

PASTURE VALLEY CHILDREN'S HOME

NEWSLETTER- FEBRUARY 2012

*In faith

we grow

"But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous" Luke 14:13-14

I am so excited about what God is doing! It has been a really busy time with the children going back to school,



getting the new children into schools and getting school clothes and textbooks for all the children. But God has been good in helping the children in finding schools.

Today we visited Magubeleni Primary school which is about an hour's drive from us in the Shiselweni region to bring some clothes, school uniforms and food to a boy who needed support. While at the school, the Head Teacher brought 2 other children in need from poor families to our attention. One child did not have any caretaker as his parents had abandoned him and he had no food to eat daily except what he gets from handouts from the teachers. The other little girl is an albino child and in need of eye glasses as she is struggling to read,

but her family are too poor to afford this for her. I told her that she need not be ashamed because Jesus loves her and I too was helped by a lady who bought clothes for me when I could not afford it when I was schooling (a kindness I will never forget). I was really excited to see God at work in showing us which children are in desperate need. We have such a desire to be able to help, yet on the way home I was wondering if we were going to cope with assisting the many children that now needed help. When I got home, I opened a mail entitled: Good News. A donation had been made that would help each one of those children I was worried about! Through the funds provided by so many, Pasture Valley is able to now support 22 other children with school clothes, school fees, stationary and food. Through some funding provided by folks in Texas we were able to meet with 13 children in need living in the Hlatikulu/Kubuta region. Upon interviewing each child, I was touched by the aspirations each one of the children had. One girl said she was hoping to be a pilot! We have sent some clothes to the albino child and when her mother received it I was told that she broke down and cried. She was overwhelmed. God truly provides and we know that we need just carry on trying to help where we can.

We are hoping to assist this school (Magubeleni) with a fruit tree orchard and have discussed this option with their agriculture teacher for the future. Peter is very excited about this area that is so rural and feels that we need to try and support it with either a feeding point for children or find a caregiver that we can support to care for those children in need in the area or to plant a church there that can oversee the needs of the area. Please pray that God



leads us in the right direction. We need to call more people to His banquet and bring in more people to know Jesus.

CHRISTMAS OUTREACH

Christmas is a time for sharing and joy. At Pasture Valley, we collected some clothes, bought some food and went out to several homesteads in need about 15 km away from us. The people were overjoyed by our visit and we prayed with each of them. Some were old, some recovering from an illness and one lady was pregnant and in need. Some of our children accompanied us on this visit and my heart was glad to see them praying confidently and taking out supplies to them.



FOUR MORE CHILDREN JOIN THE PASTURE VALLEY FAMILY!!

Social welfare phoned us in December to ask if we had any more space to take in more children. We told them we had space enough for 2 children. They informed us that they needed to desperately find a home for a family of 4 children. A few days later they called to ask if we could collect the 2 children and that that they would try to find a place for the remaining siblings nearby.

Somehow, we just did not feel it was right to split up a family and after prayer went to collect all 4 of the children. The four girls had gone through a lot of trauma and two of the girls will need medical assessment and educational support in the future. As they shared what had happened to them, I told them that Jesus loves them and that we hoped to provide a safe place for them at Pasture Valley where they would not need to worry anymore. We cried together for a long time. Please pray for healing for these beautiful girls.



BIBLE STUDIES

Peter has started a bible study with the older boys every Monday evening. The boys are encouraged to do homework and have been taught how to have quiet time with God. I have recently started one with the girls and it is a special time right on the floor in the laboratory office. The teachings are generally what we are led to discuss and teach on the day and we are looking for bible study materials relating to teenager topics.

CHRISTMAS AT PASTURE VALLEY



As is true to our tradition, Pasture Valley put on a Christmas play again this year. The play was focussed on the role of the humble shepherds and how they were chosen to receive the good news of Christ's birth. The children enjoyed having their respective roles and did so well. Gail made beautiful costumes for the sheep and it was wonderful to see so many of the children have the confidence to sing and speak in public.

We had a wonderful Christmas eve lunch and handed out Christmas gifts on the day. The children were all given school bags filled with pencil boxes and stationary. On Christmas day, the children all received their own

personal box filled with a facecloth, soap, toothbrush, deodorant, a packet of noodles, chips and hand cream. The boxes were intended for them to keep any personal item they wanted to store in it and it could be kept safe in the education centre for them. This gives them the opportunity of having a little personal space and storing of things that are precious to them.



We took all the children on an outing to the Nhlanguano Sun where the children had great fun swimming in the pool and playing on the swings and jungle gym.



They were all treated to lunch and then taken to KFC for ice-creams afterwards. The KFC staff could not believe their eyes when they saw so many children walking in!



Thank you to all of you for all your kind gifts. The children received delicious vegetables, meat, presents and even some Christmas stockings filled with lots of goodies which were much enjoyed!

