



Answering for the Children

960 N. Tustin Street #240
Orange, CA 92867

November 2017

Thanksgiving will be upon us soon. It's easy to focus on the food, fun, and making sure the house is decorated just right.

This year, Thanksgiving has come a little early for AFTC with a special homecoming two week visit from Robert. Robert is a **16 year old** radiant, loving soul who lives to serve his Lord while he is in Kampala in the Teen Challenge Program. Robert's road has not been an easy one by any means, and it makes his time back at AFTC that much more of a gift that blesses all.

I remember when I first met Robert — he was around 8 with a husky and scratchy voice and a smile and humor that always brightened my day. Seriously, with a face and personality like this, wouldn't you feel the same way?



One day at school, there was an assembly about not doing wrong and that God (and somehow, the teachers as well) can see all the good and bad you do. When it ended, Robert walked up to me and in his husky voice said, “Teacher Steve, I don’t want this anymore,” and he handed me a rusty nail from his pocket. I struggled to just nod and try and keep a stern face while receiving his small, rusty burden.

Robert excelled in school. He’s a smart, amazing young man. And like all of us, he has suffered. As Robert got a little older, he started getting into trouble, driven by feelings and thoughts that controlled and hurt him. He carried on, still excelling at school. He seemed so far beyond his years in the way he expressed himself. However, his burden—which he kept quiet about—was a lot larger and heavier on his soul, pushing him towards things he did not want to do. Like always, Deidrah rallied for him, pulling for him, trying to figure out what the problem was, never giving up even when others did and always trying to help unburden him from this painful yolk around his soul. After several suicide attempts, short and lengthy stays in hospitals, Robert had to leave the family and it was unclear when, if ever, he would return.

Robert’s journey away from home has lasted longer than anyone wanted. Along the way he would battle his demons again and again. It got rougher and then, it got better. Robert went to Teen Challenge in Kampala and love won out. Robert had to work to be able to see God’s love surrounding him. He is the first to say it is worth it — all of it. Teen Challenge has been a great addition to his life, and Robert loves serving with them.

This young man, Robert, is a gift, an amazing gift, and we are all so thankful that he is not only getting better but has found his identity in Christ. He knows he is loved by his family, friends and above all by God. His first two week visit in a long, long time is what the entire family is thankful for. His homecoming is a perfect gift, and it involved no fretting about whether it would be perfect. It portrays the true spirit of love, forgiveness and being grateful for family and an ever merciful God. God has worked miracles in him along every step of his life’s journey. Robert, in turn, has worked miracles in us.

Robert goes back to Teen Challenge on the 8th of November. He still has 6 more months in the program and he and the entire family look forward to a Christmas visit, and other days off that he will earn. They all have more hope and joy knowing that in the not too distant future, he will once again permanently be back at home. Free to be who he is and continuing looking forward to be the chef he wants to be.

Deidrah said the highlight of his visit was sitting next to Robert in church and watching him clap in praise and lift his hands in worship with tears in his eyes. Hearing him give his own testimony in church brought tears to her eyes as she sat and was so thankful that God carried them all through and that she never gave up. Deidrah is more than hopeful and the tears that flow from her face when she thinks and talks about Robert are tears of joy and not of pain.



Phillipians 1:6 – Being confident in this, that he who begun a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Robert still has 6 more months in Teen Challenge and then 6 months at home under regular visits and counseling from the Teen Challenge staff before he can graduate from the program. There is no doubt he is on track and a celebration next year will definitely be in order. Teen Challenge is not free and yet Deidrah has used her own funds as well as cut their home budget here and there to make sure Robert can stay in the program, as well as keep the family going. Will you consider donating today to boost the budget at home to ensure Robert can complete the program and the family still has everything they need?

We are thankful for all of you who support Deidrah and the entire AFTC family. Without you, Robert could not have had the care and love he has had since the tender age of 3 months of age until today. His journey is just beginning and we thank you for always partnering with us. As a board member who lived in Uganda for 5 years and worked closely with AFTC on the ground, I know for a fact, there is love, trust, long suffering, and an abundance of God's grace that flows in that family. AFTC Uganda is good ground for any gift you give. I am thankful I have been and continue to be a part of it.



We want to say, 'Thank you!' Every prayer and every contribution is such a gift to us here at AFTC. Please remember AFTC among those you choose to bless with gifts this Thanksgiving.

***Happy Thanksgiving and blessings to you and your loved ones.
AFTC USA Board***

If you would like to give to AFTC please make your checks payable to: Answering For The Children and mail to:

*Answering For The Children
960 N. Tustin St. #240
Orange, CA 92867*

To give via PayPal, please visit our web site at: <http://www.answeringforthechildren.org/> and click on 'Take Action'.

Newsletter written by Steve Rozmus, AFTC USA Board Member