



# Morning Star Children's Centre

Reg.No. 009-016 - NPO

Kopano Complex  
Long Road  
P.O.Box 2459  
Welkom 9460  
Tel (057) 352-5176  
Fax (057) 357-2141  
morningstar@wol.co.za  
www.morningstar.org.za

## MANDELA DAY 2019

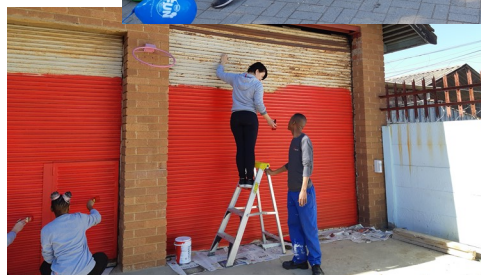
Nelson Mandela International Day is an annual event in honour of Nelson Mandela. It is celebrated on 18th July, Mandela's birthday, each year.

Mandela Day is a global call to action that celebrates the idea that each individual has the power to transform the world, the ability to make an impact.

The Mandela Day campaign message is: "Nelson Mandela fought for social justice for 67 years. We're asking you to start with 67 minutes".

Each year, Morning Star benefits from Mandela Day's public participation. The public/business sector visit us and volunteer their time at our two Centres and we receive donations of food, clothing, toys etc.

Several local businesses and community groups visited us this year and blessed us in umpteen ways. We were also the beneficiaries of the national Food-forward/Pick'nPay partnership that hosted a Mandela Day food drive. Over four days, Volunteers from Morning Star (staff and teens) were invited to engage with shoppers and encourage them to purchase basic food ingredients for us. 7 trolleys of groceries were donated all-in-all.



## Our Children's Health

Sadly, 3 of our children have been very unwell over the past while. 13 year old Rethabile Nthapo has been in and out of hospital for months and just doesn't seem to regain her strength before having a further relapse. She's slowly recovering after a recent chest infection at the moment and will attend Morning Star each day upon her discharge from hospital and until such time that she's well enough to return to school.

12-year-olds Tshepo Kalake and Difedile Moketsane both have CD4 counts of below 10 at present. They were both in Bongani Hospital for a spell and their conditions are still being carefully monitored, Little Mohau Molefi is a bit better right now but, with an untreatable heart condition, as well as the symptoms associated with HIV/AIDS, is ever vulnerable and in danger of contracting a new infection.

Sihle Mdangi's dermatitis has flared up again. He was so much better when he and his younger brother, Thandokhule, were placed at RHI Children's Village in a Place of safety for four months. Back in his mother's care, Sihle's condition always deteriorates and we go back to square one.

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20th August 2019

### Inside this issue:

Our Premises	2
AGM and Board Meeting	2
Staff Members	2
News of our Families	3
News of Sarah Wilkins	3
Calendars and Christmas Holidays	3
Prayer Requests	4

### Special points of interest:

- Our young adult, 19 year old Eliza Chabane, did very well at iCalc Academy over the last trimester. She studied HR Management and received the highest marks in the class. She was also the only one to pass one of her subjects.
- The advent of spring in the southern hemisphere (Casual Day) has grown into the most prominent and successful social advocacy campaign in South African history, with a record R31 million raised in 2018. The 2019 fundraising theme is *Time to shine with Persons of Disabilities*. Morning Star's celebrations are low key in comparison with what happens across South Africa that day. On the 6th September we'll be having a Children's Fashion Parade out-of-doors (and trust the sun will be shining) and enjoy hamburgers and chips for lunch as a special treat.



## OUR PREMISES



Whilst our premises at both our Welkom and Kutlwanong Centres are in fairly good repair, the infrastructure in the Free State and in Matjhabeng (Welkom and surroundings, in particular) is another matter altogether. No longer is lack of service delivery affecting 'other people' and 'other areas' - it's now right on our doorstep.



The garbage container (called a 'skip' here) at our Welkom

premises at Kopano Complex in Welkom used to be emptied twice weekly. Now it's only emptied twice a month.

The manhole outside our Kowie Street property has been pouring sewerage since last week and has

only just been attended to today - almost a week later. The stench is unbelievable! The entire block has been similarly affected for months now. The municipality doesn't have the funds to install new pipes and appears not to know what is actually causing the continual blocking either.

Electric copper cables are repeatedly stolen from the substations in and around Welkom. Each suburb is regularly without power for up to 12 hours or more and until the municipality repairs and replaces the cables. No sooner is one area restored than another is targeted.

