

Musa's Story Touches Ministry Friends Worldwide

The actions of our health team and the prayerful response of Challenge Ministries' supporters showed one Swazi grandmother (Gogo) how God uses His people to be His hands and feet.

Earlier this year Compassionate Care volunteers became aware of Musa; a 9-year-old boy living near the Engcamini ICBC site. Until February, Musa had been a bright, active boy who did well in school. A sudden high fever and vomiting were soon followed by a total loss of his hearing and eventually his sight. Musa was left in a dark, silent world on the rural homestead. Musa and his Gogo sought the advice of doctors but were provided no explanation or course of treatment.

Health team nurse Clair Oates visited Musa's home along with medical student and Mission Impact volunteer Ross Campbell from Scotland. Together they performed some basic assessment tests of Musa's reflexes and senses. They agreed that there could be a brain tumour affecting Musa's hearing and sight.

Through local contacts the CMS team were able to connect with one of the nation's few neurosurgeons, who agreed to perform an immediate scan of Musa's brain. As suspected, the scan showed a large mass, and Musa was admitted to hospital. A posting on our ministry Facebook page asked supporters to join in prayer for this young boy and his grandmother.

The response was tremendous. Many people shared the post and passed the prayer request

along to their friends. Written comments let us know that Musa's story touched hearts all over the world. We were able to share these prayers with Gogo during the days she sat with Musa as he awaited surgery.

During his three-week stay in hospital, the Challenge Ministries team was able to visit regularly. Nokuthula Nzima helped Gogo understand the test results and doctors' updates on Musa's condition, and our Hospital Ministry team came by to pray.

Although Musa passed away within a week of having brain surgery, we praise God that he wasn't in pain at the end of his life. Doctors have assured us that the pain would have become quite severe as the tumour advanced, but in the hospital Musa was resting peacefully and was covered in prayer. His Gogo shared that he had given his life to the Lord, and she often found him with his hands pressed together as if in prayer. Clair recalls that he responded to her touch and stroked her hand with his thumb during one of her visits. He gave a small smile when she presented him with a lollipop and eagerly accepted the sweet.

Following his death, Challenge Ministries continued to support Gogo with funeral



During an April visit, Compassionate Care leader Nokuthula Nzima delivered food and basic supplies to Musa and his Gogo.

arrangements and helped to return Musa to his home area in Engcamini. ICBC Pastor Vusi Mkhonta says the community was encouraged that Musa had received care through the church family. This has certainly strengthened the presence of the Engcamini church and helped people to understand how God can work to draw us close to Him even through our sorrows.

To everyone who prayed, sent messages, and assisted with Musa's care, we pray you were blessed as you followed his journey. We know that Musa is healthy, restored and redeemed, and with our Father in Heaven.

Annual Awareness Dinner Celebrates Victories

Each year we gather in Swaziland to share the Challenge Ministries stories with our local community. This year's event, titled "Celebrating Victories" allowed us to shine the spotlight of God's work in each area of the organization. Life Skills Bible School students were our serving staff, and our rehabilitation centres joined the Khulula Choir for a special performance.



Even 7-year-old Phiwa shared her victory of traveling to Northern Ireland to sing with her brothers and sisters from the Children's Homes.

Saneliso, aged 20, shared how life in our Children's Homes has helped him develop a relationship with Christ.

"Eleven years ago when I joined this ministry I was just a tiny boy with no hope, no goals and no hope for the future. But today I am singing a different song. I'm singing a song of hope, a song of love. A song of going forward with Christ each and every day. Christ is my victory." Today, Saneliso is dreaming of studying medicine but says he is open to wherever God will lead him.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for this special evening, and especially to those who shared their testimonies!



Directors Frans and Martie Pienaar with Waheedah, Bongie and Musa. Wahedaah served as the evenings host and Musa led the musicians in accompanying the Khulula Choir.

In traditional Swazi attire, Waheedah Masinga interviewed people from throughout the ministry. Here, Lindelwa shares how being at the Life Skills Bible School has helped her to see God's vision for her life and give her hope for the future.

