit is we started 2021 with 52 bags of food in that same box!** Those bags were given away on the first day of school, so now the **BOX** is officially empty! You do the maths..... **only God could do this!** Jeanene asked the parents if they felt Children's Vision had done enough during the pandemic. Many said we had been their **ONLY** help during these hard times. Three parents were standing together, and one mum said "I need to tell you what has happened in my home. I have canisters for all the food you give us, one for rice, lentils, pasta, beans, sugar and so on. I have a cup in each canister. **Since I have received food from Children's Vision, when I serve, my cup is always full, but I have never seen the bottom of the canister. I scoop, it multiplies, it is always full, and I have so much I can share with others too.**" The other mother turned towards her and said **"Really, that is what is happening in my house!"** The other father looked up in amazement and said, **"in mine too!"** Glory to God for all that He is doing to help these needy families. The multiplication has truly been a reward for the hard work done to help all those that we can.



Trustees: Richard Sanderson, Christine Hodgson, Margaret Swift and David Hodgson

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Christmas 2020 was a little different, we were determined it should be safe (socially distanced) and still incredibly special. Although the new Blessings building is not fully finished, as a one off we were able to use the NEW 2nd floor lunchroom / main auditorium. It took 2 months on and off to pack all the gifts. Each bag had the child's full name, date of birth, their picture, and a bow. The next job was to find special gifts and clothes, followed by wrapping the presents, no small task! We organised the bags by families, arrival times and days. The families came 10 at a time, 3 times a day for a week. Not one family missed their appointed time. **The children's response as they walked into the new building for the first time was so special, as their mouths dropped open, and their little eyes began to roam around the room.... followed by "wow".** Each family sat at their own table, the Christmas story was told, pictures were taken by the Christmas tree, and the sound of giggles filled the room as the children opened their gifts. The Joy of Christmas! There are never two Christmases the same, and 2020 was no different, as there was an extra special gift on the way! When 8-year-old "H" opened her gift, she beamed the biggest smile and said, "now I have something to give my baby brother in my mummy's tummy." It was a handmade soft beautiful blue winter hat. She began to tell us how concerned she was that Baby "D", did not have anything. We had not realised that mum was due to give birth in the next couple of days. So, we asked her to give us a few minutes, and we did an **Emergency Baby Shower** in between our families Christmases. Then, labour pains started as she rubbed her tummy telling baby "D" that he could come now! He did however wait a couple of days more, and then this miracle of life was born. The mum told us later how grateful she was, God's provision for help was supplied with perfect timing and we got to be the channel of his blessing!

We have been working hard to finish our new Blessings building. We have seen God at work and His blessing there too! Back before the pandemic Children's Vision had been given a special grant from a Rotary Club in the USA. When you normally serve 600 meals a day, fridges and freezers are extremely important. We had dreamed for years of walk-in fridges and freezers and now we have them! We are so excited to have these new additions to our kitchen equipment which will allow us to buy more food products in bulk, to reduce costs and therefore help more people. Also, as part of this pre-pandemic grant came industrial ovens, dishwashers and the machine that will cause the most excitement, an ice cream / yoghurt machine! We have been trying every way possible to get this important project finished because of the joy and transformation that it will bring to so many, young and old alike. We needed more hands, and a ministry friend here in Colombia offered us two teams of young men and women to help. They worked so hard and with their help the 3rd floor is now finished, along with the 2nd and 4th. The 5th floor is very advanced and on the 1st floor we have been working hard to get the final piece of the electrical system in place. We still have a little way to go but we can already see the fruits of the hard work of many volunteers and our Colombian building team. We hope to be finished by the beginning of May! Thank you, thank you to God and to everyone who has helped to make this project possible, you have contributed to the changing of lives and transforming of futures of many needy people, bringing lots and lots of happy days.

We pray and trust in God's protection and provision for you all during these difficult times. Jeanene and I have again been unable to do our normal presentations due to the pandemic. Thank you, thank you so very much to those who have continued to pray for and support us in such a faithful way. We very much hope that everyone will enjoy the photo pages that go with this newsletter.

At some point in April, we will be sending out, via e-mail, the link to a pre-recorded Bible teaching/preaching accompanied by some type of audio-visual update of the work, firstly for churches to show to their congregations, and then finally to all our individual supporters. If you don't normally receive our newsletters electronically, then please get in touch, either via telephone or e-mail (as on the letterhead) and we will make sure you are added to the list. In faith we have opened the diary for an October 2021 speaking trip. If you are interested in booking a date, please make contact as soon as possible.

*With blessings and hugs,
Richard and Jeanene Sanderson and our large Bogota family.*

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Please help support our large family going forward: food, staff wages, medical care, gas, water, electric, telephone, transport, maintenance, school supplies, and new buildings among others! Please join with us in prayer for the expansion of our UK support, we are very much looking for new opportunities to share about our work and if you or a contact would like to book a free presentation, for any time of the year, then please contact UK Diary Planner Ruth Brierley on 07538 887305.



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