

# HANDS ON DECK



## CONTRIBUTORS

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The McKinley Family

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*“I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with those who are of contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and revive the heart of the contrite” - Isaiah 57:15*



*“In different meetings we were a part of, Angel was willing to be the first one to step up to say this is what I am struggling with.” – Kara McLaughlin*

## THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF CHRIST

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

In March, Kara travelled to the Likasi in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) with Niza (African Leader, Zambia). They spent three weeks supporting the Likasi Service Centre who serve seven of the most vulnerable communities.

“I want to start by sharing the first two verses from Luke chapter 15, it says ‘Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him and the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled saying, this man receives sinners and eats with them.’

From these verses, I saw in such a fresh way who our Jesus is. Right there, in the midst of religious people and great crowds, the sinners and tax collectors...the most broken, the most corrupt,

the most wicked, the most evil, the most discounted, were drawing near to Jesus. They wanted to get close to Jesus because they wanted to hear Him. There’s something about our Jesus that made Him so attractive to people. It didn’t matter how much sin people had in their lives, they just wanted to be close to him. I was challenged and asked myself, what about me? Do the most broken, hurting people who are stuck in sin and darkness feel safe? Do they want to come and be close to me? Do they want to draw near to hear what I have to say? If Christ is in us, people who are hurting and broken should want to come close. They might not even know why!

It was such a privilege to spend time with the Likasi Service Centre team. There were so many reasons why it was so special, but one of them was seeing how Angel led her team through vulnerability. One day, we were planning a Relationship Group Champion meeting but before we

met, she pulled us all aside and said we would have to be the ones who were willing to be vulnerable before we ask others to do the same. She pointed out that it should not be a fake vulnerability, but something true and significant in our lives. If we were struggling with sin or if there was something serious happening in our family, we would have to be willing to share our story. This is how she leads her team. In different meetings we were a part of, Angel was willing to be the first one to step up to say this is what I am struggling with.

I remember a Care Worker revival we were part of for Toyota A and in Toyota B communities. It was very, very powerful! We started off by having time in the community to pray and worship together. Niza shared the Watchword, and then the Holy Spirit decided that He wanted people to be set free from generational curses.

During that time, people began to openly share. The Holy Spirit was



saying, you can't fight darkness with darkness. The only way you'll be delivered is through Jesus. At one point Angel stepped forward and opened up. She was modelling what she had said to us. She asked people to pray for her. As this happened, I was sitting off to the side, and I felt like the Holy Spirit pointing out something for me to share. But I did not want to share. It felt vulnerable and messy. Eventually, I was obedient, and I shared and asked for prayer. In that moment, I had this huge moment of understanding of what our Care Workers experience when we have Relationship Groups or do Holy Home Visits. We expect them to open up, but it is not easy. As a Hands family, are we willing to be vulnerable? How honest and real do we get? Are we able to say this is the sin I'm struggling with? This is darkness I'm stuck in, or my family is stuck in. I need prayer, I need deliverance. We can hide behind saying that we are here to minister or help others, but the truth is that our pride can be the thing that gets in the way. I don't want people to think less of me if I share. After this experience, I felt so convicted. The Holy Spirit was helping me understand that we cannot expect other people to do what we are not willing to do ourselves.

The truth is that when we bring struggles into the light, there's healing, there's freedom, there's deliverance! That's why our Care Workers are set free because they are willing to humble themselves and say, pray for me!

On another occasion, we had a Relationship Group in Kambove community. Niza was sharing a word about where Jesus invites us to cast our burdens on Him because 'His yoke is easy and His burden is light.' Niza was challenging us to say that when we don't do that, we are being disobedient to Jesus because He said to give Him our burdens. We are not supposed to carry them. He will and He can because He is God!

After that time, the Care Workers literally dropped to their knees and started confessing and sharing the burdens they had been trying to carry themselves. Tears rolled down their faces and they were saying, pray for me!

In the Bible, it says blessed are the meek, blessed are the humble. God says in Isaiah 57:15, 'I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with those who are of contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and revive the heart of the contrite'. If we want healing and freedom, we're going to have to humble ourselves. And if we don't, we're being hypocritical, and we won't get that healing that we're so longing for. That takes us getting rid of our pride and saying, pray for me.

Remember, the sinners drew near to Jesus because they felt safe with him. Are we willing to do it? Perhaps that is where the blockage is? Maybe that is why we are not having personal breakthroughs? Maybe it's because we're not ready to humble ourselves like we see our Care Workers do and say, I'm struggling with sin. I want it out. God will. He can. He does. And this Care Worker revival was full of that.

I want to share the story of a Care Worker from Kisunka named Mama Rachelle. In my first week of being there, we visited Kisunka to follow up on a little baby boy. His mother had died a few months ago. We went to sit with the family to hear how they were going. When we were there, we were told that the baby was no longer staying at that house and that he'd been taken in by Mama Rachelle.

