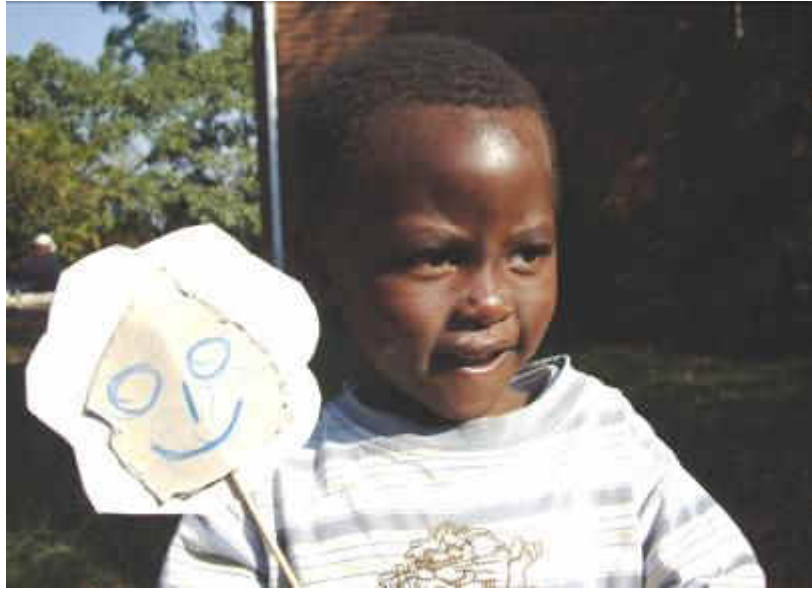


KENOSIS

Newsletter

Issue 36

July 2009



Dear Friends,

The last six months have (again) been filled with activities, challenges, excitements, trainings, visits and a whole lot more. In this Newsletter we hope to share some of these with you. However before I start with all the Kenosis Happenings, I would like to share with you something that has been on my mind in the last couple of weeks. I have spent quiet some time reflecting on the question of: ***'How do we responsibly care for children in a world threatened and marked by HIV and AIDS?'***

This question is not easily answered! Over the years we have learned that there are more, many more questions than answered when trying to address the needs to vulnerable children. We have learned that our actions and our good-will can lead to dependency rather than helping children grow up to independent and responsible individuals. My personal key learning over the last 6 years in Kenosis has been: ***Build Children from Within!*** Make them strong inside so that they can themselves find solutions to the challenges they are going to have to face in their lives. Build their self esteem; build their characters; build their support systems; and build their souls! I believe that if these elements inside of a child are strong, they will be resilient and have the ability to face the challenges that will come along as they journey through life!

What holds true for ‘the children cared for by Kenosis’, holds true for all other aspects of the work we do. If we make the Spiritual Foundation on which the Sisterhood is built strong – it will hold and it will let others see and it will grow. If we build a good Diaconical Training Project, a place where people can be trained in an environment where Spiritual growth goes hand in hand with ‘Academic Education’, it will build strong servants for the church and strengthen the church from within.

Build from Within! Over the years this has become for me the most important sentence of the work we do. In this way we wish to serve our community, our churches and those who come to seek our help. However I also believe that we will only achieve this if and when we trust God on this journey. This means that God gives us the strength, the courage, the patience and the wisdom ***‘from within’*** to do these things and build his kingdom.

Pastor Elke Carrihill

Elke Reports:

Diaconical Training Project

In the last Newsletter I reported on the building Project and the progress made. Further developments have taken place and the house is now nearly finished on the inside so that we will soon be able to ‘put it to use’. I also reported that Pastor Celiwe Dlamini

had joined Kenosis as and taken on the responsibility for the Training Project. Pastor Dlamini spent three months of this year visiting projects in the churches in South Africa and managed to get a picture of what is happening in terms of diaconical projects,



what we could learn and where the needs were. The trip was very enriching for her and she will report on this later in the letter. I also reported that, she was planning to go to Norway for some further studies in the next year. However, due to some

personal developments –she got married - she has decided to not go abroad after all. This decision was not taken easily, and we are now actively planning on how to take the process forward. I am sure we will be able to inform you about these developments in the next Newsletter when things are more clear. We trust that God will continue to guide us in our deliberation of the Project as a whole.

