



FRIENDS of MADAGASCAR MISSION



Vol 15:1

ANNUAL REPORT

2025

Dear Friends of Madagascar Mission,

How does one summarize an amazing year of Friends of Madagascar Mission's work? There are so many exciting stories, but there isn't enough room in this annual report to share all of them. So, on this front page we will share some numbers and inside share some stories and budget needs as we look forward to 2026.

1. We have three categories of FOMM programs:

A. Evangelism:

- a) **4 synods** have 72 evangelists assigned to do evangelism work
- b) **32 Prisons** (Spiritual Division) have a Word and Sacrament ministry
- c) **3 Bible Schools** had 69 students graduate
- d) **2 Seminaries** where we supported 28 students

B. Children in Peril:

- a) **Nofy I Androy** has 800 girls enrolled
- b) **Mampiray** serves 8 public schools with 111 children who have sight issues. The program also works with children who are in prison with their education
- c) **School for the Hearing Impaired** with 167 children enrolled
- d) **Dr. John Dyrnes School** is a K-12 school with 550 students
- e) **Hope School** is a 1-9 grade school for street children with 190 students

C. Development:

- a) **32 Prisons** (Humanitarian Division) where there is distribution of food, medicine, clothing; and vocational programs to teach a trade for them when they are released from prison
- b) **Food Distribution** at Ejeda Hospital, Toby Ambohimahazo, prisons and other locations when emergency food crisis's occur
- c) **Antalaha Prison Half Way House** that serves 60-70 families every quarter of the year as a transitional place when youth are released from prison and untied with families
- d) **"Thanks a Million!" Program** to raise on million dollars to dig more wells and distribution systems for water to communities for drinking and farming
- e) **Building projects:** 3 clinics and two Bible school buildings under construction. We are also raising funds for a new dining hall/meeting room at Toby Ambohimahazo

2. In 2025 Friends of Madagascar Mission received **\$446,316.10** in support of our programs. In 2026 we are seeking \$487,740.00 to meet the needs outlined in this report.

3. We have a staff of 5 members and a board of directors who donate all of their time to manage FOMM's programs. We publish four newsletters a year and have two websites to share details about all of the programs mentioned above: www.MadagascarMission.org and www.MadagascarDevelopment.org

Now, we invite you to open this Annual report and read several stories of the programs that have been listed above.

PEACE IN CHRIST!

The Rev. David P. Lerseth

A. STORIES ABOUT EVANGELISM

a) EVANGELISTS

Currently, we support 72 evangelists. There is always a need for supporting more evangelists as the Malagasy Lutheran Church continues to reach out with the Gospel of Jesus Christ to millions who have not heard the Good News of the Gospel.

The Ambovombe Androy Synod has a special ministry to the Tandroy people. There are no Christian resource materials in their language and so we are supporting a Tandroy Resource Center. They provide written, recorded, and video resources for a mission outreach by three evangelists assigned to this region.



Support for an evangelist is: \$900.00 a year. You will receive 4 reports per year about their work. The 2026 evangelist budget is : \$67,240.00. The Tandroy Resource Center has a 2026 budget of : \$7,400.00.

b) PRISON MINISTRY SPIRITUAL DIVISION: Personal story

FAGNAPEA MAGNIRISOA HOMENJANAHARY AZY is a prisoner from the Bara ethnic group in Madagascar—a region where strong traditional customs are deeply rooted. In that culture, a man is not considered a “real man” unless he has stolen cattle, and he cannot marry unless he has a mark or history that proves he has been imprisoned. It was cattle theft that led him to prison, where he is now serving a 15-year sentence. According to his story, he arrived in prison on May 3, 2012. Now, in 2026, he has truly changed and has made a firm decision to repent and follow Christ. In his own words he writes: “From my childhood until my time here in prison, I was a very stubborn person. I strongly held on to my identity as a pagan. Looking back now, I realize that my stubbornness and my attachment to that way of life are what led me to prison. Many pastor and priests have come to the prison but I considered their message to be meaningless stories and fairy tales. I even thought they



were people with nothing better to do. But then when Pastor Dieu Donne, supported by Friends of Madagascar Mission began to come to our prison, I came to get the free rice but not to hear God’s Word. Later, he formed a choir. I began to take interest in it, though it had not yet deeply impacted me. Then one song in particular when sung changed something inside me. I felt sorrow and conviction of my sin and from that moment Christ’s love never left me. After that, I made a decision to join in this “singing sermon” ministry. I truly believe that this ministry is what changed my life. When I am baptized, I would like to have a T-shirt made with the following words: **FAGNAPEA MAG-**

NIRISOA HOMENJANAHARY AZY — A TRANSFORMED CHRISTIAN, BAPTIZED.”