UNEXPECTED SUCCESSFUL FARMERS DAY AT HLUTI

Last week we loaded up several fruit trees (mango's, avocado, papaya, bananas, pomagranate, citrus, etc) and headed for Hluti (a town in Shiselweni that is very dry and with little development). We had coordinated with Chief Bhejisa to visit a school and some members of the community so that an orchard could be developed for those in need and to be a tool for education. When we arrived the chief was nowhere to be found and the school was not aware of our visit and our spirits dropped. The chief arrived and we realized that we had been at the wrong location because he took us to his "meeting place kraal" where about 30 farmers, government officials, supervisors and teachers were patiently waiting. We were asked to give some training on how to plant the trees. The radio called to say that they would be broadcasting the event. So, right there under a big Jacaranda tree, we did the best we could in training and showing farmers the importance of planting fruit trees and giving God the glory for His provision. We laughed and chatted and enjoyed the day with the farmers. The chief asked if Peter could possibly repeat this day with some training in dairy management for the farmers in the future. It was an unexpected successful day!



BICYCLE RACE

Luke and Siyabonga took part in their first bicycle race of 10 and 15 km respectively. It was good experience for the boys and much enjoyed by the spectators.

REACHING OUT TO CHILDREN IN NEED ACROSS OUR REGION

Various organizations have come to our doors to ask for assistance with children in need over the last few weeks. Children who have been abused, some have had their parents abandon them, some have no parents, others were too poor to afford schooling and had to look after their family's cattle last year. I look into each child's face and see the hurt and the rejection. We help to provide for some basic needs, but I pray that they will each find God's love. It is a burden I have and ask that you will pray with me for these children.

LANDSCAPING AND TRAINING

With the rains having come in February, more fruit trees have been planted at Pasture Valley around the homes. We were proud to be able to harvest a good crop of pears and passion fruit this month from the farm. Each housemother has taken some flowers and hedge plants from the nursery to make their gardens look beautiful. A washing line was put up for each house thanks to Willie and with weekly inspections on the houses now introduced, the houses are looking very tidy and neat. Lizel has started with a monthly training schedule to assist the children and housemothers on various hygiene and safety issues such as first aid, personal hygiene and kitchen and bathroom cleanliness. Each housemother was given a training file and notes.

VOLUNTEERS



Kees and Greet van Someren from Holland have recently visited us to help with the children's preschool and tutoring and have assisted in building the outdoor cooking area kitchen for the children's home. We will show you photos of the completed cooking area in our next newsletter! We have been blessed by their visit.

Greet has shown the Bambanani group how to crochet using plastic bags. We hope to show them how to make hats and bags from recycled plastic using this technique.

BAMBANANI WOMEN (and MEN'S) SUPPORT GROUP

The products (necklaces, earrings and bracelets) made by the caregivers in Dwaleni can now be viewed online from our website www.pasturevalley.com. Two groups received a production bonus at the end of the year based on the amount of produce made. The groups also chose to purchase something that will help them in the long term, so we bought them a brand new sewing machine! Gail arranged for a gentleman to repair and do some maintenance and training on the old sewing machines and we have contacted a lady (Sibongile) who will be doing some sewing lessons for the groups over the next 2 months. The ladies are so keen to learn any craft or skill and it is wonderful to see their commitment to attending the training sessions each month.



BACK TO SCHOOL

It was a busy time trying to get 31 children to various schools this year. We have various children at 3 separate High schools and 2 Primary schools. Each school has a separate set of rules, different uniforms and different text book requirements. Interestingly enough, each of the 5 schools have blue uniforms! In the end all went well and places were found for all the children. Taiwan has been chosen as a school monitor for her class which comes with certain responsibilities. We are proud of her and all the children.



Sandile passed his final Primary school exams with MERIT. He was one of 5 in the school grade of over 100 students to do so! His head teacher was really proud of him and praised him for this achievement. Sibusiso and Sphe also got first positions in their classes.

PRAYER NEEDED

- That God will continue to protect and keep our 36 children and all the staff and volunteers at Pasture Valley safe and healthy.

- Give thanks for the improvement of Constance's health and for the recovery of Michael's broken arm.

- The mission house building to continue and progress well. The house already has a roof on and all the plastering work has been done.



- For guidance and wisdom in running the children's homes daily needs.

- For the way forward regarding the Gege area project for children and community needs in that area.

- Thanks for God's provision over the Christmas and school period and for all those that so kindly gave gifts and donations during this time.

- For schools and education in Swaziland and for those in authority.

- For the futures of each child- that they will walk in the path God chose for them

Thank you once again to all of you who so kindly sent food, gifts and donations to the children. May God bless you.

With love,

Peter, Michelle and all the children at Pasture Valley Children's home



