

New Song News



BROWN COUNTY, INDIANA • FALL/WINTER 2020

A FREE PUBLICATION OF NEW SONG MISSION

Students Thriving In School

Eight students, three adults, two classrooms. The experience is nothing like the overcrowded schools New Song's residents used to attend. For preteen Shawnia, this is a very good thing.

"I like it so much more than where I went before," Shawnia says. "There were a lot of fights [between students], and I didn't get the help with math that I needed." Shy and observant, Shawnia is relatively new to New Song, but she is already fast friends with Lilli, a fellow seventh-grader who joined New Song over a year ago.

Lilli nods as Shawnia recalls her old school.

"That's what happened to me in fifth grade," Lilli says. "[Other students] were getting into trouble all the time."

With her teacher occupied by other students, Lilli struggled to figure out difficult math concepts by herself. "It was either that or you just had to skip it," she remembers. The chaotic environment she faced at home didn't help. "I didn't get to sleep, really," Lilli says bluntly. "There was a lot of arguing."

Lilli's grades dropped to Cs and Ds. Math went from being her favorite subject to the one she dreaded most. She gave up her ambition of becoming a teacher someday.

Now, the holistic care Lilli and Shawnia are experiencing at New Song is giving them a second chance. They and the other girls live together with houseparents Dave and Laurie Hix, while founders Bob and Lisa Schloss parent New Song's first house of boys. The houseparents strive to create a stable, loving environment where trust is the foundation of each relationship.

"They all can be really protective," Shawnia says thoughtfully. "If we get in an argument or something, they will be there to help us."



Equipping children *for life,*
through the love of Christ Jesus.

(cont'd on next page)

From *the* Heart

A message from the Director

Increased Enrollment Brings Excitement, Challenges

Eight hearts to shape. Eight minds to expand. Eight lives to care for.

With eight girls and boys now living on campus, there is much to be thankful for, and much to be done.

The three boys that Lisa and I care for, all pre-teens, love ACTION! Building Lego tanks and planes, playing “2-on-2” basketball games in the park, catching bluegill in the pond, and throwing paper airplanes off the 84-foot Mill Race Tower in Columbus (126 steps, in case you’re wondering) are but a few of the activities we’ve enjoyed together. Thankfully, while Lisa and I are in our mid-50’s, we still have enough energy to keep up with them...barely!



When the boys and girls get together for activities, there’s even more fun to be had. From cookouts around the campfire, to Taco Tuesday dinners, to activities in the park, the kids really enjoy having good times together.

One evening in October we all played a marathon kickball game that ended in

the black of night. Final score: 22-20. By the last inning, it was so dark that you couldn’t see the base runners flying around the bases.

With all of these fun activities have come some difficulties as well. Some of the kids are insecure, which can lead to conflict, while others can be outright defiant at times. Social skills are often lacking.

Houseparents are serving 15 hours straight many days, helping tutor the kids in the classroom and then caring for the kids in the homes. There is physical and emotional exhaustion. All of the responsibilities can cause a great deal of stress. While the joy of helping the kids and knowing that you are serving the Lord is definitely worth it, the challenges seem overwhelming at times.

I share all of these things—the fun and excitement, as well as the difficult realities—because you are partners with us in this ministry, and we need your prayer support. We are also dependent on your contributions of time, talent, and treasure. New Song receives no state or federal funds, which is good, but it means that the ministry needs a tremendous amount of grassroots support. Thank you for praying, volunteering, and being generous with your financial resources.



Bob Schloss
Founder/Executive Director

The joys of serving Christ and being with the kids here at New Song are abundant. Through the loving relationships we have with the kids, combined with the daily discipleship, instruction, and mentoring, we are seeing the kids overcome their challenges, by the grace of God.

Lisa and I are so thankful for our campus team: girls’ houseparents Dave and Laurie Hix, teacher Grace Flint, office manager Shelley Benefiel, and bookkeeper Carol Skiles. Together we serve, unified in our purpose and our Lord.

Because eight young lives hang in the balance.

For Christ and kids,

Robert P. Schloss, JD
Founder/Executive Director

Continued from front...