*Cables are stolen and sold to scrap dealers for money or used for illegal connections. Copper cables hold high monetary value and can be sold for about R70.00 per kilogram. (3-4pds). The scrap metal business has become very lucrative with unscrupulous dealers simply buying copper with no questions asked.*

A new gas stove (cooker) has recently been installed at our Kutlwanong premises. Using gas in Kutlwanong is vital as the price of electricity is exorbitant.

A big, big thank you to Crowlees Primary School in Mirfield England, for their "Great British Bake-Off Competition" in May and for raising the funds needed to purchase the new cooker.

## AGM AND BOARD MEETING

*"Success is going from failure to failure without a loss of enthusiasm"*

*Sir Winston Churchill*

Our Annual General Meeting took place on Friday 19th July this year. It was very well attended, with a good number of our children's mothers/guardians present as well. We're not sure if this was as a result of curry & rice for supper being advertised or because board member, Johan Pauw, was our guest speaker and spoke on "The role of Non-Governmental Organizations in the context of a developing country". Our Board Meeting this quarter was

held on Thursday 18th July. Items on the agenda included our way forward regarding the new National Minimal Wage directive, the need of a fulltime youth worker at Morning Star, always strategic planning issues, our financial situation—in that our income is not matching our expenditure each month and our urgent need, as a result, of setting up a Morning Star Charity in the UK. It was agreed that our chairman, Joshua Bolaji, travel to England at the beginning of October this year to meet with all those willing to both advise us and act as Trustees of our Morning Star Charity. We have had a good response in our appeal in this regard.

## STAFF MEMBERS



Quite a number of our staff have been struggling with coughs and flu over the last few months. This is normally the case during winter and often means that we don't have enough personnel to cover all the areas at Morning Star each day.

Thankfully, our Social Auxiliary Worker, Shiwe Nkuna, returned to work on 22nd July. She had a knee replacement operation at the beginning of

June and I'm pleased to report, it was a great success.

Child Care Worker, Lorato

Rapuleng, has had two spells in hospital over the past few months as well. Her one leg swelled significantly in May and she was found to have a DVT (deep vein thrombosis).

Then, last weekend, she began experiencing chest pains and was readmitted to Bongani Hospital and diagnosed with a

'swollen heart'. Her DVT was still at the core of her diagnosis and hadn't been properly treated the first time.

Part-time cleaner, Evelyn Monyatsi, has also been unwell and unable to come to work for 3 weeks. Her epilepsy often spirals out-of-control and this has been the case again. She is going to have to step down from her job at Morning Star, sadly. She's a fantastic cleaner and we're going to miss her very much.





## NEWS OF OUR FAMILIES

We were deeply moved recently upon hearing that 13-year-old Mpho Moahlodi's fellow pupils at her former school in Kutlwanong Township all contributed R5.00 (about 30p) towards the school and hostel fees of her new school, Bartimea School for the Deaf and Blind, in Bloemfontein. These are impoverished families reaching out to one of their own and their compassion touched our hearts. Sadly, Mpho is slowly losing her sight and needs to be at a school where she can learn in braille and develop the skills she'll need in adulthood. She began at Bartimea School on 12th August.

We are assisting several families at the moment who were born in South Africa but, for one reason

or another, have never managed to get Birth Certificates or Identity Documents for themselves. The Chavulas from Kutlwanong are one such family and, after endeavoring since 2015 to assist them with their vital documents, they were finally called to collect them from Home Affairs. There was much excitement when they came into Morning Star with the evidence. It felt like an occasion to celebrate with cake and vuvuzelas. Mum Chavula is now able to apply for her children's birth certificates and access their government child support grants. Praise God!

A few months ago we were approached by a Rotary Club in Johannesburg and asked if we'd like a donation of Lego for our children. Not for it all to be kept and



utilized at Morning Star but to be given to our children to take home and enjoy. Of course, we jumped at the offer and, as promised, almost 100 kits arrived in Welkom in due course. We were determined to not just send the Lego home with the children to be misused, trampled upon and lost. Most of our children have never possessed Lego in their lives before. We decided to conduct workshops at Morning Star first and, once each child had mastered the instructions and could help themselves, we sent the kits home to be completed at leisure. A big thank you to staff members' teenagers who gave up two Saturdays in a row to assist our teenagers construct their intricate Star Wars Lego kits.

## NEWS OF SARAH WILKINS

Wonderful news of Sarah is that she returned to Welkom and Morning Star on 25th July, after spending 7 weeks back home in England, reconnecting with her sending church, Manor Park Evangelical in Worcester. Sarah has been at Morning Star for 9 years now and, in addition to ensuring our little school flourishes, has also been instrumental in getting our Child Protection Policy, Discipline/Behavioral Policy and Children's

Transport Policy fine-tuned and functional over the past several months.

