

Dear friends,

Rains are late this year, and farmers in our area are a bit anxious, scanning the sky. We at Kwethu are also scanning the 'sky of future plans' as we've been pushed into new stages of faith and challenge. But let the story tell itself...

KWETHU: This wall mural was painted a year ago by a volunteer from Indiana. It's an example of the rich visuals left behind by many volunteers at our riverbank community in Loskop, KwaZulu Natal, dedicated to the health of children and hope for the Zulu community.



KWETHU: It is 'Our Home', no matter what the day brings. Kids and teens are doing well, thanks to good care, lots of laughter, good food and strong friendships. There is plenty going on at this time of year: senior exams, harvesting the garden, selling chickens, springtime, anticipation of end of school and big transitions.



Our huggable toddler reading to Rat Patrol Cat, off duty.

20 children. The tiny 1 kg baby brought in for a chance to live 18 months ago, is now a laughing toddler. Shy and tentative 12 year olds are now teens about to graduate from high school. Kids reaching barely to my waist 4 years ago are now 7th graders eager to start secondary school, razzing and joking with Gogo B. (That's me- grandmother!) We are proud of these kids and we thank supporters for giving a chance to these growing orphan kids.

And change is here! Our biggest family group (7 children) will be leaving us Dec 15, to go to their family home that is fairly close by. This home was built by volunteer donations over a period of 4 years. It will be a bittersweet time for us and the children as Kwethu has been HOME for 7 years and mutual love connects us all. Social Development will support them with grants and we pray we will be able to have the funds for university for a couple of the children when the time comes. We're planning a great party for the poignant end of year changes as well as welcoming home returning college students. For the joy of Hope, Jesus came and showed us the way with Love and Compassion, the gifts that keep us going.

For your prayers and thoughts: We want the children leaving Kwethu in December to have a secure and safe future and to know they will be provided for. This includes our high school graduates leaving with high hopes for the future.

Gardens and Chickens From June onward, we've been successful in hoeing and planting a big garden. Cabbages are rolling in, spinach is for dinner on Wednesdays, and tomatoes at 10 cm tall, are yet only dreaming of red and sweet. The garden is a draw for the older boys, who work enthusiastically in it. We love the fact that our garden is on Loskop Road side, a visual to the community that we are helping ourselves survive and 'you can' too. Produce is also selling to the community. But that's not all. We've had a long-term goal to generate income to support ourselves. Early in September, Kwethu manager Njabulo Mbongwa started our first chicken project, raising 200 chicks to sell at 6-7 weeks old. The first

group of 190 were sold within 10 days. The Zulu community like their chicken 'fresh' so many of the birds 'walked out' under somebody's arm. But we found there is a market for slaughtered chickens as well. Staff and teens did the 'dirty work' and our large donated freezer kept the stock cold on their way to market. A second round of baby chicks, in time for the Christmas market, are now 3 weeks old and eating their weight in food. We are grateful for volunteer help in starting both the garden and the chickens, along with seed capital from an enthusiastic donor. That's 10-grader Fanafuthi replenishing the food trays.





In October, a well organized team of **80 volunteers** arrived to carry out a carefully planned series of projects, in **ONE AFTERNOON**. The order of the day: painting the big room, 3 wall murals sketched and painted, our garden weeded, new plots hoed, a jumble of donated toys sorted and labelled, a soccer game organized for the children, shelves put up in both the clinic room and the bead office. Wow! I've never seen more people work more efficiently in such a short time. Huge thanks to International Good News Conference trainees, who every year give two

afternoons of their training week to community service.

Resource sharing is one of our goals and we're able to thank a big list of generous volunteers, in-kind donations that have enriched Kwethu and the homes of many in our community.

PLANS FOR 2012

Providing for the needs **of** community, **with** community, **in** community.

- register Kwethu as a Place of Safety for vulnerable and orphaned children, in cooperation with Social Development
- actively support foster care in the community, a process of encouraging cultural attitude shifts
- respond to need for safe home for high school teenagers, orphaned and/or vulnerable. These children do not fall under Social Development protection and yet need support, education and someone who believes in them
- Ubuntu Partner Trust assumes oversight of the Kwethu property, its use, maintenance and building.
- Kwethu Children's Village NPO will provide support for programs such as Lulisandla: 'give a helping hand'. Building on last year's pilot project, Pastor Philip Tshabalala implements the mission of assessing the needs of neighbourhood families, identifying orphans and vulnerable children, giving support and distributing donated food, clothing and household goods.