Of course, fun together is also key to these relationships. “When we do play,” Shawnia begins, “we run around in the living room, or kitchen—”

“Whacking people with paper towel tubes!” Lilli interrupts, and Shawnia laughs. “That was Miss Laurie’s idea.”

Laurie, Dave, Bob, and Lisa also take turns assisting New Song’s teacher, Grace Flint, who skillfully juggles eight students’ learning across six different grade levels. Each student can work at their own pace, thanks to an online curriculum and the amount of one-on-one tutoring they have with the staff. This individualized attention in the classroom has transformed Lilli’s grades.

“I had an A last year in math,” she says with pride in her eyes. “I didn’t have any C’s last year. I got three Bs and two As.” As her grades rise, so does her self-esteem. While they are in the same grade, Lilli is about a month ahead of Shawnia in their curriculum. “If she needs help, I can help her because I’ve already done it,” Lilli says confidently.

She may become a teacher yet.

Schoolhouse News with Grace Flint

New School Year Brings Exciting Changes!

A new school year is underway and New Song's students are adjusting well! Some exciting changes have taken place in the classroom that I would love to share with you.

This year we welcomed six new students to campus—three boys and three girls. The classroom was completely redone to allow for two separate rooms. The boys now enjoy a sports-themed classroom, and the girls get to spend each day at the beach!

We added flexible seating to the classrooms so that students could sit on exercise balls, cushions, or standard seats. An exercise bike allows students to take an active break during school. New Song also purchased carrel desks to provide a more focused environment for study.

It can be quite an adjustment for new students to transition from a large public school to our classroom, but the children are adapting well. Every student that has come to New Song has improved their grades significantly this quarter, and this is due to the individual attention they are able to receive in every subject area.

This would not be possible without New Song's houseparents stepping up and assisting in the classroom. As we seek to hire an additional teacher, staff are assisting with tutoring and managing students. This has been a huge help and has allowed for students to continue to receive the tutoring they need to thrive academically.

Students do the majority of their school work online, at their own pace, through several different learning platforms. The students are working hard and showing improvement each day!

An additional group class was added this year, physical education! While the class did not turn every student into a cross country runner (my secret hope), hopefully it prompts them to continue to be active on their own and to take care of the bodies the Lord has given them!

Fall Fitness!

Taking advantage of this autumn's idyllic weather, New Song's students enjoyed the outdoors with a new physical education class. From goal-setting to goal-scoring, the activities all focused on building students up in body, mind, and heart.

One of the main aims of the course was building aerobic fitness. "This was particularly difficult for some of the girls, who had come from a more sedentary background," explained class teacher Grace Flint. "The very idea of running around outside sounded daunting to them."

Nevertheless, these girls went from struggling to completing a short lap around the playground to finishing a mile-long course on the hilly campus terrain!

"It was great to see the girls especially gain confidence from completing challenging workouts," said an enthusiastic Grace. "What they thought was impossible initially became something they could grasp. Both the boys and girls have worked very hard and persisted through their workouts."

New Song's Associate Director Lisa Schloss also helped with gym class periodically. "I loved seeing the students push themselves to do their very best, and I enjoyed working out alongside them," remarked Lisa.

Along with personal exercise, a variety of group games provided moments for lessons in teamwork and sportsmanship. Basketball and soccer drills, kickball, volleyball, and king of the hill were a few of the students' favorites. As an extra treat, New Song's summer enrichment director, Ellie Trotter, joins the students each Friday. "It has been such a blessing to have her continue to be involved with the children," confided Grace. "Ellie is such an encouragement to them!"

While darker days and cold weather will limit physical education opportunities this winter, the fall gym class was a great experience for our students. As 12 year-old Teron proudly shared, "By the end of the class, I went clear down to a 10 minute mile, even with all of those hills!"



Partnering with Parents

What barriers might be making parents hesitant to enroll their kids at New Song? Are there changes that we could make in order to help parents feel more comfortable enrolling their children on campus?

These were some of the important questions that the New Song leadership team wrestled with last spring when the ministry was only caring for two children. The questions compelled team members to begin a comprehensive research effort, the results of which have been transformative to the ministry while allowing New Song to remain true to its original vision and mission.