Currently we support a Word and Sacrament Ministry in 32 of the 84 prisons in Madagascar. The Ministry of Justice, which operates all of the prisons greatly appreciates FOMM’s support of this ministry as it has a very positive affect upon the prisoners behavior and attitude. Part 2 of the Prison Ministry Program is reported on page 5.

Gifts of any amount are appreciated for the annual Spiritual Division Ministry. The 2026 Prison Ministry Spiritual Division budget is: \$40,040.00

FOMM’s Prayer Gathering: Every third Monday of the month we gather on a ZOOM call to hear updated news from Madagascar and have an opportunity to pray from 4-4:30pm (CDT). We send out email notices to invite and remind you to join us. If unable to attend, please keep FOMM’s mission in your prayers.

c) BIBLE SCHOOLS

Ernest Jean de Dieu is a student at the Manasoa Fanjarahira Bible School, currently in his second year. He is from an area predominantly inhabited by the Bara ethnic group in the southwestern region of Madagascar. He is 46 years old. **1) Life Before Becoming a Christian:** Prior to his conversion, he lived according to a Gentile religious worldview, engaging in idol worship, the veneration of sacred trees (hazomanga), and the consultation of traditional healers (witch doctors/ombiasa). He is married and has children. **2) Baptism:** Upon hearing the Gospel through the outreach of Christian evangelistic teams who ministered in his village, he experienced a conversion to Christianity and was baptized. **3) Life after Baptism** Following his conversion, he voluntarily committed himself to theological training at the Manasoa Bible School and is now, motivated by the reality that many people within the Bara community remain unreached by the Christian faith. His intention is to serve as a catechist or evangelist, proclaiming the Gospel among his own people and neighboring communities. **4) Becoming an Evangelist :** Upon completion of his studies, he is prepared to return to his home region to bear witness to his faith and to proclaim the Gospel through preaching, evangelistic campaigns, house-to-house visitation, revival ministry, and the establishment of local churches, with the aim of leading members of the Bara Gentile community to the Christian faith. In light of the challenges inherent in this mission, he is in need of prayer, assistance, and sustained support for the effective fulfillment of this demanding ministry.



Support for a Bible school student's annual tuition is : \$375.00 (Tuition/books/board and room) The 2026 Bible School budget is : \$44,800.00

d) SEMINARY STUDY

There are 6 Regional Seminaries where students study for 4 years and may then be ordained for parish ministry. In addition, if a pastor wishes to receive a Master's of Divinity Degree he must go to the SALT seminary for 4 additional years of study.

Currently FOMM supports 14 students (\$375.00 a year) at the Bezaha Regional Seminary and 10 students (\$850.00 a year) at the SALT Seminary. The 2026 budget for seminary scholarships is: \$22,000.00



FOMM IS SEEKING TWO STAFF POSITIONS

1) ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTION: a person who will work closely with Pastor David Lerseth, the executive director, to learn about the mission, our managing principals for staff in the USA and in Madagascar; and be able to eventually become the executive director.

2) DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR: a person to help guide FOMM's programs to raise funds and keep donors informed as to how their financial gifts are being used.

DETAILS: 1) Neither of these positions are geographically tied to a specific location (USA positions only)
2) Neither of these positions are considered full time currently

If you or someone you know is interested and would like to find out more about either of these positions, please contact Pastor David Lerseth at 847-445-8177 or at FriendsOfMadagascarMission@gmail.com to receive a "Ministry Description" or to answer any questions you may have about either of these positions.

God is calling someone, and we hope it is you!