Kenosis Sisters

The Sister's have had a half year filled with joy and sadness. Sr Lindeni attended the Retreat with the Kononia Community in Gauteng in April. This Retreat is always a great experience and offers the sisters some time to interact with other communities, get away from the daily demands of Kenosis and spend time in retreat. Sr Happiness joined a delegation from Pietermaritzburg and visited Germany for four weeks in May. One of the highlights was a visit to the 'Kirchentag' in Bremen which the group attended. Sadly she had to cut her trip short due to the sudden death of her mother on the 3 June 2009. We wish her and her family the experience of a loving and comforting God in this time of mourning.



Our Children's Projects continue.

Our crèche started the school year in January with about 20 new children so that we again have 50 children visiting our little school. Rhoda and Sr Lindeni continue to guide the children and teach them with dedication and love and give them a good foundation for the formal schooling they will be facing.

I reported in our last Newsletter that we have realized that the children in our **Foster Care Project** are no longer 'only children' but many of them are entering their teenage years. Yes, with this we are faced with new challenges. One of the ways we try and address these challenges is by providing our Foster Mothers with training in skills around 'child care'. Together with CINDI (a network of organizations) Nomthandazo and Hlengiwe have attended some training sessions in Child Care with a well established organization called NACCW. Also through CINDI the Foster Mothers are able to attend meetings with other Child Care Workers in Pietermaritzburg where they can share experiences and learn from one another. Over the years in Kenosis we have learned the importance of 'building the primary care giver' of a child in order that she can be the 'best parent possible'.

Sr Happiness continues to work with the community in **Maqongqo**, known as our 'Outreach Project'. This Project places the biggest challenges in our way. Again and again we are faced

with difficult questions of: 'How do we best attend to the needs of impoverished families and the children in their care'. We are proud to say that the establishment of a group of local volunteers in Maqongqo has paid off. These women have grown in knowledge around Child Care, Counseling, Children's Rights, as well as procedures around accessing Grants and Documentation. These volunteers are also the ones who run Support Groups for children on a regular basis and with them we have been able to, since middle of last year, give space to 400 children to attend a structured program in which they are given the opportunity to express and work through some of their own grief and trauma. It is wonderful to see how children, after being depressed and despaired, have grown to trust again, take charge of their lives, built new friendships and improved in their school work. We believe that these changes are as a result of children being able to express and identify some of the grief in their lives. Further more, the volunteers and Foster Mothers together attended a workshop around 'Memory Work'. The focus here is to help children keep positive memories and encourage their care givers to help them do this. Many children do not have many memories of their parents and it has been found that in order for the positive development of a child keeping memories are important. We hope to incorporate this memory work into the support groups the children attend.

Our **Kids Week** in December 2008 was a huge success and we had a record of 250 Kids attend. Here too we have realized the importance of this work. Not only do the children get a cooked meal during this week, but also the time they spend in Kenosis is constructively filled with activities, biblical stories, music, sport and discussions which hopefully further their own developments. Having 250 Kids on our grounds is becoming a challenge and we have to look at how we structure the week so that all children get the most out of 'what is on offer'.

The Volunteers

Over the years Kenosis has seen many volunteers coming and going – this again holds true for this year. In August, Claudia, Ellen, Johannes and Jonah will be leaving us and a new group of

Volunteers will come to live and experience the life of Kenosis for a year. Christian came to Kenosis in April and spent a couple of months with us.



He will leave in August.

