

(Report 4.9.1)

St Lukes Mission Station Report: - Synod 2023

The St Lukes project was a spontaneous result of the outcome of the Synod 2019 when the topic was “Land Reform in its different facets”. One of the guest speakers at that synod was the representative from the Shack Dwellers Association and actually resided in the settlement of St Lukes.

2019 the settlement had about 1110 residents – from baby to elderly and most of them receiving social grants. This settlement is located 35 km inland from East London. From donations of clothing, household items the Coastal Parish was able to assist this community.

With the outbreak of the Covid – 19 pandemic this settlement was throw into dire need of assistance. Schools and businesses had closed and all form of feeding schemes were non - existing. Hunger and medical care were not available, and the people were starving. Within the CCE we were able to assist and together with a local supplier who had the necessary papers we were able to supply much needed food supplies almost immediately.

Funds were released from Cape Church, application for funding was made to the Luther World federation. Thru the LWF we received 2 years of funding – which in turn enable us to supplied regular bulk food deliveries for this period. Congregations wherein the Border Area assisted with household, clothing and other items etc.

When the schools reopened again – the children that did not have the complete or correct uniform could not return. In some instances uniforms were rotated and many children only attended school every alternative day. We were fortunate to receive funds from the Friedrich Schweizer Kinderheim Trust and from congregation

members and were able to purchase school uniforms and shoes in bulk.

During 2022 the majority of the children had re- entered schooling systems and day care centres. In the meantime the settlement also had also had an influx of many new residents and many more houses have be built and number of residents has escalated.

Sadly the total ambience of this village has changed and with that sadly also an element of petty crime and disaccord.

The funding of LWF has come to an end. The school uniform outreach is ongoing, but much tighter controls are in place. Donations from the congregations within the area are still happening, communication is ongoing and the goodwill is still there.

What have we learnt from this outreach project:

- * Humbleness
- * That we can work together – across many barriers.
- * That when government and families forsake their nearest and dearest – there is still a need.
- * That the elderly and children are the ones that suffer most.

To everyone that assisted in any way to make this outreach possible – it was by no means always easy – but I stand in awe and gratitude for this experience in my life and I am sure there are others that would join me. Thank you!



Bettina du Buson

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