B. CHILDREN IN PERIL:

a) NOFY i ANDROY

The program began with 17 students in 2012 by Meta Paubert Kaurin and her daughter Melodie and has grown to over 700 students in 2025 with a goal of over 800 students in 2026. The program's mission is to help families to support their young girls to continue with their education. Many girls in this culture become "child mothers" at the age of puberty and live in poverty the rest of their lives. Through this program girls are being supported by teachers who help them achieve their educational goals. FOMM has been a proud sponsor of this program through donors who are assigned a girl to support and receive 2 letters a year about their educational pursuits. Many go on to become teachers, nurses, doctors and other professional persons.



For \$200.00 a year you may become a sponsor of this program and save a girl from being a "child mother" to a successful educated woman. FOMM also provides a chaplain for this program to teach the Christian Faith and work with the girls and the families to seek success. The 2026 budget for the Nofy i Androy Program is : \$24,000.00

b) MAMPIRAY means unity

It is a recent program supported by FOMM. Mr. Ernest retired as the superintendent of a residential school serving blind students. He decided he wanted to continue serving blind students and so he developed a program to go out to the public schools and help teachers with how to teach the students with sight problems. He now serves 8 public schools with 111 children. In addition he works with children in prisons with their education.



A gift of \$25.00 will provide each student with the educational resources they need to become successful in their education. The 2026 budget for the Mampiray Program is: \$16,000.00

c) SCHOOL FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED

The school is located in Ansirabe, Madagascar and has a very high record of student's passing the government tests for educational advancement. There are currently 167 residential students at the school. 2025 was the first year that FOMM has supported the school with financial support, which they are very appreciative of receiving. They shared in their annual report to FOMM that there were 10 deaf students who were confirmed and 2 students were baptized at the school. They have a full time chaplain that ministers to their spiritual needs.



A gift of \$50.00 provides for a student's tuition cost for school and board and room. The 2026 budget for the School for the Hearing Impaired is: \$8,000.00

d) DR JOHN DYRNES SCHOOL

The history of this school goes back to the early 1900's when Dr. Dynes arrived at Manasoa, Madagascar, the location of an early missionary settlement. He saved many babies from the "death sentence" when the witch doctors declared "an evil day and all newborn children must die". Dr. Dynes took action and saved many babies, which meant after a period of time he had to start a school.



The school relocated, in 1960, to a larger, nearby city, Bezaha where it continues today. We first visited the school in 2023 and met with the principal, Auber TSIFARIA, who described the dire situation with the school, because there was an enrollment of 378 students, early drop out of girls as they reached puberty, became child mothers and a lack of finances. FOMM accepted to financially support this school and to establish a Nofy i Androy Program (see (a) on pg. 4) about this program, provided more desks, built a wall around the school for safety of the children and the enrollment has increased to 550 students. Now they have sent a proposal to start an orphanage called "Bridge of Hope" which the FOMM Board of Directors will consider for adoption at their spring board meeting on June 25th.

A gift of \$48.00 a year will provide support for one student to attend the school. The 2026 budget for the Dr. John Dynes School is: \$3,200.00, which support seminary children's tuition. Scholarships for other students are needed.

e) HOPE SCHOOL



Hope school in the capital city of Antananarivo, began under the guidance of Hope Lutheran Church and local pastors, provides free, faith-based education and nutritious food to street children. The students receive free lunch daily, which for most of them is their only meal for 24 hours. The children live in extreme poverty and have a high risk of entering the juvenile justice system or being victims of sex trafficking or child kidnapping. Currently there are 190 students in grades 1st through 9th grade.

Despite limited resources, the school boasts a strong academic track record, with 100% of its students regularly passing their fifth-grade government exams. Thus, it relies heavily on charitable support. It is partnered with organizations like the Friends of Madagascar Mission, which helps fund operations and projects.

A gift of \$75.00 will provide a scholarship for a student to attend Hope School. The 2026 budget for the Hope School is \$12,000.00.

