

## BULEMBU SWAZILAND UPDATE

JULY 2011

“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.” John 14:18



We realise we haven't written since our return to Swaziland early in May .... lots going on! Big changes in Bulembu. Those who give support through Partners In Action will have received a letter regarding those changes; for those of you not in contact with PIA, we attach a copy of the letter. To put things as simply as possible, a philosophical disagreement regarding the purpose of Bulembu - ie. ministry vs enterprise/sustainability - resulted in a major portion of

financing from the Canadian organisation, Bulembu International, being withdrawn. This dichotomy regarding the question 'are we building a city or building into the lives of the children?' has been apparent since our arrival, and uppermost in our prayers. We are convinced that the right decision has been made although current tightening of belts will be necessary while God raises up new donors. He is faithful and we are all excited about a closer unity and reliance on God in the community, which has resulted from these changes. Our focus has always been on reaching and teaching the children about God's love through the Lord Jesus Christ. To give due credit to Bulembu International, they have previously provided huge financial assistance in building the infrastructure in Bulembu. We are grateful to God for his provision through this organisation and for the foundation they have laid in the village. Bulembu Ministries are hoping and praying for restored relationships between BI and BMS. However, BMS is not prepared to compromise in the need to remain committed to our vision and to operate with the integrity and love God has called us to walk in. God is our source of provision.

*Please pray for Andrew as he now carries the responsibility of managing the affairs of Bulembu; for which the community stands beside him 100% and surrounds him with prayer.*

We have been joyously busy since our return in mid-May. New children have come into the Welcome Centre and joined the Bridge school. Carl's office in the Clinic is almost ready, enabling him to have a 'home away from home' for his books and resources for his medical work. Through our attendance at Carl's medical school reunion, God stirred up a positive response and interest in the work in Bulembu. The Clinic has always operated on a small budget and now with the recent changes even these resources are diminished. After Carl's short presentation at the evening reunion dinner, one of his

classmates generously offered to help raise funds for the Clinic. Our God is great and answered prayer before it was even asked! The other result of our travels was that God has laid it on the heart of a young lady named Tara to start a bus fund for Bulembu! The children here are unable to participate in any inter school activities because of lack of transport. When she asked me what the youth from our local churches could do for us, I was immediately impressed to ask for a bus! God is a great God and he wants to give us what we need. What a mighty God we serve! *So please keep Tara in your prayers as she works to raise up funds for the Beautiful Bulembu Bus!*



Our trip to the USA was filled with visits to family (we were blessed to be able to spend time with all five sons and five of the six grandchildren), old friends and new, from Tomball, Bryan, College Station, Huntsville and Bastrop, in Texas to Sonora, Arroyo Grande, Nipomo, Burbank and San Francisco in California, with a slight detour to Reno, Nevada. How thankful we are for each one of you!

The house rental / lease is being taken care of by an Agency in College Station; we especially want to thank Dean for all her hard work and help on our behalf in getting the property leased. Praise God that he is always at work even when we cannot see it! *Please continue to pray with us for rental of the small house and farm property in the coming weeks. Pray also for the sale of the Mazda Speed 6.*

Any work on the internet continues to be a continual challenge - many times we are unable to send or receive emails. To have access to unrestricted internet we must drive an hour and a half into South Africa, a three hour round trip. *Please pray for resolution to this frustration.* It is not just an inconvenience and expense (for fuel for the drive) but a hindrance to the work we are trying to do; many times Carl needs access to medical information and I often need to use the internet for additional material for school lessons. The main concern is that we cannot communicate with family and friends as much as we would like. We have explored the possibility of a personal internet account but at a very expensive \$1,300 per month, that is obviously prohibitive for us.



We have recently had the joy of having our Texas home church bring a team of 10 to minister in Bulembu for almost three weeks. We are thankful for their generous and giving hearts as they unselfishly gave of themselves, their love and

their talents to the people and children not only in the village, in the Clinic and the School, but also in the nearby community of Malanda. Pastor Joel, who led the team, is putting together a video / report of their visit which can be shared with other groups in our home church, as well as other supporting partners and churches. A huge thank you, to each one of the team, from our hearts. *Please praise God and thank him for bringing the team to minister and encourage us all.*

Marvellous news from Royal Rangers. The week prior to the half term break, seven of the Rangers Kids (8-9 years old) prayed with me during the meeting and asked Jesus into their hearts. This is the reason we are here. *Please be praying now as we design and incorporate a discipleship programme, suitable for them, into the curriculum and into their lives.*

Speaking of Royal Rangers, I, Lesley, have just returned from a four day Royal Rangers camp, for the National Training Camp. Mid winter is not the best time to go camping but, despite freezing temperatures at night, we (about 17 of us) built and maintained a campsite as well as being tested on a variety of skills necessary to pass the test to receive the NTC badge. We were tested on Scripture Memory (my favourite part!), building and starting a fire with natural materials and only one match (challenging at best but even more so with cold gale force winds blowing!), lashings (with which we built camp tables, seating etc), first aid, Swaziland nature - trees and plants, hiking and swimming safety, tools and tool safety, and tying eight different knots (this was my least favourite part but I think my Navy Dad would be proud of me!) This was the very first NTC training camp in Swaziland and I was proud to be a part of it. Don't listen to anyone who says you're too old to do something new!! Just as a side note: I have even more respect now for the normal Swazi households who have to make a fire before they

can boil water for a cup of tea or use bathing water. They don't experience the luxury of pushing a button and the hot water magically appears two minutes later ready to pour into your cup! One of our many blessings! *Take a few minutes to count your own special blessings : )*

We want to add a brief note from the CEO of Partners In Action; this organisation, through whom we receive our funds, is dedicated to orphan care in 60 orphanages in 23 countries around the world. We received this note from Curt in response to our query while in the US about the recent changes in organisation in Bulembu. We hope this letter will reassure many of you that we and Bulembu Ministries are 100% committed to the care of the children here.

From Curt Cluff: President and CEO of Partners In Action, Arizona.

*“As I am sure you are aware, there is a lot going on. Let me assure you that this will not affect you or your ministry in any way. With God's help, the funding for the children should not be effected. PIA and Bulembu USA will probably be more involved than we have been in the past. We will continue to serve you and your donors as we have in the past. Your funds will continue to be sent to you upon request. You are both highly regarded in Bulembu, and everyone is anxious for your return.”*

As we sign off for now, we attach to this letter our love, our thanks, and our appreciation for each and everyone of you. We cannot accomplish the work here without God's wisdom, grace and strength or your prayers, encouragement and support. May God bless you and your families with joy and contentment.

Joyfully serving Jesus with you, as you serve Jesus with us, Carl and Lesley.