Our research revealed that New Song could do several things differently to help parents feel more at ease with enrolling their kids on campus. The ministry has already implemented some of these changes, and parents have responded quite favorably.

Some parents were concerned about the 1-year minimum enrollment term that was required. Consequently, New Song changed its enrollment policy to make the length of enrollment flexible. Parents are now encouraged to consider enrolling their kids for a school semester or even shorter time frame to “try New Song out.”

Parents were also worried about their children feeling abandoned by them, and they wanted to make sure that a strong attachment could be kept with their kids if they chose to enroll them on campus. As a result, New Song greatly expanded its visitation practices, and children are now going home every other weekend. In addition, some of our students have multiple video calls with their parents during the week. We have found this new visitation design to be very valuable.

New Song’s team also discovered that, while parents want the holistic care New Song offers kids (physically, academically, emotionally, and spiritually), some of them struggle with feelings of guilt when considering enrolling their kids in a “children’s home.” But parents LOVE having the ability to give their children an outstanding educational opportunity, which is exactly what New Song provides, in part.

In response, the ministry has begun emphasizing with parents of prospective students the outstanding academic opportunity available at New Song. Enhancements are being made to the ministry’s educational program, which has already proven to be very effective with students. New Song is beginning to take on more of a “school feel” to parents, with kids enjoying week-long fall, winter, and spring breaks at their homes, as well as two full weeks during the summer. Our teacher is now providing mid-term academic report cards to parents, which we give along with progress reports created by our associate director that touch on other areas of a child’s life.

In addition, New Song’s board has recently committed to pursuing accreditation for the ministry’s school component. With these changes in mind, the “New Song Leadership Academy” will be established as a distinct program at New Song in 2021, and marketing materials given to parents will bear that name.

Another very valuable insight that has been gained is that many parents need someone who can “vouch for” the ministry before they will enroll their kids. God provided a ministry partner that would do just that in Safe Families of Central Indiana!

We praise God for the significant insights we have learned in how we can better love, serve, and support parents who are seeking a good opportunity for their children.



Spur Growth

Partnering with Ministries

“Last spring, the Lord opened the door to an incredible opportunity to collaborate with another ministry,” shared New Song Director, Bob Schloss, “The results have left us in awe of His goodness.”

As the COVID-19 pandemic remained in full force in June, summer camps around the state began to shut down, including a camp that kids from a ministry called Safe Families attend each year. “As we at Safe Families were struggling with disappointment that our kids would not be able to have that great camp experience, I talked with Bob, and he and his team stepped out in faith and provided an amazing summer camp adventure for a group of restless, energetic kids!” said Lanna Blanchard, Director of Safe Families of Central Indiana.

Safe Families is a ministry that supports families in crisis, including the provision of short-term out of home care to children, utilizing volunteer host couples recruited through churches.

“I have always admired the mission of New Song and wondered what would be the best way to work together to make an eternal impact on the lives of the families we serve...I would have never imagined that it would be through a summer camp partnership in the midst of a COVID crisis!” shared Lanna.

“We jumped at the chance to help these kids,” said Bob. The New Song staff team quickly went into high gear to prepare for the camps, with only six weeks to go before the camps would begin. A new challenge course was built in the process, thanks to the help of a generous couple which supported the camp, as well as volunteers from a Greenwood, Indiana ministry called Men For Missions. Everything fell into place, albeit at a frantic pace!

Fourteen boys and girls, ages 7-13 attended the New Song Adventure Camps, which ended up being very successful.

And God had even more in mind. Upon returning home from camp, several of the kids urged their parents to allow them to attend New Song for the upcoming school year. Five of the campers are now full-time New Song students, receiving all of the holistic care the ministry provides. The Lord used the summer camps as a bridge to enrolling more children on campus!

“God has made a way,” shared Bob. “The camps and the relationship with Safe Families weren’t of our own doing—they came about by the grace of God.”

The Lord can accomplish great things when ministries work together; things “abundantly beyond all that we ask or even imagine.” (Eph 3:20)



Get to Know the Hixes!