C. Development:

a) PRISON MINISTRY HUMANITARIAN DIVISION: Personal story

32 Prisons At each of the prisons there is a program for the distribution of food, medicine, clothing; and vocational programs to teach a trade for them when they are released from prison

Olivier is a 23-year-old young man from the western part of Madagascar. In search of work and a better life, he moved to Fianarantsoa, where he found employment with a local employer. Instead of collecting his wages every week, Olivier chose to have his employer save his funds until he needed them. As a result, a significant amount accumulated. However, when the time came for him to receive his salary, an unexpected situation occurred. The employer seeing the large sum he owed falsely accused Olivier of theft. Although Olivier tried to explain that he was innocent, no one listened to him, and he was sent to prison.

continued on page 6

He was sentenced to five years for a crime he did not commit. During his time in prison, Olivier went through deep hardship. His family did not know where he was, and there was no communication at all from the prison. It is very likely that they even thought he had died. Despite this, Olivier admitted that he had been somewhat rebellious in his past life.



While in prison, a transformation began in his life. Before this, Olivier had no knowledge of prayer or the Word of God. But in prison, he began listening to sermons from the Malagasy Lutheran Church (FLM), working in partnership with the Madagascar Prison Ministry (MPM), supported by FOMM/USA. Through this ministry, Olivier received various forms of support: 1) Food assistance (rice) from the Humanitarian Madagascar Prison Ministry 2) A Bible provided by the Spiritual Ministry Prison Ministry (SMPM)

During his time in prison, he 1) was baptized 2) participated in vocational training through the Working Group in the prison to teach prisoners a trade they may use when released to make a living. He learned how to make sandals and 3) received a certificate to show he was qualified to make sandals and received a tool kit from Friends of Madagascar Mission to take home with him on his release from prison.

Olivier expressed deep repentance for his past life. In his own words: “Coming to prison has been like a discipline from God in my life, even though I did not commit the crime.” Today, he is ready to begin a new life. He shared that he no longer wants to depend on working for others, but instead wants to use the skills he learned—making sandals—to support himself. After completing his sentence, Olivier decided to return to his family. His greatest desire is to see them again after so many years without contact.

He has now returned home, carrying with him: 1) New hope 2) Faith in God 3) And practical skills to rebuild his life. This story reminds us that: 1) Human judgment can sometimes be wrong 2) But God continues to transform and restore lives and 3) Even in prison, a person can begin a new life. Written by Pastor Dieu Donne, the pastor of the Fianarantsoa Prison Ministry.

Gifts of any amount are appreciated for the annual Humanitarian Division Ministry budget. The 2026 Prison Ministry Humanitarian Division’s annual budget is: \$58,972.60 and the administration budget is \$5,987.40.

b) FOOD DISTRIBUTION

The southwest region of Madagascar is a very arid region. It is the fourth most likely region in the world to face extreme drought, resulting in water and food shortages which severely affect the people of the region, especially children. While FOMM is not able to solve this issue for the total region, we seek to help reduce the affect of drought through the programs we support to address these issues.

(1) At Ejeda Hospital, a Lutheran Mission Hospital, we provide food for the patients. In Madagascar, as in Africa, families must provide the food for the patients. If a family, as a result of the drought, does not have any food they will not come to the hospital. Thus the FOMM Nutrition Program at Ejeda provides funds for the hospital to give to the patient’s family to cook their daily food needs of rice and a protein.



Gifts of any amount are appreciated. The annual 2026 budget is: \$13,750.00

(2) Toby Ambohimahazo is best described as a spiritual renewal center which trains and prepares Christians to live a life of service and justice. There are many Tobys across the country and besides their 2 year training program, they also care for the poor and the mentally ill people. Currently this Toby feeds 260 people at a cost of \$.65 per day. Their goal is to increase the nutritional value of the food served which would increase the daily cost per day. FOMM's support will allow them to increase the daily cost to \$1.00 per day.



Gifts of any amount are appreciated. The annual budget for the Toby is: \$8,000.00.

(3) Emergency Food Fund is needed for times when FOMM is requested to fund a program or community that is suffering from a lack of food. Food is fairly distributed to all regardless of being a Christian, but a gift of God to the humanitarian needs of a suffering population.

Gifts of any amount are appreciated. The annual budget depends upon how much funds are donated.

c) ANTALAHA PRISON HALF-WAY HOUSE is best described as a place where families of youth that are in prison may stay when they come to receive their child when released from prison. Making contact with the families sometimes take a lot of time and the half-way house is a place for prisoners to wait to be united with their families. The Half-Way House serves 60-70 families every quarter of the year. FOMM supports the half-way house and it is managed by a French non-profit called "Grandir Dignement". We work well together.



