

HANDS ON DECK

ISSUE FORTY-SEVEN



“Their eyes tell a tale of deep sadness that I can’t possibly try to comprehend..” – Celine Letkeman

A Witness to God’s Faithfulness

Celine Letkeman, International Volunteer (Canada), Communications Team

In the middle of July, a Maranatha Workshop was held in the community of Share, South Africa for Primary Caregivers and children. The workshop was facilitated by the Hazyview Service Centre (SC) and supported by International Volunteers from the Hands at Work HUB in South Africa.

A challenge in the community of Share is a sense of mistrust, disunity and the struggle to forgive one another. A reality for the community is the belief that if a negative event happens, it is the direct result of another person’s actions. This belief can lead to disunity and a lack of trust between neighbours and families. On the first day of the workshop, the Primary Caregivers were engaged and asking lots of questions about the Holy Spirit, creation and forgiveness.

Audrey Sibiya (African Volunteer, South Africa) shared about the importance of forgiving one another regardless of another person’s actions towards you. The following day, one of the grandmothers shared that she had put Audrey’s teaching into practice: when she had returned home the previous day, she went straight to her neighbour’s home and forgave her. Those who heard the story felt that this was a beautiful testimony of God’s goodness and faithfulness.

Celine shares, “as I looked into the eyes of the children, Care Workers and Primary Caregivers, I wondered what their eyes must have seen. Their eyes tell a tale of deep sadness that I can’t possibly try to comprehend and their body language magnifies a level of pain that I don’t understand. I desire for them to know and truly believe that God loves them and knows them. My heart breaks at the thought that they don’t know God and how important and valuable they are to the Kingdom.

At the same time, I was deeply encouraged and inspired by the youth leaders that came from the community of Pfunani (South Africa) to support the workshop for the children in Share. They demonstrated to the youth in Share what it meant to lead in a Godly way. They helped to lead worship, prayer times and assisted in leading Relationship Groups. It was beautiful to see the relationship between two of the youth boys from Pfunani, and their Care Worker. It was obvious that they respected and looked up to this role model. It was an amazing privilege to see the model of healthy relationships between the youth leaders and Care Workers.”



CONTRIBUTORS

in this issue of Hands on Deck

Celine Letkeman
Brenda Rebro
George Snyman
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Seeing God in Brokenness

Xolani Makwakwa, African Volunteer (South Africa), Regional Support Team (RST)

Over the first weekend in August, there was a day camp in Bhandeni Community, Swaziland for children and youth. The workshop was facilitated by the Oshoek Service Centre (SC) and the South African RST. The SC and RST were supported by a team from Woodlands Community Church from the UK.

"The weekend that we spent with the children in Bhandeni was challenging but God had greater plans than we could've ever imagined. It was amazing to go into the weekend knowing that people were surrounding us with prayer and scripture. One of the challenges that stuck out was the brokenness of the children in Bhandeni. They have a lot of responsibility at such young ages. In their homes, they see Jesus being mixed with other cultural beliefs. They were open as they shared their lives with us; challenging us deeply."

The Woodlands team brought hand-made puppets that they used to tell the children stories from the Bible. The children understood what the stories meant and asked the question 'how can we overcome what our culture says?' This workshop wasn't simply an event but has the power to be life-changing, which is why it's so important that there is follow-up. Xolani shares, "It was beautiful to have the children with us and to see the freedom that they had around the bonfire. As a team, we are excited to walk and grow with the children."



HEALING AND TRANSFORMATION

Brenda Rebro, International Volunteer (US), Regional Support Team (RST) and Hospitality

In July, Brenda travelled to Malawi with the purpose of supporting the Dedza Service Centre (SC) as they hosted a team from Lloydminster School, Canada. It was an exciting team to host because although they have been involved with Hands at Work for several years, this was the first team sent to their partner community of Mngwere. The team was composed of seven ladies, each coming from different walks of life. While the team was in Malawi, they visited two communities – Chinkhu and Mngwere.

Brenda shares, "On one of the days in the community, I had the privilege of doing a Holy Home Visit with Violet (Dedza SC). We visited a young girl of about seven or eight years old, who had been feeling unwell for a significant period of time. She had been taken to the clinic and Violet wanted to follow up to ensure that she was improving. When we arrived at the home, we noticed another smaller child. She seemed to

be about two years old but was much smaller than she should have been. She was sick and not eating which had led to weight loss. This little one's mother had taken her daughter to the clinic but was simply given supplements. We prayed for the family and that the child would want to eat food. Two days later, we returned to the community and this girl's mother came running to tell us that her daughter was finally eating. I thought that she would've started by eating soft porridge, but when her mother listened five different foods, I was amazed. It was a beautiful way to see God working.

The members on this team have challenging stories about the journey that God has been taking them on and it was no accident that God brought them to Africa. God used the Holy Home Visits to speak deeply into the lives of each of the women on the team. They were profoundly impacted by the Care Workers, Primary Caregivers and children that they met. There were divine encounters as the ladies met and encouraged women who have struggled through similar life situations. It was a blessing to be a part of this team as healing and transformation took place."

PRAYER POINTS

After many years of prayer, a house where the Service Centre team and other visitors can stay has been found near Apatuku Community, Nigeria. Praise God!

As the Hazyview Service Centre continues to follow up with Share Community after the Maranatha Workshop, pray that God would bring continued healing and transformation to the lives of the Primary Caregivers and children. Pray for the Care Workers to be unified as they serve the children.

As preparation for the October Gathering in Zambia continues, please pray for God to give wisdom and guidance to those who will be facilitating. Individuals from across Africa will travel to Zambia at the beginning of October. Pray for protection.