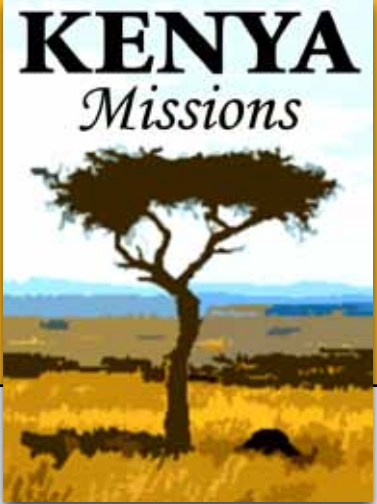


# DECEMBER 09 NEWSLETTER

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**After three years in the making... IT IS FINISHED!**



To receive updates online,  
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PLEASE VISIT  
[www.bridgingthegapafrika.org](http://www.bridgingthegapafrika.org)  
to learn more about the ministry,  
give online donations,  
and see more pictures!



Dear Friends,

Yahoo and whoopee – IT IS FINISHED! This may seem like a funny introduction for a newsletter, but it is certainly appropriate for this one.

After three years in the making, hundreds of emails, discussions with people on four different continents, thousands of sweat-filled man-hours, sleepless nights, living in the bush for almost a year, Teri and I being separated for weeks on end, wild animals, thousands of kilometers of travel, 15 tons of steel, 800 bags of cement, stress, and being stretched as never before, the 112-meter Galana River Suspension Footbridge now stands majestically!

*“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of*

*many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”*  
~ James 1:2

If there was one word to describe what it took for the success of this endeavor, it would be *perseverance*. There were many times when we wanted to quit—some days we were so exhausted we could not work—but quitting was never an option. Strange things frequently happened that no one could have dreamed up. For example: the only man in the small coastal town of Malindi who owed a bulldozer tragically died the night before he was to lift the heavy wire ropes into a truck to transport to the bridge site. It was very sad and frustrating at the same time.

Overcoming the daily curve balls thrown our way



To financially support Harmon & Teri's work in Kenya, please use the enclosed envelope and make checks out to *Kenya Missions*.

# “In Kenyan culture, rain is considered a sign of God’s presence and blessing.”

tested our determination for the goal of seeing men, women, and children crossing the bridge safely, free from the dangers of drowning, crocodiles, and hippos. Our goal is now a reality.

The bridge-opening ceremony on October 28th was a deluge. It rained heavily for more than two days leading up to the celebration, turning the dirt roads into slippery muck. Many people and buses got stuck while driving to the bridge site. Only 4-wheel drive vehicles were able to maneuver their way through the slop to reach the big celebration; sometimes it rained so hard the road completely disappeared and became a river! I think you get the picture?

I have said this before: in Kenyan culture, rain is considered a sign of God’s presence and blessing at a ceremony. Well, if this is the case, God must have been sitting right next to us and very pleased with this event, for He not only blessed us, but also saturated us! As usual, there were speeches blasting from a sound system driven by a noisy generator. Children were running around, uninterested in the speeches blaring out of distorted speakers, but staring curiously at us drenched ‘wazungus’ (white folks) under a leaky tent on loan from the Red Cross.

It is impossible for me to describe my feelings as Teri and I watched the hundreds of children crossing the bridge late that afternoon. The rain had ceased and the sun peaked out as the bridge plaque was unveiled. Teri and I looked at each other, both of us soaked to the bone; we smiled with satisfaction wondering what it will be like to have a ‘normal’ life again.

*If you would like to learn more about the Galana River Suspension Bridge, please visit our website: [www.bridgingthegapfrica.org](http://www.bridgingthegapfrica.org)*

Teri and I had a nice Thanksgiving Day, and we hope you all did as well. We missed not having our son Josh with us to celebrate, but we filled the house with friends and food to compensate. Harmon religiously fulfilled his yearly tradition of roasting a bata mzinga (a turkey) on the Webber for 4 hours, adding pieces of eucalyptus charcoal and basting

the turkey with its smoked drippings every 45 minutes. And wouldn’t you know it, the electricity went out in the neighborhood right at the time we needed to heat up all the food. But being veterans of living in Africa for so many years, we didn’t freak out, we just went with the flow – no one seemed to mind.

Without doubt this past year has been the most difficult year of our lives. We know we could not have endured without you, our faithful prayer supporters! There is a lot to say about prayer, especially when one is on the receiving end. Just knowing people were praying for us was very encouraging and enabled us to persevere, knowing God would help us.

Teri and I also want to thank all of you who faithfully support us financially. With every newsletter I write, my words seem inadequate and cannot express our gratefulness to each of you. We sincerely want you to know and to feel a “part” of our ministry. It is true when I say it would be impossible to carry out our calling and mission without you. As well, I want to voice and represent all the Kenyans who benefit from our being here and to say thank you on their behalf. They are very grateful. It is through YOU that we are able to make a difference in the lives of thousands, and to show God’s incredible love in such a practical way.

In saying that, Teri and I wish each of you a very Merry Christmas. We pray your homes and your hearts will be filled with the historical reality that God Incarnate, our Redeemer and Lord, was born and lived among us – and now He lives within us! What an incredible message of hope and love we all have to share with the world, the world God so loves. As Paul so passionately prayed in Ephesians 1:18-19, I pray the same for all of us:

*“I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.” Amen.*

**We pray you have a Merry Christmas and a very blessed New Year!**

Harmon and Teri



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