

HANDS ON DECK

ISSUE FOURTEEN



Hands at Work
AFRICA



Lisa and James, two members from the Family Church Team, with their new friends from Kaphunga Village in Swaziland.

OUR TEAM IN SWAZILAND

Family Church Team
Guildford, UK

When a team from Family Church came to serve in Swaziland with willing hearts and deep faith, they all had their hearts broken by the desperation, vulnerability, and hope found in the mountains of Kaphunga Village.

For Dave Rowe, International Volunteer (UK), having a team from his own church here for the second time was a huge blessing. "It's a real privilege to be with my team, see their journey, and be a part of it. This was my third trip to Swaziland. As I keep going, the weight builds and I keep getting broken by the stuff I've seen."

Lisa had come with a team to Hands two years ago. "I knew I would come back. It was time." She was impacted by the unity of her own team, and the experience of staying with Ma Nomsa

in Swaziland. "It's like she's your mom even though you just met her. She has warmth that says 'come be part of my family.'" With such a maternal presence, Lisa was struck by the lack of men in the community. On a home visit, she met a young man, Sandy, in his early 30s, caring for his sick father. "It was amazing to see a young man step up and care for his father in a difficult place where we saw very few men. We kept wondering where they all are? We had so much respect for Sandy." Lisa was so encouraged to meet Care Workers like Tuleelay, and see how the children she cares for relate to her. "She is amazing. To see her playing with the children... the kids were so comfortable with her. Teasing her, not afraid to overstep any boundaries. We could see she genuinely loves those kids, it flowed out of her naturally."

Only seven years ago, another member of the team, Anne Marie, was living in Africa. She grew up in Luanshya, Zambia, and moved to the UK when she was 14. She spoke of her journey:

When George came to speak at my

church in the UK, I sat at the back quivering and crying, knowing what I had to do. I came with no expectations, but thought God would bring some things up. In Swaziland, there is a softness about the land that reminded me of God's peace, but I knew there were parts I couldn't see. Something was hidden. But as I spent time with the children, it became hard to explain what they brought out in me... the ability to love unconditionally. One little girl never left my side. It brought out the maternal side of me. Many people had told me they received the same words about me from God: "mother of many". I still don't know what God is doing, but I'm excited about it.

There is a silent pain underneath all the people in Swaziland when you strip away the smiles on the surface. You see the lack of men to enforce justice, the generation of kids growing up who are saying to God, directly or indirectly, "Why?" And He has said to me, "What are you going to do?" It's time to start a cycle that will last generations, so that where these kids are now won't impact where they will be in a few years. They need to have the truth ripped out and have the truth of Jesus heal their hearts and mould them into something new. There is every chance I could have been one of those kids.

+ CONTRIBUTORS

in this issue of Hands on Deck

Catherine Clarkson

Lisa Dalley

Family Church Team

Anna Snyman

George Snyman

Jen Waspe

HANDS CANADA

Lisa Dalley,
President, Hands at Work in
Africa (Canada) Society

Lisa and Brian Dalley first came to Hands in 2005. In 2007, Lynn Chotowetz connected with the Dalley's through their church in Calgary, Alberta. He asked if they would be willing to start an International Office in Canada. "We said 'sure!' not knowing what that really meant", Lisa says. They began gathering people who were interested. "We remember sitting, the few of us, in a living room and none of us feeling like we knew what we were doing – so we just went for it!" Brian took on finance and Lisa took on communications and volunteers.

Seven years later, Hands Canada is focused on developing community across the country where their volunteers are widespread. They are hoping to connect the Hands family across all of Canada – all teams, churches, volunteers and advocates. They have begun having focused times together. A few times a year they gather together for retreats where visiting pastors speak. When volunteers from Africa are home in Canada they have an opportunity to speak to the Hands Canada family – updating them on the work on the ground in Africa and also encouraging the International Offices in their work in Canada. In Calgary, where many Hands Canada family live, the community is holding breakfast and dinner together twice a month. The development of the community is encouraging! Another exciting change is Kristal Hoff, who served long term with Hands in Africa and has volunteered for many years with Hands Canada, has recently committed to serving with Hands Canada full time, and her husband, Will Hoff (who also volunteered in Africa), continues to serve as a Hands Canada volunteer too!

Lisa says, "It's hard, but it's fun! We work together, and figure it all out. It's a joy to do this, and every day we are really blessed for the opportunity. The years have gone on, we keep going, we love it." Please pray for all of our International Offices as they strive to live in community and live out Hands at Work values in their own countries where there are many more challenges to this way of life.



OUMIE IN SWAZILAND

Anna 'Oumie' Snyman,
Prayer Intercessor

As our faithful prayer intercessor, Oumie gives much of her time to encouraging our Care Workers across Africa. There are people who have never met her and yet feel connected to her thanks to the text message she sends to encourage them with. Recently, Oumie had the opportunity to meet some of the Care Workers she has prayed for, in person. Oumie travelled with other members of the Regional Support Team to Swaziland for a few days with their main focus on bringing together the many caregivers of the most vulnerable children in Kaphunga Village.