The next week, we were in Kikula B for a Care Worker exchange visit, and Mama Rachelle came with the baby, but I didn't know it at first. You know, when you are sitting there, and your heart becomes drawn to a particular child? At one point Mama Rachelle even let me hold the baby. I was asking myself, why do I feel this connection? Later on, Angel pulled me aside and shared, 'This is the child we had tried to follow up on.'

His story is painful. Though he is over a year old, he is tiny and malnourished and struggles with a life-threatening illness. When people found out about the illness no one was willing to put up their hand to take care of him after his mum passed away. That is when Mama Rachelle stepped in. She isn't related to him but she said, 'I'm going to take him, he's going to become my grandson. All the family was saying, you know what's wrong with him? And she said, 'I know, but I'm going to take care of this boy and I know God sees me, that I've chosen to look after him and one day this boy is going to grow up and he is going to take care of me.'

This little boy does not want to let Mama Rachelle go. There's such an attachment because he knows how loved he is. I remember sitting with her and weighing up the cost of her choice. But she knows the love of Jesus and she decided to say, he's mine. I know the cost, I'm counting the cost and it's worth it. I'm going to love this boy. I'm going to take him and rescue him. Since Mama Rachelle has taken him in, he has been putting on weight. She makes sure he is getting the right medication. Is this such a picture of our Jesus?

My time in the DRC taught me about vulnerability. If we humble ourselves, we will get the healing and freedom that we're longing for. I learnt more about the heart of Jesus and our call to attach people to Jesus. This is our only hope for healing, for courage. They need to know that they have a friend, and that they can be delivered. Jesus alone! The darkness is not greater than the light, because it cannot overcome the light. He is the Light."



## THROUGH THE EYES OF CHILDREN

The McKinley Family (Eric, Ashley, Tali (11), Beth (8), Zac (6), International Volunteers based in South Africa (US)

Eric and Ashley McKinley share, "As we were coming back from the community each day, Ashley would spend some time asking our kids to reflect on the time that we spent in each community. We wanted to see what it looks like from a kid's perspective to go into the community and spend the day with the Care Workers and the kids. We hope that you can enjoy the little glimpses of God that they got and also the joy that they had in playing."



**Ashley:** "Beth, what did you do yesterday?"

**Beth:** "We went to the community Msengeni A and we played with the kids. Tali pushed some of the kids on the swing and we made leaf crowns for the kids."

**Ashley:** "What was your favourite part about yesterday or today?"

**Beth:** "Today my favourite part was making the leaf crowns. Yesterday we went to Msengeni B and there was a giant tyre tower thing and we played on it and then we played with some of the kids. Then we got to eat with them."

**Ashley:** "Did you get to try some of the pap?"

**Beth:** "I like the pap. Then we chased the chickens, but today we found out that most of the chickens have long legs."

**Ashley:** "What do you see God doing in these places?"

**Beth:** "I see God giving people homes and food and water, and it provides a safe place for everybody to stay and play."

**Ashley:** "What did you do in Shoka community today?"

**Zac:** "We played on the monkey bars."

**Ashley:** "What was your favourite part about today?"

**Zac:** "It was helping Daddy fix the play structure. We took off a board that didn't need to be there and put it in the right spot."

**Ashley:** "Do you remember what we did yesterday and today?"

**Tali:** "Yesterday we went to the Msengeni B, a community here in Eswatini. And then today we went to Msengeni A and what I really loved was that in both of them, there were so many chickens running around and the younger kids, like, even though I couldn't understand what they were saying, like, they would copy whatever I did and we could play an entire game. And I really liked that. I also loved all the songs that they sang there. Even though I didn't understand what they were, they just sounded so beautiful."

**Ashley:** "What would you say are some of the challenges that you're facing right now?"

**Tali:** "I'm missing home, and I'm very tired."



**Ashley:** "What do you think God's doing here?"

**Tali:** "I think He's using the Care Points to help strengthen these kids and feed them, not just physically, but spiritually and mentally. I also think that the holy home visits, when you go to visit someone's house, I think that they're very inspiring to me."

**Ashley:** "Did you go on a holy home visit?"

**Tali:** "Yea, we went on one today. The lady had a problem with her left eye and she said she went to the pharmacy to get some medication for it and she would put it in her eye and then one day some yellow stuff came out. Ever since then, she's been having headaches. And her head's been hurting a lot."

**Ashley:** "Why did we go visit her?"

**Tali:** "We went to go visit her to encourage her and hear her story and to see how we could help and share that people love her and that she's cared for."



