

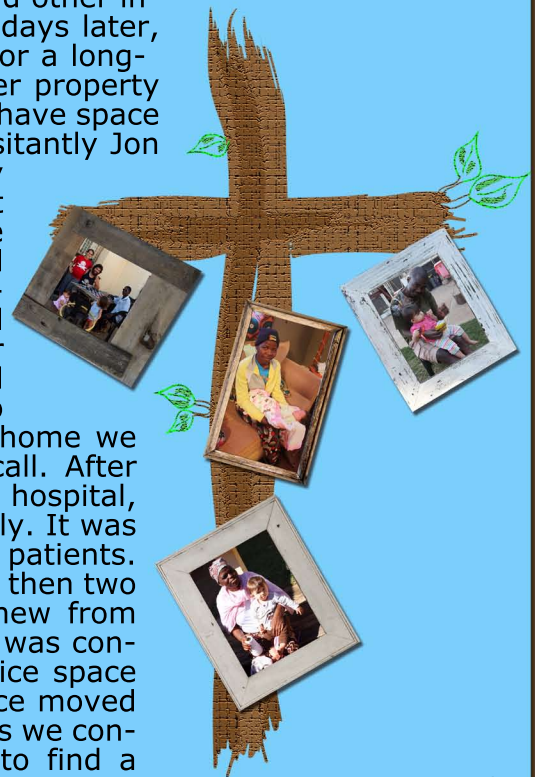


Casa Anava

Hoping to Grow

FIRST

Our family moved into the house we call our home back in June of 2011. It was a welcome move from the smaller, town-home style house we lived in prior to that. It had a nice little yard for our growing number of kids and big dog to run around in, and Layne's vision for colored walls, hand-sewn curtains, and cozy wall hangings made it a place to call "home". We fell in love with this house. One of the first conversations we had with the home owner was about the possibility of purchasing it from him outright. Almost two years later he approached us and offered us the opportunity to do just that. It was a wonderful feeling, and our hearts leapt at the chance. We had already renovated and prepared the two flats out back, the one bathroom, and a small kitchen (with the help of a wonderful group of young people from our church in Arizona) in preparation for Casa Ahavá, and it just felt right. We spoke with Sergio, a church member who works as a realtor, who already knew about our vision for Casa Ahavá. We wanted to be as informed as possible about pricing, legal obligations and other information regarding the purchase of a home. A few days later, Sergio called Jon up with an idea; if you're looking for a long-term home for Casa Ahavá, why not look for another property that would help Casa Ahavá expand to be bigger and have space more suited to the community it's designed for? Hesitantly Jon agreed and the two went to see the other property Sergio had in mind. Jon remained unconvinced. At that point, Casa Ahavá wasn't even approved by the hospital or Social Services department and it seemed unlikely that would happen soon. It would feel gratuitous to purchase a large house (with extra attached bedrooms bathrooms and kitchen) for just the Heller family without any indication that Casa Ahavá would start there soon. In our hearts, the matter was put to rest and we continued our pursuit to purchase the home we knew and loved. One week later, we got a phone call. After waiting on and working with the administration at the hospital, Casa Ahavá was approved and could start immediately. It was an incredible and holy moment. We started inviting patients. We started with one, then a second, then a third, and then two more were coming in from out of town that we knew from years passed. Our guest room/office/girls play room was converted into another Casa Ahavá room, while our office space moved into our own bedroom and the girls play space moved into the dining room. Our hearts continued to groan as we continued to tell patients in the hospital who longed to find a family and home that there was simply no space for them. Yet God whispered of something else. He whispered his tears for those who are sick, who are strangers, who long to be visited and invited in. Layne wanted to see the place Sergio had shown Jon, so we set another date and we went. Jon, caught in his skepticism that this place was too big and could not be used, continued to resist the idea. Layne saw immediately that this was the direction God was leading. It could be that specific property, or another, but her heart soared with the vision for what Casa Ahavá could be in a place like this. With 9 bedrooms, two kitchens, 6 bathrooms, space to plant a farm, raise chickens, and even rehabilitate a little warehouse into a chapel, this was a place Casa Ahavá could grow. This was a place Jesus could welcome the stranger, visit the sick, feed the hungry and thirsty, clothe the naked, and release the bonds of those imprisoned by their sickness. After many late nights of discussion and prayer, we felt peace that this was indeed where God was leading us; Growth.