Armstrong Family's 'Mission Impact' Returns for 12th Year

We often hear that people find themselves deeply impacted by coming to visit the ministry, even though they initially set out to make an impact on others. The same is true for Gary Armstrong and his family from Northern Ireland.

Twelve years ago Gary visited the Children's Homes and asked Executive Director Kevin Ward about why the children seemed a little distant.

"He told me that the children see people come to visit and they never return," recalls Gary. "I decided right there that I would commit to returning as often as I was able, to tell them 'I haven't forgotten you'."

Gary's daughter Michelle says being part of Challenge Ministries is just part of who they are. "This has shaped who we are as a family," she says.

The team comes prepared with a music and teaching presentation that is performed to schools, and also visits prisons and hospitals for prayer and ministry. This year Gary's granddaughter, Fay, 11, was popular everywhere when she sang her favourite SiSwati songs at the primary schools.



(Top) The Armstrong team is up early each day to visit schools with a fun musical presentation. (Left) They bring all of the materials and supplies to do a craft with rural schoolchildren.



"Even throughout the trip she became more confident," says mom, Michelle. "This was her first time singing by herself and she got more comfortable as time went on. Fay began to speak about having her own relationship with God.

As well as making an annual trip, the Armstrong family organized and hosted this year's tour of the Khulula Choir in Northern Ireland. They are already booked in to Mission Impact for 2015! Thank you Gary for your enduring commitment to Swaziland and to our children!

New ICBC Site Brings Hope

In the rural areas of Swaziland, where transportation is generally made on foot, In Community, By Community (ICBC) projects can literally be effective even short distances from each other.

Just 10 kilometres away from the existing Engcamini project, Pastor Elliott Shongwe sees his community affected by drought, unemployment and HIV/Aids. His vision for a community-based church and children's home fits the ideal model for an ICBC initiative, and a new partnership has been formed.

"There is poverty in this land," says Pastor Elliott. "Young people are having children at a very early age and there is a lot of ancestral worship. My vision is to have a church, with a pre-school, a garden and a football ground."

Currently meeting in a ragged tent, Pastor Elliott sees around 100 people coming to Sunday services. Community members prepare food for the children each week, and already young people gather to play football on the dusty field. Recent revivals were very well attended, and volunteers from the area followed up with people who chose to follow Christ.

Work projects have seen tremendous support from community members. Trenching for water and preparing for the foundation is already complete, and Mission Impact teams have provided additional help during site visits.



Just 16 years old, this young man is heading up a home with five children. One day their house burned to the ground while they were at school. Pastor Elliott (left) immediately organized clothing and a tent for them to stay in, and continues to help as they work to rebuild. Rice packs from Kids Against Hunger help him feed the younger children in the house. Pastor Vusi Mkhonta (right) from Engcamini ICBC is working closely with the new site.

Please pray for open hearts and the coming together of this community, and for Pastor Elliott as he leads the initiative. The ICBC projects are designed to support the local Pastor in bringing a strong church and sustainable development to the rural areas of Swaziland.



Want more stories? Join Challenge Ministries Swaziland on Facebook!

Dreams Coming True

Young Ncobile, age 10, was filled with anger and bitterness when she came to live in our Children's Homes. She was fearful that she may never have a future, and she was without hope.

Now 22, Ncobile is a young working woman with an education. She knows that her Father God loves her and has a tremendous plan for her life. She also has a motherly role model in caregiver Nomvula, and the guidance of Pastor Timothy Makhanya as she deals with the issues of life.

At times Ncobile struggled with knowing which direction she wanted to take in terms of her schooling. Once she decided on catering, she pursued her goals with determination.



In May, Nomvula was right by her side as Ncobile graduated from the Lobamba Catering School. Because of her high marks she was selected to give an address to the students and families.

Shortly after graduation Ncobile began working at Likusasa Catering in Matsapha and quickly impressed her supervisors with her work ethic.

"I wish I had five more like her," says Collin Pheiffer, owner of the company. "Sometimes people from catering schools aren't prepared to do the work. Ncobile works hard whether she's washing floors or serving customers."

This year Ncobile has also passed her driving test and is becoming more independent while living on our Elusitweni property.

"I am so grateful for God's hand in my life," beams Ncobile. "I feel like this is all a dream come true."