



NEWS LETTER FROM ANDY GROOME

Proverbs chapter 31 verses 8 and 9.

“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed. Yes, speak up for the poor and helpless, and see that they get justice.”

I thought I should write you another newsletter; it's been long overdue. I am writing at a time when I am preparing for another visit to the Eastern Cape, South Africa, leaving at the beginning of November and returning after seven weeks. You can find out more at a get-together we are having on the 16th October in Hemel Hempstead, details of which you can find on our new web site www.outreachacrossafrica.org.

As I told you in my previous newsletters, I stayed on a church mission in Mgeswa near Lusikisiki in the Eastern Cape. The people I stayed with had so few possessions yet so much more of God. I learned so much from them.

My first meeting with Nomalizo

And so here begins a very hard story and a very hard lesson for me. It all began early on in 2004. Often as a church we were invited out to people's homes to pray with the sick.



This was the family's home. Unfortunately the middle hut, used as a kitchen had caught fire and was now useless.

The night was dark and it was raining as we made our way through the village. We soon arrived at a very run down, thatched, round, mud hut. There were about eight of us and soon we were invited into the home. As I entered I had to stoop through the low doorway and found myself in a darkened room. It took a few seconds for my eyes to adjust to the light, and as they did so I found myself standing over a young woman, (I later learned her name was Nomalizo), laying on the mud floor, whose form was wasted, almost skeleton like. The rain, dripping through the old thatched roof, was being caught in old tin containers on

the floor. With her mother and sisters we all started praising God by singing. Then after a while, with arms lifted to heaven, we all started praying to God, all calling out loud, simultaneously. I looked down and to my surprise, I saw the young woman joining in, with her skinny arms raised from her bed on the floor. By now my eyes were transfixed on the woman and totally amazed at her love for God at such a difficult time.

What could we do?

Later that night when we had returned to the mission, totally shocked by what I had seen, I spoke to Pastor Monde alone, about the family and said I would like to try and raise some funds to re-thatch their hut. Monde thought money would be better spent investing in a new, square mud building with a tin roof. I agreed and made some drawings and priced

the job, although at that time we had very little funds. However we agreed to keep the plans to ourselves and pray about the situation.

As the months went by I saw a lot of people dying and went to a lot of funerals. I also made many good friends including Nomalizo Ndondo, the woman I had seen lying on her mud floor that rainy night and her best friend Victoria, who lived on the mission where I was staying. I also got to know Nomalizo's family. Her mum picked tea as a job and brought in the only meagre income for the whole family. They were a very poor family, life was hard and the prospects were pretty grim, although they always seemed to be happy. As I got to know Nomalizo I learnt that her illness was T.B.

During my time there I tried to help those I could and Nomalizo was one of them, but there were so many sick people I felt helpless and used to weep in my room.

As the weeks and months went by Nomalizo's health was up and down, sometimes looking quite well despite being very under weight. Then one day came that I will never forget. We learned she was H.I.V. Positive. Things to me seemed hopeless, although I knew luckily in our area there was a clinic where some people could get A.R.V.'s, the medication that, with a good diet could give a longer and healthier life.

Nomalizo's Dream

Months went by and lots of things were going on, but one day I decided to fast and pray, a thing that the Bible talks about doing to help a person talk to and hear from God, but a thing that I have rarely taken part in due to my love of food. On that afternoon Victoria saw Nomalizo who told her that she was planning to go back to Durban to find work - in the rural areas there is very little work, lots of people are very poor and go to the cities. Victoria's response to this was that in her state of health it could kill her. Nomalizo said that her dream was to build her mother a small home and she wanted to earn the money for it. I was very excited deep down, and when the pastor returned I told him that I felt that God was saying that it was the time to build them a new home. Monde agreed, but there were still no funds. At that time I had just written my second newsletter and with it going out, you all gave enough money for a new home to be built out of concrete blocks instead of mud, with proper foundations, a tin roof and guttering to catch valuable rain water.

Whilst the house was being built Nomalizo was lying in the mud hut and her health deteriorated. She contracted meningitis so we had no choice but to take her to the nearest hospital in the back of a pickup truck. I visited her every day after she lapsed into a coma.

On about the third day of her coma another pastor was going round the wards praying with patients in the name of Jesus. I asked him if he would come and pray for Nomalizo, but not to touch her as she had meningitis. As he stood over her and prayed in the name of Jesus, Nomalizo's eyes opened right up, her head and shoulders came right off the bed and her mouth was moving with his prayer. When eventually he stopped praying her eyes closed, she fell back on to the bed and went back into the coma for another two days. On the fifth day I went in to see her and she had her eyes open. All she wanted to talk about was God and she asked me to read to her out of the bible how Lazarus came back from the dead.

