



**The OUTCRY Newsletter :
March 2014**

Zanini Bantwana is a Christian Outreach Organization dedicated to meeting the needs of lonely, sick and disadvantaged children in the Government Hospitals in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. Our passionate team visits the children daily, telling Bible Stories, facilitating developmental stimulating craft activities and bringing the children toys to play with. They love and listen to these precious children, and in doing so help to facilitate their healing process

The Team for 2014



The team of 9, Alan & Sheena, Lindo, Toyse, Mpume, Hlengiwe, Thobile, Khanyi and Jen, have started the year with renewed energy and enthusiasm. Our team remains our greatest strength and blessing as there is a strong sense of mutual calling and commitment which has created a beautiful synergy. All practical training and input are implemented in the wards. This helps our children, while keeping the focus on Christ's guidance and the core messages.

Some highlights of the past 3 months in pictures

Come Children...

Come and stick, paste, paint, play, glue, listen, learn, laugh, grow, heal and hear the Great news of a Father whose love for you will never end!



Team Building



New Resources



'The lost Sheep'



'Zaccheaus'



The Memory Game



Puzzle Time



Dutch Volunteers Paint Room



'Jesus feeds the 5000'



Story-time



'Noah's Ark'



Play-dough Fun



Messy Painting



Paper Folded Doves



Story-time



Human/Children's Rights Week



"Come children, listen to me and I will teach you the fear of the Lord"

A bit about our New Team Leader, Jen



I am a patriotic South African with a heart for rural Africa. Growing up on a farm, I developed a great love for the outdoors, for animals, sport, hiking & exploring new places. My faith is central to who I am, and fellowship is a way of life. I am drawn to things that require energy & enthusiasm, anything that involves a challenge, problem solving & creativity. I am open to new experiences and never say no to an adventure. But above all, God has blessed me with a heart for working with people, especially the little-people. As an Occupational Therapist I feel privileged that my profession aligns with my gifts and calling. I am SO excited to be a part of the ZB team. Thank you to each of you, whose gifts and prayers enable us to do this amazing work!

What is working well at ZB?



- **The Team:** having a consistent team, of local people, who speak isiZulu, understand the culture and community, who love the Lord and feel called to work with children is key and forms the foundation of the work that we do. They are able to connect with the children, staff and parents as they are reliable, regular (visiting the children daily) and trustworthy
- Daily Bible Stories, craft activities and free play
- Reaching, praying with and loving both children and parents

What are we improving?



- Enriching the work that we are doing by making the craft and play activities more developmentally appropriate so as to ensure that the children are learning and growing
- Exposing the children to new learning opportunities
- Involving the parents in all activities and using the opportunity to teach them too
- Further outreach: At Northdale Hospital we have been invited to attend the HIV children's clinic twice a week and visit the malnourished children, aged 0-3yrs in the isolation wards. These are both exciting developments.
- Introducing a 'themed' week 5 times during the year. We develop a programme for each theme. The whole team then presents this in each hospital in turn. We use songs, skits and educational materials. Children's Human Rights week was a great success and enjoyed by all.

Meet one of our 'Little-People'



This Little Person has been in the hospital for months. Due to her compromised immune system she has had to fight infection after infection. While other 6 years olds attend school, play and grow, she has to spend long hours alone in the ward. Her grandmother loves her, but has to be home to nurse her very ill daughter. It is no easy task for Granny to juggle her time and limited financial resources between her daughter and granddaughter. This Little Person has crept into our hearts as we have journeyed alongside her. On 'good' days she participated in team activities, on 'bad' days she just wanted to be held and loved. Highlights of our week were her cuddles and smiles (when they spontaneously snuck out during a playful activity!) I am thrilled to write that when going to visit her this week, she had been discharged home as she was well enough to return to her family. Please pray for her and her family and for all the others, like her, that we visit daily.

It is your Donations that enable us to do this work-Thank you!

Donations can be sent to:

South Africa: FNB Account: 62180674270; Branch Code: 220825

UK: Cheques payable to "Fitzroy Presbyterian Church" sent to Garth Graham, 1 Malone View Crescent, Belfast BT95PL and marked for Zanini Bantwana.

Secure online credit card facility: http://www.givengain.com/cgi-bin/giga.cgi?cmd=donate&cause_id=1809

REF: Your name if you wish to receive an acknowledgement.

"Come children, listen to me and I will teach you the fear of the Lord"

Alan & Sheena Gaston

'God sets the lonely in families' (Psalm 68:6)

There is not much time to be lonely in our family! In fact, there is rarely a dull moment with 4 lively children at home, all with their own personalities, interests and needs and 3 big children in the UK all busy with their lives. Here is an update on each of them.

Henry (16) is having a better year at school. He is happier and working better as he has now selected the subjects for the South African matriculation exam, which he will do at the end of 2016. He really enjoys soccer and cross country at school. He loves the Friday night church youth group and has started to help at a Saturday morning Bible club which is held in the nearby township and caters for over 200 children. He has matured quite a bit and seems to be more comfortable in his own skin.

Sihle (9) is a one-off. Whatever he does, he does 110% for good or ill. He always has an idea or a plan. He is thriving at his new school and says that everything he does is fun. His teacher is pleased with his work. He is in the chess club and in the choir, which he loves. He is passionate about most sports and we love them too as they burn off quite a lot of Sihle's energy. There is always a tension around Sihle and he uses up quite a lot of our energy too.

Sipho (10) does well as the only girl in the family, being able to hold her own with the boys. She is quite a resilient little girl with good social skills. She is not so comfortable at school and we are currently researching possible alternatives. We want to do the best for her that we can and see her reach her own potential.

Nzuzo (5), commonly referred to as Mr Nzuzo, is a small boy with a large personality. In January he started at the pre-primary department of the same school as Sihle. He is very happy there and loves all that is on offer. His teacher describes him as a little sponge, able to absorb lots of interesting facts.

We had a great time at Christmas with **Matthew** when he joined us for a week's camping. Matthew is currently working as a civil engineer in London. He was very good with the little ones and we all had a ball.

We are delighted that **Naomi** is engaged and plans to marry **Andy Whiteford** in Glasgow on December 22nd. Naomi is currently finishing GP training in Coventry and will move up to Glasgow at the end of August.

We are thrilled that **Peter and Katy** are expecting a baby in May this year. Exciting times lie ahead.

Also on the family front, we are currently enjoying **Sheena's mum and dad** being with us for a visit. We so much appreciate their making the long trip out to visit. They have already been to see the children's schools and sports events. They have also visited in Edendale hospital. We feel truly blessed by being in this family.

"Come children, listen to me and I will teach you the fear of the Lord"