



Sakila Sponsorship Program

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Dear Sponsors and Supporters,

May 2010

Godwin's homecoming, after visiting his father in April, was delayed by the volcano in Iceland. His six-year-old daughter, Ayanna, muttered under her breath, "stupid, stupid volcano!" She was *beyond* ready for her Daddy to come home! Godwin's dear wife, Kim, writes this month's story in honor of her mother-in-law, Helen who went to be with her Lord on February 1st.

It has taken me a few weeks to get to a place where I could sit down and write this tribute without breaking down in tears. There are many women who have civil relationships with their mothers-in-law, but don't necessarily count them as friends...I am not one of them. I was blessed to have a mother-in-law that I loved from the moment I met her and I wanted to share that memory with you.

When Godwin and I were engaged, we decided it would be good for me to travel to Tanzania and visit for a couple of months to see what my future home was like. So in October of 1994, I journeyed half way around the world to see what I had agreed to. I arrived late one evening and was welcomed by a huge group of women at the airport, singing and dancing and wrapping me in beautifully colored clothes. I could make out a few familiar faces; Godwin, Eliudi, & Mama Helen, whom I had met one time when I was a young girl. They all scooped me up and we were whisked away to a waiting Land Rover that drove us off into the darkness of the African evening.

When we arrived at Eliudi and Helen's home, there were smiling faces everywhere I turned, welcoming me and greeting me in a language I didn't understand. We made our way to the dinner table where a huge, customary meal awaited us. As I sat down and everyone talked back and forth in Swahili, I felt a little intimidated by my inability to even communicate my gratefulness for the food before me. A young girl stepped forward and prayed over the meal and then normal dinner routine unfolded ...people chattering, dishes being passed, young girls coming in and out with more food to be brought to the table. When my eyes glanced up from the food on my plate they were met by the warmth of my future mother-in-law's eyes. Without hesitation and with no one else looking at us, she stuck out her tongue and crossed her eyes at me! I laughed to myself and instantly I knew I was at home. Many would ask why that memory sticks in my mind as an important one and I will tell you. From that moment forward, there was never a time in our relationship that I felt uncomfortable.



As soon as I set foot in Mama Helen's home, and make no mistake, it was her kingdom; I was part of the family. She welcomed, guided, loved, encouraged, and respected me every step of the way. I had the privilege of having a front row seat to a real life lesson on sacrificial giving. I watched as she opened her life and home to people from all walks of life. She took in the homeless and orphaned, gave to the widows, and listened to those who needed to be heard. She lived with such grace and strength that it is hard to imagine trying to even come close to that. So in my times of mourning and grief, I have found great comfort in my personal memories of this amazing woman.

And, when I watch my children get excited to collect things to send to Tanzania, I know her legacy of giving lives on in them. When they think of others who are in need, they are emulating a Godly woman, who followed hard after Christ. And when our eyes meet in a crowded place and they cross their eyes and stick out their tongues at Godwin and me, it's not a sign of disrespect, but a sign of honor to a woman who loved them more than they could imagine and whose legacy lives on! Nakupenda, Mama Helen. (I love you, Mama)

Thank you so much for continuing to send extra for food. We wish we could give each of you a hug of gratitude. You have not forgotten the struggle of your brothers and sisters in Sakila. We were able to send a significant amount of money with Godwin for the purchase of more beans and corn in April. And we will continue, with your help, to assist with food until the four containers shipped in March get there. With God's grace they will arrive in another 4 to 6 weeks. Please continue to pray for their safety. They are carrying, among other things, 20 tons of rice and computers for the school. Your prayers for rain have been heard! Praise the Lord — it has been raining in Sakila! Yahoo! Don't stop now. If the rains continue, when July comes they may be able to harvest the first crop they have had for a *year*.

We gather every other Tuesday at Christ Memorial Church in Poulsbo to pray together. This month it will be May 4th and 18th in the West Wing. We know most of you are unable to make it but you can still pray from wherever you are. That's what's fun about prayer...no distance is too far for our Lord to hear us.

One more bit of news:

By the time you receive this letter, Bishop's message given at the January Potluck will be posted on the website. Go to www.sakilasponsorship.org and click the **GALLERY** button, then click **Sakila Videos**, then click the one named **Bishop_Eliudi_Sermon_2010.mov**. Enjoy!

God bless you all so much!

Gene & Perraine Anderson

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