



Morning Star

Children's Centre

Reg.No. 009-016 - NPO

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23rd ANNUAL GENRAL MEETING

22ND JULY 2022

GENERAL MANAGERS REPORT

MISSION STATEMENT

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

Our current statistics are:

- 122 children aged 3 – 14 years attend our two centers Welkom & Kutlwanong on a daily basis.
- 524 of our children are in primary and secondary schools in Mathjabeng. Including 20 children in our school leavers file.
- 15% of our current children are living with HIV/AIDS.
- 76% of our school-going children are living with HIV/AIDS.
- 113 of the children on our register are orphaned as a result of HIV/AIDS.
- 42% of the children on our register are 14 years and over.
- 317 of our children have died since our inception in January 2000.
- 2 children have died since our last AGM in 2021.
- 48 children are currently on our waiting list.

STAFF MOVEMENTS OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS.

- Dineo Motsepe and Bronica Tseoute were transferred back to our Welkom and Kutlwanong Centers in January 2022 and are doing very well in their respective departments.
- Nomvula Mpinda was retrenched from the employ of Morning Star in December 2021.
- Edith Tsobo's contract wasn't renewed and she left Morning Star's employ at the end of 2021.
- Johannes Wettes retired at the end of 2021 but is still assisting with the transporting of our town children each weekday and is used as a relieve driver when necessary.
- Teboho Moloi left the employ of Morning Star in November 2021 and has been replaced by Naledi Marumo as our internal accountant.

- Teaching assistant, Motshidisi Karreebos, was moved from the Grade R class to our Little Stars (toddler) class in October 2021 and is proving to be proficient in her role there.
- Dieketseng Matlaletsa joined our cleaning department on a voluntary basis in 2021.
- Elizabeth Dhlamini is doing an ECD Course at Universal College this year and has been accommodated at Morning Star for her practical experience. She is here on a voluntary basis.

IN GENERAL:

Almost two and a half years after Covid-19 reached South African shores, where we like the rest of the world had to adapt to an almost theatrical lifestyle, the South African government declared that the wearing of face masks, hand sanitizing and Covid-19 regulations, as we came to know them, were no longer compulsory. By the grace of GOD alone we, as human beings, have honed the skill to adapt to circumstances and situations that might challenge the very essence of humanity in every aspect but not to be defined by them.

Morning Star's financial position was severely affected by the above. By September last year we were facing a deficit of about R58, 000.00 per month. To manage the situation, we were instructed by our board of governors to draw up cost saving measures from the end of October last year. With the help of our wonderful staff we were able to implement the measures decided upon and bit-by-bit, saw our financial situation start to improve. Unfortunately the cost-saving measures also included a staff restructuring process which resulted in two employees, sadly, being retrenched at the end of December last year.

Furthermore, towards the end of 2021, a circuit breaker in one of the substations at our Kopano Complex premises blew which rendered us without electricity for almost four months. This meant that we had to run our generator every day, in order to get our work done. From November last year to mid-April 2022, we had more rain than we've had for many years. In some places in the Free State Province, up to 450mm were recorded which, for our part of the world, is not the norm. Nonetheless, we were very thankful. Unfortunately, our Kutlwanong Centre (original house) suffered extensive interior damage as a result of all the rain, so much so that it was declared unsafe, resulting in the administrative part of the centre having to move into the pre-school building. Additionally, as a result of building regulations, our insurance claim was unsuccessful. They declared that the actual foundation of the house was structurally unsound. Upon further investigation, we found that the original foundations hadn't been impacted properly and that there was basically no foundation at all. This brings Matthew 27:24-27 to mind, counseling us to not build our houses on the sand. The breaking down of the interior walls and floor and the rebuilding of the house began at the beginning of June and is now reaching completion.

Thankfully, as a result of the savings gained from our cost-cutting measures at the end of 2021 and the generous monetary donations from Joan's recent UK trip, we're able to pay for the repairs being undertaken. A big thank you to Kutlwanong manager, Anna Matiyase, and her wonderful team of staff for graciously adapting to moving into the pre-school building temporally during this time of upheaval.

