

**LIVING
PROOF**

*Christmas
Uniforms*

Christmas 2020

Believe it or not, it is that time of year again! It is the time of year when we begin our annual fundraising drive to provide Christmas for our 1500 Living Proof children. As you well know, 2020 has been a year like no other. This has also been the case in Zimbabwe.

For most of our LP kids, it has been a very challenging and confusing year. Imagine living in rural Africa, without electricity, internet, TV or any of the means of news, information, updates and communication that we are so accustomed to. Imagine hearing about this pandemic and suddenly your school and your church is shut down. Imagine hearing stories about people getting arrested and beaten for being found out in the townships and on the streets because of nationwide mandatory stay at home orders. Imagine what must be going through these children's minds.

Fortunately, things began moving back toward normal around the end of September as schools started opening for the higher grades and hopefully, by the beginning of November, all children will be back in school. Churches are also opening up again, but just like here in the states, things are nowhere near being "back to normal."

Add to all of this the devastating economic hardships that Zimbabwe had already been facing even before the pandemic, and we are now looking at perhaps the most difficult season yet. Fortunately, thanks to a grant from IDES (International Disaster Emergency Service) we were able to provide relief in the way of food and other essential items to over 600 families connected with our churches and mission in September. Still, it has been a very hard year in Zimbabwe.

So here we are looking ahead to Christmas 2020!



For most children, Christmas is their favorite time of year. The same is true for our Living Proof children! It is the highpoint of the year for three key reasons:

1. As children raised in the Christian heritage and in HVCM mission schools, Christmas is a season of Joy and celebrating the birth of Christ our

Lord. Even among the poorest, it is a season of special songs, worship and happiness. Christmas, after all, doesn't come from a store!

2. A second reason the LP kids get so excited at Christmas is the anticipation of the annual Living Proof Christmas party

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and feast! Hands down, this is the greatest meal these children have all year. Chicken, sadza, rice, bread, fruit, cake with icing and cokes! It is a little taste of heaven!

3. Of course, the third reason the kids get so excited this time of year is in anticipation of a new school uniform that they will receive as a Christmas gift from you, their U.S. sponsor. It is hard for some of us to understand just how much a new school uniform means to these children and their families. It is such a source of pride to be able to go to school with a nice, new, clean uniform, shoes and socks. Last year, we were able to purchase 1500 uniforms, all in the names of each child's U.S. sponsor.

Extenuating Circumstances

However, due to Covid-19 in Zimbabwe, we were unable to deliver ALL of the uniforms to ALL of the rural schools before the government shut everything down. The uniforms had been purchased and have been sitting in our LP offices in Chiredzi during the shutdown.

So here is the situation: some of the LP kids received their uniforms, but a number of them did not receive them before the shutdown. Our plan for Christmas 2020 is to provide every LP child with a new school uniform as always. For some, this may mean they are just now receiving one already purchased from last year. For others, this may mean we need to purchase a new one because they outgrew the one they already received.

But that's not all!



For some time now our staff has wanted to provide a nice backpack and pair of flip flops to every Living Proof child, but we never wanted to ask for the additional funds because the uniform is always the greater need. However, with the unique set of circumstances this year we believe we can do both! If sponsors contribute the usual \$35 for

a Living Proof Christmas gift, we believe this will allow us to purchase the few additional uniforms needed to cover any changes in sizes (or various circumstances) and also allow us to purchase a nice backpack embroidered with Living Proof. Then every Living Proof child will receive their new uniform, shoes, socks, flip flops and Living Proof embroidered backpack from their U.S. sponsor. What a Christmas party it will be!

Uplift Their Spirits This Christmas

We would really love to uplift their spirits this Christmas after such a rough year. Taking advantage of this unique opportunity and providing the additional gift while only asking for \$35 from those that are able to give will do just that.

So once again, if you would like to purchase the Christmas gift for your LP child (or children), you can send a check for \$35 to: HVCM, P.O. Box 686, Grayson, KY 41143 and write "Christmas Gift" in the memo. You may also give online by going to our website www.hippovalley.org/christmas-gifts1.html or call/email the office to have us run your card/account on file (606-474-3460 or hvcm@hippovalley.org).

And... If the Lord has especially blessed you this year, you might consider purchasing more than one. This will provide for those kids whose sponsors were unable to give this year. We want every single child in the LP program to get their Christmas gift. If you can, take a minute and go to our website to see a short video message from one of our Living Proof parents. The gift means so much to them! Tatenda and Kisimusi yakanaka!! (Thank you and Merry Christmas), HVCM Office Staff.

PLEASE NOTE:

*Please note all donations should be sent in by December 1st.