



“Raised to Praise”



28 May 2004

There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called to one hope when you were called – one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” Ephesians 4:4, 16

What an incredible provision God has made for His children through our adoption into the family of Christ! In this family, we are given the opportunity to learn, grow, encourage and be encouraged, and together bring honor and glory to our God. When faced with the world’s increasing tendency toward individualism, it is good to be reminded that God created us to serve Him with the unique gifts He has given each of us. In this way, we are able to join together in unity with other believers to carry out His purpose.

Encouragement toward unity in Christ was the topic of our last staff meeting as Pastor Ronald Kalifungwa, friend and board member of Bethesda Outreach, challenged our staff toward the unity that God desires us to have as we labor with other believers. In this next month we will be joined by additional staff and need your prayers as we strive to grow in unity in order to most effectively carry out God’s purpose for this ministry.

Staff News

We are rejoicing that God is once again extending our Bethesda family with the addition of a fourth houseparent couple, Klaas & Martha Mashabela. Klaas and Martha have already been a great encouragement to myself and Bethesda’s staff through their firm commitment to God and desire to use their gifts to further His Kingdom. Klaas and Martha will be arriving on June 1st bringing their two children with them and we look forward to seeing God provide more orphaned children to be welcomed into their home. Klaas will also be assuming the position of Childcare Administrator for Bethesda Outreach. We are thrilled for how God has uniquely prepared Klaas for this role. Please pray that God will give Klaas wisdom as he provides leadership and encouragement to our houseparents and as he and Martha transition into their new roles.

God has also directed in the lives of EBM missionaries Phil & Alana Carmichael, currently ministering in Mali, West Africa to bring them to serve at Bethesda. The Carmichaels will arrive on the 12th of June and we anticipate the addition they will be to the Bethesda staff. Phil will be ministering mainly in the area of maintenance on Bethesda’s grounds, and Alana will continue to care for their two children and help out in various areas as needed. Please pray for strength, protection and peace for the Carmichaels as they are in the midst of completing their ministry in Mali and preparing for the move to South Africa.

Though not new to Bethesda’s family, we are thrilled to inform you that Fritz Shikwambane, husband to Masello and father of seven Bethesda children, will be assuming the role of Houseparent Supervisor, working closely with Klaas Mashabela. EBM missionary Dana Scott has currently been filling this role and will be transitioning into other needed responsibilities at Bethesda. Dana will be training Fritz in the months to come. Pray that this transition will go smoothly and that God will be glorified in every aspect.

Construction News

We continue to be amazed by the sight of the first buildings on the village property as they are slowly nearing completion. The water approval has just been finalized this week and we are awaiting the approval for sewage. Please pray that this will be granted soon so the work can continue to progress as scheduled.

As we excitedly look toward a July completion date, we would like to extend to each of you an invitation to join us at our village dedication on October 16 for a time to give God the glory due His name for His provision thus far. He has been faithful to guide this ministry to the place it is at today, and we look forward to seeing how He will continue to direct in the days, months and years ahead. Each of you has had an important part through your prayers and support, and we would love to have you be part of this special day. If this is possible and you desire information on accommodations or the event itself, please send an e-mail to bethesda-temba@boi.org stating your desire.

Recent and Upcoming Events

We have been blessed this past month to welcome many visitors to Bethesda and are deeply grateful for the unity God provided as many individuals joined together as one.

On the 5th of May, we welcomed a group from Baptist Youth of South Africa to minister through a special program to our children. The children were full of smiles as they listened to Bible stories, enjoyed the antics of a friendly clown and participated in singing.

On the 7th of May, a team of nine students from Cedarville University (Ohio, USA) arrived to spend three weeks working on Bethesda's property and ministering through local churches. The time flew by and we are grateful for how God worked in individual lives of both the team and our staff. Their activities included clearing brush at the entrance to the village, preparing a home for the Mashabela's arrival, filling a large underground drain with rocks and running the children's program for a weekend family retreat for Central Baptist Church in Pretoria. Their evenings and weekends provided opportunities to minister to our houseparents, children and local congregations, and many came away blessed through the interaction.

On the 17th of May, we were joined by Charles & Stephen Wesco (IN, USA), who ministered greatly through gospel chalk drawings, evangelism, manual labor, and times of encouragement to our Bethesda families. Pray that those who heard the truth in these past weeks will realize their need for a Savior and put their trust in Him. Also, the week of the 17th, we welcomed personal friends Bill, Joy & Ami Jaspersen (IN, USA) who came to minister in whatever way they could and were a blessing as they jumped in working alongside the Cedarville team.

Please pray for each of these groups as they return to their places of ministry in the USA and yield to the Lord's guidance in their lives. All have been touched by the reality of life in this country stricken by HIV/AIDS and would appreciate your prayers as they return that God will use them and their experiences mightily to further His Kingdom. Pray for the groups who will join us in this next month that God will prepare them thoroughly for what He wants to teach them and for the tasks awaiting them.

We are continually humbled by your prayers and please accept our gratitude for your faithful support. We could not do what we do without you and are thankful to you for faithfully carrying out the vital role God has given you. Please continue to pray for our houseparents as they daily meet the needs of the children God has placed in their care, and pray that each child will desire to know God personally and serve Him wholly in a way that encourages unity in the family of Christ.

Persevering with great joy,

John Mixon
Director, Bethesda Outreach Ministries
