

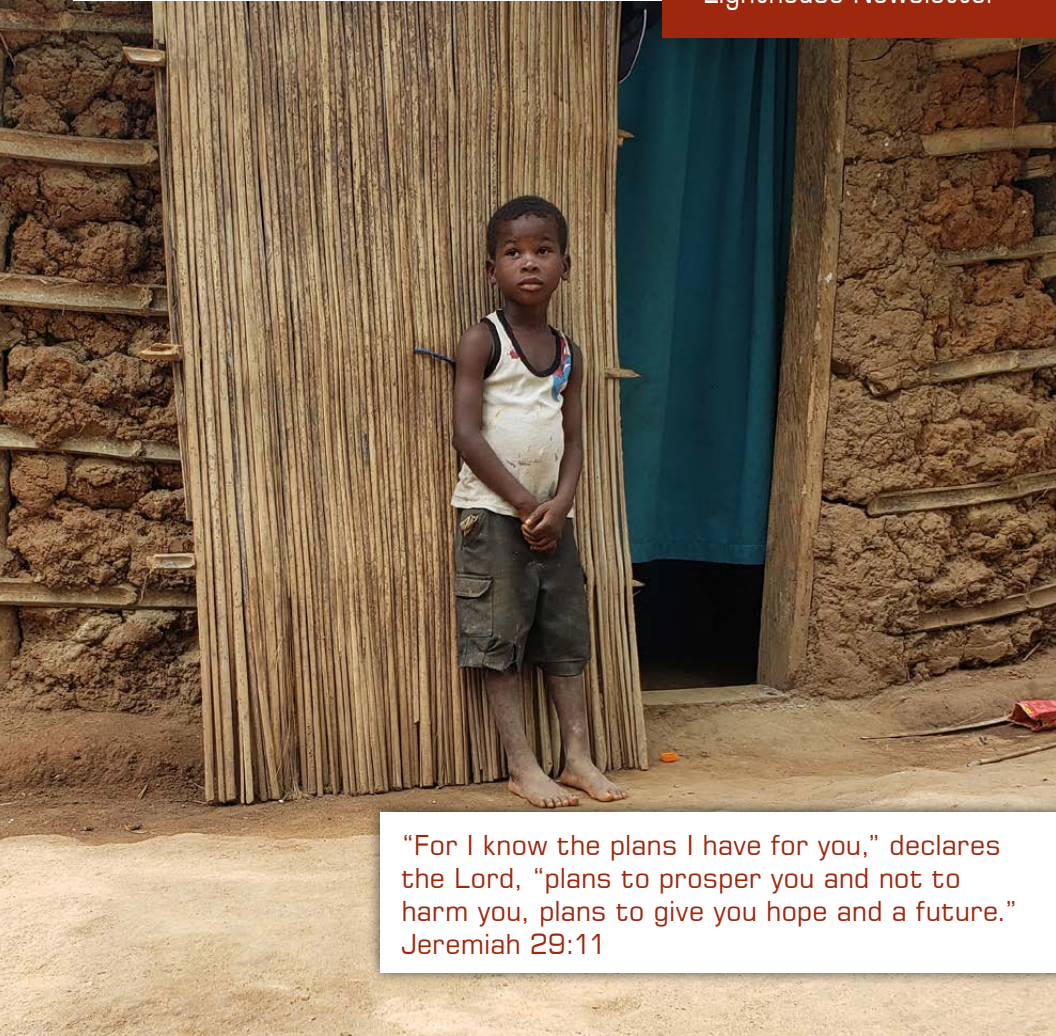


# LIGHTHOUSE

MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

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Lighthouse Newsletter



“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”  
Jeremiah 29:11

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# Children's Home

The Charis Shepherd Vineyard Children's Home (formerly Lighthouse Childrens Home) has built up a good reputation with the Department of Social Welfare. Because of this, the home receives many referrals or cases from the Department.