Dave and Laurie Hix began serving as girls' houseparents at New Song this past June, and we are so thankful they have joined us in ministry. We hope you enjoy the Q&A below to learn more about Dave and Laurie—please keep them in your prayers!

Q: Will you please share some of your background?

A: We have been in ministry together for thirty years. Dave has served both as a youth pastor and a pastor in a church, as well as the head of our own mission's-related ministry. We have been blessed to lead multiple mission's trips, that last one of which was a trip to the Philippines—working with the children there was the catalyst to our becoming houseparents. Before coming to New Song, we were houseparents at a boys' home in Tennessee.

Q: What draws you to be in ministry with at-risk kids?

A: We find ministry to children to be the most rewarding of all of the ministry opportunities we've had; it's where we feel the most called. At-risk kids need ministered to, and we are grateful for the opportunity to do just that.

Q: What do you enjoy most about working with the kids in your home?

A: This is the first time we have been houseparents in a girl's home! The girls are a little more cautious when new people come into their lives, perhaps because of some insecurities. We have found much enjoyment in watching some of the girls slowly let down their walls and allow us to hear their thoughts and ideas and, on occasion, speak into their lives.

Q: What are some of the fun things you do with the children?

A: We love playing different games with the students and laughing together! Some of our most enjoyable moments are when we make up fun, crazy competitions and challenges. Laurie loves leading and teaching new board games to the girls. We appreciate how board and card games teach more than just how to play the game itself. Recently we all enjoyed playing balloon volleyball together in the basement—lots of screams, laughter, and fun!

To read more of our interview with the Hixes, please visit www.NewSongMission.org/GetToKnowTheHixes

Won By Love

Avery had little interest in spiritual things before coming to New Song last year. Like many teenage girls, she had been caught up in the challenges and worries of the world. Last summer, that began to change.

Avery had been having some difficulties, and New Song's Associate Director, Lisa Schloss, was counseling her through the challenges. One evening as Lisa was meeting with her, Avery's heart became tender to the gospel and she received Christ as her Savior! "Her prayer of repentance and faith was so precious," recalled Lisa. "It was a moment I'll always remember."

When asked what the turning point was for her, Avery responded with quiet confidence, "Knowing that God loves me, with all I've been through."

Her relationships at New Song, and with Lisa in particular, taught Avery that God's love is unconditional. Lisa and Avery have built a strong relationship over the past 16 months. "I've really enjoyed growing closer to Avery, and I'm so glad we are able to have an open dialogue about her struggles," shared Lisa. "It's a real encouragement to see her desire to grow in the Lord." They are currently studying a devotional for teen girls called *His Revolutionary Love: Jesus' Radical Pursuit of You*.

"I'm more interested in learning during chapel and church now," Avery shared. "I've begun to look at life in a different way and protect my heart more with others. Meeting with Miss Lisa and also Miss Laurie (Avery's current house mom) has really helped me in my faith."

God's love for Avery has made all the difference for her. "You are altogether beautiful, my love," Avery recalled reading in the Song of Solomon. Beautiful...and loved.



JOIN US IN
PRAYER

Please visit
www.NewSongMission.org/Prayer
to see a list of our current prayer request

For Such a Time as This

By Ross Templeton, New Song Board Chairman



My five-year-old daughter, Esther, loves hearing the story of Queen Esther from the Bible. Aside from the novelty of sharing a name with a Biblical hero, it's not hard to see why this unique piece of history captures her imagination: the story is an exciting reminder of God's power to protect his people and how he uses us, his children, to play key roles in these plans.

Chosen for her beauty, young Esther, who was secretly Jewish, becomes a queen in Babylon, just as the king's advisor moves to eradicate the Jews from the land. In response, Esther's cousin pleads with her to take action and powerfully points out that her position comes with real responsibility, saying, "And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?"

Today, the need in our world for God's protection and provision is obvious. 2020 has been a year of turbulence for all of us as the pandemic dramatically affects our schools, homes, churches, and economy. Across Indiana, fragile families now more than ever need support to weather the extreme challenges many are facing. They need to see God's grace through it all.

What if New Song was developed "for such a time as this?" As families face a disrupted school year, financial impacts, and health concerns, New Song is a vital lifeline: a loving, discipleship-focused environment where children can grow and flourish.

