



Morning Star

Children's Centre

Reg.No. 009-016-NPO

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24TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

28th JULY 2023

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 2 – 10 years attend our two centers Welkom & Kutlwanong on a daily basis.
- 480 of our children are in primary and secondary schools in Mathjabeng. Including 27 children in our school leavers file.
- 29 of our 122 current children are living with HIV/AIDS.
- 335 of our 480 school-going children are living with HIV/AIDS.
- 291 of the 633 children on our register are 14 years and over.
- 321 of our children have died since our inception in January 2000.
- 4 children have died since our last AGM in 2022.
- 22 children are currently on our waiting list.

STAFF MOVEMENTS OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS.

- Naledi Marumo has left the employ of Morning Star in February and was replaced by Rose Khambula as our internal accountant.
- Dimakatso Mokoena replaced Kutlwanong pre-school Teacher, Emily Mahlangu, whilst she was on maternity leave from January 2023.

IN GENERAL:

After ending the 2021/22 year with the major changes implemented due to a consistent monthly financial shortfall, life in general returned back to normal here at Morning Star. It is by God's good grace alone that we are able to conduct our day-to-day business as usual and without restrictions of any sort.

With that being said, even though some days at Morning Star are still more challenging than others, we get to experience more of the good than the bad.

From the 21st – 25th of February this year, we once again had the wonderful opportunity of taking 30 of our teenagers to the seaside for the very first time in their lives. Amongst other highlights, they got to visit uShaka Marine World and stay at Kinderstrand Resort in Port Edward, where the friendly, well-trained staff presented their usual Skills Development Program to the children. Thank you Chantell Erasmus, our Morning Star PA, for expertly managing the trip for the very first time. Our annual sea trips are definitely a big highlight on the Morning Star calendar and are something all our Morning Star teenagers look forward to. Of course, these trips would not be possible without the help of the U.K. couple who so generously and lovingly sponsor this event year-on-year.

Another highlight which I am sure will go from strength to strength in the coming years is the newly instituted Holiday Club for our 10 – 13 year old children. This took place during the first week of the June/July school holidays in 2022 and will become an annual event, held over the same time period each year, God willing. This club was instituted as a result of the alarming number of 10-14 year old children in South Africa who are falling pregnant/being raped. We're wanting to address these issues before our children become sexually active and give them the skills needed to spot the signs of sexual. Each day the club featured a Gospel message, an icebreaker, a DVD on sexual grooming/abuse and a puppet show (based on said DVD), as well as crafts and much more. We invited qualified people to speak with our children about the ethical issues that impact their lives, who also gave them advice on how to handle confrontations and where to go for help.

At Morning Star our children are our number one priority, and their safety and well-being is one of the things around which our job descriptions revolve. Therefore in December 2022 apart from the newly upgraded security in the compound, we installed eight (8) CCTV surveillance cameras in and around our school area which enable us to monitor what's happening in the classrooms and which also help us when there are matters to be resolved. The next step is to have similar installations made at our Kutlwanong Centre but this will only be possible once fibre installations are made in the area.

Furthermore, our children, up to the age of 16 years, have received free doctor consultations and medication for the past 23 years. How can we ever express enough gratitude and thanks to the doctor concerned for this selfless service?

Even though our second hand clothing shop only opens once or twice a month, it continues to boost our coffers. It is hard and tiring work to sort through all the donation clothes we receive and to make sure it is cleaned, hung and ready for the next time somebody wants to purchase an item.

Thank you Mapulane Phalatsi for your hard work in this regard and the expert manner in which you oversee this department.

OUR OTHER REGULAR ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- Weekly in-service training for our child care workers, at both our Welkom and Kutlwanong centres.
- Monthly Support Group Meetings for our children's parents and care givers 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 men who have faithfully served us here at Morning Star over the past twelve months - Joshua Bolaji; Revival Hlongwane, Randy Teachout and George Van der Westhuizen.
- 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 and emphatic space to share their struggles and to 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 Pastor Revival Hlongwane who faithfully serves 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 from all walks of life who are not on our food parcel list coming to Morning Star almost daily to ask for help. Thankfully we are still partnering with Food Forward, a company that distributes food to NPO's across the country, and get to enjoy 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, they also enable us to give out healthy food to a few of our most vulnerable families as well.

(For 2023/2024 report): Unfortunately, in light of their recent support of LGBTQ, and Morning Star being unashamedly a Christian organization, we have had to separate ourselves from Woolworths and the benefit of their weekly donations perishable foods.

KOWIE STREET PROPERTY:

We are fortunate to have 4 wonderful tenants occupying the apartments at our Kowie Street property. Apart from basic cosmetic repairs, due to earth movements, we are sometimes faced with severe cracks and foundational problems, like Unit 4 which needs to be underpinned as a result. 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 4 units.

