

With lots of green grass, blooming flowers, and cold rains it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas around here. We hope this finds you well as you prepare to celebrate the season and the birth of our savior.

A BIGGER STORY



For All That You Have Done

As another school term closes we reflect on all that we have to be thankful for. We have been blessed to be a part of what the Lord has been doing in the life of staff and students at RVA, their families and those in the community of Kijabe.

Accreditation: RVA is currently going through our Middle States Association of Schools accreditation process, which means meetings, meetings, and more meetings! we both are serving on separate committees, trying to come up with student and school performance objectives, measures, and action plans. Amidst all the big words and fancy lingo, it is actually a very interesting process examining what we are currently doing as a school and where we want to go in the next few years.



Spiritual Emphasis Week:

This past October, we were blessed to have a speaker from the Chicago area. Youth pastor, David Griffen, came to RVA to share with us on the topic of "Surrender." Using a dresser as an illustration, he walked us through areas of our lives and challenged us, staff and students alike, to surrender all to Jesus. My favorite quote of the week — "Why should I surrender? Because there is no better way to live!"

Part of the "BIGGER PICTURE" of AIM!
During AIM's annual Spiritual Life Conference, held at RVA, we were reminded of AIM's mission — "Christ centered churches among



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... (cont. from page 1)

all African peoples.” Where do we fit into that mission? We have the privilege of teaching, training, coaching, mentoring, correcting, and loving the children of those who are on the front lines of this ministry. We are in the business of always making disciples. RVA is host to over 22 different nationalities. In my 5th grade class of 18 students, there are 7 nationalities represented. And of those parents, we have doctors, nurses, teachers, and others serving in many difficult locations, some who even work in “creative access nations” reaching the unreached. We feel privileged to be a small piece of the large puzzle of reaching people for Christ and raising up the next generation to do the same.

Roads: Kenyan roads are notorious for being dangerous and not well maintained. In our opinion one of the worst roads in Kenya is the one that leads into our community. It is in the process of being repaired, but as with any repair things have to get worse before they get better. On top of the road work, we are beginning to encounter “El Nino” type weather, with unusually heavy rains. Steep hills, massive potholes, and lots of mud, oh what fun.



Visitors from Michigan – We have been blessed to have several visitors from the US this past school term! It is always such a treat to see familiar faces on this side of the ocean! Thank you for encouraging us with your visits!

Desperate Times - There are two types of people out here. Those who work hard to provide for themselves and their families and those who take from those who do. Our dear friend Esther is one of the former. We’ve known her since our first day in Kenya over 14 years ago. Esther, a single mom has worked hard to put her three children through school and provide for their daily needs and well being, all while



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supporting and caring for her aging mother. Several years ago Esther invested in a dairy cow that she purchased as a calf and raised to maturity. Her cow was pregnant and very near giving birth which would not only provide a second cow but also provide a steady and reliable source of milk for Esther and her family. Recently someone, or someones, (of the later group) came in the night and stole Esther’s cow and two others from her neighbors and slaughtered them in the nearby forest. They took the choicest parts of meat (most likely to sell) and left the rest to rot in the forest.



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As you can imagine this was a devastating blow to Esther and her family as well as her other two neighbors who also lost their cows.

People often ask us if there are any specific needs that they can contribute to or help with in any way. This is one of those areas of need. If you so feel led to help provide a new cow for Esther we've made a way to do so. A dairy cow in this country costs about \$400-\$600 US. If you feel led to help Esther and her family, let us know and we can give you information on providing assistance.

Advent — This year as we are in the days leading up to Christmas, I am challenged to think of the anticipation and hope that that this time of year brings. I have been reading in Isaiah about the coming of the Messiah. Just as people were longing for the Messiah's birth in those days, we long for Jesus's second coming. We live in a world full of evil and terror. The climate of our world is changing to one that can feel unsafe and terrifying at times. We cling to the hope of Jesus returning and that every corner of the world will have a chance to hear the name of Jesus proclaimed!



Praise & Prayer...

- **Praise that Jeff's parents are visiting** us during our December break. It is great to see them face-to-face after about 1-1/2 years apart. Jeff's mom, Louise has had several health issues recently, so we are thankful she is able to make this trip.
- With the current condition of our road and the poor weather, please **pray for safety** as we navigate the challenges of bring nearly 400 students back to campus on January 2.
- **We appreciate your prayers** for our family! Megan is in 8th grade, Lyndsey is 5th grade and Ian in 3rd grade. Pray that we would lead and guide our children to love Jesus more and more each day.
- Please **pray for strength** and for joy in our every day jobs. Jeff continues to serve as dean of students and Iovellen as the 5th grade teacher.

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You are receiving this email because you have partnered with Jeff and Joyellen investing in lives that Change the World.

Our mailing address is:

RVA

PO Box 80

Kijabe 00220, Kenya