



Because of the current events of the world, it probably goes without saying – but our lives have looked very different over the last couple of months! Here at Rift Valley Academy, the school year runs on a year-round schedule, divided into three terms. Term 2 began the first week of January and was scheduled to end on March 28 (which is “Departure Day” for students, when they head home). However, the decision was made to send students home early during the weekend of March 14. Although it might have seemed pre-mature at the time, it quickly proved to be a wise decision on the part of RVA’s administration, and all students were able to make it home – some just hours before their country’s borders closed.

Even before all of our dorm boys had left that weekend, Dave was involved in a long Saturday afternoon meeting to brainstorm what RVA’s response might look like for term 3 (which, at that point, was still six weeks away). Again, this showed incredible foresight and wisdom, as it allowed RVA staff to begin preparing for running term 3 online. And it gave parents and students time to decide if this would be a feasible option for them. Because RVA students come from families who are serving all over the continent of Africa, each family’s situation is unique in their access to technology, internet, and bandwidth. However, leading up to the beginning of term 3 (on April 27), an incredible amount of work was done to try to make this option as workable as possible for as many families as possible. Thankfully, as we are now into the term, many aspects of this new online learning experience seem to be going well, and most of our students have been able to remain enrolled! (This is not to assume there aren’t challenges for both students and teachers, but we are thankful for all of the successes so far.)

So, although our ministry remains the same at its core, we are learning and adapting to new ways to do it for the time being. For Dave, he continues to serve as the Junior High coordinator, which means things such as corresponding with 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade families, supporting 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers, and attending Zoom meetings. Along with this, he is also teaching his own 8<sup>th</sup> grade history class online. For Ashley, she is adjusting to teaching Beau from home while continuing to watch Everleigh. Together, we are trying to keep up with and facilitate relationships with our dorm boys from afar – again using the internet as a way to communicate and build community.

## Coronavirus Impact in Kenya

Although coronavirus has had a seemingly low impact on the country of Kenya from a “confirmed cases” standpoint, the effects of the pandemic are still being felt. Many people have been laid off from work, which can be devastating in a country where many people live “hand to mouth.” One of our Kenyan friends – who is still receiving some income while being laid off – contacted us toward the end of April to say that his family was out of food. He said that although he had enough to get to the end of the month, he was faced with seeing people who lived around him starve, so he shared what he had. This left his family with no food. We were able to take them groceries, but this is just one example of what people here are going through.



## Praises and Prayer

- Praise God that all RVA students were able to travel back to their countries in mid-March before borders closed!
- Please pray for the people of Kenya. Because many live day-to-day, those who are unable to go to work right now may not have money to purchase the food they need.
- Please pray that coronavirus does not start spreading more rapidly in Kenya.
- In addition to coronavirus, Kenya has also been dealing with flooding and locusts over the past few months.
- Please pray for RVA staff and students, as we are operating online for term 3.
- Please pray for those at RVA making decisions for the start of next school year. As a boarding school, RVA has students who would need to return to Kenya from many different countries – which creates a significant challenge in the midst of a global pandemic.
- Please pray for RVA seniors, who are facing the prospect of not having graduation. Although many seniors even in the U.S. are facing this, students at RVA have an added level of grief, as they come from many different countries and may never get to see each other again.