In June of this year, our Quantam bus used to transport our Kutlwanong children to/from Morning Star each day was unfortunately involved in a motor vehicle accident. Thankfully, and by the grace of GOD, no one got hurt. Thank you so much, Mr. Vusimusi Sithole, for keeping calm during this whole ordeal and Elizabeth, who so efficiently handled all insurance-related matters.

Furthermore, and still relating to vehicles, we had to install additional security measures at our Welkom premises due to the number of break-in attempts made to steal our Toyota Quantam parked inside the compound. Thankfully, the perpetrator was not successful in his attempts.

With that being said, even though some days at Morning Star are more challenging than others, it is by the Grace of God alone that we get to experience more of the good than the bad. At the beginning of March this year, we once again had the wonderful opportunity to take 30 of our teenagers to see the sea for the very first time in their lives. Amongst other highlights, they got to visit uShaka Marine World and to stay at Kinderstrand (Childbeach) resort in Port Edward where the friendly, well-trained staff presented their usual skills training program to the children.

Our annual sea trips are definitely a highlight on the Morning Star calendar and something all our Morning Star teenagers look forward to. Off course, these trips would not be possible without the help of the U.K couple who so generously and lovingly sponsor the event year-on-year.

Another highlight which I am sure will go from strength to strength in the coming years is our newly instituted Holiday Club for our 10 – 13 year old children. This took place during the first week of the July school holidays and featured an icebreaker, DVD, puppet show (based on said DVD), a craft and much more. Thank you to all the staff who assisted with the club and to Elizabeth and her team of organizers who managed to plan and put together a full program for the children to enjoy.

OUR OTHER REGULAR ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- Weekly in-service training for our child care workers, at both our Welkom and Kutlwanong centers.
- Monthly Support Group meetings for our children's parents/carers in both Thabong and Kutlwanong.
- Staff devotions between 7:45 - 8:15am four times a week. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the various pastors who have faithfully served us here at Morning Star over the past twelve months - Pastors Joshua Bolaji; Revival Hlongwane and Shaun Darker.

- All children 16 years and under enjoy free doctor consultations/medication from a local Welkom doctor. We have enjoyed this wonderful service for over 20 years now and are deeply indebted to the doctor concerned.
- Our second-hand clothing shop continues to boost our income year-on-year. Even though it opens only once or twice a month, it still generates a steady income. Thank you to Mapulane Phalatsi who has overseen this department since July 2020.
- Quarterly teenage meetings for our teens between 14 – 19 years of age. These meetings are only for our HIV positive children so that they can have a safe place to share their struggles and be encouraged by one another.
- We also have a monthly Bible Study for our teenagers and young adults and these meetings are open to all who wish to attend. Thank you to Pastors Revival Hlongwane and Frans Radebe who faithfully serve our young adults in this capacity.

FOOD PARCELS:

Our monthly food parcels go out to all families who receive two child support grants or less per month. Food remains a very big need and we have people coming to Morning Star daily to ask for help. We have partnered with Food Forward over the past few years and have enjoyed their valuable assistance each month with both perishable and non-perishable foodstuffs.

We also thank our local Woolworths store for keeping Morning Star on as one of their beneficiary charities year-on-year. Their weekly food donations are a huge boost and, in addition to complimenting what we cook for our children every day, enable us to give out healthy food to a few of our most vulnerable families as well.

KOWIE STREET PROPERTY:

We are fortunate to have 4 stable tenants occupying the apartments at our Kowie Street property. Apart from general maintenance, due to earth movements, we've been able to replace some of the tiled floors with new laminated flooring over the past 12 months. In due course and funds allowing, we will replace all the tiled floors with laminated flooring. A big thank you to Chantell Erasmus, our Morning Star PA, who oversees the administration of this property. She is very efficient in communicating with the various tenants, coordinating their monthly utility bills and conducting quarterly inspections of all four units.

MANAGEMENT, STAFF AND BOARD:

A big thank you to our Morning Star management team who's dedication and concerned efforts towards every aspect of this ministry is without question.

This team includes operations manager, Elizabeth van der Westhuizen, accountant Naledi Marumo, HOD of Education, Sarah Wilkins, professional nurse Sr. Pulane Leeuw, pastoral youth care worker, Revival Hlongwane and Morning Star ambassador, Joan Adams. To work with you all is such a humbling, yet encouraging experience, as each of you owns a particular set of skills which ever inspire and encourage not only myself, but the rest of the staff and our many clients as well.