Oumie's highlights included seeing the Care Workers and children at Asonde Sive Bomake Community Based

Organisation, and attending a caregiver day. She saw the RST's focus in action as they connected with the gogos, aunts, and older brothers and sisters who are caring for the many orphaned and vulnerable children. One little boy touched her heart deeply. "I was asking all the children their names and ages. They asked me my age and then I think they thought I was a dinosaur! Everyone was laughing except for one boy. He wouldn't talk. But after everyone else left, he came up to me and told me his name and his age. I was able to let him know how special he is".

Oumie was impacted by the sacrificial love in action she witnessed throughout the community. She peeled pumpkin leaves with Patricia and Tuleelay, two Care Workers who are in Manyeveni, a remote area of Kaphunga, caring for 25 children just the two of them. "I could never do what they do", Oumie said.

PARTNER STORY: IMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH, USA

Catherine Clarkson, International
Volunteer (UK),
Partner Communications

When Immanuel Baptist Church visited Oshoek, South Africa in 2012, their hearts broke for the most vulnerable children they met. When they returned to the USA, they had a desire to allow the most vulnerable in Africa to remain a part of their lives. They did not want their two weeks in Africa to become something they had simply done in the past. A lady called Ruth was on the team and when she got home, she began telling the stories of the children she met in Oshoek to her friends, colleagues and her own family, including her daughter who attends Nash Elementary School. Her daughter and her friends at the school were so impacted by what they heard that they not only began raising funds for Oshoek, but they had a desire to reach out to the children they were supporting. They created a huge banner with their handprints and messages from Nash Elementary School, and mailed it all the way to Africa where the children in Oshoek could see that they are being thought of by friends around the world!

OPERATIONS UPDATE PRAYER POINTS

George Snyman, Co-Founder

"We can never take for granted what we are a part of here", George says. In all of our work, may we recognise how God has blessed us, and pray for his favour as we stretch ourselves. Please pray together for these prayer and praise points:

- We are focused on our African leaders, current and future. Please pray for more leaders – pray and trust God for it. This is so important! Some of our local leaders on the ground are under persecution in one moment, and then go on loving children as if nothing has happened to them the next.

- Our leaders are growing. In Zambia, we see the RST learning and growing in capacity. The community at Kachele is forming. In DRC, Angel is becoming a leader and it is beautiful. The world calls the Tete Corridor in Mozambique the "missionary graveyard", but Farai and his team in Zimbabwe are ripping open the poorest and most dysfunctional communities there.

- In many countries we are working on legal registrations. We are trying to register in all of these countries as International NGO's, but there are many requirements we must meet. This is a ton of work, but we want to do it right.



SALT - SERVE AND LEARN TEAM

Jen Waspe, International Volunteer
(UK), Volunteer Coordinator

"You are the salt of the earth..."

– Matthew 5:13 (NRSV)

We offer various opportunities for volunteers to come and serve with Hands. In February and September we hold volunteer intakes for people desiring to come and serve long term (one year or more), those who can commit to roles where they can build capacity here on the ground. This opportunity is for those who feel serious about God's calling on their lives. After completing orientation, these volunteers are placed in roles throughout Africa. In July or August of each year, we offer a two week opportunity through the Short Term Service Team (STST) for people who want a brief experience of Africa and what it would be like to volunteer with Hands. This team takes place solely in South Africa.

Last year, for the first time, we offered an opportunity for volunteers with an experience that falls between the STST and Capacity Building. The Serve and Learn Team (SALT) was created for people who are interested in coming for about three months, but want an in-depth experience of Hands at Work within those three months. Previously, we found it difficult to facilitate volunteers who were only coming for about three months. By the time they finished their orientation and became settled with a Service Centre to serve, it was almost time for them to leave. By having a team solely focused on a shorter term experience, this opportunity has become more valuable for both the volunteers, and less of a burden on our local leaders. SALT helps potential long term



volunteers to explore Hands and see how serving here could look in the future. The team is comprised of people from around the world, and is led by Kristal and Will Hoff from Canada who served in Africa and continue to serve with Hands Canada. This year they will start in May with three weeks of orientation in South Africa. They will participate in sessions with key people and have opportunities to get to know the Hands family. We are very focused on the importance of this team getting to understand that who we are comes before what we do.

The team will travel to Zambia to focus on learning about the Regional Support Teams and how the structure and people work to serve our Service Centres. They will also travel to Malawi where they will stay in the community and build relationships with Care Workers. Their time will end back in South Africa where they will debrief and share stories of their experience.

Please pray for SALT 2014:



Katie Cutshall, 21
Tennessee, USA



Elena Groen, 22
Calgary, CANADA



Quinn Johnson, 21
Tennessee, USA



Jill Peacock, 25
Saskatoon, CANADA



Rebecca Walliser, 22
Edmonton, CANADA