

VOLUME 5 | EDITION 1 | APRIL 2025

# BETHLEHEM

newsletter

**News from the field**

**Where does  
Stichting Bethlehem  
work?**



**Bethlehem**

from bread to the Bread

## BRIEF MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Dear Reader,

Here is the first newsletter of the year. We aim to send you four newsletters per year. Out of gratitude for your involvement and support, we would like to periodically keep you informed about the ins and outs of the missionary work in South Africa. We hope that you will continue to support the work both financially and with prayer. Blessed be His glorious name forever!



**Gert Hop,**  
(Board member  
Fundraising and  
Communication)

## He Shall and They Shall

**By Mathias Weststrate**  
(General Manager)

**From mid-November, the Bible class visitors start discussing the ‘festive season’. This is what the period between the end of November and the beginning of January is called in South Africa. Because the ‘festive season’ is the highlight of the year many visit their families, and those who have a job take time off during this period. For many, the focus is on “let us eat, drink and be merry.”**

Personally, it was a bit of a shock. Because from the beginning of December, suddenly no one could be reached anymore. It seemed as if the world had suddenly come to a standstill. Empty streets, only a few cars on the road, closed businesses and shops. And no people. Suddenly, everyone seemed to have gone off the grid. Phones and text messages were no longer answered.

### **NOTHING?**

From the dozens of Bible class visitors and other people we had contact with every week, we went back to nothing. At least, that’s how it felt. Nothing? No, not quite, because there was still a handful present. With a handful, we still gathered around God’s Word.

### **‘A HANDFUL OF CORN...’**

During the month of December, I had to think of Psalm 72 verse 16. There we also read about a handful of corn. “A handful of corn upon the top of the mountains.” The top of the mountain is barren. It is rocky and infertile ground. That is how it sometimes seems to us on the mission field.

### **‘... UPON THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAINS’**

For who has ever seen corn growing on a mountain top? Yet David prophesies here

## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

**Our workers in South Africa are happy to tell you something about their daily work. The needs of the fields become tangible as you read.**





that barren soil will produce fruit. Shaking fruit, even. David was enabled to look so far into the future that he saw that heathens would be brought into the Kingdom of the greater Solomon. This Kingdom will be expanded to the ends of the earth, as long as the sun endures. This gives comfort and encouragement for the missionary work, because enemies will be won over.

### **COMFORT**

Why does this provide comfort? Because He shall live (verse 15). David not only saw that this Kingdom would be expanded to the ends of the earth, but also that the greater Solomon had to suffer, die and rise again. We may notice that it is written several times “He shall”, but also “they shall”. How this shows the one-sided work of God. He shall and they shall.



What shall they do? Cry out for a helper because of their need. Cry out for mercy. Cry out to be saved (verses 12-14). How clearly the work of the Holy Spirit is revealed here. They live because He lives, also in 2025. How

does this Psalm end? Amen, and Amen. It is certain that the Kingdom of Christ will exist unto the end of the world. Because He Himself has given the command, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations.” Also in South Africa.

### **CERTAINTY**

What is even more certain? That the whole earth will be filled with His glory. Why? Because He shall and they shall. Shall is the future tense. Therefore people will still be added. This is certain. Because the sun is still shining. He will gather His Church and He will do whatsoever He pleases. And they will come, led by the Divine Light. And they will give Him the glory.

It is our heartfelt wish for 2025 that the Lord will not withhold His Spirit, but will couple it with His Word. The Word that can make one wise unto salvation.



## I Have Seen the President

By Lianne de Baat  
(field worker)

**As I turn my car towards the exit of the neighbourhood, a boy suddenly comes running towards the car. Hey, that's Robbert. I know him. I sometimes give him a ride and once he has helped me translate during the children's class. I roll down my window.**

When he sees that my local colleague is sitting next to me, his face falls. This local colleague is responsible for one of the kitchens in Phumzile, and Robbert wants to say something about the kitchen. With an unhappy face, he tells me that he didn't get any food at the kitchen on the other side of the neighbourhood today. He was waiting in line with his empty bowl, but unfortunately, the ladle with corn porridge skipped him. 'But why?' my colleague asks. 'They thought I stank too much,' is his answer. And now it seems as if tears are almost coming from his eyes. My local colleague raises her voice and reacts indignantly, 'What? They should have given you a bar of soap! This isn't fair!'

Then she looks at me questioningly. She must be wondering what I think of it. I don't say anything. I know that it won't help to get involved in this. Although it does hurt me a



little that this boy in particular has no food now.

