



Morning Star

Children's Centre

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Morning Star Staff

It is with great sadness that I write to let you all know that our beloved internal auditor of the past 13 years, Liza Mans, died unexpectedly on Tuesday, 15th October.

The staff at Morning Star are all still reeling in disbelief. Liza left work on Friday afternoon, 11th October, seemingly fine. She had a bad fall on the Saturday afternoon (fell hard on her abdomen) and was immediately hospitalized. However, neither the x-rays nor the initial scans performed on her showed any breakages/ruptures at all. However, by Sunday afternoon, her abdomen was so swollen that she couldn't breathe and she underwent emergency surgery to determine why her condition had so deteriorated. The doctors found that she had perforated her bowel and septicaemia had set in. Apparently, she had a further perforation on the Monday night, causing faecal matter to reflux into her lungs, and just after 12.00 midday on Tuesday 15th, she passed away in the intensive care unit of the



Medi-Clinic Hospital across the road from Morning Star.

The news of her death came as such a shock and, like her family, we were totally unprepared for her passing away so suddenly and unexpectedly. Amidst much weeping and wailing, hugging and trying to console each other, we began to consider life and, particularly life at Morning Star, without the clinking of keys and her firm steps down the passage, her strong voice reprimanding clients for not voicing their appreciation for the help they were receiving, her cluttered desk, where only Liza knew exactly where to find things and the secret monetary assistance so many of our families received from her hand.

Liza began working at Morning Star in June 2006 and was a Godsend right from the start. She dedicated her life to her job in the finance office – first as Tim Kelly's assistant and then, upon his death, as Morning Star's internal auditor. Never did we have to concern ourselves that accounts and salaries wouldn't be paid on time. She did her job diligently and well and was always ready to go the extra mile. I was ever amazed at how quickly she could calculate figures and remember facts and, when she wasn't sure of something, how rapidly she could find the files and folders that contained the information needed.

We've had two seriously ill members of staff at Morning Star over the past few months – Lorato Rapulang, our newly

appointed assistant accountant, and our head gardener / maintenance manager, Papiki Monyane. Both had life-threatening illnesses but God heard the cry of our hearts and restored them to health and strength again. It was not so with Liza. Tuesday 15th October 2019 was her day to die and predetermined long before she was even born.

Her sudden death has caused us all to reflect, afresh, at how fragile life really is. None of us knows whether we'll even see tomorrow. We're all going to die – sooner or later – but are we ready to face our Creator should that happen to be today?

This is the question we're posing to our Morning Star staff, teenagers and parents right now, asking them to consider whether they're right with God and whether they've trusted in the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ for their salvation? Tomorrow might just be too late.

Liza's death has left a big, gaping hole at Morning Star. Obviously there was no time to prepare anyone to take over her role as our finance person. We were all so stunned last week that we couldn't think straight or move forward at all. But, life goes on, and our work at Morning Star needs to continue as well. Thankfully, Mr Teboho Moloi, who used to work at Morning Star and who left us to further his studying as an accountant, was available and able to step in immediately, in the interim. He has agreed to assist us at least until the end of 2019.

Issue 2

25th October 2019

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"All flesh is grass.
And all its beauty like the
flower of the field.
The grass withers, the
flower fades
when the breath of the
lord blows on it;
Surely the people are
grass.
The grass withers, the
flower fades,
But the word of our God
will stand forever."
Isaiah 40: 6-8.



Our Morning Star Children

Thankfully, our children are, generally, quite well at the moment. Even 12-year-old Difiedile has improved remarkably since being at our Welkom Centre each weekday. She's put on weight, is much stronger and is excelling in the classroom as well. We're trusting she'll be able to write her end-of-year exams in November and move back to mainstream education and proceed to Grade 6 with the rest of her class at Kgotsong Primary School in 2020.

All our Grade R (Reception Class) and Special Needs children have enjoyed a visit to the Xtreme Reptile Centre in Welkom over the past two weeks. This centre doesn't just boast reptiles and rodents like spiders, snakes, lizards, tortoises and chinchillas but also animals

such as rabbits, goats, donkeys, chickens and pigs too. Outings like these ever cause us to reflect on just how much of our own backgrounds and upbringings we take for granted. None of the children taken to the Xtreme Reptile Centre had ever seen a tortoise before. Imagine that! They were fascinated by the disappearance of its head into its shell and couldn't make out where it had gone, at first. They marvelled over that discovery at great length.

Our Grade 1 and 2 children will be visiting the Xtreme Reptile Centre next week and both Welkom & Kutlwanong Preschool Classes will descend on the Welkom Fire Station on 8th November. Sarah Wilkins' Grade 3 pupils are going to the Peanut Factory in the Free State town of Viljoenskroon on 31st October.

