

HANDS ON DECK



CONTRIBUTORS

in this issue of Hands on Deck

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“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.” - 1 Corinthians 13:4-8



“..if you watch the way that the Care Workers care for the family, it brings so much encouragement to all” – Tyler Ralph

BEAUTY IN THE CHALLENGE

Tyler Ralph, International Volunteer (Canada), Zimbabwe Regional Support Team

More than two years after his last visit, Tyler was able to travel to Zimbabwe in April to spend time supporting the Mutare and Honde Valley Service Centres.

“I was so grateful for the opportunity to go. It was wonderful. On one of the days in community, we visited Chinyausunzi and I met a girl named Sophia*, who was with her elder brother. Sophia was so small and vulnerable and her brother took such loving care of everything for her. During the lockdown in Zimbabwe, people were not supposed to be moving around at all. But Florence, who is the coordinator, refused to stop caring for the children. It is because of Florence’s example that Sophia’s brother cares for her in the way that he does. He sees how Florence cared for them.

I also had the chance to visit the Honde Valley and spend time with

the team there. Whilst doing a Holy Home Visit, we visited a mother, named Gloria*, whose husband had left her and never came back. The husband’s family then came and took everything, leaving them with nothing. The family told them they weren’t wanted, to leave, and they even poisoned their food. One day, her eldest son was hurt by a member of the husband’s family, drugged and left naked lying on the ground. As we spent time with Gloria, we shared that the Care Point, where her kids go, is a safe place for her too. The Care Workers invited her to come every Wednesday to spend time with them. One of the Care Workers even said that they would come and fetch her every Wednesday. She lives surrounded by people who hate her but if you watch the way that the Care Workers care for the family, it brings so much encouragement to all.

A highlight for me was the fact that, for the first time ever, we were able to do de-worming in the Honde Valley. Farai (Hands at Work leader, Zimbabwe) developed a relationship with a doctor in Mutare, and we had him come to do a proper assessment

of our children. He said that if our children get sick or are in trouble, we can bring them to him and he will help – no charge! The doctor and nurses that came even asked to do Holy Home Visits so they could see and understand what we are doing. And when they returned to Mutare, they could not stop talking about it. I saw so many tough things in my time in Zimbabwe, but I also saw the beautiful things in what God was doing.”



OSHOEK BIBLE SCHOOL

Prudence Mthabini, Hazyview Service Centre (South Africa)

Nontobeko Mnisi, Oshoek Service Centre Coordinator (South Africa)

In the middle of April, the Eswatini, Hazyview and Oshoek Service Centres gathered together in Oshoek for a three-day Bible school, facilitated by George Snyman. The purpose of their time was to go deeper into understanding the Bible and the way that God is speaking to us.

Prudence shares: "it really spoke to our lives. One of my highlights was seeing that God has compassion on us and so we much have compassion on others. We need to rely on Jesus when we feel weak. Throughout our time together, we had lots of time in small groups to share with each other what we were hearing. We talked about the things that have happened in our lives that have stopped us from showing compassion. Things like pride, anger, jealousy. We judge or doubt ourselves and that can get in the way of us showing compassion."

Nontobeko says: "It was really powerful to be together. Some of the things we talked about was looking at God as being a loving Father who cares and has humility. It was a challenge to me, that we need to be walking in His footsteps, and have that same love and humility. George shared the story of Hagar and how our God is a God who sees. He is looking out for the least recognised and that is something that really touched me. Many times, we forget about the least recognised but these are the people who God has called us to. For me it was like a confirmation, and a starting over. It was taking a pause and remembering what God has called me to do. A seed was planted in my life and with the help of the Holy Spirit, I can do it. He is the one who will guide and lead us."

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ACTS OF SERVICE

During Holy Week, across Africa and in our International Offices, we celebrated by participating in an Act of Compassion within our communities, cities and hometowns. We put our faith into action and moved aside our day to day work and thought of something that we could do to bless one another.

Here are a few examples:



In South Africa, the Poulsom small group shared a simple Passover meal with the Care Workers in Welverdiend, did a craft with the children, and helped pave stones from the Life Centre building to the kitchen.



In Australia, they bundled Easter baskets and delivered them to homeless people in their community.



In the Democratic Republic of Congo, they planted a garden in Kisunka Community and washed the feet of the Care Workers.



In Zambia, the Kitwe Service Centre went to Mount Moriah Community where they played games with the children and distributed toothbrushes and toothpaste.

ACTS OF SERVICE CONTINUED.....



In South Africa, the Mwenda small group played some games with the children, ate lunch with the Care Workers, and helped to clean up around the Care Point.



In the US, they invited all of the children from their church into their home for the weekend.