It's good to have her back at her post as our educational HOD and being able to leave things in her capable hands once again. Her Grade 3 pupils were overjoyed to see her—they always have so much fun in the midst of their formal lessons with their Teacher Sarah. She makes a lasting impact on their lives each

year and only eternity will reveal the difference she has made to those who have benefitted from her teaching expertise and compassionate heart over the years.

*Have you considered coming out to Morning Star and volunteering in our midst for a term? It's a wonderful opportunity to see life from a different perspective and to interact with the children and families that we serve.*



**Thabo Lephaka was the first to finish his Lego kit.**

## CALENDARS AND CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

Our beautiful 2020 Morning Star calendars are presently at the printers. If you'd like to purchase one of these please e-mail Glenys Barham at: ([glenys.barham@gmail.com](mailto:glenys.barham@gmail.com)).

Christmas Gift cards are also available from Glenys for 5pds, 10pds and 20pds. These can be purchased instead of gifts for friends and family and the money sent to Morning Star for school shoes, bags & stationery for our school-going children in 2020.

Morning Star will be closing for a month over Christmas, as usual. The last day for the children this year will be 6th of December so, if you're planning to send a Christmas gift, please ensure that it reaches Morning Star before this date. Alternatively, and more appropriate with postage being so expensive these days and our SA postal service so erratic, why not deposit some money into our Lloyds Bank Account for the child you sponsor and we'll ensure that this is given to him/her

and family for their Christmas needs. Of note, clothing is always appreciated at Christmas-time and part of our African culture is that all children have a new outfit to wear on Christmas Day.

*"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those that dwell therein".  
Psalm 24: 1-2*



**20th August 019**

Morning Star Children's Centre  
Kopano Complex  
Meulen Street  
Welkom 9459  
Free State, South Africa.

Phone: +27 57 352 5176  
Fax: +27 57 357 2141  
E-mail: morningstar@wol.co.za

"To see every vulnerable child become an independent, responsible leader through Christian education."

Website:  
[www.morningstar.org.za](http://www.morningstar.org.za)

#### OUR BIRTH:

Morning Star was born out of a deep compassion for the plight our Nation found itself in due to the escalating HIV/AIDS pandemic that was sweeping through our land. We are committed to restoring hope to the women and children of our region, and making a meaningful difference to as many families as possible. Morning Star opened its doors for the first time in January 2000.

#### MISSION STATEMENT:

Morning Star exists to prepare children and young people in a Christian environment to move beyond their vulnerability to productivity.

#### OBJECTIVES:

- Provide children infected/affected by HIV/AIDS the opportunity to reach a measure of their potential.
- Promote and demonstrate Christian values.
- Provide basic and remedial care and education.
- Lead training programs for young people/adults.
- Establish partnerships with organizations with a similar ethos and mission.
- Deliver support to our children's families.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

Praise and thanks for:

1. Our Social Auxiliary Worker, Shiwe Nkuna's successful knee replacement operation and that her adopted son was able to put her on his private medical aid so that she could have her operation sooner than later.
2. Existing staff unity at Morning Star and that our personnel were so gracious concerning the National Minimal Wage directive and our inability to pay them all the required salary each month.
3. The improved health of both Difidile Mokatsane and Tshupo Kalake after being hospitalized recently with CD4 counts below ten (10).
3. An excellent Board of Governors and their combined support of Morning Star year-after-year.

Please pray for:

1. Our very ill Rethabile Nthapo. She was readmitted to hospital yesterday after being prematurely discharged last week and before being successfully treated for pneumonia. Pray for wisdom and compassion for the doctor treating her and pray for her very anxious mum.
2. Pastor Revival Hlongwane in his new role as Youth Care Worker at Morning Star and Lorato Rapuleng who has been moved to the finance office to take his place and is presently learning the ropes.
3. Our Morning Star Board, for godly wisdom in the strategic planning issues facing them at present.
4. Our financial needs at Morning



Star and how best to utilize the funds that come in each month and what to cut out/down on. Sadly, our income is no longer sufficient to cover our monthly expenses.

5. For Board Chairman, Joshua Bolaji's proposed UK trip at the beginning of October. He will be meeting prospective Trustees for the Morning Star UK Charity we intend setting up and assisting in the establishment thereof.

6. Our teenagers. Pray for their safety, that they'll continue taking their ARV treatment as directed, that they'll be able to stand up to bullying and to stigmatization due to their HIV/AIDS statuses and that they'll be kept from falling into temptation re: joining Township gangs, indulging in premarital sex, alcohol and drug-taking.

7. The evidence of spiritual growth in the lives of our teens/ young adults who attend our monthly Bible Studies with Pastors Joshua Bolaji and Revival Hlongwane.