A big thank you to our Morning Star PA, Chantell Erasmus, for your support and assistance, not only to me, but to Joan and any other staff member who might be in need of your expertise too. Your willingness in every aspect is appreciated.

Social Auxiliary Worker, Shiwe Nkuna; thank you so much for your perceptiveness and careful consideration in the cases that we work with and clients that we see, counsel and visit each week. Your involvement behind the scenes with regards to the teen's meetings, support groups and annual grandmothers (Gogos) Christmas party doesn't go unnoticed and is deeply appreciated too.

At Morning Star we are truly blessed with such diversity and a wonderful team of people who work hard in their respective areas. Where would we be without assistant accountant, Lorato Rapuleng, or the exquisite cooks in our kitchen, Joyce Monyane and volunteer Martha Lukhuleni, under the supervision of Camilla Moholobela, who faithfully and lovingly prepare two nourishing meals for our children every day? Or receptionist, Lineo Moroane, who oversees all our children's birthdays in the midst of attending to her administrative duties? A big thank you to you all.

A big thank you to our exceptional team of educators, Portia Khobi, Shiyiwe Ziyeka, Cynthia Polaki, Emily Mahlangu, Zanele Khambule, Sylvia Ntholeng and Julia Klip and their assistants, under the leadership of HOD, Sarah Wilkins, whose sole aim is the educational growth and stability of our children. To our care workers who so lovingly look after our children and relieve our educators during lunch or teatime, thank you. Will we ever tire of Rachael Chabangu who very enthusiastically marches the children past my office every day whilst passionately leading them in a worship song on their way to some well-deserved and supervised outdoor activity? Rachel, your love for the children is evident and we thank you. A big thank you to our cleaners, both in Welkom and Kutlwanong. We know that your line of work can be very difficult and challenging but thank you for doing your jobs to the best of your ability.

We have an exceptional team of gardeners at Morning Star who are responsible for maintaining the gardens of our two centres and overseeing our vegetable garden and the gardens at our Kowie Street property. These five men, under the supervision of Papiki Monyane, have proven over and over that no task is too big for them and that if there is maintenance needing to be attended to, we can rest assured that they will get it done.

Papiki; Shedreck; Richard; Steven and Petros, we respectfully thank you from you from the bottom of our hearts.


Our trustworthy drivers under the supervision of Operations Manager, Elizabeth vd Westhuizen; Tshepiso Dhlamini; Eric Mtshali and Vusimusi Sithole. You three gentlemen are tasked with the responsibility of transporting our children to/from Morning Star every day, delivering food parcels, running errands as needed and undertaking scheduled, long distance trips whether to Kwa Zulu Natal for our annual sea trips or when transporting children to and from their boarding schools in Bloemfontein each term. Elizabeth always says "the transport is as clear as mud" but your awareness when you drive and the general maintenance and housekeeping of your vehicles is a sure indication that you take pride in your work and we thank you for it.

To Anna Matiyase, our Kutlwanong manager, and her wonderful team of ladies, thank you. Thank you all for the way you invest yourselves in your duties, whether it be cooking, cleaning, laundry or serving the community in Kutlwanong. Anna, your involvement at our monthly support groups, as well as in the lives of our children and parents is deeply valued. Thank you also for assisting me when we do our weekly visits and for your guidance and council with regards to the families I don't know well.

To those employees whose names I've not specifically mentioned, please know that this is not a reflection on your value as an employee or as a person, nor on your contribution towards this organization. It does not matter which position you occupy; in reality, without all of you doing what you do on a daily basis at Morning Star, we would not be able to serve our community as well as we do.

To our wonderful Board of Governors, thank you so much for maintaining your keen interest in our organization and for your loyal and ongoing support of Morning Star. We are indebted to each of you and deeply value your input and strategic advice at all times.

In conclusion, to be involved in Morning Star at any level and being part of the team means "To come together is the beginning, keeping together is progress and working together is success". May our sovereign LORD be praised for His faithfulness towards us in every aspect and may everything that is done here be aimed at glorifying the Very Lord of lords and the Very King of kings.

Signed: 
(CHAIRMAN)

Date: 27 / 07 / 2022