In Zambia, the Makwakwa small group played bingo with the Care Workers and distributed treats to the children.



In Zambia, the Kabwe Service Centre shared the Easter story with the children in Baraka Community and distributed some treats.



THE POWER OF GOD

Jimmy Shamasefu, Luanshya Service Centre (Zambia)

Mutale Kakumbi, Luanshya Service Centre (Zambia)

At the beginning of April, there was a Maranatha Workshop for the Primary Caregivers in Maposa Community, Zambia. The workshop was facilitated by the Luanshya Service Centre and the Zambia Regional Support. Throughout the week, the team shared about the truth of Jesus and who He can be in their lives. The first two days were for the children, the next two days for the Primary Caregivers, and the final day was a time of celebrating all that God had done.

Jimmy shares, "One of the Primary Caregivers shared that he suffers from sleepless nights. Whenever evening comes, he is unable to sleep. On Wednesday, he wasn't there but he came on Thursday and in just that one day, he encountered the power of God. When we went into small groups, he was able to share his weaknesses. We encouraged him through the word of God prayed together. On Friday, he came and he was very excited because he was able to sleep the night before.

My life was transformed because of the way that people shared but I wasn't expecting to be impacted. We went to bring changed but we came out being changed ourselves. Just recently, we received a phone call from Promise who is the coordinator in Maposa but is also a leader at the community church. She shared that many people who had come to the workshop, are now members of the church."

Mutale says, "Throughout the workshop, I learned a lot of things especially about how God created all living things just using his voice. It showed me that there is power in our voices and I can use that voice to speak for our children and those who are voiceless. I learned that there is nothing that I can do myself but when I am with the Holy Spirit I can do much more."

NOT SIMPLY FOOD PROVIDERS

Michael Mwila, Luanshya Service Centre
Coordinator (Zambia)

Throughout this year, Hands at Work leadership has been intentional about increasing the support that it gives to the more isolated countries that we are supporting – which includes the Democratic Republic of Congo. Recently, Michael spent three weeks in the Congo supporting the Likasi Service Centre as it cares for five of the most vulnerable communities.

“In the first week, we went to Kisunka Community to distribute plastic that the Service Centre had purchased for several Primary Caregivers and Care Workers whose homes were leaking. For those grandmothers who were unable to put up the tarp, we planned to go and help them. On the day that we went, we managed to do nine homes. At the home that Jones (African leader, Zambia) and his group were at, there was a neighbour who had been sick for a long time



and was paralysed. When he heard that people from the Life Centre had come to work and help, he sent people to call them and ask them to come and pray for him. He knew that they were people who prayed. As we sat in the evening discussing the day, this story was so encouraging. It shows that people understand what we do and who we are. They don't just see us providing food, they know that we also bring the Jesus We Know.

In the following week, we went to finish the feeding point shelter that we are opening for 30 children in an area called Kapalowe, which is within the wider community of Kisunka. At the other feeding point in Kisunka, called Kamboyi, there is no secondary school and it is a 20km walk to Kapalowe, where there is a school. So, some children shift to go and stay in this new area so they can be closer to school. Thankfully, we found a person in this new area who can be cooking for the children so that they are still receiving holistic care. They even offered a place that we use.”

Pray for this new area, that God will minister through this new Care Worker. Pray that she will be an encouragement to the children coming to attend school and that she will be able to grow her team of Care Workers.

Michael continues: “I was able to visit a family in Kitabataba Community, where there are five children. The children are staying with their father because their mother passed away last year. During the day, the children remain alone at home because their father tries to find odd jobs in town. The eldest girls, who are twins, take the younger children to the Care Point and then go to school. They then come and receive their food and take their siblings home, where they have to fetch water and do the cleaning of the house. When we look at them, the pain of losing their mother is still there. At the age of 12, they have taken on the responsibility of being mothers at home and taking care of their siblings. It re-enforced the importance of the under-fives’ programmes. Whenever the twins bring their siblings to the Care Point, they know that they are taken care of. We need to continue praying for this family.”

PRAISE AND PRAYER POINTS

Praise God for the new houses that have been constructed so far in the Chisamba and Kabwe regions after the heavy rains. Pray that God will give continued guidance and wisdom as the Service Centres finish the construction of the remaining homes.

Pray for the communities that Hands at Work has newly identified across Africa as being extremely vulnerable. Pray that as the Service Centres start walking with them, the Care Workers will encounter the love of Christ and grow in their understanding of what it means to serve the most vulnerable in their community.

In April, there was a youth camp for the girls from Msengeni A Community, Eswatini. Praise God for the time that they had together. Pray that they will continue to grow in their understanding of God's love as they walk in their newfound relationship with Him.