



November 21, 2022

Dear friends of ChristAid,

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.” Thus begins Charles Dickens’s book, A Tale of Two Cities. The same could be said about 2022 as ChristAid continues its ministry in Uganda. It was a great year with many reasons for celebration as you will read in this letter. It was also an extremely challenging year for the people who live in Uganda with prices for food, fuel, and almost everything soaring to unprecedented heights. Of course, struggles faced by the people of Uganda translate into new challenges and opportunities for ChristAid to share the love and provision of God with them.

It was the best of times. There were numerous reasons for celebration as some projects reached completion. The first three homeless Grandmas moved into the Grandma Village in the fall of 2021. In 2022, the construction of the Grandma Village was completed. There are presently seven Grandmas living in the Village with an eighth to move in soon. Five duplexes are complete, as well as two latrines and the gazebo providing a place for the Grandmas to meet and worship. Final work is being done on the kitchen that will provide a building so the Grandmas can stay dry even when they cook during the rainy season. Finally, the gardens are mature and producing vegetables and bananas for the Grandmas to eat.

Schools in Uganda opened again in January 2022 after being closed for 18 months because of Covid. The primary school opened with over 850 students and the preschool opened with 200. In addition, the secondary school opened with an enrollment of 315. Much more about that later.

Construction on the office and apartment building continued after issues with a contractor disappearing with his work left undone. In spite of that, the outside structure is complete. Presently, windows are being installed, plastering of the structure is being done and a security fence is being built. That leaves primarily the inside finishing to do before ChristAid can begin to see sustainable income from the building.

A Grandma received a new house in 2022 and the Grandmas continued to receive their monthly stipend and health care. Truly, it was the best of times.

It was also the worst of times. Because of inflation caused by Covid and the war in Ukraine from which Uganda receives much of its wheat, many in Uganda are struggling to feed themselves and their families. Furthermore, reports suggest that one-third of students who were in school prior to Covid will not return because their parents cannot pay their fees.

Those same issues have created huge challenges for the newly opened ChristAid Secondary School. The cost of feeding the students has tripled from the original budgeted amount forcing the administration to decide between feeding the students and paying the teachers. We have stepped in to help with the teachers’ pay, but the budgetary struggles remain.

More than \$40,000 was raised at the fall banquet and we thank all who contributed. Those funds will make it possible to complete our first two teacher housing units so that our headmasters can move into them. They will also provide the funds necessary to remodel the present two apartments where the headmasters are staying into rooms useable by the secondary school, pay the secondary school teachers for the rest of this year, and purchase curriculum materials needed for next year.

We are working with the headmaster of the school to balance next year's secondary school budget which is a challenge because of the increased costs of nearly everything. Increasing the number of students to 500 is planned which will help offset additional expenses through additional tuition payments. That, however, creates the need for additional space, books, and desks. It is our plan to help with those initial expenses so that the school can cover its day-to-day expenses through its own income.

Can you help? As you think about your end-of-the-year giving, please consider helping the ChristAid Secondary School continue to provide a quality Christian education to the young people of Uganda. Again, we thank those who have already contributed to help the secondary school at the fall banquet. Especially for those who were unable to attend, please consider what you might be able to do to help. As always, we truly appreciate your support and your prayers.

Peace,

Bruce Van Dusseldorp
Executive Director, ChristAid International