

Herald of Hope

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A SPECIAL GIFT FROM GOD

On a calm Sunday morning (July 24, 2022), an expectant mother came to Hope Christian Hospital to deliver a baby. She endured a couple of hours of waiting and the pain of childbirth to welcome her bundle of joy. Her joy of motherhood, however, was short-lived. When the midwife delivered her baby boy to her, she noticed that he was born without both arms (a condition known as phocomelia). At the sight of the baby, she broke into tears. Even though a lot of counseling had been done prior to handing over the baby to her to help her manage her expectations, she could not control her disappointment on seeing the baby.

Things moved from bad to worse when members of her family came to visit

her at the hospital and saw that the baby was without any arms from the shoulder outward. The family said they believed that the baby was a “spirit child” (meaning he had come from an evil spirit or was a manifestation of an evil spirit) so they wanted to perform some rituals and “send the baby away to the spirit world” (a statement that meant they would either kill the baby or abandon the baby in a forest to die). The hospital staff and staff of Hope Children’s Village (the Village of Hope’s children’s home) intervened and tried, without success, to convince the family against their decision. Next, we involved the Department of Social Welfare. Officials of the Department of Social Welfare did their best to convince the family not to end the baby’s life but to no avail.



A baby born without upper limbs



VILLAGE OF HOPE

Saving Lives and Serving Humanity

Rescuing. Repairing. Preparing. Propelling.

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LOCAL OVERSIGHT

The Elders of
Vertical Centre Church of Christ,
Community Six, Tema, Ghana.

SUPPORT

VOH-Ghana,
A 501(c)(3) Non-profit.

MINISTRIES

Hope Children’s Place
Hope Children’s Village
Hope Training Institute
Hope Christian Hospital
Hope Christian Academy
Hope Ridge School
Hope College
Agriculture
Church of Christ at Village of Hope
Campus Church of Christ - Ayawaso
Evangelism
Church Planting and Strengthening

Everyone knew that if the mother and members of her family were not convinced, no matter what the Department of Social Welfare and the Police will do, the family will eventually “send the baby away to the spirit world”. We got desperate to save the child. We found videos of Nick Vujicic and other people who were born without arms but have grown into useful adults, online to show to the family.

After watching the videos and much persuasion, we were able to convince the family that something good could come out of the baby and so he should not be “sent to the spirit world”. However, they felt that the entire family will be stigmatized by their community with the baby in their family so they did not want to have anything to do with the baby. They, therefore, left the baby with us at the Village of Hope. Even the mother, who had this baby in

her womb for nine months, willingly abandoned the baby and went away with her family without any remorse.

The Department of Social Welfare has facilitated the necessary paperwork for the baby to be admitted into residential care at the babies’ home of Village of Hope. He is currently receiving the best of care at the NICU at Hope Christian Hospital. He is expected to join other young ones at the babies’ home after he is discharged from the NICU.

As he starts this journey of life, we entreat you to remember him in your prayers. We are hopeful that God will do something great with his life.

"Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will receive me." (Psalm 27: 10) [!\[\]\(339a16584d5da0f0a3ca4e9ec17bf6a1_img.jpg\)](#)



The baby resting peacefully in the arms of Priscilla Ntim, the IT and Communications Manager (left) and also in his cot at the NICU (right).



Hope Christian Hospital's NICU - where the baby without arms is receiving the special care he needs.



Ernestina Asante (Nurse) and other staff of the NICU work around the clock to care for the baby.

"AKETE" TO "OBOLO"

UPDATE ON THE CHILD BORN PREMATURELY AT HOPE CHISTIAN HOSPITAL



Adeyepena Gyan was born prematurely at 28 weeks old on August 31, 2019. Almost all babies born that early in Ghana die owing to the absence of neonatal intensive care in most of the country. Death would surely have been her fate but for the kindness of God expressed through the generosity of many who contributed to enable Village of Hope establish a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Hope Christian Hospital. That facility saved her life.

Today, she is doing very well and growing healthily as a happy little beautiful girl.

Thank you for partnering with us to save the lives of many preterm babies such as "Akete." With your continuous help, we will continue to save many more babies born prematurely as well as abandoned and needy babies. [@](#)



Abigail Agbo, a NICU nurse, takes care of Adeyepena Gyan - an extremely premature baby



Left: Adeyepena, born at 28 weeks.
Right: Adeyepena, three years after her birth.



Adeyepena with Ernestina Asante (left), a nurse at Hope Chritian Hospital's NICU, and Joyce Ahor, Adeyepena's mother.

AN URGENT APPEAL FOR CHARLES BUKARI

Charles Bukari was not even a year old when his father died. When he was eight years old, his mother also died leaving behind Charles and his five siblings.