News of Morning Star Board

Our Chairman, Joshua Bolaji, is safely back from his short stint in England. If you remember from my last newsletter, he was going over to meet with the folk who indicated their willingness to serve as Trustees of our proposed Morning Star UK Charity. Both meetings, the one up in Cheshire and the one down in Esher, went extremely well and Joshua was so encouraged by the attendees' enthusiasm and combined input. In fact, the discussion at the second meeting was so vastly different from the first that he came away having to rethink his constitutional document all over again.

Those of you awaiting feedback from him re: the outcome of the meetings, please be patient. Joshua was so unwell upon his return home that he sought urgent medical attention. His doctor was thoroughly alarmed by his appearance and ordered complete rest for the next two weeks. He was showing signs of an imminent heart attack/stroke and, combined with his Type 1 Diabetes, this was not a matter to be taken lightly. Please all remember him in your prayers.

Christmas/End-of-Year Functions:

We're in the throes of organizing our usual end-of-year functions and Christmas parties at the moment and I'm also preparing for our new intake of children for 2020. Our existing waiting list is very long and we'll not be able to accommodate all the children seeking admittance for the New Year. We're suspecting that word has got around that Morning Star offers an excellent service and comes free-of-charge. Of course, everyone is wanting to tap into something like that! We have to be very careful that we admit only those who are infected with HIV/AIDS first and then those who are most vulnerable and desperately needy. It's quite a task and requires careful thought and consideration.

News of Overseas Volunteers

We have several volunteers from England expected soon:

Joan Dredge from Jennyfields Evangelical Church in Harrogate and Sandra Rycroft, from Emmanuel Baptist Church in Leeds (the latter – per special request from Operations Manager, Elizabeth vd Westhuizen, that she come over and help us again this Christmas season) arriving on 8th November.

Everton & Jeanette McLeod and Jeanette's sister, Elaine, from All Saints, Hampreston in Dorset arriving on 23rd November.

And last, but not least, three overnight visitors; Dorothy Fletcher from Manor Park Evangelical Church in Worcester and long-time friends, Dave & Jan Isherwood, all coming to meet/catch up with the children they support. So very special!

We truly value your input into so many of our children's lives. You have enriched them and encouraged them more than you'll ever know; even those who haven't got the ability to write letters or whom you hear from infrequently, truly appreciate the huge difference you make in their lives.

CALENDARS AND CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

Our beautiful 2020 Morning Star calendars are now available. If you'd like to purchase one please e-mail Glenys Barham at: 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 Christmastime and part of our African culture is that all children have a new outfit to wear on Christmas Day.



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

Website:
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PRAYER REQUESTS

1. Praise and thanks for the good health of our children at the moment. We have nobody in hospital and no one even ill at home, as far as we know.
2. Praise and thanks for God's faithfulness to Morning Star. He continues to meet our financial needs month-on-month and encourages us in all kinds of unexpected ways.
3. Please pray for Liza's husband, Ian, and her children and grandchildren during their time of grief and their coming to terms with her sudden and unexpected death.
4. Pray for the Morning Star staff as well, as we adapt to life at Morning Star without Liza and seek a replacement for her, going forward.
5. Pray for Teboho Moloi, Liza's interim replacement; that he'll be able to find his feet quickly and attend to all Morning Star's financial matters diligently.
6. Please pray for our Chairman, Joshua Bolaji – that he'll heed the doctor's instructions and that God would graciously restore him to full health and strength again.
7. Pray for our Board Meeting scheduled for 14th November – that we'll know God's guidance, especially in matters pertain-

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.
- Ensure Morning Star's ongoing sustainability.



Garbage just getting worse and worse at Kopano Complex



9 year old Prosper with 12 year old Difiedile. The one born healthy and strong; the other born with HIV/AIDS.

The steadfast love of the lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.

ing to succession planning.

8. Pray for our bereaved families: Lerato Khosing's mum and Rethabile Nthapo's relatives, still struggling to come to terms with their children's recent deaths. Also, Onkarabetse Kondile's family from Kutlwanong. This little girl's 26-year-old mum died last night, leaving behind three small children, including a 4-month-old baby. Pray that a family member will come forward who will be willing to bring these children up.
9. Our teenagers. Pray for their safety, that they'll continue taking their ARV treatment as directed, and that they'll be kept from falling into temptation re: joining Township gangs, indulging in premarital sex, alcohol and drug-taking.
10. Pray for evidence of spiritual growth in the lives of our teens/ young adults who attend our monthly Bible Studies with Pastor Revival Hlongwane.