



Jthemba

**Bringing hope to AIDS orphans
in South Africa "One Child At A Time"**

Winter 2006

25:40 Sponsors New Child Care Center in Khayelitsha

Thanks to the generosity of its donors, 25:40 was able to take on another orphanage in 2005. Alec visited the *Fikelela* Children's Centre in Cape Town, South Africa, in March 2005 and was moved by its mission, the children and the workers.

Fikelela, which means "reach out," is the name of the HIV/AIDS outreach program of the Anglican Church in Cape Town. *Fikelela* was founded in 2000 to provide an active Christian response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in South Africa. Its mission is to mobilize the Anglican community to make a sustained, positive contribution to the reduction of new HIV infections and to lead efforts in HIV/AIDS education and care in partnership with other civic groups.

The *Fikelela* Children's Centre in Khayelitsha opened in 2001. Khayelitsha is a shanty town outside Cape Town where over one million people make their homes in makeshift housing made of scrap wood, tin and cardboard. The Children's Centre takes in abandoned and orphaned children and nurses them back to health. HIV+ children are placed on antiretrovirals. Once they are healthy, the children are placed with trained,

supported foster mothers living in the community, which is gradually improving as the government begins to provide electricity and help improve housing. *Fikelela* currently cares for 28 children under the age of eight. *Fikelela's* motto is "Every child is my child."

In December 2005, 25:40 sent *Fikelela* a donation of \$2,500 to start what will hopefully be a long and prosperous relationship. The following is the response to 25:40 from **Rev. Rachel Mash**, who runs the centre.

"Thank you so much for the wonderful donation. What an encouraging start to 2006! We really appreciate your prayers and support for us. We shall use the funds over the next few weeks. Our plan is to subdivide the centre to make it into two separate 'homes' in order to create a more homelike environment. In terms of 2006, the ongoing challenges are always to find funding for salaries. Funders are very keen to fund equipment, but the struggle is always to keep paying the salaries, so any help you could give us in that area would be greatly appreciated!"



The bright space inside (below) belies the rather sterile outside aspect of the Fikelela Centre (above). In the bottom picture, three young residents await foster homes.



Photos by Alec Zacaroli

Meet “Teaspoon”

Her nickname describes how Teaspoon looked when she first arrived at the Hamburg clinic, testing positive for HIV, her head much bigger than the rest of her body because, at a year old, she weighed only seven pounds.

Her real name is Nthombitiche, and she is now about 18 months old. This picture of her was taken just a couple months after she was put on anti-retroviral (ARV) medication, which boosts her immune system. When Teaspoon first arrived, she could not walk or sit up. She could only lay still and move her head from side to side. Today, she is an alert, curious girl who follows all the movement around her with her big, brown eyes. She can now not only sit up (as the picture shows), but crawl and walk, and she is beginning to talk.



What miracles happen in only a few months' time! Her resilience to such severe illness is remarkable, but it also shows how just a little medicine and some loving care can make her, and other children like her, healthy. **Graeme Hofmeyr**, a worker in Hamburg, tells us that Teaspoon's mom, a young woman who also is HIV+, takes meticulous care of her. She is always clean, well dressed and groomed. Please pray that Teaspoon continues to grow and thrive. We are all God's children, and 25:40 strives to help HIV+ children like Teaspoon, one child at a time.

25:40's initial donation of funds for the purchase of anti-retrovirals for children in Hamburg in 2005, made the clinic eligible to secure funding for all its patients on ARVs through President Bush's AIDS initiative.

HOKISA Takes in Two More Boys

Dear Amy and Alec,

What a wonderfully generous gift surprise so early in the New Year, to get your cheque for \$5000 today! On behalf of all at HOKISA, we thank you and your workers most warmly. Your gift is hugely appreciated, and, as you know, it will all go to the children and their welfare.

Since you visited last, we have admitted another two boys to HOKISA who qualify under our AIDS criteria - both of them a challenge, each in his own way. One of them has been very traumatised by experiences no child should ever have to face - and in the secure environment of HOKISA he can finally begin to let some of this surface, in an unconscious and turbulent process. As you can well imagine, that is an enormous challenge to the staff, as this is never easy to handle. To help him and to enable our team to support him, we have to look for medical-psychological support for him. Such support is available in the health service, but he is too old to qualify for the Children's Hospital, and the waiting periods for such services at other public facilities are horrendously long. This means that we will have to pay a private practitioner. Just as we were wondering how we could possibly afford this, your cheque arrived Thank you so much.