Life was extremely difficult for the children because they were completely abandoned by their parents' external families. They dropped out of school until Village of Hope came to their rescue in 2002.

Though a late starter in education, Charles worked diligently through the years and completed college in 2020. He has since been teaching and is currently a sixth-grade teacher.

Charles has a problem and needs your help. After a childhood sickness, suspected to be polio, his left leg shrank and became shorter than his right leg. He has, therefore, been limping since childhood. Now, after so many years of putting pressure on that leg, he experiences excruciating pain whenever he walks.

Specialist orthopedic surgeons have determined that he needs a complete total hip replacement at a cost of eight thousand, two hundred and seventy-seven U.S. dollars (\$8,277.00). Charles cannot afford to pay for the urgently needed surgery, and neither can we at the Village of Hope. We have recently paid for surgeries for Vera Sah and Patience Adu (see page 6) and have no funds to assist Charles.

Please help Charles Bukari to undergo surgery by contributing towards a fund to pay for the surgery. Earmark your check "Charles Bukari" or "surgery" and mail it to Village of Hope, P. O. Box 670394, Dallas, TX 75367. You may also donate online at www.thevohgroup.org/donate and designate your donation for Charles Bukari's surgery.



JOHN ARTHUR TRAVELS TO USA FOR STUDY ABOARD SEMESTER AT WEBSTER UNIVERSITY



John Arthur arrives at Village of Hope with his biological parents and younger sibling (December 21, 2006).

John Arthur was trafficked as a child to work on the Volta Lake. For several years, he worked as a slave catching and selling fish and running other errands for his master. He lived in harsh conditions and was subjected to inhumane treatment almost daily. One day, after being beaten mercilessly by his master, he ran away and sought shelter in the home of George Achibra, a school teacher. Achibra helped John to find and reunite with his biological parents, who were too poor to provide for his needs. On December 21, 2006, George Achibra, accompanied by John Arthur's parents, brought him to live at the Village of Hope. That was the beginning of John's long walk to dignity.

After completing elementary school at Hope Christian Academy and high school at Hope College, John Arthur gained admission to Webster University - Ghana Campus. The main campus of Webster University is in Saint Louis, Missouri but the university has campuses abroad, including a campus in Ghana. In late August 2022, John joined other students from all over the world at the Saint Louis campus of Webster University for a semester/study abroad program.

John Arthur's story from the shores of the Volta Lake as a fugitive slave child in Kete Krachi, Ghana to a citadel of knowledge at Webster University in Saint Louis, USA is an incredible story of the transforming power of God's love expressed through the goodness of His children. [📖](#)



John Arthur at Hope Children's Village (March 19, 2014)



John Arthur at Webster University - Ghana Campus (May 8, 2019)



Jason and Jennifer Hackmann welcome John Arthur at the Saint Louis Airport (August 25, 2022).



John Arthur at the Saint Louis, USA main campus of Webster University (September 17, 2022)

"RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD"

THE STORY OF RAPHAEL

Raphael is the ninth of ten children born to Pete Teye Narteh and Pauline Dede Ayongo. The entire family of 12 live in a two-bedroom mud house roofed with thatch in Ensuo, a rural community in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Like several other rural communities in Ghana, Ensuo has a poor road network, with neither access to electricity nor potable water. Most of the townspeople engage in cocoa farming to sustain their families.

Raphael's parents are no different. They engage in small-scale cocoa farming, and work as labourers on other cocoa farms when the need arises. Pete and Pauline's meagre earnings were almost always inadequate to provide for the basic needs of their family. Life in Ensuo was indeed unbearable for Raphael and his siblings. This informed Raphael's decision to seek greener pastures elsewhere, without the knowledge of his family. One day, while on an errand for his father, Raphael absconded to Accra. Not knowing his whereabouts, his parents reported to the village chief that their son was missing. Search parties searched for him in all the cocoa farms and forests around the village. His family searched for him in all the neighbouring towns and also made announcements of his disappearance at a radio station in Konongo (a town that is 5 miles away from Ensuo). He was nowhere to be found. His disappearance got his family and the entire village heartbroken and devastated.

Upon arrival in Accra, and with no relative to turn to, twelve-year-old Raphael got stranded on the streets of Kwame Nkrumah Circle (one of the business districts in Ghana). For days, he wandered about, surviving on leftover food from the roadside and waste bins. When night fell, he sometimes slept on the sidewalks and at other times at the bus stations or in front of closed shops. This was Raphael's way of life until he met a good Samaritan named Evans Cudjoe, who introduced him to the Reconciliation Ministry (a center that provides food and help for street children). Raphael spent his days at the shelter of Reconciliation Ministry and his nights on the streets.