Some new developments in Germany around Volunteering have brought about the requirement that all volunteers are to participate in a 'half-way-seminar' while they are volunteering in another country. In South Africa Rev Thomas Wojchekowski from the Hermannsburg Mission and myself hosted this seminar in February. About 30 young people, who are placed all over South Africa, descended on Kenosis for a week and we spent time reflecting on their experiences, their challenges and what they still want to achieve during the year. It was a wonderful week for all and we hope that it gave the volunteers the opportunity to deepen the experiences they have made in South Africa.

In Closing

A lot has happened over the last months in Kenosis and sometimes I feel a bit overwhelmed by it all. But it helps to know that there are people all over the world who are interested in our work, carry us in prayer and are prepared to support this work financially. For all of this and lots, lots more: THANK YOU! It all contributes to the notion of '**Building from within!**'

Pastor Elke Carrihill

Training Project

The beginning of the New Year 2009 marked a beginning of new challenges and the start of some research around Diaconical work in the churches, as had been planned for the Training Project. I started my field trip at the beginning of March 09. Our plan was

to have trips to Namibia, Tanzania, Madagascar, Botswana, Swaziland and South Africa, however, due to financial constraints I could not go to most of these countries. I ended up visiting some parts of South Africa and Swaziland instead.



I spent two months away from Kenosis and visited some of the community and church projects working around HIV and AIDS. Some of the projects included Home Based Care, Support Groups for people living with HIV, and church

organizations such as Diakonia AIDS Ministry in Soweto. One of the challenges I encountered during the trip was the life experiences and the conditions people lived in. I was deeply touched by the remarkable work, groups and projects in the communities were doing in helping these people. I noted that in most of the caregiver and support groups in the various areas people experienced very similar problems and I noticed that many of our church members were not involved or did not participate in these group activities. Only few individuals are involved.

My lesson for the training project is, to come up with strategy for motivating church members to be involved in outreach mission in their congregations, parishes and communities.

During the trip it was interesting to also learn that the Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa (LUCSA) is also in the process of beginning Diaconic training. I



had some discussions with the coordinator and looking forward to working in close cooperation with them.

The plan was that I will begin my studies in the School of Mission and Theology in Stavanger, Norway in August 2009. Due to family commitments I will not be able to further my studies abroad as I am getting married on the 27th June 2009. We are still discussing with Kenosis the future plans after these above mentioned developments and will be telling you more about this in the next Newsletter.

Pastor Celiwe Dlamini

“Our Maqongqo Child”

In our Newsletter Nr 34 we reported on a baby we had ‘taken in’ for a couple of weeks from Maqongqo, in April 2008. At the beginning of June Thandekile, one of our Foster Mothers, made me aware that this child had been involved in a domestic accident which left it with bad burn-wounds on its stomach and its right arm. This accident brought us into contact with the baby and her family again. The mother had taken the child to the hospital after the accident, however it seems as though the local clinic had refused to renew the bandages of the baby after a couple of days, because the necessary papers from the hospital had not been sent along.

The situation and the state of the child was a huge shock and I



was overcome with a deep sense of sadness. Ncile was naked and the seven-day-old bandage stuck to the wound. Further more she was dirty, hungry and her development was hugely compromised. It was very difficult to remove the old bandage. The fear and pain sent Ncile

into bouts of hysteric screams. I was devastated when I saw how

big and dirty the wound was. Over the next couple of days I went back three times to dress and bandage the wound. It was then, after discussing the matter with the mother that we decided to take the child back to Kenosis for as long as it took for the wound to heal and the baby to be strong again. “The same procedure as last year”

During the day the baby was taken care of by the volunteers. In the evenings Thulisile would keep the baby for the night.

In Kenosis the baby received the necessary ‘medical attention’ in order that the wound could heal well. It also helped that she was fed regularly and was showered with love and attention for a couple of days. Under these conditions Ncile recovered much faster than expected and we could return her to her family after only 5 days.

