



Connecting Hearts

AN EXCITING UPDATE

We have a wonderful update to share with all the members of Team Tesfa. You'll want to read about the progress through this sponsorship program.

PAGE 1

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Thanks to your support, a monthly birthday celebration is held to honour the children born in that month! See the joy from this new tradition.

PAGE 2

SAVE THE DATE

Gems & Java is back! Mark your calendars and save the date for the 2024 event so you can enjoy all our flagship fundraiser has to offer.

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A Walk in Their Shoes

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UPDATES FROM TESFA'S SHELTER

THANKS FOR SPREADING LOVE WITH TEAM TESFA



Welcome back to Connecting Hearts, a quarterly newsletter for Team Tesfa Sponsors! We are excited about another year driving change in the lives of 94 incredible children at the shelter.

Happy Valentine's Day to each and every one of you! We thought it would be fitting to share updates on this day celebrating love. Thank you for spreading love through your life-changing donations. ❤️

We have really incredible news to share this month. Thanks to the success of a new fundraiser (find all those details on Page 7), a total of 66 children are now sponsored through Team Tesfa. WOW! What a beautiful result for this young program!!

We're on a mission to continue expanding Team Tesfa. Please consider sharing your experience with others in your life. Feel free to pass on [our website](#) or [social media channels](#) if you think friends, family or coworkers may be interested in learning about this innovative sponsorship program.

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BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

SEE THE JOY

You may remember one of the new traditions introduced at Tesfa's Shelter is a monthly party for all the children who celebrated a birthday that month.

Even a simple gathering with a few treats - cake, fruit and candies - ensures these children feel showered with love. Most of them have never experienced their own birthday party or felt celebrated just for being born!

They even use a fake snow spray, which signifies a special gathering. Look at these happy faces! Is there anything better?



Thank you for making simple pleasures like birthday cake, treats and a small gift a reality for your sponsored children and, through Team Tesfa, all the children at the shelter.

We think this is such a special way to show love and care to children who have experienced the unthinkable in their young lives. At Tesfa's Shelter, everyone learns to work hard and be part of a team - and they experience moments of pure joy and fun!

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NEEDS AT THE SHELTER

NEXT STEPS FOR NIGUS

Nigus is a brave young boy in the Team Tesfa family who is continuing to recover from a hyena attack a few years ago. In our last update, we shared that a specialized team of Canadian facial surgeons provided free surgery, with our organization covering other expenses. Unfortunately, Nigus is still suffering.

As you can imagine, with the extent of his injuries - and the limited medical care he was able to receive in the immediate aftermath - there is a very long road to recovery.

Right now, the most pressing need is to manage his pain and look for more permanent solutions to help this young boy. Nigus will be going to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital city, soon for assessment, treatment and surgery. Mothers with a Heart for Ethiopia is paying the expenses.

We are hoping Team Tesfa can share positive thoughts or prayers for Nigus and his mother as they travel for these crucial appointments.



HAVE AN OLD CELL PHONE? CONSIDER DONATING!



Do you have an old cell phone or tablet ready to go to a new home? If you have electronics with which you're ready to part - assuming they still work! - consider donating to Team Tesfa. They can be used by the children for school work and shelter projects. Email info@moms4ethiopia.ca to donate.



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HEAR FROM THE CHILDREN

A MESSAGE TO MEMBERS OF TEAM TESFA

A very sweet message for Team Tesfa Sponsors to start the year on a great note!

The children at Tesfa's Shelter helped to create and design this cute video to celebrate the holiday season and the start of 2024 here in Canada. In Ethiopia, Christmas is not celebrated until January. The Ethiopian New Year starts on Sept. 11, since the country uses a different calendar.

However, the children know their Team Tesfa Sponsors in North America celebrate Christmas and welcome the New Year in December and January. Enjoy their message.



We hope this video message puts a big smile on your face! It sure did for us. We love seeing the children looking so healthy and happy. Did you catch a glimpse of the Canada Day T-shirts from our fundraiser last summer?

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A LOCAL SUCCESS

SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR TESFA'S SHELTER

As a way of engaging local community support for the shelter, Tesfa worked for many weeks to secure school supplies for the children.

Although Mothers with a Heart for Ethiopia is providing the vast majority of the needed funds to operate Tesfa's Shelter, we also want to encourage Tesfa to generate as much local support as possible to reduce dependency on our organization.

