

September 2016

Dear family and friends,

Since our last letter, we are thankful to back and used, again, to the warm African sun, watching game while driving on the highway, the long distances and our own home in Okahandja.

We are looking back on our time in the Netherlands with much joy and thankfulness. Thank you to every one of you who made a contribution in one way or another.

Last week we went to Gobabis to discuss in more detail, with the missionary Henk Olwage, regarding our future and also made use of this time to look for a new apartment that we can call home.

Even though we visited a number of apartments, we unfortunately did not find the place, that we can call home, yet. Henceforth, we continue to keep our eyes and ears open even though we are back in Okahandja. We are thankful towards some of the Gobabis church leaders and friends are also on the lookout for a suitable apartment with us.

Despite the fact that we haven't found a suitable apartment we are still planning to move to Gobabis at the end of next week. We are trusting and praying that the right door will be opened to us during the next few days.

During the week that we spent in Gobabis we were brought in contact with a special couple whom we would like to spend more time with in the future. Through this and other "coincidences", we are once again aware of God's hand in every small detail of our lives, even our future home. So in the meanwhile we are working as if it all depends on us and praying as if it all depends on Him.

At the start of October we will spend a few days with oom Henk Olwage, helping him with a few admin tasks for Project Light for the Children to apply for funds that will continue to be utilized to provide food for the more than 200 children daily. Amongst this, other things that we will focus on in the first few weeks are visiting sponsorkids, doing house visits to church attendees of the project in the township and the teachers at project. We would like to meet people in their homes in order to get to know them better as well as how we can assist them in addressing their own needs.

Thank you for your continued support, in every way.

Prayer remains the greatest way by which you can support us in the work in Gobabis. Here are a few prayer points:

- Thank you for the home that God will provide for us in Gobabis.
- A small truck to transport our things to Gobabis.
- Wisdom to build relationships and to assist others in addressing their needs.

Shalom!

Jac-Louis & Gijsbertha

October 2016

Hope

Yes, it remains possible to be filled with hope in the midst of gloominess, or as the saying goes...it is in the darkest places that light shines brightest. Therefore, we continue to be hopeful for we are serving a God to whom **nothing** is impossible.

When reading of the sick that are being healed and the dead raised to life we know that it is still possible today, for our God remains the same yesterday, today and forever.

The above mentioned are encouragements to continue loving, helping and encouraging.

In the physical, we hope for a good rain season, starting with the early rains. The first drops have fallen...promises of good rain...we continue to hope. During the last week we had multiple days of 37 degrees Celsius, while summer hasn't started officially.

Gobabis

Since the end of September, we are in Gobabis and last week Friday in our new home, which is by now "home, sweet home".

Light for the children

During the last 2 weeks we were busy helping with preparations for the 17th birthday celebration of the project Light for the Children. We also made use of this festivity to raise awareness amongst some of the local business leaders, since many of them are not aware what is taking place in the informal settlement (Epako) of Gobabis. Thankful to say (as some of you might have noticed on Facebook) the evening was a great success, with several business and church leaders present, the special advisor to the Governor, Deputy Mayor of Gobabis and the Director of Education in Omaheke, amongst others.

During the evening guests enjoyed a few of the traditional San-dances, songs were sung and speeches held. The narrative of the project was done by, the project director Henk Olwage, who made use of a brief photo slideshow, small beginnings, much work and tons of grace. Beautiful to see this photo of how it looked when they were starting to dig the foundations for the project 17 years ago. And so God's promises remain visible in the hearts of many still involved today as they are working to make the dream a reality...Omaheke for Jesus... starting with us.

Our work

Meanwhile, we are already busy helping out wherever we can. Tuesday evening, we had a meeting with 4 foster parents who care for orphans in Epako. They are being sponsored from Germany. Our colleagues are coordinating the project, and hope to continue to support them as necessary. There are a number of children from these homes who are eligible to receive grants from the government, but they need help to complete the admin necessary, and meetings so we hope to assist here also.

Gijsbertha, with a few ladies started making some crafts that can be sold as gifts or decorations, orders welcome ;). The ladies are really excited about this new opportunity.

Jac-Louis is in the process of getting the necessary applications for international sponsorships in order that are to be submitted soon and helping out where-ever a hand is needed (advising, supporting, team buildings, preaching, etc, a bit like Jack of all... ;)).

Banking details:

Namibia

- J.L.S. van Rooyen Bank Windhoek,
- Gobabis branch, 482773
- Account no. 2000294680, savings

South Africa

- J.L.S van Rooyen
- Absa
- Cheque account nr. 4074565123

November 2016

Thankful

There are so many reasons why we can be thankful! When we realize how much we have, not to forget the seemingly little things, then we cannot stop thanking the Giver of all these good gifts!

We are thankful for our home – a place where we can rest and prepare, recharge, for the next day. We are thankful for the sparks of light in our work, the precious people and moments.

We are thankful for the few drops of rain that has fallen.

We are thankful...