A boy without a father, a boy with a mother who lives in a village farther away, a boy who just found out that he tested positive for HIV, a boy who didn't finish school, a boy who probably doesn't have all the abilities to finish school either, a boy who often walks around in worn-out clothes, a boy who lives in different places and has new 'caregivers' all the time, a boy who suddenly looks very happy again! 'But,' he says to me, 'I have to tell you something. I went to Johannesburg this week. She (pointing to my local colleague) took me with her in a taxi and do you know who we saw there? The president! I saw Ramaphosa himself! The sad face completely disappears! He is beaming from ear to ear! For him it was a happy occasion to see the president!'

And yes, such a happy face makes me happy again. At the same time it gets me thinking, and a prayer rises up from my heart, "Lord, may He also meet Thee, the Ruler of heaven and earth? Not for the first time after his life on earth. But now, in this life?"

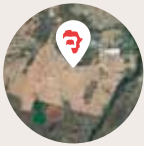


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[www.stichtingbethlehem.nl/blog-en](http://www.stichtingbethlehem.nl/blog-en)

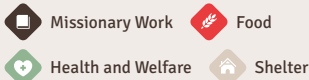
## WHERE DOES STICHTING BETHLEHEM WORK?



Stichting Bethlehem works in the townships around the city of Pretoria, South Africa. The main purpose of the foundation is to make God's Word known to the local people and to teach them from it. In addition, we help the local population by supporting them materially. Below you can read how we do this in the three work areas.



### Hammanskraal

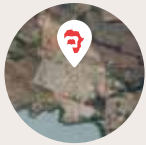


In Hammanskraal, Stichting Bethlehem works at three different locations.

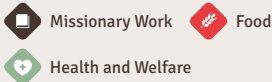
In the Garden of Hope, local men and women learn how to grow vegetables and also hear God's Word every day. There is a home for the elderly on the site, we give Bible classes and in-depth Biblical education to the community

and there is a day care for the little ones. Tshwaraganang is an orphanage that houses approximately 50 children. The field and missionary workers visit these children weekly to provide them with Biblical education.

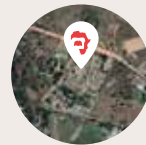
At the Community Center, 'The Safe House,' women and men work in the garden and various Bible classes are held for the community. A safe house has also been built with room for four women with children. We hope that the safe house will open in February.



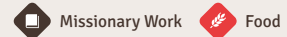
### Refilwe



Our field workers give Bible classes to the children. The missionaries provide Biblical education in the communities around Refilwe. The children are also visited at home, where support is offered in the home situation. In Refilwe we support the families who take care of orphans with a monthly food package.



### Phumzile



Bethlehem has helped set up two community-led soup kitchens. Last year, the first Bible classes for children were established and there are Bible classes for the community on Wednesdays and Fridays. We now have our own piece of land with a small building on it. These are the first beginnings of a community center.

## MISSIONARY WORKER

A missionary worker feels called to pass on God's Word to people who are not or hardly familiar with it on the work fields in South Africa. He passes on the Biblical message to them in all simplicity, praying if the Lord will bless that spoken word. This happens both during (evangelistic) meetings and during personal contact. The explanation of God's Word will always go hand in hand with a compassionate, pastoral willingness to help and with mercy towards one's neighbour.

### Main activities

- Organize and lead simple Bible classes.
- Co-develop materials for evangelism and training.
- Provide pastoral guidance to the people who are being served, both in groups and in their home environment.
- Be a point of contact for pastoral questions.
- Teach catechism classes to local staff.

## FIELD WORKER

The heart of a field worker that carries out children's evangelism lies with children and/or teaching. The field worker is responsible for the after-school programs for children and teenagers in particular and provides them with Bible education in various forms. The field worker develops materials and methods in consultation with the (local) team and management. In addition to these activities, the field worker devotes his attention and energy to building and maintaining relationships and offering support to parents and children.

### Main activities

- Building relationships within the communities, learning the culture and language, offering support where needed within the set frameworks.
- Preparing and teaching Bible and evangelism classes to children and teenagers in our work fields.
- Visiting parents and/or families and offering pastoral care in special cases or events.
- The (further) developing of an education and evangelism plan for children and teenagers.

Read more about the vacancies: [www.bethlehemfoundation.ca/jobs](http://www.bethlehemfoundation.ca/jobs)

Donations can be made via e-Transfer to our email address: [info@bethlehemfoundation.ca](mailto:info@bethlehemfoundation.ca), or by cheque to the church with "Bethlehem Foundation" on the memo line.