

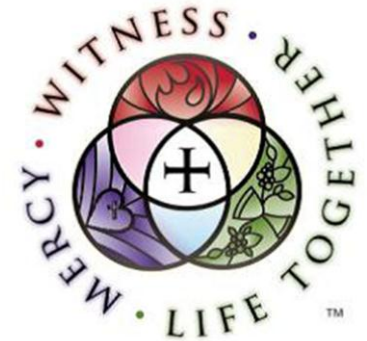
# March/April Newsletter

Julia Wehrenberg Serving in South Africa with LCMS World Mission



Shongweni Crèche is open and growing! We now have 88 children registered and more children asking to join. God is giving us many opportunities to teach these little ones His Word.

Principal Hlengiwe Mzobe teaches and enjoys outdoor play with her class.



## Back in Shongweni Village!

Sawubona (Hello) family and friends! I arrived back in South Africa in early March after being back in the States for a few months to share about the mission work and raise support. It was a great blessing for me to spend time with my family, friends, home church and other congregations while at home. It was nice to travel to different churches and schools to do presentations. Thank you for your prayers, encouragement, support and concern for the mission work here. Through you God is working to share His Word in Shongweni Village. Thank you for being caring brothers and sisters in Christ to the children here and to me. I look forward to sharing with you this next year about the various outreach programs for the orphan project and community!

## Shongweni Crèche

When I came back to South Africa it was exciting to see the growth that had taken place at our early childhood center (crèche). We now have eighty-eight children at the crèche and are able to share God's Word and pray with the children every day. My mission partner Shara and I have also been working to secure funding with the government, so that we can provide more staff and resources for the school. Thankfully God has provided many people to help us during this process and it looks like we will be receiving funding soon. All of the teachers are Christian and four of the workers go to our church, which gives us the chance to provide a safe and Christian environment for children coming from all different traditions and religions.

## Outreach Programs

Our other outreach programs are also continuing and expanding. The Christian social workers have been back so that we can provide both emotional and spiritual support for the caregivers of the children in our orphan project. We currently have two hundred children and caregivers that we are working with in the orphan project. Since I have returned, several more orphans without proper housing have been identified by the pastor, so we plan to do more building and support programs for them through the help of short term teams. The sewing classes have continued, and our chicken project is going to get started in May when our first short term team builds the chicken coop.

*"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!"*

**1 John 3:1**



The children have song and prayer time at the start of every school day.

All of the classes are taught in Zulu, so I am also learning a lot from going to crèche.

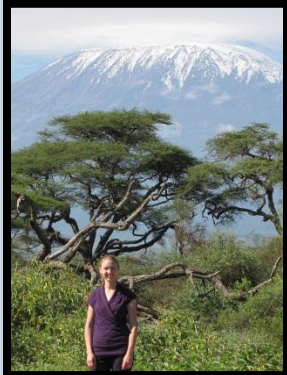
## Time in Kenya



In Kenya we were able to learn more about the Maasai culture. Jumping high is a big part of their traditional dance.



The Maasai use nature to meet their needs. Here the men are showing how to make a fire using sticks and dung.



In Kenya we were able to see a lot of God's beautiful creation. This is Mt. Kilimanjaro near the Tanzania border.

When Shara and I came back we enjoyed a nice reunion with Pastor Thwala, our church family and the children from the crèche. We also had the amazing opportunity to travel to Kenya for the All Africa Missionary Gathering sponsored by Grace Place. This was the first time I have been able to meet all of the missionaries with LCMS that are working in Africa. It was great to share about everyone's mission work, pray for each other and enjoy time to have fellowship. Grace Place led us in sessions about the importance of being well so that we can serve others well in the mission field. This was encouraging and a great way to start out this next term of service.

While in Kenya a small group of us also went on to see more of the country and enjoyed a game reserve where we could see Mt. Kilimanjaro, and also learn more about the Maasai culture. The Maasai have a nomadic way of life with many interesting traditions. We were able to attend church with the Maasai and learned that missionaries had come to them and that this group was now Christian. It is always wonderful to see how God's Word is shared throughout every tribe, tongue and nation!

## Really Good News!

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Peter 1:3-5

God created the world and everything in it. He loves diversity, but makes it clear that He alone is the creator and God of all people. Jesus came to die for the sins of the whole world once for all and shares that God wants no one to die but to have eternal life in Him. We are to make disciples of all nations. In the short time that I have been back in South Africa I have again seen the need for urgency with sharing the message of Christ's love and salvation.

Pastor Thwala, Shara and I have met with several more children who have been orphaned and there have been two funerals for young adults. There is an urgent need for these children and grieving loved ones to know the Good News; that Christ has conquered sin, death and the power of the devil on the cross! Shara and I are able to bear witness to the Giver of eternal life as we live our lives together with the people in Shongweni.



All of the LCMS World Mission missionaries serving in Africa and our Grace Place retreat leaders.

To financially support the mission work here that Shara and I do together designate as:

**Missionary Support – Shara Cunningham**

Send to:

LCMS World Mission

PO Box 790089

St. Louis, MO 63179-0089

Personal and Prayer Correspondence:

Julia Wehrenberg

14 Highland Heights

11 Highland Road

South Africa 3610

Tel: 011 27-72-359-1911

*"How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" Romans 10:14-15*

Thank you for your prayers and support that allow me to be here. We are all working as brothers and sisters in Christ to share God's salvation with everyone. In the U.S. you are reaching the nations. God's blessings as you share the truth in love that Jesus is God. He is Risen! He is Risen indeed, Alleluia! May God who has defeated sin, death and the power of the devil give you the courage to share this truth boldly to the nations!

*"And the Peace of God, which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus our Lord."  
Phil. 4:7*



## Prayer Requests

- Prayer for continued health, safety and peace where Shara and I live and as we travel by taxi and walk.
- Prayer that the crèche (early childhood center) at the community center will receive funding so that we can begin caring for more children.
- Prayer that Pastor Dean Thwala, Shara and I will continue to work well as a team.
- That God's comfort and saving Word would be known to all of the people in Shongweni Village.
- That the children who have been orphaned and their caregivers would be strengthened and encouraged in their faith.
- Prayer for wisdom and discernment as I spend time in Scripture, prayer and studying for the work I will be doing with the church.
- Prayer that the children who have been mistreated and neglected will find care, and that we will know how to best help them.
- Prayer that God would protect us from the work of the evil one in our lives and service.



Our sewing classes have continued as a way to empower the women to help support their families.



We have continued to provide support to orphans and their caregivers.



The church now has two soccer teams and they serve as great ways to reach out to boys in the community. Several of the boys have started to attend church.