Gifts of any amount are appreciated. The annual 2026 budget is: \$2,400.00

d) AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

In the rural, arid southwest, most of the food is produced by individual families to provide food for themselves and if they have any produce left over to sell in the community markets. They farm the way they have for centuries. When drought times occur, there is then a drastic shortage of food and starvation becomes common. FOMM is working with international partners to help teach new ways of farming which includes: 1) Water for drip irrigation during a drought, 2) Saving some of their seeds from their harvest for planting the next season, called Seed Banks, 3) Planting Moringa Trees, which are a tree of life, as every part of the tree is edible. It is life saving in arid parts of the world. It is a huge change of cultural norms but we pray it will save many people from the rhythm of starvation in the communities that we serve.



Gifts of any amount are appreciated. The annual budget is: \$50,00.00

e) **"Thanks a Million!" Program** plans to raise one million dollars to dig more wells and build distribution systems for piping water to communities for drinking and farming purposes. We encourage you to go to our new website: www.MadagascarDevelopment.com to view how you, your congregation or an organization may provide support for this program. We encourage you to ask others to join in supporting this program. In precious years we raised \$100,000.00 to dig numerous wells in the Betroka and Mananovy cities in south-west Madagascar. This program was very successful and caused us to dream big and seek to proceed to reach out to the many small villages that suffer from a lack of a sustainable water supply.



Gifts of any amount are appreciated. This program is not a sprint, but a marathon, meaning it will take a few years but as the funds come in we will begin to dig more wells. The annual budget goal for 2026 is : \$100,000.00, and we pray more with your support.

f) **BUILDING PROJECTS:** 3 clinics and two Bible school buildings are under construction and will be finished in 2026. The funding for all of these buildings has been raised. Now we are seeking funding for a dinning and meeting hall at the Toby Ambohimahazo. (See the purpose of this program at the top of page 7). We have raised half of the funding for this program.

We are seeking gifts of \$15,000.00 to fully fund this building project.

g) **"Help to get a Woman and her Child(ren) Out of Prison" Program**

In FOMM's Prison Ministry Program, we serve both male, female and children in prison. Many woman in prison also have their child(ren) with them. The issue in Madagascar is that when arrested they are brought to the prison until they have a time to appear before a judge to hear their case. Sometimes this will turn into not only days or months but even years. Also many of the prisoners do not have the money to hire an attorney to help them appear before a



Marine and her child the night of her release from prison

judge, so they are helplessly lingering in prison. One of FOMM's faithful donors heard about this issue and gave a great gift for us to begin this program "Help to get a Woman and her Child(ren) Out of Prison" Program.

We had the first woman with one child to receive financial support to appear before a judge on April 20, 2026 and she was ordered to be released from prison. Her name is Marine and she is very happy. Narcisse Rabezato Lovamalala, a student studying to be an attorney and supported by FOMM, is managing this program.

He writes "Marine is very happy and thanks the donor who provided these funds to help her be released from prison". We hope that many more woman will also be able to appear before a judge to hear their case and hopefully, be released from prison.



Marine acquittal certificate



Marine, her child and Mr. Rabezato at the bus terminal to be on her way back home. The bus ticket and money for food on the journey are also provided by FOMM.

The cost for attorney fees is very expensive, but a gift of any size will help us to have more woman appear before a judge.

SPECIAL GIVING 2025

IN MEMORY OF

Steven Lellelid
David Awes
Pastor Carl Vaagenes
Pastor Carl Vaagenes
Pastor Carl Vaagenes
Pastor Morris Vaagenes
Ruth Vaagenes
Pastor Carol Vaagenes
Arlene Lellelid
Steve Lellelid
Pastor Morris Vaagenes
Pat Schaeffer
Christa Lee
Carolyn Peterson
Ted Berkas
Bob and Ethel Anderson
Elaine Perkins
Vivian Wells
Caleb and Connie Quanbeck
James Peterson
Pastor Malvin Rossing
James and Carolyn Peterson
Pastor Morris Vaagenes
Dale and Dagny Lerseth
Ruth Vaagenes
Melvin Krums