New Song is delivering on its promise to provide a safe and stable environment for children who need it. With record enrollment this fall, we have two houses with several children in them, and other kids waiting to enroll just as soon as we can hire a second teacher. Our beautiful campus is full of life in the classroom, around the kitchen table, and on the playground.

While we are thrilled with what God is doing at New Song, we also hope for even greater things to come. We need more help in the classroom to guide and challenge our growing number of students. We need additional support staff and volunteers to sustain and grow the ministry. We need God's continued provision and grace.

Just like Queen Esther, we hope you will play a key role to help God's children in a time of need. What resources has God given you "for such a time as this?" As so many families across Indiana look for help, how will you answer that call? Your prayers, volunteering, advocacy, and financial support can make a lasting difference in children's lives!

Three Ways You Can Inspire New Song's Children and Help the Ministry!

1. Children's Scholarship Fund



Gifts to our Children's Scholarship Fund allow disadvantaged kids to enroll on campus.

2. Prayer

Please pray for:

- A second teacher
- The spiritual lives of our students
- Several major gifts by the end of the year
- Strong partnerships with other ministries



3. Needs List



Our families and ministry would be so encouraged to receive any of the following items:

- Art supplies, including Lego coloring books
- Family friendly grade-school reading books
- A ping pong table and other games
- Weight room supplies, including a power rack
- A gas grill for the girls' home
- Weed trimmers and lawn mowers



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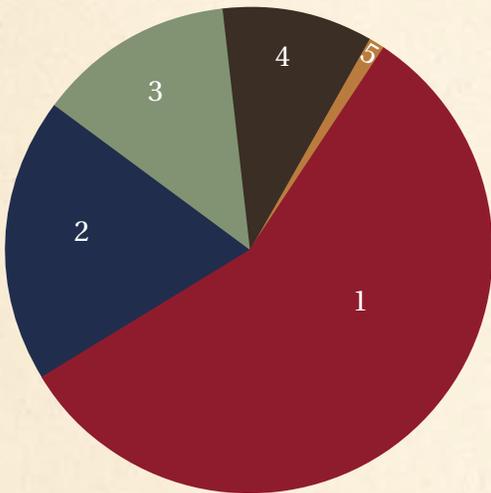
Check us out on...



New Song Mission is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit ministry which is solely supported through the generosity of ministry friends—thanks for helping us equip children for life!

FISCAL YEAR 2019-20 FINANCIAL REPORT

What Your Gifts Support



1. Home Life Care: 57%
2. Academic Instruction: 19%
3. Administration: 13%
4. Communications: 10%
5. Capital Purchases: 1%

The chart to the left shares how New Song spent the charitable contributions the ministry received in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020. Total gifts to New Song during that time period were \$321,000, compared to total expenses of \$244,000. The additional income over expenses added to our small cash reserve fund. We believe that our expenses will increase by 20% this fiscal year mostly due to the hiring of a second teacher and an anticipated increase in our student body. We remain very grateful for the generous support of ministry friends who share our concern for vulnerable children.

Home life at New Song The comprehensive care we provide children at New Song begins in our homes. Houseparents provide the love, Christian discipleship, social/emotional growth experiences, and fun activities that the kids need in order to thrive!

→ 57% of your gift directly supports the home life that kids receive at New Song, as well as all of the activities and outings they enjoy!

Academic Instruction We have a tremendous responsibility to provide a high quality education to our students, and we are able to do so in a very personal, individualized manner. Each student we've had at New Song has been very successful with us academically, some well beyond what they had ever dreamed of achieving.

→ 19% of your gift directly supports the academic success of the New Song students, giving them a strong foundation for their future.

Essential Organizational Activities Guiding and promoting the ministry are essential organizational activities in a grassroots ministry like New Song, which is supported through the generosity of individuals, churches, foundations, and businesses.

→ 13% of your gift supports the administrative work of the ministry
→ 10% of your gift supports our communication activities

Capital Purchases (home furnishings, equipment, etc.) About 1% of our budget was spent on capital purchases during the last fiscal year.