

# HANDS ON DECK



## CONTRIBUTORS

in this issue of Hands on Deck

Catherine Clarkson  
Kara McLaughlin  
Michael Mwila  
Bethuel Mkhabela

*“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” - Romans 10:14-15*



*“The church is choosing to see this as time to seek God and trust that God is actually stirring them up....” – Catherine Clarkson*

## SACRIFICIAL GIVING

Catherine Clarkson, International Volunteer (UK), Partnerships Team

From the beginning of Hands at Work, our vision has been to mobilise the local church in Africa to care for the most vulnerable, but to do it in partnership with the International Church. In the wake of COVID-19, many of the teams, who would have been coming to serve with Hands at Work at some point throughout 2020, have been forced to postpone. However, despite not being able to physically be on the ground in Africa, we have heard teams and partners say that they are choosing to see this season as an opportunity, given by God.

We invite you to read two stories of partners from across the world, who remain faithfully committed to serving the most vulnerable from afar, even in this season of uncertainty.

“A new partner for Hands at Work is a church in Chicago, USA, called Church of the Beloved. The advocacy at the church is being led by Abe and Suzette Lee, who relocated to Chicago for Abe’s work. The church

was planning to send a team to Africa this year. Of course, they were disappointed that they were unable to come, but the church hasn’t let this set them back. If anything, they have let this spur them forward. Abe said that “he wants this to be an opportunity where the church can witness what God is doing in our own community at this time.” The church is choosing to see this as time to seek God and trust that God is actually stirring them up to do something in their home community. They have decided that every day that they would have been in Africa, they are going to come together virtually to pray for the children and Care Workers. Additionally, they are going to be thinking of creative ways that they can bless their community. This is incredible, and speaks volumes about the way that churches like this are seeking many new opportunities, even amidst the challenges.

In the UK we have a partner church called Greenfinch which faithfully,

every year, sends three or four people to Zambia to encourage and support their partner community. The whole church gets involved in sending these people! The first thing that you see, walking into the church, are pictures of the children they support. The members of this church are faithful in praying for these children and it’s been a huge challenge to each of us in Africa. I wonder if we can all say we have pictures of children in our own homes who we pray for daily?

In this season, many Care Workers across Africa are filled with fear; an additional burden added to the load that they already carry. In this season where many people are struggling financially, Greenfinch decided they wanted to bless the Care Workers in Chilabula, the community they support. Coming together, they combined their resources so they could bless the Care Workers with food parcels. Isn’t that beautiful?”

## BRINGING THE GOOD NEWS

Kara McLaughlin, International Volunteer (Australia), Regional Support Team

For the last several months, Kara has had the privilege of being in Mozambique, supporting the Chimoio Service Centre as they care for the most vulnerable.

“It is amazing to see what has been happening in the Chimoio Service Centre over the last few weeks. There is a new fire to bring Jesus to our communities, we can be so thankful for that. The beauty of this is that they are passing this fire on to the Care Workers and the church leaders in our communities. I would encourage each one of us to pray for our Service Centres,



that they would be beautiful feet. Isn't this the time when we want to be beautiful feet to our communities and our families like never before? Our gospel is 'good news'. It is 'good news' that we have a relationship with Jesus. Our Jesus has authority over everything. He is the Alpha and the Omega but he is also the Good Shepherd. He protects us and is our refuge. That is a message of hope in the midst of the storm that is raging.

Recently, the Service Centre met with the church leaders to discuss an issue in the community. There was a family which was breaking down. As they were discussing how they were going to support this family, the church leaders turned to the Service Centre and said, “leave it to us. We want to take this issue forward but we also want to find a way to bring Jesus to this family.” This is something we can praise God for but we can also pray for the intense strongholds in our communities. Lately, we have become freshly aware of how people in our communities mix Jesus with traditional practices. Please pray for the church leaders to be lights in the community and call people to run only to Jesus. Pray that they will fully surrender to God's Kingdom.”

---

## BE ENCOURAGED

Michael Mwila, African Volunteer (Zambia), Luanshya Service Centre

Today, as you read a story of an incredibly vulnerable young girl living in Chilabula Community, be encouraged by volunteer Care Workers, who have answered God's call on their lives to fight on behalf of the most vulnerable children in the community, despite the vulnerability that they themselves face.

“Before 11-year-old Ruth\* was born, her father passed away. As her mother was giving birth to Ruth, she passed away. Ruth remained living with her elderly grandmother, Mary\*, who struggled to find food and to care well for her. At six months old Ruth was malnourished, and was taken to the local clinic in Chilabula where the nurses assessed her. She needed proper food and care. It was then that the Care Workers started supporting Ruth and helping Mary to care for her granddaughter. In time Ruth started to recover, and then, when she was old enough, started school. The Care Workers continued to visit Mary and encourage her, especially as her health wasn't good.

A pastor from Luanshya, who runs an organisation aimed at supporting youth, visited Chilabula and met Mar. He became very supportive of the family, even taking Mary to the hospital when she needed.

Two years ago, Mary passed away, leaving Ruth without a home. Currently, she moves from house to house as no relatives have accepted her. Before she died, Mary asked the pastor, to continue supporting Ruth. When the Care Workers came and asked him if that was possible, he said that he would help find a place for her to stay, but requested the involvement of her relatives. The Care Workers, together with the pastor, are planning to meet with the relatives living in Chilabula, to make a plan for Ruth. There is hope for Ruth. Hearing her story from birth, and what God has done, we can see His hand. We know that God is still in the situation and that He will find a way for this young girl.”

Please pray for the Care Workers and the pastor to find a safe place for Ruth to stay. Pray that she will come to know the unconditional love of her Heavenly Father.



## SERVING IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Bethuel Mkhabela, African Volunteer (South Africa), Hazyview Service Centre

Across the world, men and women are committed to serving the most vulnerable children, even in the midst of crises like COVID-19. Bethuel is regularly in Mafambisa Community, South Africa, supporting the Care Workers as they serve the most vulnerable children whilst following the regulations and rules set out by the South African government.

“In Mafambisa I visited a family where there are four children living with their mother. I was visiting their home because the children hadn’t been coming to the Care Point and therefore weren’t eating food. When I arrived at their home, I found the three younger children home alone, as the eldest daughter and her mother had gone looking for food. The nine-year-old girl was cooking vegetables for her siblings, as they had no other food in the house. When I asked why they hadn’t been coming to the Care Point, she said that they didn’t know if the Care Point was open, and that they were afraid of the police and soldiers. I was able to explain that the soldiers wouldn’t give them any trouble if the children told the soldiers that they were going to the Care Point to receive food and would then go straight home.

At the Mafambisa Care Point, the children come with their lunch boxes, which we wash as they arrive, and we help the children keep a social distance. Then they wash their hands, are prayed over by the Care Workers, receive food and go home. When I took the three children, who were staying at home, to the Care Point, with a big lunch box for the family, they were extremely happy to return. It was clear that the Care Point is their place of safety and happiness. One of the things that I realised during this time is that when the schools are open they get lunch from school, but now that everything is locked down their vulnerability is only increased, as many don’t have food at home. Even during this time, they really need our care. If we don’t visit, then how are we going to know if they don’t have food, or are being abused?”

*“Even during this time, they really need our care.  
If we don’t visit, then how are we going to know if  
they don’t have food, or are being abused?”*