

the OUTCRY

Sept/Oct 09

Alan and Sheena Gaston work with children in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

God sets the lonely in families.

(Psalm 68:6)



Sheena with the new arrivals

Now we are six!

Just when things seemed to be going slowly and we were wondering when we were going to get more children in the Place of Safety, in one week we welcomed twins of 21 months and a baby of 9 months, thus doubling our numbers at one fell swoop.

The twins needed to be placed as their mother is being treated in Durban for TB and their granny could not cope with them. We hope that they can go back to their mother at the end of her treatment which will probably last 6 months.

When they arrived we had the twins tested for HIV and TB. We were delighted that they are HIV- and disappointed but not surprised, they have tested positive for TB. They have started on their TB medication

and we are thankful to be able to help in this way. They were also malnourished and are very light for their age. After 2 weeks of a better diet and a stable routine, they are becoming livelier and are looking brighter.



The baby is already a great favourite with Henry, Siphon and Sihle who are very tickled by his antics. We think he is around 9 months but this is an estimated birthday – he has no birth certificate. His mother died of TB and as a small baby he was alone in Edendale hospital because of TB and severe malnutrition. He finished his TB medication at the end of August. When he left hospital he moved around several places before coming to us. The court will now investigate if his father is around and, if so, whether he can look after him. ‘Baby N’ is surprisingly content after such a rocky start to life. He enjoys clapping, laughing, ‘singing’,

listening to music and playing with the other children.

Here in South Africa we live in a world of HIV and TB. Sadly, these are commonplace diseases, particularly among the poor and disadvantaged. We are privileged to see this and to be able to help in a small way. We are also thankful that in the week when we got these new children, we were able to share this with some of our family. Our ‘big sons’ Peter and Matthew were with us on holiday as were Sheena’s brother, Derek, and his wife Gill and daughter Joy.

Holidays!



We had a lovely break in Cape Town in August - all by ourselves for 5 days! Natalie looked after our children while we were away. It was great timing as the 3 new children arrived the week we got back.



The 'Haves'

The most important thing we **have** to offer the children in hospital is the **Good News** that they are not alone. God has not abandoned them. Whatever the popular song says, God is not 'at a distance'. He made all of us for the joy of knowing us and Jesus paid with his life to save us from the ravages of sin. We **have Good News**.

About 90% of the children we visit **have HIV/AIDS** and many of them **have TB**. Very few **have** two parents. A survey around Edendale hospital found that 96% of children **have** only one adult in their home. Most children do not even know someone with two parents.

We **have** a great team of people who spend their days showing God's love to these children. Maybe it is Mpume giving a little boy a hug. Maybe it is Sihle telling a story or singing with them. Maybe it is Sethembile helping with school work. Maybe it is Toyse pushing the boy in the wheelchair out to the playground. Maybe it is Hlengiwe teaching how to brush their teeth.

We **have** the privilege of meeting with these children. We can see the joy on their faces when they listen to a story or learn to add above twenty (difficult when you only have twenty fingers and toes!). We **have** the satisfaction of knowing that we have planted **God's word** in their hearts and minds.



..and the 'Have Nots'

Most of the children in hospital are among the '**have nots**' of this world. They do **not have** good food, good housing, good education, good family and good access to health care.

Most of them **have not** had an opportunity to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ. We have great

opportunities to take God's love in word and deed to these children.

Support Needed

However, so far this year our expenditure is exceeding our income. Our major expenditure is salaries which we have to meet every month. There is a group of committed people who give faithfully each month and we are very grateful to them. Would you be in a position to join this group? If you are, then please contact us and we can send you the necessary details.

URGENT!

As I write, Sihle is in hospital with pains in his chest and fluid on his lung. They do not know what is wrong with him. Please pray for his speedy recovery.



Zanini Bantwana is registered in South Africa and is an associate ministry of African Enterprise.

It is possible to make credit card donations, including regular monthly donations, through a secure facility on our website www.zaninibantwana.org. Please note that it is not possible to issue tax receipts for online donations.

Donations can also be paid through any of the African Enterprise offices, making cheques payable to African Enterprise and marked clearly for the 'Zanini Bantwana' hospital work or 'Khayelihle', the place of safety in our home.

Northern Ireland: c/o Mr Tom Wilson, 55 Rosemount Park, Newtownabbey, BT37 0NL

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