When she returned home from the hospital Nomalizo's condition continued to worsen. Victoria and I nursed her every day in the same old mud hut where I had first seen her. By now she had constant diarrhoea and sickness and many of the awful signs of full-blown aids. We had got her



Andy and Nomalizo

medication (A.R.V.'s) but she was so poorly, we were crushing the tablets and dissolving them and putting one drop into her parched mouth with a syringe every ten minutes. After an hour or so she would be very sick, throwing up all the vital medication, but through it all she often used to talk about God and Heaven.



The opening of Nomalizo's house.

Nomaliza's dream came true when we were able to carry her smiling into her new house with her family.

It was almost time for me to leave, my visa had nearly expired. The house was built and blessed with prayer. Nomalizo was nearing the end. I knew I wouldn't see her again in this life. It was very hard for me to leave.

I returned to the U.K. and a week later I received a call from her best friend Victoria who was crying, "She's gone, she's gone, she's gone." Nomalizo had gone to be with her Lord. She died knowing that she loved Jesus and that her prayer had been answered. Her

family had a roof over their heads. Nomalizo was buried in the garden.

What your generosity provided

There now stands a house in a village in the old Transkie that's brought light into a poor family's life. It cost about £2,200 and I want to thank you all for making this prayer become a reality.

With the money you have given, we have also been able to purchase a vehicle (£3,021) for a Pastor called Mr Eric Ntshangase, to enable him to earn a living and to work in the community and surrounding villages, which can be miles apart.



Pastor Eric now has a vital means of transport.

My Return

So, I'm due to leave on the 1st November, I will be visiting my friends at the mission where I stayed two years ago. The focus of my trip will be our two friends Clive and Zoliswa with their little daughter Nathi. They have been out in S.A for about four months now, the first three months of their trip being spent in an orphanage in Kwa-Zulu-Natal that they are going to model their orphanage on. They belong to a small charity -Timothy Mission to African Townships (T.M.A.T.), based in the U.K. It is a small charity with big ideas. A lot of young children orphaned by A.I.D.'s need help, and T.M.A.T. is aiming high to open an orphanage. Clive and Zoliswa will soon be at work on their plot of land preparing it for the orphans. At the moment it is just a plot of land in a rural part of the Eastern Cape, no water yet and no electricity, so they need as much support as possible. So far we have been able to give them £1000 which is going towards the orphanage. I am going out to

help where I can, but I will also be praying that God will show us the way we should be moving forward in the near future.

If you want to know more about my trip or T.M.A.T. feel free to contact me, or you will be very welcome to come to our get-together in Hemel on the 16th October where we are pleased to have Margaret Templeman the director of T.M.A.T. coming to talk to us.

An important letter to you all

I am going to finish now with a very special letter Nomalizo wrote to us towards the end of her life. She said she wanted people to read it.

Dear Friends.

My name is Nomalizo Ndondo I'm so pleased of what had happen to me. I was working in Durban for a short time but I wasn't have a money to do my needs while working. When the year was nearly to be end I start to sick because I was working hard. I decide to come back at home. On that time I discover that my mum didn't have money to take me to the Doctor, I feel like I nearly die. My mum was very worried because she think about the expenditure of when im dieing. One day I was lying down and situation was bad, Andy and Pastor Nkulane came to see me. They give me some money to look for the doctor, in short the doctor discovered the T.B. he give me a treatment. When I was continued to use the treatment in few weeks I still becoming sick again. Andy gave me a money to go to the doctor again. The doctor said I must go to the local clinic to do a blood test. I was worried about this because I thought that how can I have money to go to clinic but Andy gave me another one. I find that im tested H.I.V positive. I accept this, but deep down in my heart I think about my future because I wasn't have a room to sleep, even a bed for sleeping, I was staying in a old round house and it was leaking when it is raining. I decided to go back to Durban to look for a job so that I can build a room for sleep, but I was still weak before I go to Duran. Andy and Pastor Nkulane came at home to help me build a house for me and my family. When Andy was talking to my mother I was crying because of this miracle and my heart was full of joy. Soon Andy was going to buy all things for building even food for builders. So now im sleeping in right room no matter it is raining, so now im safe no matter it is raining because of Andy and his friends and families, I want to say thank you very much about all things you have done through Andy.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES/FRIENDS.

Nomalizo Ndondo