

Happy New Year! No matter where you celebrated the start of 2022, I hope it was filled with at least a little bit of peace and of course a whole lot of love. For the first time in a long while, I was not on cooking duty on New Year's Eve...which allowed me extra time to reflect on all the great things this community makes possible. Here are just a few of the highlights from December that I was giving thanks for as the clock inched closer to midnight.

### Hooray for Healing



We had several children from our China Healing Home undergo surgery in December, including handsome Tobias below. While we always wish they didn't have to go through such intensive medical procedures, we continually give thanks that they get to receive all the help they need because of your kindness. For children like Tobias, who spent two whole years lying in an orphanage crib in immense pain, being able to recover from his recent operation with his favorite LWB nanny by his side is a blessing we never take for granted. Tobias has truly bloomed while staying in our healing home, and his complete joy at finally knowing what it feels like to be loved is a direct result of your support.

### New Foster Care Program in Uganda

December saw the launch of a new foster care program in Pakwach, Uganda. This exciting new initiative is going to make a huge difference for orphaned and abandoned children. Pakwach is in far northwestern Uganda, in a region that is truly underserved. We weren't initially sure of the reception we would receive from the local government as we began discussing the importance of family-based care for children, but then over 100 officials from the region showed up to learn more about formal foster care! Even more exciting is that when we held our first community training, 68 local families came and expressed interest in fostering, with the majority wanting to learn more about foster-to-adopt. We began placing children into LWB foster families just a few weeks ago. For kids like 9-year-old Keith (pictured in red), life with a caring mom and dad is a real dream come true.



## Lighting the Night in Guatemala

In early December, I returned to Guatemala to finalize several new children's projects we are beginning in the highlands region. I had a very special delivery to make as well, as my duffel bags were filled with over 500 solar lights for children living without access to electricity. Living in complete darkness when the sun goes down at night not only limits a child's ability to study but also brings danger when simply trying to walk to an outhouse. These special lights are waterproof and last up to five years, and they really do provide enough light to read by. The families were overjoyed to receive such an essential gift and expressed their thanks to everyone who supports LWB.



## Early Child Development in Cambodia

Since COVID began, the local landfill in the border region where we work has seen a dramatic influx of new families with nowhere else to go. Desperate parents, with no other source of income, bring their children to live at the dumpsite to search for recyclables to sell. While LWB has schools in place for the older kids (and tuk-tuks to get them there safely), we did not have a program close enough to the landfill to support toddlers and preschool-aged children. We wanted to offer these little ones a safe place to play, explore, and receive quality nutrition, and so in mid-December, our Rangsei Early Childhood Development Center opened its doors! What a joy to be able to give these precious children a respite from the harsh realities of life at the landfill — and a great headstart on learning!





## More Cardiac Care in India

December was another record month of critical heart surgeries for children living in India, including one-month-old Somesh. This baby boy was born with Transposition of the Great Arteries, a complex cardiac condition. We were so thankful we could step in to immediately help when his tiny heart began to fail. The surgeons told us that his operation was going to be extremely high-risk due to his unique anatomy, so you can imagine how much we celebrated when this adorable little guy found the strength to come off the ventilator quickly and start breathing on his own. Brand new year....brand new life!

I hope you enjoyed reading about a few of my favorite moments from December. I can't wait to gather all the data from our teams into an annual report to highlight what you made happen for children throughout the entirety of last year.

I wish you and those you hold dear a very happy new year. Your support and encouragement for vulnerable children around the world continually humbles me, and I can't thank you enough for being part of LWB. I have no doubt that if we continue coming together in love, we'll make 2022 even more remarkable for the children who need us most.



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*Thank You!*

*“Every Child Counts”*