MANAGEMENT, STAFF AND BOARD:

A big thank you to our Morning Star Management Team whose dedication and concerned efforts towards every aspect of this ministry is without question. This team includes General Manager, Albert Duvenhage, Operations Manager, Elizabeth van der Westhuizen, Internal 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 be equally yoked with you all and pulling together against the demands of this ministry is such a humbling and Christ exalting experience.

At Morning Star we are truly blessed with wonderful diversity and a great team of people who work hard in their respective departments. Without each and every one of you coming to Morning Star every day to perform your respective duties, I honestly don't think this organization could serve the community as well as it does. A big thank you therefore to our 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 and who carries out the professional duties of a teacher as the circumstances require. Thank you also to our care workers who so lovingly look after our children and relieve our educators during their lunch or teatime breaks.

We have an exceptional team of gardeners at Morning Star who are responsible for maintaining the gardens of our two centres and maintaining our vegetable garden as well as the gardens at our Kowie Street property. Under the supervision of Papiki Monyane, these five (5) men have proven over and over that no task is too big for them and that if there is maintenance that needs to be attended to, and which fits their ability, 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 and 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 trip or when transporting children to and from their boarding schools in Bloemfontein and Thaba Nchu each term. Your awareness when you drive and upholding Morning Stars code of safe driving, along with the general maintenance and housekeeping of your vehicles is a sure indication of the pride that you take in your work and we thank you for it.

We also have a wonderful Kitchen staff, who under Camilla Moholobela's supervision, make sure that our children get to enjoy two healthy and nourishing meals every day. Sometimes the demand on these two ladies, Joyce and Camilla, is a big one, especially when Morning Star caters for a function or has a special event or children's party. Whether it being, "Camilla fried chicken" or "curry a la Morning Star" or hot dogs and hamburgers for the kids, or a lovely cup of coffee, your love for your work can be seen and tasted in what you cook. We appreciate you very much.

In our social department, where Shiwe Nkuna is the first port of call for our parents and carers, we can rest assured that they will be shown empathy and leave Morning Star with hope. Thank you Shiwe for your discerning devotion in your role, and also accompanying me when we do house visits. Your efforts in assisting some of our parents to go to SASSA and Department of Social Development, when they struggle with documentation, is truly encouraging. Furthermore thank you for your involvement at our Monthly Support Groups as well as with the Annual Gogos' Christmas parties.

Morning Star is unashamedly a Christian organization and therefore we are thankful for Revival Hlongwane, our Pastoral Youth Care Worker, for his dedication to the Gospel message being shared on every available platform. The work that you do amongst our teenagers is worthy of praise. You are tasked, logistically, with such a big area and making contact with our teens is challenging in itself. The important role you play in assisting our children and parents in obtaining birth certificates/other vital documentation is vital to them and to Morning Star and we thank you for always showing willingness and dedication towards this ministry.

Thank you, our two ladies in the finance office, Naledi Marumo and Lorato Rapoleng, who are tasked with handling Morning Stars financial affairs. This mammoth and demanding task requires dedication, commitment and attention to detail.

A big thank you, also, to our Morning Star PA, Chantell Erasmus, for your assistance with administrative and computer-related matters, not only to Joan and myself, but to all who ask for help. Thank you, also, for investing yourself in our staff members' lives by teaching them the fundamental basics in computer skills on every Thursday afternoon. I am sure those in attendance find much benefit from it.

Lineo Moroane, thank you so much for being the liaison between the public and Morning Star, overseeing the children's birthdays and assisting where needed in the midst of your other administrative duties.

I think one of the most thankless jobs anywhere is in the cleaning department but we have the most wonderful cleaners in Bronica Tseoute; Dineo Motsepe and volunteer, Dieketseng Matlaletsa. Thank you for performing your duties with diligence and pride. Your efforts go a long, long way.

Where would Morning Star be without our Kutlwanong team? 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, assisting in the classrooms or serving the community in Kutlwanong. Anna, your involvement at our Monthly Support Group Meetings and filling in, whether in the kitchen or in the classroom, 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 from Kutlwanong whom 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, and reporting for duty on a daily basis at Morning Star, we would not be able to serve our children and the communities as well as we do.

To our wonderful Board of Governors, thank you so much for maintaining a 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. As a result of your input, we're able to reach well-rounded conclusions and make the right decisions.

To conclude, in Galatians 6:9 the Apostle Paul tells us, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." In this passage of Scripture, Paul is telling believers that they do not need to become weary in doing good. Oftentimes it can be tough to not to grow weary but God does not want us to grow weary in doing good. God wants us to continue to do good and shine His bright light to others. May we, thus, find comfort in the following words by Jonathan Edwards "The way to heaven is ascending; we must be content to travel uphill, though it may be hard and tiresome and contrary to the natural bias of our flesh".

Signed: _____
CHAIRMAN)

Date: / /