On realizing that Raphael's situation was beyond the scope of Reconciliation Ministry, Evans Cudjoe, who is a social worker at the Reconciliation Ministry, reported the case to the Department of Social Welfare, after which investigations were carried out. The social investigations concluded that Raphael was a missing child who needed care and protection. Based on these findings, the Regional Director of the Department of Social Welfare arranged for Raphael to be admitted into residential care at Hope Training Institute, where he could learn a skill while we looked for his family.

On January 1, 2021, Raphael expressed interest in formal education and so was transferred from Hope Training Institute to Hope Children's Village. There, he was enrolled at Hope Christian Academy and is now in 4th grade. Raphael lives in Boateng House with other boys who are cared for by Samuel and Helena Otchere.



Raphael arrives at Hope Training Institute



Evans Cudjoe (left) and some staff of Hope Training Institute



Pauline Ayongo sheds tears of joy as she celebrates the return of her son Raphael.



The family expresses their gratitude to Village of Hope for protecting their son Raphael.

According to Ghana's "Children's Act, 1998," children in social care above eighteen years are to be reintegrated into society. Before reintegration is carried out from Village of Hope, however, we trace the background of our children to locate either the parent(s) or any surviving relative. When such family members are found, the children are allowed to spend time with them during holidays to enable the children get acquainted to their relatives, environment, culture and local dialect.

Through the efforts and hard work of our social workers, Raphael's family was located. It was all tears of joy when the news of Raphael's existence was broken. After several fruitless searches, the family assumed that Raphael was dead and even held a funeral service for him. Raphael was reunited with his family on August 22, 2022. Upon his arrival, people from the village showered talcum powder on Raphael and the social worker, Jennifer Appiah-Kubi (an act that signifies victory and great joy in Ghanaian culture). His mother sang songs of praises with tears running down her cheeks whilst his father stared at his son in disbelief. The family was thrilled to see Raphael and the whole village burst into jubilation. It was indeed a "resurrection from the dead". [📍](#)



Jennifer Appiah-Kubi (left) with Raphael and his family

SUCCESSFUL SURGERIES

Two of our children, Patience Adu and Vera Sah, had successful surgeries at the same hospital during the third week of August 2022.

Patience Adu joined the Village of Hope family in 2010. She was born with lymphangioma, a condition that causes the cheek to swell. This is the fourth time Patience has undergone surgery. She had two previous surgeries at the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital (the biggest hospital in Ghana) on November 26, 2007 and October 6, 2008. Then on March 14, 2013, she went through another surgery in Dallas, Texas. Her latest surgery was conducted on August 15, 2022. Through it all, her house parent (Irene Ayisi) has been her pillar of support. Irene was by her bedside right after the surgery until she was discharged - encouraging her and praying with her constantly. Irene has continued to care for Patience since she returned home.

Vera Sah is one of our oldest children who came to Village of Hope in 1997 when she was barely five years old. With the care and love she received at the Village of Hope, she completed her elementary, secondary and tertiary (college) education. She is now a fully grown independent young woman. Vera was diagnosed with ovarian cyst and needed urgent surgery. However, she could not afford the high cost of her surgery. Village of Hope, therefore, assisted her by paying for the surgery. On August 17, 2022, Vera also had a successful surgery.

Both Patience Adu and Vera Sah are recuperating very well at home. Join us in giving thanks to God for their successful surgeries. [📍](#)



Patience Adu with her house parent Irene Ayisi



Vera Sah

RENOVATION OF SMITH HALL BY CHURCH OF CHRIST AT VILLAGE OF HOPE

The Gaylon and Deanna Smith Hall serves as a very important facility on the Fetteh campus of Village of Hope. It is the meeting place for worship services, Bible studies and other church services and meetings for the campus church. It also serves as an assembly hall for Hope Christian Academy and a meeting hall for Hope Children's Village.

After more than a decade of use, we noticed that parts of the roof were caving in as a result of rotten roofing beams. The entire roof had to be replaced to prevent the collapse of the roof. The main wooden beams were replaced with metal trusses.

While the renovation works were ongoing, church services were held at the Becky Holloway Courtyard at Hope College. [🔗](#)



Metal trusses being erected on the Gaylon and Deanna Smith Hall



Ongoing roofing works



Completed roofing works

HOPE COLLEGE STUDENTS WRITE WASSCE

Every year, over one million 12th graders from five English-speaking West African countries (Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, Sierra Leone and The Gambia) write an exam known as the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). The results of the exam are used by universities across the world to admit these high school graduates to study for undergraduate degrees.

This year's WASSCE began on August 24 and ended on September 26, 2022. Hope College presented 111 students for the exam. Join us in praying for their success. The results of the exam are expected to be out towards the latter part of November or early December.

[🔗](#)



An exam in Practical Chemistry

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