Claudia Wiedemann

The Volunteers say ‘Hi and Bye’

It is winter in South Africa and we are sad to say that our time in Kenosis is ‘slowly but surely’ coming to an end. The time seemed to have ‘flown by’. But this just confirms that we have enjoyed, and still enjoy, our time here in Kenosis. In Kenosis there is always action. It does not matter whether one is working in the crèche, or doing general work around the property and garden, or whether one is playing with the children – in Kenosis we were never bored. This meant that at the end of the day, we felt hugely satisfied with our achievements.

In August 2008 we started off as a group of four and at the end of April Christian joined our group. He had spent 3 months at the ‘Deutsche Schule Hermannsburg’ before coming to Kenosis for his last 3 months in South Africa.

Of course we did not only work. We also had the opportunity of traveling and discovering South Africa. On our trips we discovered the Drakensberg, the wild life in Hluhluwe and iMfolozi, the Wild Coast, the Garden Route, Cape Town and the Western Cape, as well as Johannesburg, Pretoria, Lesotho, Swaziland and Malawi. Whether we will be able to take all these impressions home with us remains to be seen.

After our travels and discovery trips it was always wonderful to be able to return to our “home” Kenosis. Here we learned the meaning of ‘community life’ where the meeting of different



characters brings with it a number of challenges. In the months of our stay we became more independent. We learned how to make ‘butternut soup’, how to work the

washing machine and in the garden we learned the difference between tomatoes and weeds. All of us discovered a new language – Zulu, for some of us we also had to learn ‘Schwaebish’ (a dialect spoken in the south of Germany).

We are thankful for the time we were aloud to spend in Kenosis. We are thankful for what we have learned, for the friendships made, and the understanding we received. We will never forget this time.

Ellen, Claudia, Jonah, Johannes and Christian

2 of our Children write:

Khelo (12): “My Name is Khelo (nickname). My real name is Thab’sile Makathini. I live in Kenosis (Kenosis Community). It is where orphans are kept (Orphans are children who do not have parents. I am one of them.) We live with a wonderful loving Mom. I have many brothers and sisters who are also orphans. I sometimes like Kenosis but when someone lies I wish I could just shout. I like it when we treat each other equally. I really like when we all talk about what is good for the community.

At school my favorite subject is science because I want to be a nurse and because I like knowing about nature. I like playing netball and exploring what I do not know.

When I came to Kenosis I was very small. I did not know why I came to this place but I did not care at all. When I grew up things changed. When I was small I was confused when I watched TV. I saw families with two or three children and at home we are nine all together. But when I grew up I finally found out the fact that I had no parents. At first I could not understand and I started asking myself how come I am not lucky like other children. When I saw the people who sleep on the street with an empty tummy I realized that I am lucky unlike the children who do not have homes. I mean, I have my own bed and my own clothes but they do not have.

That is all about me!
Thank you for your attention. Bye-bye”

Sane (12): “My name is Saneliswe and my surname is Hlongwane. I love living in Kenosis but sometime things do not go the right way.



People do not want to learn that you do not have to always think of yourself. You should also think of the other people who need a thing the most. My dream is to make every ones dreams come true. As I am growing I look at all the children who are suffering as I am in this type of life. I thank the Lord that I have both, my parents and my brothers and sisters. But I also do not like it because I do not live with them. I live with my aunt.

I am willing to give all my best to the things that I am given by my school teachers because I want to prove to people that even if I am short I have a big brain. In the class I sometimes am the highest in a test.

I do not wish for anyone to sleep in the streets with nothing in their tummy. I feel sorry for those people who cannot stand up on their own two feet because maybe they could make the world a wonderful place and do it to the better than people who can stand. I look at the children that have rich parents. Their behavior is not always good, like when they eat they want different kinds of food

because they know that their parents have money and do not think of what they will eat tomorrow. I want to make sure that when I get to the top of the ladder I do not want anyone to go to bed with an empty stomach.” (Sane lives with her aunt in Kenosis.)

Sane and Khelo



**THANK YOU FOR WALKING WITH, NEXT TO
AND FOR US IN 2009!**

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