

## Themba lethu Ministries AGM

Themba lethu Ministries' Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on Tuesday the 27th October 2009 at Melville Union Church (45 Ditton Avenue, Auckland Park). The meeting will start at 7pm. We welcome all members, donors, volunteers and interested persons to attend this meeting.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information, please visit our website [www.thembalethu.org.za](http://www.thembalethu.org.za) or contact us at;

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#### Themba lethu 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

Themba lethu Ministries would be delighted to discuss bespoke fundraising opportunities for corporate organizations, trusts and individuals and thankfully welcomes any donation in cash or kind to assist the organization to fulfill its mission.

43-45 Ditton Avenue, Auckland Park, Johannesburg, 4092



# thembalethu

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Ministries

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NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our third issue of Themba lethu Ministries News 2009. We give glory to God who has taken us this far. Spring is here with us brightening our spirits laden with the challenges of the ministry. We joyfully salute all our friends, supporters and donors for enthusiastically walking all the way with us. Your support and encouragement remains a great resource of strength for us to forge on with our task.

### Looking homeward

In our January-March issue, we gave the life profile of Pele our former participant who said he had spent 11 years as a street kid. Pele finally worked his way out and is now self-employed and enthusiastically working to further improve himself. He is now pursuing a driver's license. Bravo Pele! Four of our participants saw things differently from Pele. They have opted for home as an exit route from street life. For these four individuals the route to escaping from their dilemma is *"seek ye first the family then everything else will follow"*.

While this option of going home is the best in our eyes at Themba lethu Ministries, it is proving to be an uphill task for our participants. In the past two months we have had three scenarios. In August we assisted Linda Mbuqe who after responding to a teaching during one of our Sunday sermons, took a step to go back to home in the Eastern Cape. His intention – go back home, mend relations with the family and start all over again.

In the second scenario, Doctor who had initially decided to go back home opted for a lodging in Roderpoort with a former neighbour he knew during his childhood in Carltonville. This former neighbour offered to take him in her household for as long as he is willing to stay. Through this relationship Doctor has managed to apply for social grant that he will start receiving from October 2009.

Thirdly, Thabo lost courage to face his family and backed down on the 22nd of September, the day that we had agreed on to meet his family. The next step is to wait for him to initiate the move

whenever he feels emotionally and mentally prepared to do so. The fourth participant, Mpho, is set to face his family this month. We pray that he will have enough courage to rejoin his family.

### **Sunday services**

Our participants are encouraged to voluntarily attend services every Sunday. The average attendance is 15. The majority of participants are not able to read. As a result our services are structured to include both exposition of scriptures and small group discussions. In the group discussions the participants have an opportunity to express their faith and discuss issues concerning life now and in eternity. The freedom that participants have in expressing themselves in their own languages helps individuals to communicate their feelings more effectively. Crucial, life transforming decisions are made during these sessions.



The encouraging news is that those participants who have moved on with life and left the streets still come back to fellowship with us on Sundays. Willie and Sizwe who are now working still continue to fellowship with us on Sundays. Such individuals help in providing leadership among the participants.

### **Projects**

We encourage our participants to get involved in projects offered by organizations we network with. The tower gardens are one of projects that have exposed some of our participants to being involved with the community. Besides the small token they get for facilitation, this project exposes them to interpersonal skills and a chance to interact with members of the local community in a mutual relationship.



Leadership, decision-making and community development skills are inculcated in the participants during this process. In August Thabo and Luwi assisted the community in Naturena to build a tower garden at Naturena primary school. They were facilitators in imparting the skills of building the tower gardens. In September Thabo and David built tower gardens for two members of the Melville Union Church.

We have also helped six participants to join the Bell Records Studios on a project initiated to tap the skills of street kids in Arts & Culture. While the project is new, we are encouraged by the enthusiasm and commitment this has generated among the 6 participants.

### **ID Documents**

In our last issue we referred to our participants as 'citizens without identity'. We want to profoundly express our gratitude to Amelia, a social worker, and the Department of Home Affairs who came to Themba lethu Ministries to assist 14 participants to apply for their IDs for the first time. We eagerly await the outcome of this process. We also assisted 5 participants to reapply for their ID's.

### **A volunteer's perspective**

Themba lethu ministry has been a challenge and a great blessing at the same time. The ministry requires time, love, faithfulness and patience and thus we've grown in these areas as volunteers in our personal walk with God. The boys sometimes expect too much or on the contrary might seem that they are not appreciative but seeing a change in attitude and decisions taken which reflects the gospel at work within them is a greater blessing. I know God is doing something in their lives through this ministry and we all want to be part of it. From the camp to the weekly meetings we have, this ministry is a reminder that despite the background and status, no one can live without God's sustenance.

### **Christmas Party**

The festive season's joyous bells are sounding in the distance. Every year Themba lethu Ministries has the pleasure to host a Christmas dinner for our homeless children. As is the tradition, this dinner is to be held in the first week of December at Melville Union Church. We invite all our friends, supporters and donors to make this the special occasion that it has always been to the homeless children. Donations in cash and kind, as well as your presence, are welcome.

### **Challenges**

Our ministry is consistently challenged by the participants' recurrent substance abuse. We are faced with cases where participants who have not been using addictive substances for a long time find themselves hooked again. This vicious cycle greatly retards progress in bringing change to the participants concerned. We are praying for the possibility of networking with an organisation that can help bring meaningful rehabilitation to our participants.

The other challenge relates to the youth who outgrow our target group before they can find something meaningful to do. These young people become of age in terms of chronological age but still remain immature due to the lack of training and guidance through their pre-teenage and teenage years. Now that most service providers cater for children of 17 years and below. This lot of youth falls within a vulnerable group in terms of human development projects. When Themba lethu Ministries can no longer continue with them they still find it difficult to move on with life.