Ashley says, "The seeds that were planted in their lives, I'm hoping that those will grow with time. While we were in Eswatini, we did a Holy Home Visit to Gogo Belita\* in Bhandeni. At first, her story seemed so devastating. Her husband was murdered in front of her eyes, because he was wrongly accused, and her children are still suffering from the aftermath as she's mourning. I was sitting there, and asking God, what's going on?"

But we stayed and we listened. We listened, and we prayed, and Ma Audrey from the Regional Support Team encouraged Belita, reminding her of the hope that we have in Jesus. I kept hearing Jesus' words when He says, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.'

I saw and felt the Kingdom here in this Holy Home Visit. It was such a joy. It was an upside-down, unusual, strange experience to find the Kingdom come in such brokenness, in such sorrow, in such sadness, and to see the hope that is real and alive in who we have in Christ.

And not simply to see Belita receive that hope, encouragement and comfort, but to see the strength that she already had. She shared her strength and she shared the joy that she has despite her circumstances. It was such a powerful Holy Home Visit experience, and I just wanted to share that you guys know that when we go to these Holy Home Visits, sometimes we're like, okay, we're going to go and encourage them because they're sad, and they have tough circumstances, and then we go and we're just blown away by the fact that the Holy Spirit's already working in them, and then the Holy Spirit's filling us with the overflow that He's already filling them with."





## INFLUENCING THE WORLD

Bethuel Mkhabela, African Leader (South Africa), Maintenance Team  
Loneck Ndlovu, African Leader (South Africa), Hazyview Service Centre

Recently, there was a church mobilisation workshop for the pastors in the Oshoek area. Together with Levy Mwenda and Herman Cloete (African Leaders), Bethuel and Lonneck had an opportunity to support the workshop, reminding the pastors of the Biblical mandate to care for the most vulnerable.

Bethuel says, "Baba Levy started by reminding the pastors about the mandate that God gave to the Israelites at first. The mandate was to worship God alone and to influence the pagans, and to care for the orphans, the widows, and the most vulnerable. But the Israelites, they changed, instead of influencing the world, they got influenced by the world. And instead of caring for the most vulnerable, the orphans and the widows, they cared for their own self-interest. When Christ came, He introduced the church and the church was given the same mandate as the Israelites. But the church did exactly what the Israelites had done.

There was corruption, and pastors turned to their self-interest as well, and instead of influencing the world, they were influenced by the world, and they worshipped other gods, apart from God alone. Baba Levy shared with the church to say that sometimes the church has moved away from God's mandate to do its own thing. It was good for me to see the pastors repenting, saying, we see that we've done wrong. Then they started thinking of ways that they can

get more involved in helping the most vulnerable around Oshoek."

Lonneck shares, "The first thing the pastors shared was how much they realised and acknowledged that they've not been doing what the Lord has called them to do. They've been being influenced by the world instead of being the ones influencing the world. They shared how most of the time, they want to take rather than give. That's something that they have not been able to do because they never had someone to speak to them, because they are always the ones in front teaching, telling people this is what you should be doing. They were really challenged because there was someone to speak to them and to tell them that yes, you've been doing this, but this is the road we should be using. This is where Jesus wants us to be. The pastors have committed themselves that when we want to find other communities to serve, we should invite them, or we should let them know so that they will be there to help us find these poor of the poorest communities.

They want to help us by giving us land. Obviously, they don't own the land but they are the voices in the community. They are the ones who are mostly heard. They should be able to speak on our behalf to the Indunas (local chiefs), to say we know these people, they've been here and they've been here faithfully serving the children, the community and we trust them. They also committed themselves to continue praying for our children and to visit their houses, and to do whatever they can to help in their homes or at the Care Point. But it doesn't end there. That was the theory and living it out. We also want to engage more with these pastors, not just speaking the Bible all the time, but building a relationship with them."

## PRAISE AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Praise God for the recent camps for the youth and the 6-12s that have happened in Zambia and Eswatini. Pray for the Service Centres as they continue to follow up with the youth and invest in their lives. Pray that our children will continue to grow in their desire to know God and follow His will for their lives.

Praise God for the time that Dan Waspe (International Volunteer, UK) spent in Canada with our International Office Volunteers, partners and advocates. Pray that we will see the fruit of his time in Canada in the months to come.

Praise God that in the midst of a challenging season in Zimbabwe, He has been at work in the Primary Caregiver days and the Care Worker Revivals. Continue praying for the situation in Zimbabwe, that God will give guidance and direction. Pray that He would continue to transform the lives of the most vulnerable through the faithfulness of the Service Centres.

Pray for our Service Centres as they continue to discern and work out what it means to invest in our Primary Caregivers.

Pray for the Regional Support Team in Zambia. They are a small team serving the biggest region. Ask God to strengthen them and continue to equip them as they serve.

Pray for our pastors in South Africa, and across Africa, that as they are reminded of the Biblical mandate to care for the vulnerable, they will make it personal and take ownership of what is happening in their communities.