With inflation soaring to nearly 30 per cent in the country, and financial support directed to areas of Ethiopia that have been affected by unrest and war, local support is very challenging to secure.

Tesfa is incredibly committed and persistent to this effort, though. Look at the results he delivered with these wonderful school supplies! We so appreciate his heart, selflessness and commitment to finding other means of support where possible.



Friends Ink

CHECK IN WITH OUR VOLUNTEER WRITING TEAM

“Hello dear children! I can’t tell you how excited your Friends Ink Team feels about receiving letters from you. It makes our hearts fill with love. Thank you for taking the time to write to us. We are learning so much about you through your letters.”

That’s the start of one lovely letter sent to Tesfa’s Shelter by a volunteer writer. The Friends Ink team is having a marvelous time drafting positive and encouraging notes to the children each month. You can read the correspondence from the last few months at the links below.

READ OUR LETTERS

Click below:

[September 2023](#)

[September reply from the children](#)

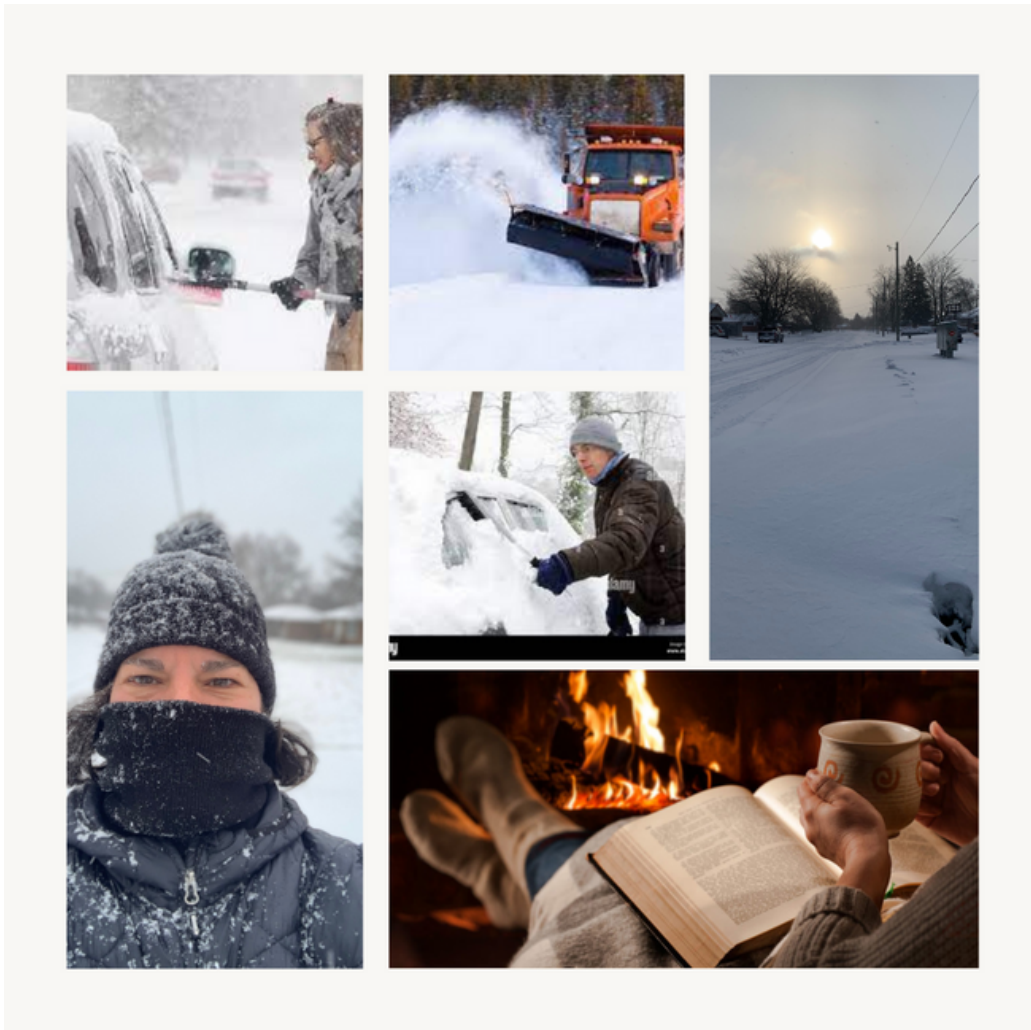
[October 2023](#)

[November 2023](#)

[November reply from the children](#)

[December 2023](#)

[January 2024](#)



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NEWS, NEWS, NEWS

A WALK IN THEIR SHOES WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!



