



# Morning Star Children's Centre

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Our Very Dear Friends,

Summer – and the heat of the season – has been very slow in asserting itself this year. Somehow, one just can't pack away the last of one's cardigans and light blankets yet; today might be warm and tomorrow, really hot, but then we hit a cold front and the weather turns chilly all over again. Very strange for this time of the year in South Africa!

We do thank and praise God for the first rains of the season though – not only have they brought relief to farms and gardens but they have, thankfully, settled the dust as well. And taking note of all the signs of new growth and new life around us is ever a reminder that:

"As long as the earth endures,  
Seedtime and harvest,  
Cold and heat, summer and winter,  
Day and night will never cease."  
Genesis 8:22.

What a comfort this is in the midst of the widespread turmoil going on in the world these days. Simply reminding ourselves that 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever' brings peace to our souls. Our God remains sovereign over all and fully in control of every little detail of our lives.

So much "living" has filled our days at Morning Star since my last letter to you. It's all too profuse to adequately share; my 'letters' can ever just reflect a small part of our daily routines here. Thankfully, the joys always outweigh the sorrows, making our work with our precious children at Morning Star the most rewarding and fulfilling job in all the world.

Our greatest joy was the arrival of Sandra Rycroft's 16 couriered boxes on 21<sup>st</sup> September. These were filled with not only children/young adults clothing, shoes and pyjamas but also crafts, toys, puzzles, towels, stationery, school uniforms, sponsored children's gifts and so much more. Bit-by-bit all 16 boxes were opened and the contents admired and carefully sorted, in readiness for Mapulane, our clothing cupboard overseer, to pack away in our cupboards. As can be expected, quite a bit has already been given out, much to the delight of the various recipients.



MAPULANE - MORNING STAR MATRON



Thanks for our pjs. We've never owned a pair before.

*To all who contributed to the contents of the boxes, a very big thank you. Please know that you've blessed us 'out of our socks' and that we truly value your loving partnership in our ministry here in Welkom, South Africa. And God bless you, Sandra Rycroft, for co-ordinating this massive project again this year.*



On 1<sup>st</sup> September Kutlwanong Morning Star joined Welkom for a combined sports event (to mark the beginning of spring) and on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, we celebrated Heritage Day at both centres. At the latter function children and staff alike donned traditional wear and, in addition to some of our little ones performing a few tribal dances, everyone also proudly paraded themselves around the playground to a cheering audience. Our Kutlwanong Centre went the extra mile and invited their children's parents to not only their Heritage Day function but to a traditional meal served afterwards as well. How's this for a menu: maize meal, mokgodu (tripe), motoho (sour porridge), madombolo (dumplings) and spinach. Delicious, is how this feast was described. *All I know that preparing the mokgodu is a very smelly business indeed!*

Our 3<sup>rd</sup> happy event was our parents' pre-school workshop on 12<sup>th</sup> October. We've held these workshops every quarter for a few years now and they've made such a difference to our parents' perception of what their children are taught at Morning Star each day. Many a Township crèche/pre-school does little more than provide a safe place to leave one's child when one is at work. Discovering that even a 2-3 year old child can be taught through play and group activities has been an eye-opener for our parents. Most of them never finished their own education, let alone had the privilege of attending pre-school in early childhood. We're trusting that all that is learnt at these quarterly workshops is played out in the home environment and that our parents are even passing along their newly acquired knowledge and skills to their neighbours. Pre-school teacher Sylvia described this recent event as follows: *"The parents' activity for the day was the making bean bags. Each parent was given a pre-sewn little pouch which they had to fill with recycled plastic shavings and then sew closed. After the children had demonstrated the different functions of the bean bags to the parents they did exercises/aerobics with them as well. It was a very successful workshop and thoroughly enjoyed by all."*



As always in life, joys are usually intermingled with sorrows and we've had our fair share of these over the past month. In fact, we can't even remember when last we had so many people dying within such a short space of time:

- Two of our children passed away in September: 15 year old Lucia van Rooyen, after aborting her anti-retroviral treatment and contracting meningitis and young adult, Pheello Pali, who was apparently poisoned and who died on 30<sup>th</sup> September.
- Six of our children's mothers/grandmothers have died over the past month as well: Junior Lebetsa's, Rearebetswe Mosa's and Karabo Shale's mothers and Lefa Mohlouwa's, Karabo Utloa's and Relebohile Motjaleba's grandmothers.
- Additionally, we have two mothers suffering from MDR tuberculosis (multi-drug resistant TB) at the moment and another who is terminal ill with cancer.
- 4 year old Nosipho is in hospital and being treated for hot oil burns to her legs and Siyabulela's and Philokuhle's poor health remain a serious concern.

- We're also aware of several teenage girls who are sexually active and who are either pregnant or have already given birth to babies. The most tragic case is that of a 14 year old who was seemingly raped and who fell pregnant as a result. Her little boy is already 3 months old.
- And then there's my husband, Ron. My last newsletter shared that he was getting to the end of a 6 week course of antibiotics and seemed so much better. But, to our horror, 3 days after completing the course, his abdominal infection returned in full force and he had to be re-hospitalized – this time up in Johannesburg, because that's where we were at the time. Many more tests later the team of specialists in Johannesburg concluded that he had an infection higher up in his shunt and that it had to be taken out forthwith. He was sent back to Welkom to have it removed by the neurosurgeon who put it in, in the first place and subsequently spent a further two weeks in hospital on very strong intravenous antibiotics, intended to bring his extremely high rate of infection down. In the process, the toxicity of the antibiotic burnt his veins at each of the six infusion sites on his lower/upper arms, resulting in blood clots forming. This led to the development of thrombophlebitis, causing intense pain and discomfort. Praise God he's finally home and slowly regaining his strength. He is truly a shadow of his former self.

*We now know that Ron 'caught' a superbug in hospital when the shunt was inserted seven months ago and that it should never have been left in situ all this time! Join us in praying that he won't have to have another shunt inserted into his brain at all.*

Many of you will remember that last Christmas you were able to purchase Sarah Baskerville's hand-painted Christmas cards, the proceeds of which came directly to Morning Star. Sarah has let me know that she still has Christmas cards available and is selling them on eBay. You can also order directly from her, using her e-mail address: [s\\_bask@outlook.com](mailto:s_bask@outlook.com) or using the links below:

A.

[https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/175911312596?mkcid=16&mkevt=1&mkrid=711-127632-2357-0&ssspo=vtbUyIf4RV-&sssrc=4429486&ssuid=vtbUyIf4RV-&var=&widget\\_ver=artemis&media=COPY](https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/175911312596?mkcid=16&mkevt=1&mkrid=711-127632-2357-0&ssspo=vtbUyIf4RV-&sssrc=4429486&ssuid=vtbUyIf4RV-&var=&widget_ver=artemis&media=COPY)

B.

[https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/175911141168?mkcid=16&mkevt=1&mkrid=711-127632-2357-0&ssspo=vtbUyIf4RV-&sssrc=4429486&ssuid=vtbUyIf4RV-&var=&widget\\_ver=artemis&media=COPY](https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/175911141168?mkcid=16&mkevt=1&mkrid=711-127632-2357-0&ssspo=vtbUyIf4RV-&sssrc=4429486&ssuid=vtbUyIf4RV-&var=&widget_ver=artemis&media=COPY)

C.

[https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/175910624376?mkcid=16&mkevt=1&mkrid=711-127632-2357-0&ssspo=vtbUyIf4RV-&sssrc=4429486&ssuid=vtbUyIf4RV-&var=&widget\\_ver=artemis&media=COPY](https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/175910624376?mkcid=16&mkevt=1&mkrid=711-127632-2357-0&ssspo=vtbUyIf4RV-&sssrc=4429486&ssuid=vtbUyIf4RV-&var=&widget_ver=artemis&media=COPY)

D.