GIVEN BY

Delores Berkas
Lewann Sotnak
Peter and Judy Dyrud
Phyllis and Joseph Soosai
John and Diane Hetzler
North Heights Lutheran Church, Arden Hills, MN
Claudia Lodermeier
Arvella Lang
Arvella Lang
Arvella Lang
Ron and Beverly Hintz
David and Diane Lerseth
Rachael Archer
Mark and Dawn Wittenburg
Paul Grabow
Paul Grabow
Paul Grabow
Paul Grabow
Paul Grabow
Mark and Dawn Wittenburg
Memorial Gifts and Elizabeth Rossing
David and Diane Lerseth
Bonnie Vaagenes
Kenneith and Barbara Hand
Phyllis and Joseph Soosai
Peace Lutheran Church, Northwood, Iowa

TOTAL MEMORIALS IN 2025: \$35,898.32

IN HONOR OF

Missionaries living at the
Lyngblomsten Home
Pastor Sue Gunderson
Phoebe Bergh on her 90th Birthday

Pastor David Lerseth's Birthday

Ardyth Voss's 90th Birthday
Ardyth Voss's 90th Birthday
Ardyth Voss's 90th Birthday
Dr. Stanley Quanbeck
Dagmar McElroy
Dale Arnold
Hannah Shrader

GIVEN BY

David Stensland
St. James Lutheran Church, Brenham, Texas
David and Diane Lerseth
Jeff and Kirsten Schlicht
Ted and Catherine Marks
Jeff and Kirsten Schlicht
Ted and Catherine Marks
David and Diane Lerseth
Jeff and Kirsten Schlicht
Duane Quanbeck
David Mehl
James and Joy Sovada
Arne Sather

TOTAL IN HONOR OF GIFTS IN 2025: \$3,183.45



FRIENDS of MADAGASCAR MISSION

P. O. Box 46381
Eden Prairie, MN 55344

WHO ARE WE?

We are a Christian mission organization, incorporated as a nonprofit with approval by the IRS, with a nine-member board of directors consisting of Lutheran pastors and laypersons. All financial gifts are tax deductible, and donors will receive regular reports on the progress of the project you support.

Welcome to our mission!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rev. David P. Lerseth, President
Jeff Tetzlaff, Vice President
Catherine Marks, Secretary
Kirsten Schlicht, Treasurer
Andrea Crew
Rev. Lee Laaveg
Loren Morschen
Craig T. Norenberg

**2025
Annual
Report**

FRIENDS OF MADAGASCAR MISSION GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

How do I donate:

1. Write a check and send to:

Friends of Madagascar Mission
PO Box 46381 Eden Prairie, MN 55344

2. Go to: www.MadagascarMission.org (click on "Donate" and select a project to support)

3. A gift may be given "in memory of" or "in honor of"

4. You will receive:

a) A thank you letter from FOMM, b) Quarterly newsletters about FOMM's mission work

I would like to support the following FOMM Programs and/or Projects

1. EVANGELISM

- a. EVANGELISTS: page 2 \$ _____
- b. PRISON MINISTRY: Spiritual pg 2 \$ _____
- c. BIBLE SCHOOLS: page 3 \$ _____
- d. SEMINARY page 3 \$ _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

IN HONOR OF: _____ IN MEMORY OF: _____

TOTAL AMOUNT OF YOUR GIFT: \$ _____

2. CHILDREN IN PERIL

- a. Nofy i Androy: page 4 \$ _____
- b. Mampiray p. 4 \$ _____
- c. Hearing Impaired p. 4 \$ _____
- d. Dyrnes School page 5 \$ _____
- e. Hope School page 5 \$ _____

3. DEVELOPMENT

- a. Prison Humanitarian p.5 \$ _____
- b. Food Distribution p.6
 - 1. Ejeda Hospital p. 6 \$ _____
 - 2. Toby p. 7 \$ _____
 - 3. Emergency Food p. 7 \$ _____
- c. ANTALAHA Half-Way p 7 \$ _____
- d. Agriculture p. 7 \$ _____
- e. THANKS A MILLION! p 8 \$ _____
- f. Building Projects p. 8 \$ _____
- g. Help Woman/Child p 8 \$ _____