Pastor Philip distributing donated food, soap and towels to a large destitute family

- Continue to generate income from our small businesses to support our programs.
- Plan for, welcome and mentor short term volunteers into the community

For your prayers and vision for us:

- Trained and spiritually mature staff with the calling to care for children
- The focus and energy to develop alternative sources of income. Our major overseas funder is steadily decreasing funding in a planned withdrawal, terminating Nov 2012.
- A competent property and program administrator is needed urgently
- Funds for running a youth hostel and a married couple with a heart for teens
- Social Development will come through with promised funding for Lulisandla.

Amangwe Zulu Crafts

Strong sales of our products through our contacts in UK, Australia and US have blessed the women who create beautiful beadwork. Two weeks ago we received a rush order for 2800 small bracelets for the COP17 Climate Change conference in Durban Nov 27- Dec 3, giving the women a welcome bonus at this Christmas season.



Happiness Khumalo, seen here with her children and their friends, is a single mom living in three-room, mud and wattle home. Beadwork brings welcome income for this strong and loving mother, who has also been an effective chairwoman of AZC.

We look back over these 8 years of diligent work, many hundreds (thousands?) of beading hours the women have done and see what an economic success this project has been. We have been able to provide a reasonably steady income for the crafters, through a network of customers in UK, Australia and USA, as well as an increasing market here in RSA. It is so satisfying to be part of the solution to rural joblessness, to see these families healthy and thriving and neighbourhoods supported! Thank you to all our supporters and customers who buy fair trade as well as the volunteers who manage, promote and sell these products.

Ubuntu Education Fund News

Melusi Sithole graduated a year ago from high school. This 2011 school year the fund paid for his education in electrical engineering. He has done so well that a major appliance production company interviewed him for further training on the job. Melusi commented in an interview: "The people here at Kwethu were the first people to believe in me. I thank the friends here for teaching me about Jesus Christ, for believing in me and for giving me a future. It's been really hard to grow up alone and I want to help other children have a future."



Yeah for the Ubuntu Education Fund, started by Wheaton College football guys!



This fund provides finances to send qualified graduates from Kwethu Children's Village onto university. We will have 3 capable students in university January, 2012. Kenan Ndlovu (right picture) hopes to study at University of KwaZulu Natal. Patience Dawonde (left) has applied to nursing school, inspired by her close relationship to Jules Stockil. Fekiswa Zungu is studying social work at University of Free state and will be in her second year. Zamani Ndlovu has

completed 3 years of college and is hoping to qualify for a paid, on the job training position.

Please consider contributing to Ubuntu Education Fund to give these capable teenagers, and those following them, a bright future! (See below for how to...)



In the spirit of Thanksgiving 2011, we thank all of you who have supported, who've walked the way with us this year. With generous gifts from friends, John David and I were able to attend the 50th reunion of the 1961 Wheaton College Football team Sept 9 – 11. An added joy was to meet up with current football players who have so generously given their time at Kwethu over the last 5 years (and watch their exciting first game under lights). Young men whose understanding and vision have been broadened by the opportunity provided to transform living situations for needy families and orphaned kids. We look forward to welcoming Wheaton Football Ministry Partners back in March 2012.

We and the children and staff-team of Kwethu have come through a year of unexpected challenge, with good leadership and our common trust in God. These have protected and tempered our spirits, our faith been rewarded with wisdom, patience, and provision. Specifically, BB gives a shout of THANKS for this year's gift of the Mahindra, a 7 seater that has made so much happen. JD quietly thanks God for a farmer's patience that is necessary as 'fruit' is being formed and coming to 'harvest'. Hallelujah, for the ways of Grace, Faith and Love that create lively people-stories, build roads through rocky terrain leading to the great City of God, and give us wisdom to live responsibly and creatively.

Barbara and John David

For financial donations to Ubuntu Partners or Ubuntu Education Fund or both!

Log onto **Faith and Learning International** and find Ubuntu Partners under 'Projects'. Information for on line giving to either the ministry or education is provided.

Mail in donations: Checks are made out to Faith and Learning International, memo: Ubuntu Partners. Send to Faith & Learning International, PO Box 480, Wheaton, IL 60189-0480