One such case involved 2 girls from Nigeria. The girls were intercepted at immigrations with a Ghanaian woman who was smuggling them for sex trade. The Department initially requested that the girls remain at the home for a week. The stay lengthened out to 3 months before the girls were flown back to their parents. They have since called back to the children's home and are happy to be home with their parents.

In another situation, 33 children were caught at immigration. The home, however, was not able to take in a group of that size.

Because of this, the home has become a transition place for children who need only a short stay while Social Welfare finds a solution for the situation the child is facing.

There are also children who

remain for a longer time. The ultimate goal of the children's home is re-unification with the child's family. This may include mother, father, grandparent, sibling, aunt or uncle.... In order for re-unification to take place with a family member there must be both willingness and ability. If one of these aspects is missing they keep working with the family.

The twins, Praise and Blessing have recently been re-unified with their mother. Theirs was a long process. Their mother had mental challenges when they were born and was not able to care for them well. Since then she had not been willing to take the girls back into her care until her pastor was able to work through that with her. Their older brother was willing to have them live with him but was not capable because of drug abuse. Their aunt was also willing but involved in the drug trade.

Children must be monitored for 5 years after they leave the home. Every 3 months for 2 years and then every 6 months for the next 2 years. Temporary placements do not require this follow-up. This ensures the re-

unification process has been successful and the child is safe and healthy.

During a school holiday break such as Easter, many children go home to their family.... If they know where their family is. This gives the child a chance to remain connected with family members. It is good for bonding, but also gives the child an appreciation for what they have at the children's home. On their visit to their family, they may go to a town with no electricity, lights, or running water. At the home they eat chicken but with their family may need to share a tin of sardines with 5 siblings. At the home they each have their own bed, but with their family they might sleep under a mosquito net on a bamboo mat in a one-room mud hut.

The home is held to high standards by the government and the Department of Social Welfare. It is good for children's homes in Ghana to have a set of regulations to abide by as this ensures quality of care for the children. However it does create its own set of challenges as the children become accustomed to a higher standard of living than they may experience when

they return to their family.

During a break when the children visit family and the home has fewer residents, the staff take the opportunity to go out and do assessments for reunifications. The re-unification process involves a lot of time, effort and work on the part of the home's staff.

This year, the home saw the graduation of 5 children who completed their basic education. These children are now awaiting the results of the exams for them to further their education. They share their journey so far:

## THE GENESIS



I am Stephen Owusu (locally known as Kwabena), I escaped from home because after the demise of my mother, my

Auntie who took custody of me didn't have the means to take me back to school. The conditions I had to go through as a little child caused me to silently run away from home. When I was finally brought to the Charis Shepherd Vineyard by the Department of Social Welfare, I felt hopeless.

My hope came alive when I was enrolled in school (St. Lawrence Catholic Basic School) for me to continue my education and pursue my dream of becoming a soldier.

Today, I have graduated at the basic level of education. I have been reunified to my family after seven years stay at the home. I am now well built up to face the realities the world has to offer which I couldn't face as a child many years ago when I took to the street.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to who I am today.

By Stephen Owusu

## **MY HOPE RESTORED**

I am Mary and I was admitted into the Charis Shepherd Vineyard Home on 30th March 2015 after I was missing from home for two years not knowing where I came from. My mother handed me over to a friend who was



a trader at Twifo Praso. Even though she promised my mother of educating me, the story was different. God being so good, Social Enquiry Investigations were launched for me and my family was traced at Bogoso. To my family it was a dream to have thought that I would return home. Everyone thought I had been used for rituals but God had turned around my destiny through the great work of Charis Shepherd Vineyard and its stakeholders.

Life filled my mother not for the joy that I was found but the fact that the Home has groomed me with good moral living and godly standards. I have been reunified to my family but I hope to come back to the home and be a blessing as well.

