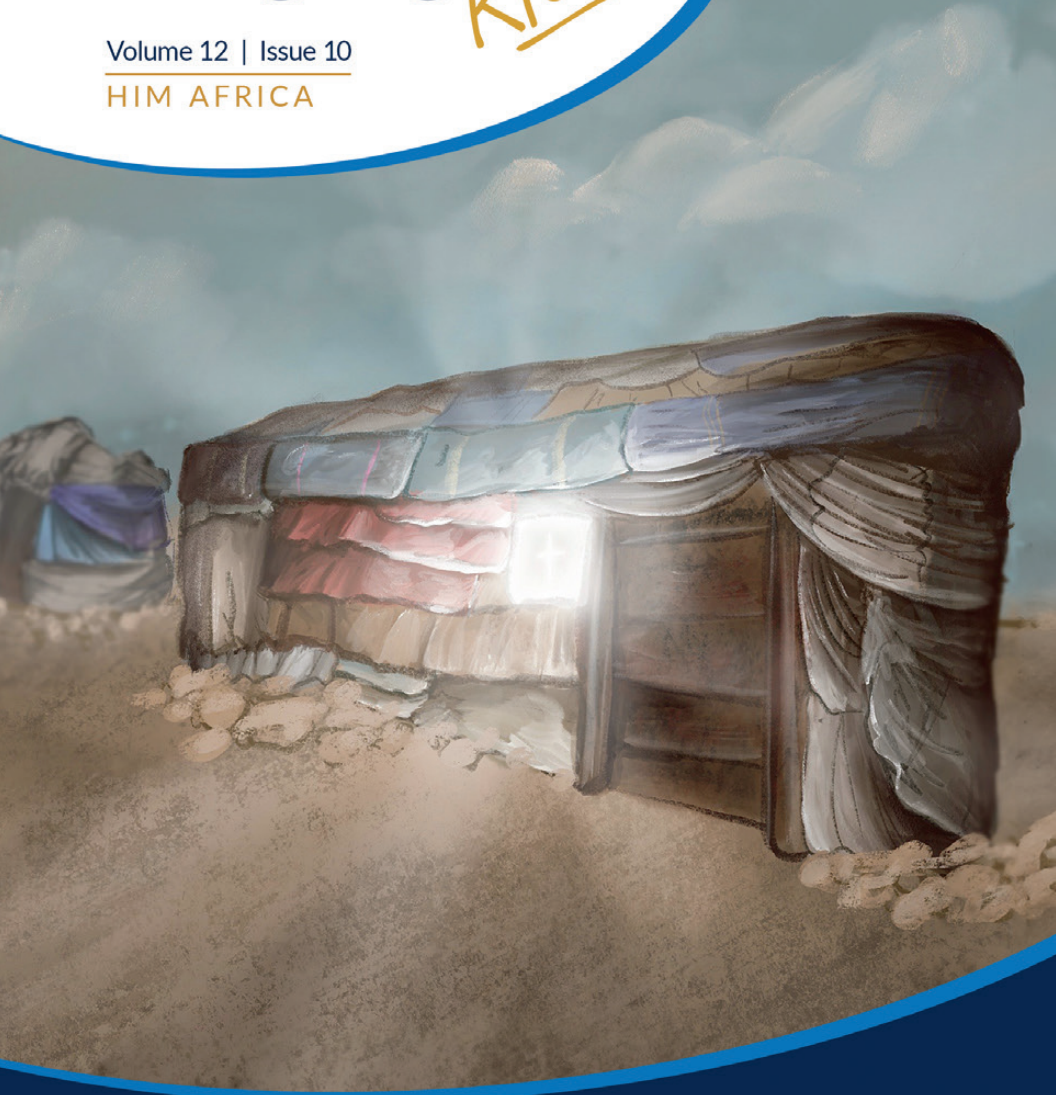


engage
Kids

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HIM AFRICA



THE LIGHT OF HOPE



HOMELESS AND HOPELESS

“Wake up! Louie, wake UP!” I heard Vashon but didn’t understand—until he held a cup of water over my head, that is.

“Okay, I’m up! What’s the hurry?”

Adjusting the duffel bag over his shoulder, Vashon tossed me an apple and said, “Did you forget? Today is trip day! We leave in ten.”

We cut down an almost thirty-hour drive a lot by flying to Zambia. I learned some things as we traveled. What do Kenya, Cameroon, Ghana, Zambia, Uganda, Tanzania, Ivory Coast, and Togo all have in common? If you answered they are all countries in Africa, you’d be correct! Vashon explained that these countries with fun-to-pronounce names also share a struggle: a lack of training and good books for their pastors.

I suddenly felt grateful for my school's library...and sad for those African pastors. I wondered how I could help.

Then we arrived at our destination. The Mayukwayukwa Refugee Camp in western Zambia is the oldest such camp in Africa. Vashon explained that people live in a refugee camp when they have to run away from their home country because of wars and lack of food. Over 23,000 people live here. They were only supposed to stay for a little while, but some have been here a long time.