The second newcomer is a challenge of a different kind: He is a very bright boy who has suffered emotional and physical neglect through maternal AIDS, and he is learning how to be just a child again, at HOKISA. We have to give him special attention to make sure that his intelligence will grow in the right direction - something one can never take for granted in children who have experienced so much insecurity at such a young age. But he is coping well and had a good report at the end of the school year. At present, the children are enjoying the last days of the summer vacation - which is just long enough that they then also look forward to the beginning of the new school year. Two of our little girls will be starting together at the pre-school crèche, and they are very excited about that.

We look forward to seeing you in July - it is a nice time to visit as it is then much quieter in Cape Town. Many thanks again, also from Lutz and the whole team. Love to you all! Karin

One Body Tapestry Displayed at AIDS Day Concert

25:40 commissioned HIV+ women in Hamburg, South Africa to make a tapestry around the theme "One Body." **Graeme Hofmeyr**, son of **Dr. Carol Hofmeyr**, delivered it personally in time for the AIDS Day concert on December 1, 2005. The embroidered tapestry depicts an African version of the Last Supper on the right side and a typical Xhosa community celebration on the left. The cross in the middle of the two red arches is beaded wire work done by a man in Hamburg gifted in such art.



The purpose of the tapestry is to connect the communities in South Africa impacted by AIDS to communities here in the United States, demonstrating God's word in 1 Corinthians expressing the fact that we are all part of One Body, and whenever one of us hurts, we all hurt, and whenever one of us celebrates, we all join in. To make this connection tangible, the tapestry will grow as it travels from church to church; each church will add a red arch depicting a scene of their own choice. We hope that many churches and organizations will participate, growing the tapestry and demonstrating the connection of One Body. Please pray about this and consider how your church or organization can contribute to the One Body tapestry.



Abiding Presence Bible School Quilt Travels to South Africa

The more than 100 children who attended Vacation Bible School at Abiding Presence Lutheran Church in Burke, Virginia in 2005 made a "tapestry" of their own for children in South Africa who are impacted by AIDS.

Each American child made a square depicting her own personality and the squares were sewn together by **Lynne Imre** (thanks, Lynne!) to make a quilt, shown at the left. Graeme took the quilt back to South Africa, where it is now hanging in a new 25:40-supported health care center in Hamburg that cares for adults and children with HIV/AIDS.

Because there were so many squares, two more quilts will be made. **Pam Park** of Abiding Presence is sewing together one and we still need another volunteer to put together the third one. **Amy Zacaroli** will likely take over the second quilt when she goes to South Africa in March and deliver it to HOKISA, an orphanage outside of Cape Town. **Alec Zacaroli** hopefully will take the third (assuming it is completed) to deliver to the pediatric AIDS clinic at Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town. Please contact Amy at 2540@cox.net if you can help with this.

Local Artists Commemorate AIDS Day

25:40 commemorated World AIDS Day, December 1, 2005, with a concert that related the history of apartheid in South Africa through the eyes of its children, who are now living in a democracy but fighting another evil — AIDS.

The story is one of strength and hope, exemplified by the dramatic reenactment of the testimony of a young girl who was brutally attacked by policemen during the violent uprisings in South Africa in the early 1990s. A beautiful photograph of the reenactment was featured on the front cover of the December 8-14, 2005 issue of *The Springfield Connection*. The photo shown here is the Cherub Choir of Abiding Presence singing a medley of *Jesus Loves Me* and *Jesus Loves All the Little Children*. In the background are photos of South African AIDS orphans 25:40 supports.

So many people came together for the concert, offering their gifts of time and talent to make the evening a big success. We thank **Allan Stern** for his artwork, which tied together all the different songs and narratives to a cohesive, beautiful visual accompaniment.