PROUDLY PRESENT

A Walk in Their Shoes

Our newest fundraiser, A Walk in Their Shoes, was held in October 2023. It was a huge success despite the rainy weather!!

We had an incredibly engaged and dedicated group of Walkers and supporters who raised donations, walked, and learned more about the needs in Ethiopia.

The event raised an incredible \$30,210 in its very first year.

Thank you to all who made A Walk in Their Shoes a reality this fall! We can't wait to grow even bigger and better for 2024.



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DOUBLE YOUR DONATION, DOUBLE YOUR HEART

A very successful matching campaign helped us end the year with an incredible \$35,413 in donations.

We received a generous gift and pledge from the Share The Green Foundation, the charitable arm of Green Private Wealth. In December, the foundation offered to match every dollar donated to Tesfa's Shelter or the prolapse surgery project up to \$15,000. We are so grateful to Paul Green and Green Private Wealth for making this matching campaign a possibility.

As usual, our supporters responded in a huge way to help us take advantage of this wonderful opportunity. Not only did donors match the generous \$15,000 from the Share The Green Foundation, they exceeded it! A total of \$35,413.00 was raised - an amazing result.



To give you an idea of how far this amount goes in Ethiopia, all the needs of 35 children at Tesfa's Shelter could be met for one year. Our donations go a long ways in Ethiopia!

“On behalf of our board of directors, all of our volunteers and the women and children in Ethiopia, I say a huge THANK YOU to all of our donors and my brother Paul Green for his incredibly generous support,” Shelley said after the amazing campaign. “These funds will make a huge difference in Ethiopia.”

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SAVE THE DATE

GEMS & JAVA 2024 IS COMING UP!

We know many of you are longtime, loyal guests and donors at Gems & Java!

It's only a few months away: Join us April 27, this year in a new location - Maranatha Christian Reformed Church.

Help us raise money for the life-changing projects we fund, including Tesfa's Shelter. You can enjoy shopping in the Bags & Baubles Boutique (gently used jewelry, purses and scarves), an excellent silent auction, a live jazz band, delicious food, the Ethiopian Merkato and Shelley's presentation. We know you won't want to miss this year's Gems & Java!

Tickets go on sale March 9 on our website or via the methods below.

SAVE THE DATE 

GEMS & JAVA

April 27th, 2024 • 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Maranatha Christian Reformed Church (Woodstock)
• • •

\$60 early bird • \$65 regular (April 1st)
Table of 8 \$460
• • •

Tickets go on sale March 9th at
www.motherswithaheartforethiopia.com
or through hmckinnon15@gmail.com or 519-535-9535

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JEWELRY & PURSES NEEDED

Do you have gently used purses or jewelry you can donate to Gems & Java?

Please email us at info@moms4ethiopia.ca if you have donations!




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GIRLS GOTTA RUN

A STORY FROM A SISTER PROJECT

We thought our Team Tesfa sponsors would enjoy hearing about another project supported by Mothers with a Heart for Ethiopia. This story comes from the Girls Gotta Run Foundation, an organization that provides a private school education, athletic training in running, life skills training, hot lunches six times a week and healthy snacks after practice, uniforms and school and sanitary supplies. Girls Gotta Run helps keep girls in school and avoid early marriage by building confidence, friendships and empowering young women at a critical time in their lives.



Meet Feven, an athletic scholar in Soddo who lives a long way from school. She is determined to get a good education, and was willing to make the two-hour walk to school, but her mother worried about her safety.

Thanks to support from Mothers with a Heart for Ethiopia, Feven's family is now able to pay for transportation part of the way, and she has excellent attendance for school and running practice!

Like all athletic scholars, she receives healthy snacks and lunches. She says the meals give her "a healthy, bright mind."

Feven's mother, Kebebus, is part of a mother's group through Girls Gotta Run. She operates her own clothing business and said the group has provided valuable advice on saving money, plus a wonderful community of women who have become friends. Mothers with a Heart for Ethiopia has provided matching funds for the mothers' group savings to help the women build their businesses and create a more stable financial reality for their families.

We are so happy to see the power of these programs for girls like Feven and their mothers, too.



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GET IN TOUCH

QUESTIONS, IDEAS, WANT TO HELP?



If you have any questions or comments, contact Shelley Green at shelley@moms4ethiopia.ca. For more stories and successes:



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