Often families of six or more are crammed into two-room mud and wood huts topped with grass roofs. The roads are sandy and rutted due to heavy rains, but most people

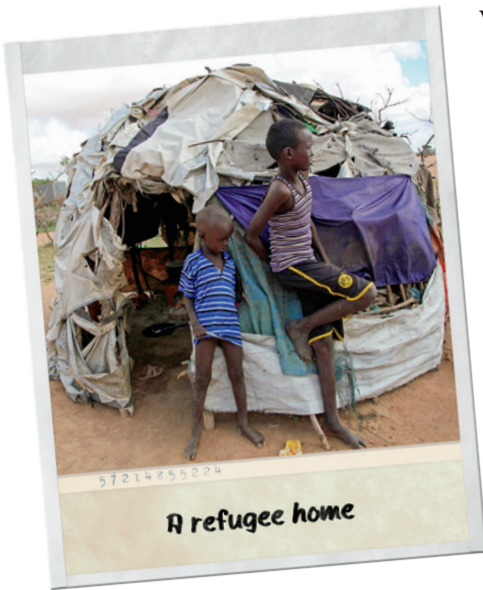
do not have a car. They walk or ride bikes. The five schools and few medical clinics sprinkled across the sixty-square miles of the camp are helpful but not enough. One clinic serves 8,000 people.

As we drove through the camp, I saw children playing in dirt yards. They made their own simple toys. Teens hauled water in giant plastic jugs. I saw men farming small plots of worn-out soil and women cooking simple meals over outdoor fires.

Their faces showed the strain of their challenges—hard living conditions and not knowing if or when they will get to return to their home countries.

“Vashon,” I finally said, “I thought you said this would be a GOOD trip. While interesting, this place also feels so very... hopeless. I can't leave Africa feeling like this!”

I was surprised when Vashon *smiled!* “You won't have to!” he said. “Come with me. There's someone I want you to meet.”





LIVING IN MAYUKWAYUKWA

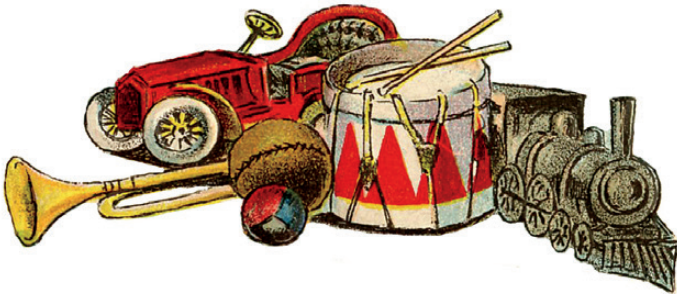
Louie and Vashon visited a refugee camp and saw what it's like to live there. How does the camp compare to where you live? Use the discussion prompts to talk with your family about what looks the same and what looks different.

In My World...

Houses are made of _____
Water comes from _____
Mom cooks on a _____
Schools are _____
Clothes are _____
Toys are made of _____
Medical treatment is _____

In Their World...

Houses are made of _____
Water comes from _____
Mom cooks on a _____
Schools are _____
Clothes are _____
Toys are made of _____
Medical treatment is _____

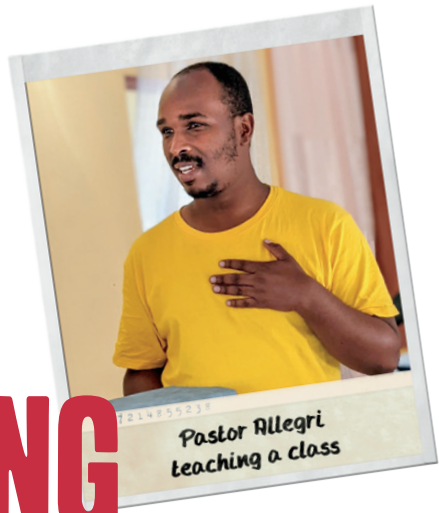




MEMORY VERSE

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. He who follows
Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

John 8:12 NKJV



BRINGING HOPE AND LIGHT

As we pulled to a stop, Vashon asked, “Louie, do you see that small building over there? The one with the bright light inside?”

“I do. Is that where we are headed?” Curious, I followed Vashon. He seemed to know what he was doing. A man stepped out and greeted us warmly.

“Vashon! It’s so good to see you! Come in. We are having class, but we can take a break to visit. Hello, my name is Pastor Allegri Parmigren.” Smiling brightly, Pastor Allegri shook my hand and led us inside, where several men were seated on backless benches, workbooks on their laps. “This is our school. Here we teach courses about the Bible, evangelism, and Christian leadership.”

Fascinated, I listened as Pastor Allegri shared that day’s topic of study, “The Life and Ministry of Jesus.” He showed us that the books were from Shepherd’s Global Classroom, a ministry that trains pastors and church leaders worldwide.

“These studies of God’s Word bring light and hope to the

refugees brought here by tragic circumstances. We pray they will carry this same light and hope with them back to their home countries someday.” Pastor Allegri’s face shone with excitement.

After a few more minutes in the classroom, we left Pastor Allegri to continue teaching and headed to our vehicle. That’s when Vashon told me Pastor Allegri and his wife were not in Mayukwayukwa because they had to be. Originally refugees themselves, they were given a chance to leave the poor conditions of the camp and make a new life somewhere else. But the needs in the camp had touched Pastor Allegri’s heart deeply, and he chose to stay because God called him to this unique ministry.

“Wow, Vashon! Thank you for introducing me to Pastor Allegri. I have been challenged by his choice to sacrifice comfort and share hope with these precious people.”

Vashon smiled. “I’m glad you enjoyed it. I wish we had time to take you to all sixteen countries where we provide training using Shepherd’s Global Classroom. Would you like to guess where we are headed next?”

Hmm. I wonder which country has the best food....

Signing off ’til next time,
Louie



Louie's Treehouse Lain



OVCN Spotlight: Poloko

Thirteen-year-old Poloko has been a part of the OVC program for several years. Poloko and her younger brother and sister all live with their aunt. Poloko loves Jesus, Romans 10:9, and singing gospel songs. She has plans to become a chef someday. Maybe God will use her to share the light of God's love along with the tasty food she prepares.



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