[https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/175910606944?mkcid=16&mkevt=1&mkrid=711-127632-2357-0&ssspo=vtbUyIf4RV-&sssrc=4429486&ssuid=vtbUyIf4RV-&var=&widget\\_ver=artemis&media=COPY](https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/175910606944?mkcid=16&mkevt=1&mkrid=711-127632-2357-0&ssspo=vtbUyIf4RV-&sssrc=4429486&ssuid=vtbUyIf4RV-&var=&widget_ver=artemis&media=COPY)

The proceeds will once again go to Morning Star.

Talking of Christmas cards brings to mind that Christmas is just around the corner and many of you will be wanting to gift your child/family with something small. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANYTHING TO US BY POST. YOUR PARCEL WILL SIMPLY NOT GET TO US IN TIME.** (For example, we recently received a parcel intended for a child's birthday in October 2022. It arrived almost a year later and he got it in October 2023 instead! Fortunately, the gift was still appropriate and there were no clothes included.)

If you intend to transfer a small sum of money to 'your child' please reference the transaction with yours/you're his/her name.

Our children's last day at Morning Star this year is Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December. I know it sounds terribly early but once the country's schools close for the Christmas holidays we struggle to get our children to still attend Morning Star each day.

Other important dates are as follows:

28<sup>th</sup> October: Last teens meeting for the year.

16<sup>th</sup> November – Next Board Meeting  
 25<sup>th</sup> November – Grandmothers’ (Gogos’) Christmas Party.  
 1<sup>st</sup> December: Grade R (reception class) Graduation Ceremony.  
 5<sup>th</sup> December – Pre-school/Little Stars (toddlers) Christmas party.  
 6<sup>th</sup> December: Grade R/School Christmas Party.  
 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024 – Morning Star reopens for the New Year.

God willing, our 2024 Durban Sea trip will take place from 2<sup>nd</sup>- 6<sup>th</sup> April with 30 young teens selected to go on it. Our sincere thanks to the UK couple who have, once again, sponsored the trip.

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

Praise and thanks that:

1. Most of our children are well and that they’re so happy at Morning Star.
2. We’re not having half as much ‘load-shedding’ as previously. Why this is so – and what’s happening ‘behind the scenes’ is a mystery – but we’re thankful for this period of grace indeed.
3. We presently have enough funds to help 150 families with a monthly food parcel.
4. Although still fragile and weak, Siyabulela Latile is back at Morning Star each day.
5. Ron Adams is out of hospital and slowly regaining his strength and stamina. Join us in praying that he won’t have to have another shunt inserted.



**PRESCHOOLERS ENJOYING ICECREAM AFTER THEIR SWIM**

Please pray:

1. For our bereaved families as they come to terms with their loss and navigate a way forward.
2. For our sick children, Siyabulela and Philokuhle, as well as Khanya, Mohau & Thatohatsi’s terminally ill mum, Ms Mosula. Pray that the morphine will keep her pain under control and that she’ll feel the benefit of hospice’s care each day.
3. Youth Care Workers Revival and Shedreck as they visit and minister to our teens/young adults.
4. That our children’s lives will be transformed by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and that they’ll put Him first in their lives.
5. That the sale of our Kowie Street property will go through sooner than later.
6. For our teens meeting this coming Saturday and for our board meeting scheduled for 16<sup>th</sup> November.
7. For Godly wisdom as we restructure our little Morning Star school in the New Year and for Sarah Wilkins as she oversees everything pertaining to education at both centres. We truly thank God for sending her to us way back in 2010.

“He has told you, O man, what is good;  
 And what does the Lord require of you  
 But to do justice and to love kindness,  
 And to walk humbly with your God.”

Micah 6:8