



# SEASONS GREETINGS

**We hope you all had a Merry Christmas, and we pray the New Year brings an abundance of blessings! We have had a full year of ministry, watching our girls grow into young women, and navigating all the new things that a year in our lives bring.**

This year has felt so much more peaceful. Although all stages of life bring its challenges, our girls have really worked hard on learning to sort through emotions and feelings that are always tough when you enter adolescence. Gone are the days when our biggest problems were “someone took my toy”, and we have entered the choppy waters of “I like this boy,” “the girls at school are mean,” and “why won’t my parents come visit me?” Although Mike and I have been raising teenagers for several years, every child has their own insecurities and doubts when it comes to the circumstances in their lives. It sometimes baffles us at how differently each girl reacts to the hard situations, even though they have all grown up in the same house, with the same adults, for so many years. Each one has their own battles.

This has been the year of them missing their mothers. We understand that adolescence brings on a plethora of questions regarding identity. Who am I? Where did I come from? Why is my life the way it is? Is any of this my fault? Navigating new territory is always complicated but even more so when you come from a place of trauma. So often our girls have mixed feelings about their mothers. They miss them, but also know that their mothers caused them hurt and heartache. They want to see them, but don’t want to go back and live with them. They wrestle constantly with how they “should” feel compared to how they really feel. It’s heartbreaking and it makes us feel helpless. We ask that you specifically pray for our girls and their hurts associated with their moms. It’s a long road, and only one that Jesus can heal.

## MAKING PROGRESS

Making progress emotionally and psychologically is vitally important for them as they grow into adulthood and eventually independence. But the small things, the little triumphs are what keep us going. After a long battle with the alphabet, Yohaly and Cristal are learning the letters and writing small words. Rosmery, who is highly intelligent and bores easily with daily work, has turned a corner and diligently does her homework. Danyelin is reading! If you knew the battle it has been to get us here, your eyes would well up with tears. Sara has dedicated herself to working hard and making the necessary steps to raise her grades.

Genesis is absolutely flourishing in her new school. Making lots of friends and getting great grades. Eva has become obsessed with reading, and we continue to get good reports from her teachers, as she is very respectful and attentive in the classroom. And Steysi continues to be the superstar in the classroom and on the soccer field. She is excelling in subjects like Algebra and Chemistry, and she is the leagues' highest scorer in soccer.



## OUR NEW "INTERN"

We have recently taken on a new intern. Mark Sweze is from Colorado and retired, looking for ways he can serve in the next phase of life. He has taken a big load off Mike's shoulders, being that he is very handy, and he has an incredible servant's heart, always available to help wherever needed. We don't know how long he will stay, if it's short-term or long-term, but he is a blessing to us for the time he is here.

## CONSTRUCTION OF THE CASITA

2025 will be the year of construction. Whether Mike and I have to start digging the trenches ourselves, or if the construction company starts it. Geez! The way things work in this country, although we have lived here for almost half of our lives, continues to frustrate and dumbfound us. We have had a church commit \$200,000

to complete the first Casita. We took the plans to our contractor, told them we have the money, and we have still been waiting for months for them to send us the budget so we can get started. We have all our permits, we have the money, we are ready to move forward...yet our hands are still tied. Please PRAY PRAY PRAY that God will move this project forward in 2025.

## THE MOVE

In the summer, Mike and I felt God nudging us to move everyone from the house we had been living in. After two years of struggling with one problem after another there, we began looking for two houses for our family, and for the girls. We found two homes, within two minutes of each other, and within five minutes of the Hope House land.

September, October and November were spent hauling our belongings to the houses, cleaning up the old house and settling into our new homes. It was the most peaceful decision made in the last two years. The stresses of the old house vanished, and everyone has felt more at home.

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## YEAR END GOALS

When the year comes to a close, we like to have goals for the coming year. Our first and most important goal is that we get all our girls fully sponsored. Our monthly operating budget for Hope House is \$6,750.00. \$4800.00 of that budget is allocated just for the daily needs of the girls. Sponsorship is a huge part of how Hope House continues to provide the necessary care for our girls. In general, our sponsorships are \$50/month (We find 12 sponsors for each girl), but we have some sponsors that give \$200/month, and we have some that give \$15/month. If your desire is to sponsor, any amount is a blessing!

Our second goal of the year is to receive short-term service teams. We currently have three on the schedule already for 2025 but we have several more dates available. If you, your church, your small group, your

friends, etc. are interested in serving at Hope House, send us an email and we would love to have you here!!!!

Our third goal for 2025 is supporter involvement. We have committed to better communication for the coming year. More Instagram and Facebook posts, better communication with our donors/sponsors, and we would love for our family of supporters to help be our liaisons. We live in the Dominican Republic, so all of you are our "boots on the ground" in the US. If you would like your church or others to be involved with Hope House, PLEASE LET US KNOW. We are confessing that 2025 is going to be the year that we not only build the Casita, but that we are finally able to give more children a home. God has placed it in our hearts to provide homes for 64 children, and 2025 is going to be the start of that dream.

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**Thank you to all of you who have been so faithful in your prayers and your giving. We are here, and able to do what we do ONLY because of you. Our doors are always open to you. Messages, videocalls, emails...we want to be part of your lives in the same way that you are part of ours! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year – The Hope House Crew.**