

Dearest Family and Friends,

Merry Christmas! It is hard to believe it is already half way through December! We sincerely hope that this letter finds you and all your loved ones well and enjoying this holiday season. As I (Valerie) take time to reflect on this past year I must admit that 2025 has been one of the hardest years of my life. There were moments that felt very dark but during this holiday season, the Lord keeps whispering to me that He is, and has always been, and will always be, the light in the darkness. He is so faithful. He never ever left us through all the ups and downs of this difficult year.

Some of you already know that the children and I spent over four months in America from the end of March until August. While our reason for needing this extended time in America was a difficult one (seeking mental health care for one of our children) we are still very grateful for the precious time that we were able to have with family and friends. There are some times in life when you need others to help you walk through things that you can't handle on your own and this was certainly one of those times. I am so grateful for my family and friends and even people who don't know us well who supported us, prayed for us, and surrounded us with love and care during some of my darkest moments as a mother. Watching a child struggle with mental health is extremely difficult. Thinking back on some of the things that God walked us through this year, I am filled with thanksgiving. I have indeed seen miracles. There are still difficult days but I am happy to say that our child who was struggling immensely is now doing pretty well and has made lots of progress. Thank you for continuing to hold us up in prayer. It is a long journey that we continue to walk and we navigate these challenges as they come, resting in the faithfulness of God.

I really wish I had good news about the church reopening but unfortunately we are still waiting. We continue to try to do what we can to fulfill the government's requirements, but it sometimes feels a bit like those requirements change frequently. We just trust that God is still in control. In the meantime, while we wait for the finances to do the remaining improvements on the building, we continue to minister in many other ways.

Appolinaire stays quite busy with his primary school which now has over 275 students!! He gets to invest in so many precious young lives through his leadership at the school. He gets to put his preaching and teaching skills to work discipling these eager young minds every day.

My (Valerie's) early childhood development center is going well despite some setbacks. We did not register as many children as we had hoped this year but we are having lots of fun with our 24 sweet little 3-5 year olds. In our 2024-2025 year we had 40 children in our center so we are hoping that in 2026 we can increase the number of children we are able to have benefit from our ECD (Early Childhood Development) Center. Pray

that the Lord will bring us the right children and the right staff to run our center well and be a blessing and a light to our community.

I (Valerie) continue to homeschool our three school-aged children who are now in eighth grade (Benjamin 14), sixth grade (Shami 12), and fifth grade (Kaneza 10). We love all the time we get to be together learning and exploring together. Homeschooling is certainly not always the “easy” road but it continues to be the best option for our family. Finding good quality schools in our area is a big challenge and there are lots of reasons that the Rwandan schools are not a good fit for our children so we are blessed that we can educate them at home. Homeschooling is relatively “new” and unknown especially in the town where we live but we have found a small community of likeminded people who we are blessed to call friends.

It is has also been fun to watch our kids grow and develop some new interests this past year. Shami (12) has really enjoyed getting into cycling and he can be seen riding his road bike most days with a few good cycling buddies around town. Shami also has five chickens that he is raising and caring for daily which has been a fun endeavor for him. Benjamin (14) is super into dogs and has a great time with our two dogs, Shadow and Rafiki. We have had Shadow for several years but Rafiki is a new addition to our family as of September. Wherever Benjamin is, you can always be sure that Rafiki is closeby. They are inseparable! We take the dogs on walks every afternoon and Benjamin has become quite the responsible dog trainer. Kaneza is my little social butterfly and loves nothing more than playing with her friends, most of whom are neighbor kids. She also enjoys helping out and loving on the little ones at our ECD. She has two rabbits that she takes care of and her female rabbit just gave birth this week to five babies! Little Noella, who is two, is the baby of the family and everyone really enjoys playing with her. She is certainly a little chatterbox and is always coming up with something sweet or funny to say.

Our two older children are doing well. Muhorakeye (25) now lives on her own in the capital city of Kigali where she is mostly doing temporary work that she finds in cooking or working events. You can pray that she will find a good steady job to help her develop in her future. Ivan (23) continues to live here at home. He works with Appolinaire at the primary school teaching computers and gym class. In the evenings, he is taking classes at a nearby university studying Rural development. It is a joy to see each of them doing well and thriving.

We are so very grateful for all of those who sacrifice to support our family and work here in Rwanda. We think of all of you so often and not a day goes by that we are not thankful for the chance to serve our Lord here in Rwanda. None of the things that we do or the people that we are able to help, would be possible without your prayers and support. So we say thank you!

We hope and pray that you will have a blessed Christmas celebrating Jesus, the LIGHT OF THE WORLD!

Sending lots of love,

The Ntiganzwa Family

Appolinaire, Valerie, Muhorakeye, Ivan, Benjamin, Shami, Kaneza, and Noella

Prayer Requests:

- 1) Health for the whole family (physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually)
- 2) Growth for our ECD and primary school
- 3) That the government would reopen our church!
- 4) Finances for improvements on the church building and school materials and books for the school.
- 5) That God would use all of our daily interactions with our students, friends and neighbors to show His love to all those that He brings into our path.
- 6) That our children would all be able to thrive in their education and lives here in Rwanda.
- 7) Our marriage and family life.

If you feel led to give to our ministry financially, through a one time gift or monthly support, you are do that in several ways. All donations are tax deductible.

**You can give online at: [www.cten.org/valeriepeters](http://www.cten.org/valeriepeters)**

**Or you can mail a check with a note attached “for Valerie and Appolinaire Ntiganzwa in Rwanda” to:**

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Good times with cousins in America



Nothing like a grandmother's love!



Kaneza with little Noella on her back.

Shami with his cycling bike!



dogs on the

Benjamin and his



Our little ECD graduating class of 2025



Some of the students at Appolinaire's primary school in the village.