THE BIG IDEA

What exactly is the vision of Casa Ahavá? We're sorry if we've done a poor job explaining it, though it has perhaps only taken full form now that it is up and running. The biggest need currently in the Oncology department is for patients who have come from the north of the country and cannot come and go for treatments, thus remain living at the hospital for the duration of their Chemotherapy treatments, often without family and friends to visit and care for them. A treatment cycle is typically 1 day of Chemotherapy and 21 days off, meaning they have 21 relatively healthy days with no need to be hospitalized. Casa Ahavá offers a home and family to those patients to rest and recuperate at no cost to the patient. Secondly, though not equally, we also desire to operate as place of comfort and dignity for people to die. The need for this is not consistent, so it would be as a desperate need arose, we have something to offer. Patients who already have been living with us for months, may naturally transition into this care. In these cases we will do our best to bring a family member to Casa Ahavá to be present during those final days.



THINGS TO KNOW

- God is leading this. It feels far more comfortable to us to simply stay where we are, to try to purchase the house we live in now, and to keep Casa Ahavá's scope down to just four or five people. We simply can't ignore how strongly God has emphasized that He wants to provide it for more people.
- Voices of the World, our mission organization and accountability team, prayed with us and agree that the Lord desires growth.
- While we feel the Lord leading us to expand our project, we also desire to keep our project small enough to maintain a family feel with Jon and Layne being intimately involved in each and every case. 12-15 patients would be our maximum.
- The desire to expand the Casa Ahavá project does not change our initial vision, only the capability to do it for more patients.
- Real estate prices in Maputo and its suburbs are constantly on the rise. We, along with most missionaries we know here, have had to move in the past three years to escape escalating rent prices. We currently pay \$1000. The current average for an apartment in the city is between \$1500 and \$2000. Each year this number has risen. Because of this, we believe it would wise to purchase a property.
- We would like a home that could comfortably fit at least 10 patients plus our family. It is common for a home in the Maputo area to have detached flats with a shared bathroom and sometimes a kitchen. This space is usually for hired staff or live-in family. We would want to use these living areas for patients and even their families when possible. Ideally we would have 3-4 flats.
- We would like to look for a home that would have some land attached to it. Many men from the north are farmers and find it difficult to sit around all day without anything to do with their hands. The land would serve to put in a small farm that the patients could take ownership of and find pride a familiar work.

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? WHAT IS NEEDED?

Money to purchase a property. To give you an idea: the asking price for the home we were shown is \$500,000. (Main house – 5 bedrooms, 4 full bathrooms, 2 living spaces, kitchen, dining room, and basement. Plus – 4 detached flats, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, 2 large warehouses, a swimming pool, and a large garden/small farm. Sits on a Hectare of land, which is 2.47 acres.)

Start up costs for a new home. This would include beds for more patients, AC units, hot water heaters, possibly some kitchen and room renovations in order to be patient friendly, etc.)

Increased monthly support. We provide all basic needs of our patients, so by increasing the number of patients, we would increase our day-to-day operating costs. This also includes the added expenses of maintaining a larger property.

What are we asking of you? Since the beginning of our ministry, we have strongly felt a part of a team. As a team member, we ask that you pray about the things we have communicated. Pray for direction, discernment, provision, faith, etc. As you pray, if you sense the Lord is telling you something, would you share that with us?



So that's it. We're going to keep doing it, keep trying to be faithful in it, and keep trusting that Jesus Christ smiles along with each patient we get the chance to visit.

We are hoping to grow.

We are hoping to serve more.

We know that Jesus provides for what He says to do.

We trust that.