



thembalethu ministries

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Thank you for sparing time to read our second issue of Thembalethu News for 2009. More challenges arise with the growth of the ministry. We thank God for helping us to survive the challenges. Our vision for the homeless children and teenagers is to seek to facilitate transformation to the whole person, body and soul, providing hope and healing for all our participants.

Word to Our Supporters ...

We are greatly indebted to all you supporters who continue partnering with us in our outreach to the homeless. We want to thank you all for committing your time, talents, finances and other resources toward this noble cause. We deeply appreciate & welcome your willingness to play a critical role in the fight to alleviate the plight of homeless children and teenagers.

Your concern for these individuals will continue to impact on their lives. Without your support our efforts to help these individuals would have very little impact. Your contribution and ongoing support to this ministry encourages us to forge ahead with the task. It is comforting to know that we are surrounded by those who believe in what we do.

It is also important to note that Thembalethu Ministries have no government funding. Thembalethu Ministries solely depend on the donations from individual donors, private and corporate organizations, and other donors to run operations. As we stand at the moment, we do not have the required funding to continue this work in 2010, we appreciate your prayers and support as we consider many avenues to raise these funds.

We are glad you are part of this outreach and hope you will continue to support the work.

E x c i t i n g N e w s f r o m C a m p

12 Thembalethu participants were treated to a memorable camping weekend from the 22nd – 24th May this year. The team was all smiles as they set out for the camp at Reality Bible Ministry campsite.



A qualified counselor helped the campers, as individuals, to reflect on and re-think their circumstances. The campers were given an opportunity to develop realistic action plans to assist them in moving forward with their lives.

The outcome of the camp was fantastic. Firstly, rival street gangs participating in the camp were helped to talk over their issues, forgive each other and reconcile. Secondly, two participants who have been in the streets for the past seven years resolved to go back home and be reconciled with their families. Thembalethu Ministries has identified a social worker linked with their home town to help these participants with the process of reconciliation with their families. One of them has since found shelter in Roodepoort while he is awaiting the outcome of the social worker's effort to re-unite him with his family. Thirdly, one participant resolved to stop smoking and get professional assistance in overcoming the addiction.

A Camper's Testimony – 'Thabo'

"The camp was a lovely experience, being able to go for three days without smoking. It was difficult but welcome for me since I have been working to stop smoking for some time now. The general feeling was that I could remain there forever. The accommodation and food was good. I wish Thembalethu Ministries could one day build us a shelter. Above all it was good have a time of telling my life story to a listening audience. It did me a lot of good. I felt a heavy load had been lifted from my shoulders. I am now more than ever determined to work against all odds.

'T. M' - T.M preferred to have his identity concealed. This is his testimony.

"I left the camp with a strong will to trace my footsteps and find my family back in Welcom. I did just that. With the help of a good Samaritan I traveled to the Free state. It was not easy, but I finally reconnected with my family. With tears of joy I was finally relieved from the anger and frustration that had been part of me since my childhood. I also managed to apply for my ID in the Free State. The camp will remain an important landmark in my life.

THE COUNSELLOR'S REPORT - Alexa

I had previously worked with street children in the Cape, am a social worker and am passionate about justice and working with communities in need.

Considering that at the moment, I am working in a corporate setting, this was a brilliant way to explore my passions further, and use my skills for a purpose outside of the commercial sector.

Meeting the participants for the first time, I realized we were going to be working with a sector of our community that is often neglected, our late teens/ early adults – our systems tend to not provide for this age group. Group work is challenging at the best of times, but when we ask of a group of boys to change their whole group dynamic and deal with deeply personal things, this is a BIG ask.

We did the BIG ask and from a therapeutic point of view, I believe got BIG outcomes. Bear this in mind as we entered into group work discussing and looking at our pasts, presents and futures. This is not easy for most people to slip into thinking about – most of our guys came from backgrounds of poverty, abuse, family alcoholism and adults who did not believe in them. So in addition to some of the interpersonal tension which was always just under the surface, we were now scratching under the surface and asking the guys to face their ghosts! This in any situation is a recipe for chaos. There was a clear sense of tension brewing – and even in the midst of this our guys kept identifying each other as their support systems and family. When the tension got to breaking point, two of the guys did what all children in families do – they get into a fight. This for me was the pivotal moment on the camp – we got to practice all the theory of what it meant to be a family – to correct relationships, to choose forgiveness and reconciliation over retribution and to move forward together.

Together the two ‘fighters’ were loaded into my car and off we traipsed to get patched up. Whilst patching up the one who had inflicted damage on the other, I handed over the first aid stuff to the offender. This may have seemed like a crazy thing to do, but it made them re-connect in a positive way. Returning to camp was in some ways harder, as it meant having to deal with the energy of the group- who were all worried and still having to make choices about what next?

Saturday night, family, forgiveness and a sense of this is all going to be ok, when we had a “group/family” discussion time. People were allowed to share their feelings, we got to say that even the most functional families fight – but it’s where you go after that matters.

Life lessons were learnt in terms of choices, forgiveness and learning to be in right relationship, rather than simply right.

It was an honor to be a part of these guys’ world- even if it was for such a short time. A one degree shift in the right direction today, is a 10 degree shift in the future!



Let’s get Active!

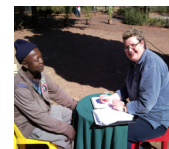
At Themba lethu Ministries soccer plays a vital role in the transformation of its participants. Sport is used as a therapeutic medium as well as being a way of building relationships. Through sport we work on developing aspects of trust, teamwork, respect, goal-setting, interpersonal skills and obedience to rules.

We have had tremendous support in building up our soccer team. Bain (Ltd) generously donated money to buy soccer boots for the team and they donated a soccer ball after a friendly game with our participants. This was complemented by the equally generous donations of full soccer kits, one from the Brixton Community Policing Forum Partnership and another kit from Emmanuel Church Phoenix, Durban.

At this stage several coaches expressed interest in the team. Five participants have been selected to join a local soccer team to potentially play in their first division team next year. It is encouraging to see how the team exit every game with valuable principles learned.

Citizens Without Identity

The majority of our participants face the risk of being labeled as an unclassified population. Without national identity books they can hardly prove their citizenship or apply for a job. Obtaining this invaluable document is a milestone for our participants. We have contacted the Department of Home Affairs in an effort to help Themba lethu Ministries’ participants get national identity books. A social worker, Amelia, assisted us by compiling reports for the application process. Previously only three participants have made a breakthrough. Nine more participants hope their ID applications will be successful.



WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

Thanks to the services of Alphaweb, a website development and hosting company, Themba lethu Ministries has registered a domain name, www.themba lethu.org.za. We have launched a user friendly and informative Themba lethu Ministries website. The website is continuously updated. You will find our contact and banking details, some success stories, photos and you can have your say by registering and commenting in our Blog.

OUR NEEDS

1. Refreshments for soccer team
2. A therapist to help participants break away from using addictive substances

3. HIV/AIDS counseling
 4. Services of a social worker
 5. Financial support - funding to continue the work into 2010
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Themba lethu Ministries Bank Details

Bank: Absa
Branch: Auckland Park
Account name: Themba lethu Ministries
Branch code: 630143
Swift: ABSA JJ
Account no: 9162367416
Type of Account: Club Account

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