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Hullo dear friends

June has arrived in such a hurry and what an eventful quarter we have had!

Our second fundraiser went really well, helping us to all but reach our final total towards the payment of our tickets for our trip to the UK in September. The parents and the children really outdid themselves and we are so grateful to them for their wonderful effort on our behalf.

Well, I guess everyone has been affected by the Public Sector Strike. What a devastating thing this has been – particularly for our schools and hospitals. We, of course, had nothing to do with the strike, but were forced to close our doors for the week of the “Big Wednesday,” since our parents were really frightened for their children. Then of course, the taxis stopped transporting children, so we have only had between 25-35 stragglers attending school during the entire period of the strike. We have used this time to spring clean the entire school (the children had a ball, scrubbing the toys in frothy suds) as well as upgrade and repair equipment and play areas.

The bathrooms and rabbit hutch all received a new coat of paint, the jungle gym has been patched up, but most importantly, our cycle track now has a 2-brick high paving wall surrounding it. We do thank our faithful Bonga and our university student who gave up 2 weeks of his vacation in order to help us with this upgrade. We did this for 2 reasons – one, to contain the children’s play and slow down the wilder side of getting around the track as quickly as possible and two, to assist with storm-flooding control. It now looks very smart indeed and it will be interesting to see the children’s reactions when they return to school early next term.

While on the topic – we have a maintenance man who has joined our staff. We welcome Clive Stanley with wide open arms. We will be sharing him with the church in the near future, but for now he is with us full-time in order to knock off as many jobs as possible. It is daunting to see how much maintenance has accumulated in the short 3 years we have been open. It has been such a joy to watch the jobs being knocked off at a rapid rate – and inevitably, as they are knocked off, so we find more that needs to be done. Poor man – and he does it all with a great big smile on his face and willingness that would floor many others.

With the extreme cold conditions that have hit us this winter, Jean Hall, the lady who heads up MMC’s crisis care ministry, became very concerned about our children’s comfort and made an appeal for blankets. MMC were wonderful in their response and we have, so far, been able to send 1 blanket to each family. Further donations have come in from elsewhere, enabling us to

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provide a further 2 blankets to each family. We are so grateful to everyone who gave so willingly and graciously in order to bless these families. They have sent many little notes to us thanking us for this provision. God bless you all. So, hopefully, our families will all be just that little bit warmer especially now during the winter holidays.

The planning for our trip to the UK is coming along very nicely. Our friends at Norton MC and Alrewas MC as well as others have been putting in a huge amount of effort to get our itinerary filled and the rough draught sent to me a while ago, contained no less than 15 definite appointments, and more still, slowly but surely, rolling in. Mirriam and I will be flying out on Wednesday, 12 September and we land at home again on Friday, 12 October. We will be closing our third term on 12 September and Teacher Daria will fill in for me for 2 weeks at the beginning of the 4 term. So, most of my focus of late has been the preparation of presentations, etc. for the trip.

A very big blessing in our lives this term has been the entrance into the life of the school of Albany Bakery in Jacobs. They heard of our work via the Albany Challenge and have since then blessed our little school and our children out of their socks. Our children received lunchboxes, bread, "Tinkies", rulers, soccer balls and blankets. The school has been blessed with neon light fittings, a large secretary's desk, upholstered office chairs, shelving for 3 classrooms, a clock, a large whiteboard and a promise of much more to come from appeals that have been sent out via their network. We extend a very big thank you to Brian Nortje, Jane Reyneke and all their associates for the tremendous blessing they have brought into our lives. We look forward to a long association with our new-found friends.

Simba the Lion came to visit and spoil the children at the end of this term. Unfortunately, the strike resulted in more than half the children missing out on the fun, so he has agreed to visit us again at the beginning of the third term so that everyone can have the pleasure of a great, big Simba Chip Hug!

Lumka, Jennifer, Cindy and Kathy will be attending an HIV and AIDS counselling course for the 2 weeks of our holiday, so by the end of that period, we should all 4 have another certificate behind our names.

Good News Community Radio (93.6 FM) have, at last, had their licence renewed for another 4 years and they have approached me to run a programme covering various areas of interest within the field of pre-schooling. So, watch out Durbs – here comes the newest air-wave sensation – move over East Coast Radio – I'm gonna need your space!!! I'm really quite excited about the opportunity and look forward to the blessing of learning a whole new area of skill and ministry!

That covers us for this quarter – for those of you who manage to make it to the snow – build a snowman for me and lob at least one snowball at an unsuspecting passer-by on my behalf.

I close with several quips that we found rather entertaining this term:

- After the week's break during the strike, Khwezi was tired of being at home and wanted to return to school. Her mother was still fearful of her child's safety and informed Khwezi, "Oh Mommy, please then, get me a body-guard so that I can go back to school!"
- Again Khwezi – she was very concerned on our very rainy day as to how Simba the Lion was to be transported to school. Teacher Colleen, thinking herself wise, explained to the child that the animal would not get drenched, since it is really just someone who dresses up as Simba. "What?! Do you mean that I came to school just to see someone *dressed*

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*up as a lion?!*" When Simba departed, he left large packets of chips for all the children, which we had to open and divide equally amongst them. Said Khwezi again, "What were they thinking? Do they think we are giants or something?!"

- Teacher Thobeka became very ill during the last week of school and was not present for her class. Anneliese, our very imaginative and animated story-teller, went home and informed her mother, "The children were so naughty, they made Teacher Thobeka collapse and the people came and took her away to hospital!"
- Teacher Mirriam had been dealing with the birth of Jesus Christ. She asked the children why they thought Jesus had been born. Davon said that He came to teach us to listen to our moms and dads when they speak to us. "When your mother sends you to get the pain tablets, you must not bring back the cholesterol tablets!"

And Lastly!

- Teacher Colleen was tossing a ball in a game with Vuyo. The ball was tossed higher and higher as the game progressed. Eventually, Vuyo asked Colleen not to toss it so high. Colleen then asked him why he was tossing it so high for her to catch – "But you are wearing glasses, so you can see better than I can!" he said quite seriously!

Until next time.

Always fishing  
Kathy

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