By Mary Eshun

## **THOUGH HER BEGINNING WAS SHATTERED**

Ramatu's hope of completing her basic education and attaining her life dream





was diminishing by the day. This challenge was spanning from the death of her father which made her mother fall into huge debt from the final funeral rites. Ramatu started missing school frequently which affected her performance and her confidence. The bankruptcy of the mother got so serious that the mother together with her and two other siblings were evicted from their house which made them relocate to an uncompleted building where they slept and lived. By grace she got the opportunity to be admitted to Charis Shepherd Vineyard which has reshaped her. Today even though she has been reunified to her family, she feels better equipped for life than it used to be.

Ramatu has now completed her basic education. This day she said she will never forget when she was handed over to her mother on the day

of reunification by Patience the coordinator from Social Welfare.

By Sylvester for Ramatu Adams

## **THE UNBELIEVABLE REINTEGRATION**



I was a very little boy when I went missing. This event was recorded one day when I was taking my father's cattle, sheep and goats for grazing. One of the animals went missing and my Father said I shouldn't return home until I found it. I harbored the fear of being abused by my father which was a usual thing. I then ran away in an attempt to relocate my mother who I had no idea where was. I was found by a Good Samaritan who took me to the police and department of social welfare who assigned me to the Charis Shepherd Vineyard. One day after almost over 7 years of being in the Home my family was located at Agona

Kweyarko after a prolonged Social Enquiry Investigation which was financed by the Home. The picture below was the first time I saw my mother whose face was even new to me. May the good Lord bless Charis Shepherd Vineyard and her donors community in Canada for such great reintegration.

I have completed my



Mud Huts



A bedroom at the home where each child has their own bed and closet.

basic education and have been reunified to my family. I'm now very hopeful for life outside the home more especially because even though I had a Muslim background, I have accepted the Lord Jesus as my personal savior also serving in His vineyard as a sound engineer in my church.

By Abdul Bashed



Inside a one-room mudhut where the entire family would sleep and store their belongings.

# Board Report

*Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,  
Glory to God in the highest,  
And on earth peace,  
Good will toward men.*

Luke 2:14

The angels introduced the birth of Jesus with great joy and among other promises, the promise of goodwill from God to men. “Goodwill” is defined in simple terms as a helpful, friendly, and cooperative attitude. Its humbling to consider that a sovereign and perfect Creator can express good will to the very created beings who deliberately spurned a relationship with Him. The offering of goodwill to us regardless of how undeserving we are of it should move us a deeper gratefulness to God for his offer of loving forgiveness.

When followers of Jesus fully grasp the goodwill that the Father showed us through his Son, the response is to reciprocate that goodwill back to the Father. How is that done? Jesus tells us that whatever we do to the “least of these” we do to Him. That gives us a window into the heart of the Father and how we can respond to the goodwill that has been shown to us.

As a board member, I have the privilege of seeing firsthand how many of you from our own community have shown goodwill to children in Ghana and people in Haiti through your generous support in prayer and monetary donations. Children in Ghana have been blessed with consistent funding for food, shelter, and caregivers, the purchase of a bus for transportation, and funding for school tuition. Because of generous goodwill, the school in Haiti continues to operate while also funding some humanitarian aid as the situation in Haiti becomes increasingly more dire.

The goodwill that you as a follower of Jesus show to people is one way that you can offer goodwill back to the Father and also spread the good news of the gospel!

May you and your family be blessed by God as you use your resources and gifts to show goodwill to those around you, like the Father showed to us through the baby Jesus.

On behalf of the board, Calvin Frey

# Lighthouse Ministries International

[www.lighthouseministriesint.org](http://www.lighthouseministriesint.org)

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## Thank You!



As a family at Charis Shepherd Vineyard, we thought that getting into the newly built Home was the greatest gift God could give us. After moving to the new Home, there was this great challenge of how we will survive moving up to school and other important movement like to church and the market. This year the bus has been the greatest gift. Thanks to Our Donors and The Boards who ensure

that one of our greatest challenges has been levelled.

On the day of commissioning, the excitement written on the faces of the Board Members, Children and Staffs could not be hidden. We are grateful for this wonderful gift and we know that the God Lord will continue to bless you all.

By Sylvester