Among the many musicians who participated were the Joy Singers and children's choirs of Abiding Presence Lutheran Church; the Messengers of Peace, a joy choir from Peace Lutheran Church, Alexandria; soloists **Laura Carlson, Carolyn Koller, Jack Palmer, and Joe McGavin**; and members of the Woodbridge Flute Choir.

Dan Heck and **David Steiner** were wonderful piano accompanists and **Ben Glass, Joyce Taylor, Duke Taylor, Julie Moore** and **Ed Siomacco** lent their voices for readings and narration. **Zoraya Stern** added her artistic talent for the programs, **Rickey Rossett** and **Greg Jones** helped out with lighting and sound, and **Emily Colman** took pictures.

25:40 was honored to have **Graeme Hofmeyr** of Hamburg, South Africa, join us for the concert and speak about the children in that village who suffer from AIDS. He works for the Keiskamma Trust, a non-profit organization formed to help the Hamburg residents with health issues, especially AIDS. The trust also employs people to do tapestries and other artwork that travel the country and the globe. At the concert, Graeme unveiled the One Body tapestry made by HIV+ women in Hamburg for U.S. churches and organizations to grow. (See related story on page three.)

Through their free-will donations, concert attendees generously gave more than \$1,200 to further 25:40's efforts in helping AIDS orphans in South Africa. Thank you so much to everyone!



Picture by Amber Healy, *The Connection*

25:40 News and Notes

Pastor Henry Brinton Runs Tucson Marathon for 25:40

Everyone has special gifts. For **Henry Brinton**, pastor of Fairfax Presbyterian Church, it happens to be running marathons. For two years now, he has run a marathon to benefit the AIDS orphans 25:40 helps support. This December Henry ran the Tucson Marathon in Arizona, a much warmer, drier climate, than Chicago, where he ran in November 2004. Henry had a strong race again, finishing the 26 mile run in two hours, 28 minutes and 55 seconds, a time that allowed him to join the ranks of the fewer than 1% of runners who qualify for the Boston Marathon. The congregations' support for Henry's run raised \$4,400 for 25:40, which was presented to Alec and Amy during a service at FPC on January 29, 2006! Thank you, Henry and FPC! We'll be looking forward to your results in the Boston Marathon!



25:40 Families to Visit South Africa

In March, 25:40 co-director **Amy Zacaroli** will travel to South Africa to visit 25:40 partners in and around Cape Town and Hamburg. **Pat Thomas**, her mother-in-law, will also be going. Pat is indirectly responsible for 25:40's existence. She and **Alec Zacaroli's** father, **Tom Zacaroli**, left the comforts of Wisconsin in the 1970s and took their four small children to Johannesburg, South Africa to live for 10 years. Those years were quite formative for Alec and a big inspiration for the founding of 25:40.

Pat is trained and educated as a speech therapist and early elementary educator. She plans to share her expertise with the schools in Hamburg and orphanages in Cape Town. Please pray for a safe journey for both Pat and Amy!

In July, **Alec Zacaroli** plans to travel to South Africa with his and Amy's two oldest children, **Nick** and **Sophie**. Alec's brother **Clark Zacaroli** and his oldest child **Ally** will accompany them. 25:40 is so fortunate to have friends and family who are so moved by the plight of South Africa's most vulnerable. God's blessings on their journeys.



Website Woes

For the past two years, 25:40 was fortunate enough to have Silver Method, Inc., of Washington, D.C. create and maintain its website for free. Unfortunately, all good deals come to an end, and we are now in search of a volunteer who is savvy with website design to maintain and update the 25:40 website with news and information on the children we support, 25:40 projects, and developments in AIDS funding and medication. If you are interested, please contact **Alec** or **Amy Zacaroli** at 2540@cox.net.



25:40 Compact Disc On Sale

25:40 has produced a compact disc, titled *One Child At a Time*, that features talented musicians performing favorite hymns and classical music. The CD was released on World AIDS Day, December 1, 2005, and is available for your own enjoyment or as a gift for family, friends and teachers. Because the music is timeless, the CD can be listened to all year round and would be a suitable gift for any occasion. It is available for a \$20 donation, and all proceeds will go to 25:40 partners in South Africa caring for children impacted by AIDS, one child at a time. To order, please e-mail **Amy Zacaroli** at 2540@cox.net.

