

February 2007
Bethesda Lutheran Church
Ames, Iowa



Bethesda Shighatini



Jesus loves them, this they know . . .
on Northwestern Avenue and in Shighatini Parish

Sunday school helps to shape our future —
you can see it reflected in the faces of 270 children
at Bethesda and Shighatini.

That's why Sunday school connections continue
to be an important part of the Bethesda-Shighatini relationship.

Currently, Bethesda has 120 children
from three-year-olds to sixth graders enrolled
in Sunday school. At Shighatini, 150 of the same age groups are enrolled.

For nearly four years, the Sunday schools
on two continents have communicated and shared with each other.
In 2003, Bethesda members traveled to Shighatini
and shared Bethesda Sunday school materials with the director of Shighatini's Sunday school.

Here are other examples of "the future" at Bethesda and Shighatini:

Sherry says . . . Sherry Maakestad, director of children and family ministries at Bethesda, says, "We have on-going opportunities in our Sunday school classes to share the stories of God's unconditional love and His gifts of grace and forgiveness that are ours as Christ followers. We are also called to lead children toward growth in sharing God's love and grace with others in word and action. Our partnership with the Shighatini Parish provides us with wonderful ways to do this, and we also grow from the love, grace and friendship that they give back to us."

The cow says . . . For nine months in 2003-2004, Bethesda Sunday school students dedicated their offerings to buy animals for Shighatini Parish farmers through Heifer International.



The result: more than \$1,500 collected to buy three heifers and a bull for three farmers.

Here are other examples of "the future" at Bethesda and Shighatini:

The hippo says . . . In the summer of 2004, Bethesda high school youth visiting Shighatini for a week taught Shighatini Sunday school children "The Hippo Song" (including the mandatory body motions). They also delivered 150 books from Bethesda's Sunday school to the Shighatini children, who expressed their gratitude with homemade crosses and other gifts (including a helicopter!)

Special cards and gifts. In 2004, Bethesda three-year-olds sent greetings to the leaders of the Shighatini church council (the parish elders) by making a special card that was delivered by a Bethesda adult team. Also that year, Shighatini Sunday school children provided homemade gifts for Bethesda's children, including wood carvings, Bible verse drawings and pictures.

Dress for success. In 2005, Bethesda learned that many Shighatini children ages three to six were unable to attend preschool because their families couldn't afford the required school uniforms. Bethesda's Sunday school kids said, "We'll help!" They collected \$1,000 in offerings that provided uniforms, sweaters and supplies for 40 Shighatini preschoolers. In 2006, Bethesda's Sunday school gathered an additional \$575, which was matched by a Bethesda member, for a total of \$1,150 to be wired to Shighatini in early 2007 to keep even more kids looking sharp and being well-prepared for the start of their educational journey.

What's up in 2007? From now until May, Bethesda Sunday school offerings will be matched to purchase even more uniforms, sweaters and supplies for Shighatini kids. Bethesda Sunday school leaders look forward to meeting with Shighatini Pastor Walter Msangi when he visits Bethesda March 26-April 16. They will discuss priorities for the Shighatini Sunday school and Shighatini Preschool. Beginning in April, Bethesda's Sunday school will begin a six-week drive to gather needed items for Shighatini.

Learn more (climb the stairs). You're invited to check out the new Shighatini-Bethesda Sunday School Bulletin Boards on the second floor of the Education Wing. **Or contact Sherry Maakestad, 232-6256, sherrymaakestad@yahoo.com, or Carla Peterson, 233-9033, carlapet@iastate.edu.**

"Give whatever you can according to what you have. Right now you have plenty and can help them. Then at some other time they can share with you when you need it. In this way, everyone's needs will be met."

2 Corinthians 8:11b, 14