The reality

I come across a 10 year old boy, intently he looks me in the eye and says 'I, also, want to go to school'.

He brings me to his house in the informal settlement and there I meet his mother, aunts and a dozen of little children. What do you do when you are found standing in the midst of such misery?

The reality is definite, but the truth also. There remains only two ways – Heaven or Hell, a life with God or without Him.

May our visits and words not be in vain we pray...

The 10 year old boy begs, and so provides for his younger siblings because his mother is addicted and his father in prison. In reality an orphan...

We are thankful that we were able to obtain birth certificates for him and his 7 siblings and cousins, because they did not have, in the eyes of the authority - they did not exist. Now time cannot pass quick enough for as of January 2017 he and his siblings are going to school for the first time.

We face the question on a daily basis, and so do you – are we willing to lend a helping hand to our neighbour in need?

An 8 year old boy also passes my mind. Physically, malnutrition and an undesirable home environment has taken it's toll, causing him to have the appearance of a 5 year old. As an orphan he is living the past 6 years with his alcohol addicted aunt who is expecting her 4th child in February.

Together with others who are near him, we are working to help him to enjoy, not luxury, but a living hope – a future.

Our hearts are being touched by all the pain we are witnessing around us, but also by the big, loving hearts of people in the same community who are caring for the hurting, the dirty and the dying, of which the multitude is children.

Primary School dropouts

Unfortunately, there are too many children who are rejected by the school system- given no other option- because they are too old for their class. In turn some of them look to addiction,

crime and a fatherless generation as possible options. This thought brought us to visit the Ministry of Education and discussed possible solutions.

In this coming month...There is a vocational training centre in Gobabis that we look to visit in the coming month and discuss the various options there are to accommodate our group of street children.

Sponsorkids

The last 2 weeks we were visiting the sponsorkids again, special to see how much many of them has improved and grown in the midst of tough circumstances.

We are thankful to work closely with these people and children. Their smiles continue to encourage us to continue with what we are doing...may it do the same for you.

Thankful we remain.

Shalom!

Jac-Louis en Gijsbertha

December 2016

Rain is Blessing!

Greetings from beautiful, green Gobabis. Before the end of the year, we thought it necessary to sneak in another newsletter from us. All of us are extremely thankful for the early rains that has fallen the last few weeks. Wonderful to see how our community is looking very much different now. 😊

Cultural diversity

Even though we are in Gobabis for our 3rd month the cultural differences here remains fascinating and keep us from getting too used to everything around us, and keep our feet on the ground. Very evident is how our way of thinking and doing things differ so much from that of the people around us, whereby we look into the mirror and reflect upon our work here.

Holiday programme

During the first week of the holiday (5-9 December) we held a holiday programme at the project. A great privilege and joy to see so many children gathering for 5 consecutive days, 4 hours per day, making use of the opportunity to share the gospel. We made use of the "Wordless book" and discussed a different character trait each day. Each trait had its own colour and each child would then receive that colour string around his/her waist. Also handy to see which kids were there the day before.

The first day, Monday, started with 105 kids and at the end of the week there were 170 kids. Luckily we had a nice team of 4 teachers and an excellent chef.

For these programmes funds would also be appreciated dearly. Kids are off the street for a week, receive proper teaching and one meal a day, of which all are a rare case at home.

Street kids

Since the holiday began we are active in our efforts to accommodate the street children, and stimulate them to think of ideas and activities beside begging. During our contact we came to know each of their names and have a place in our hearts. We are busy organising alternatives for them to do, get their food and remain off the street.

The youngest one of these are 5 years old...

Despite their faltered methods, their searching for what every child needs; healthy attention, acceptance, love and care of a parent. We would definitely like to help them, but need wisdom to do this in the right way.

A visit in the hospital

On the 15th Gijssbertha was operated and a small gland was removed. The operation went well and she is now feeling better every day. We are extremely thankful to the Lord for His

protection and provision. Now we only need to wait patiently for the results, but we are full of faith that the gland was harmless.

The coming weeks

We remain in Gobabis for the rest of the holiday and hope to continue working among the people and children in the community. We would like to visit every teacher of the project school (Light for the Children) at their homes with the intention of building relationships. As many of you already know, cultivating good relationships is key towards building communities in Africa and now we need to focus on it.

Further, we hope to organise a meal for elderly people in the community, obtaining birth certificates, helping oom Henk in his vegetable garden and selling product, planting new trees using the tree cocoons we bought from the Netherlands and doing activities with the sponsor and street children.

Festive season

We would like to wish each one of you a wonderful time with loved ones this festive season. Thank you for being part of our lives, and we're looking forward to 2017!

Sadly, in many communities this season is also filled with grief for many as alcohol abuse, crime, abuse, etc. are realities. May Colossians 4:2 prove as encouragement and we stand together in prayer. May Light shine and hearts be touched by the true message of Christmas – hope also for transformation in our communities.

We appreciate your prayers, support and encouragement dearly.

With love,

Jac-Louis & Gijssbertha