



The Swazi Voice

"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy." Proverbs 31:8-9

Volume 2

Jan / Feb 2010

Matsapha Church of Christ growing!

Matsapha, the closest "town" to us, is mainly an industrial area that has been expanding rapidly. The church was started in this area in 1999. In 2008 the members constructed a building, using their own skills and purchasing most of the



building supplies themselves. They started worshipping in their new building last year and has been a light to the Matsapha community, under the leadership of Bheki Mamba, who is also a lecturer at African Christian College. In November of 2009, they approached Mission Providence to assist them with a feeding / care point. They had been feeding some needy children in their community on Saturdays, as members donated goods. In December 2009, with the help of Mission Providence obtaining fortified rice and protein meals from Feed My Starving Children, they were able to begin feeding twice a week. Sundays they have 60 - 90 children and Wednesdays about 25. The leadership is also excited about opening a preschool at the building later this year, specifically to minister to the orphans and vulnerable children in that community. We are so delighted to work with a church where the members value such practical ways to reach people for Jesus.

New Church Plant - KaShali



One of the goals we set for ourselves for 2010 was to help establish a congregation at the 2 care / feeding points where there is no local congregation to help provide support for the children we feed, particularly in terms of spiritual care. On the first Sunday in February we, along with local church leaders and members in the KaShali area held the first service for the KaShali Church of Christ. We were optimistically expecting around 30 people to come and were overwhelmed when we saw over 120 people come to worship God. Our God is mighty and faithful and He is to be praised for this.

Goals for 2010

1. There are 2 church plants at 2 care / feeding points that will begin in earnest in February with evangelism of these areas. One is at Masundvwini and the other at Kashali (see article above). We are meeting with one of the queens in the Masundvwini area next week to ask permission to use the preschool building as a meeting place for the time being. We are working with local congregations, members living in these areas and African Christian College.

Continued...

Goals for 2010 continued...

2. We are working with the Matsapha congregation, where we started a care / feeding point last December, to help them establish a Christian pre-school aimed specifically at the orphans in the community. Esme will take the lead on this project, particularly with teacher training.
3. The Matsapha church of Christ has shown great interest in having a judo club at the church building as a means of outreach mainly to the orphans in their community. Stephen will be starting a program with the orphans to teach them Judo with a Christian emphasis on godly character building. Along with the valuable skill of self-defense, this program will provide opportunities for deeper relationships and mentoring.
4. We will be partnering with the Swaziland National Charity Fund which is governed by local business men who have a strong spiritual emphasis. This will increase the projects we will be doing, giving us more exposure to the needs here. The trust is involved in several orphanages and pre-schools where we can provide a positive Christian influence and serve as role models. As their core values align with ours, this is a natural fit.
5. We are pursuing professional language tutoring (Seswati) with some other missionaries.

Please continue to pray for us for daily wisdom and strength so our lives in this country will only be bring glory to God.



Poverty?

All too often we define poverty as a lack of physical possession: a car, a house, a TV and so on. While it may be true that the lack of material possessions often goes hand in hand with poverty, that should not be the main measuring stick.

In the book "When Helping Hurts" by Steve Corbett & Brian Fikkert I have been challenged to consider if and when I am hurting more than helping the people we are serving. In the book, a quote by Bryant L. Meyers defines the nature of poverty:

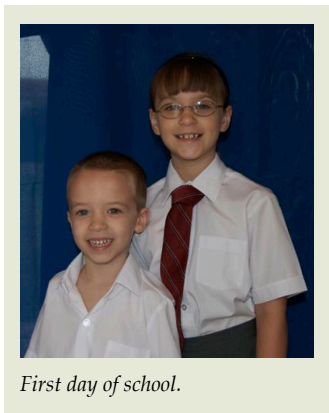
"Poverty is the result of relationships that do not work, that are not just, that are not for life, that are not harmonious or enjoyable. Poverty is the absence of shalom in all its meanings."

Blessings,

Stephen Sheasby
Executive Director and Founder
Mission Providence

Family News

Our first Christmas in Swaziland was delightful, mostly because Esme's brother and sister-in-law came to visit from the Netherlands! It was lovely to be with family and show them around here. After their short 5 days with us, they were headed to Cape Town, at which time Esme was able to join them and surprise the rest of the family there! Poor Stephen, Chloe and Joseph did not get to go this time, but at least were able to spend some time with Stephen's family in Johannesburg.



First day of school.

In January Chloe started Grade 4 and Joseph went to "big school", starting Grade 0 (Kindergarten). We are so thankful for their school where the teachers genuinely care about the children.

Joseph turns 6 this week! He is super excited to have his new school friends over for a party.

Chloe is glad to be back at school ("Holidays were getting boring") and also back at gymnastics.

We are looking forward to having Stephen's parents all the way from Tampa, Florida over in March.

-Sheasby family

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