



KAPASSENI CALLING



ISSUE 16

AN UPDATE ON THE KAPASSENI PROJECT

June 2008

TENTH ANNUAL BENEFIT CONCERT FOR KAPASSENI, MOZAMBIQUE 'Concert For A Planet You Gotta Love'

GETTIN' HIGHER CHOIR

Directed by Shivon Robinsong and Denis Donnelly
With Special Guest SUSAN OSBORN

Friday and Saturday, June 13 & 14, 7:30pm
Alix Goolden Performance Hall, 907 Pandora
The choir will sing songs from six continents, in five languages, that express our love for the Earth.

Tickets \$20 and \$15 students/seniors. On sale at Munro's Books, Ivy's Bookshop and James Bay Coffee and Books.
For out-of-town tickets call Gloria at (250) 995-8731 or email gloria@gettinhigherchoir.ca



Sarah being chauffeured from Sena to Kapasseni

Seeing The World Through New Eyes by Sarah Petrescu

Walking to mud hut houses to visit people dying of AIDS in Sena, the Kuwangisana palliative care team and I came across a group of toddlers playing in the hot sun. Most had distended bellies from malnutrition. One was carrying a wailing infant whose eyes were closed with pus from infection. It was what I was afraid to see in Africa – a horrific scene fit for a World Vision infomercial.

Then some of volunteers talked to the mother about taking the child to the hospital for medication and said he'd be a perfect candidate for their eye care program. This kind of neighbourly help and awareness is what I saw to be the impetus for change from the inside in these suffering communities.



I am a reporter for the Times Colonist newspaper in Victoria. In February, I travelled to Mozambique and Rwanda as a winner of the Jack Webster Foundation for Journalism "Seeing the World Through New Eyes" fellowship – funded by the Canadian International Development Agency. The purpose of the fellowship is to give young reporters experience in foreign reporting on development issues. When I found out we were going to Mozambique, my first thought was "I have to go to Kapasseni." I had heard about the community from Shivon Robinsong and Denis Donnelly, who lead the Gettin' Higher Choir and raise funds to support projects there. Luckily, the

couple who inspired the project – Joseph and Perpetua Alfazema, both former refugees from the area and long-time Victoria residents – were in Mozambique working at the same time.

The only catch was that I'd be going in flood season and getting there might be treacherous – which it was, a little. Five flights, a \$200 taxi, a ride in the back of a pick-up along a muddy road and six hours on the rat trap of a bicycle later, I made it to Sena and then to Kapasseni village. The trip was well worth it. Perpetua asked me what I wanted to see in my few days there and I said, "Everything you're doing!"

In Sena, I arrived at Kuwangisana to find 100-plus orphans and a dozen grandparents waiting to tell me about their lives made difficult by the ravaging floods, a lack of food and the widespread AIDS epidemic.

The children we met on the trail to Kapasseni carried their school bags with pride. We also met children making music on the valimba under a tree. In the classroom, they jammed into desks and onto the floor to listen. Their teacher told me they liked to learn Portuguese and about the area's plants and animals the most – interesting considering what Joseph told me about the wild and plant life being decimated during the civil war. We got a small reminder of this when Manuel picked up a rusted AK-47 cartridge where the tree seedlings were being prepared. The most beautiful part of Kapasseni was the community garden. Full of cashews, corn, pineapple and other edible fare, it not only represented hope and access to food in a place where it's needed most, it is an emblem of the Victorians who love to garden and helped build it. The place was bustling with a magical sense of progress.

What struck me most about my experience in Mozambique was the pay-it-forward effect that helping others inspired. Neighbours helped each other find food. Grandparents supported each other in caring for children. Most important is the ability of the Alfazemas (and Perpetua's nephew and AIDS educator Manuel Miandica) to communicate and unite generous Canadians with Mozambicans in need. This helps both groups to know what they need from each other.

Since my stories were published in the Times Colonist in March, I have received an unprecedented response from readers who care about Africa, who want to help and who want to learn more about the people in need there.

I hope that the dialogue and connections generated from my time in Mozambique continues. I thank everyone who helped me on this journey, especially the generous people of Sena and Kapasseni willing to share their heartfelt stories.

Sarah Petrescu visited the town of Sena and Kapasseni village with Joseph and Perpetua Alfazema in February. Her stories in the Times Colonist have raised awareness and moved people to donate to the Kapasseni project and to the home-based care programs run by Kuwangisana. Thank-you Sarah for the great photos and stories from your trip. To see the full articles go to www.kapasseni.org



Sarah sees students working hard on their lessons

Kapasseni School Report

School began at the end of January with an enrolment of 300 students. The plans are to have over 400 students when the school expands to grades 6 and 7. There are four teachers for all these students. The community leaders recognize that enrolling children in Grade One must be compulsory when children are old enough to go to school. Classes may be needed in other areas if children have to walk too far to go to school, especially if they are very young. The traditional music program is going strong, and funds were sent to purchase material to make uniforms for the group. Food and fuel prices continue to rise – your donations will help with increased costs for the school breakfast program, school supplies and transportation. Buying locally grown products will help keep costs down and agricultural projects will begin to provide self-sustaining support to the school and the breakfast program.

There are now 20 students from Kapasseni attending higher grades at Murraca boarding school, which is about 60km from Kapasseni. Sixteen students are receiving full scholarships from the Kapasseni Project and four are paying their own tuition. It is wonderful to see that there are seven girls and thirteen boys. At one time there were very few girls going on to higher learning past Grade 5 so this is a big step in the right direction. Unfortunately, food prices have gone up so much that the World Food Program is no longer able to provide food support for Murraca school, so boarding fees have tripled to pay for food for the students. Thank-you to the Gettin' Higher Choir and to our donors for supporting scholarships for Kapasseni students – a great investment in their future!



Joseph Alfazema visits Kapasseni School with Sarah Petrescu

Mission Work Report

by Pastor Joseph

I am the only pastor serving seven churches in Caia District, one in Chemba District and a new place in Saguro, which is in a very remote area. Please continue to pray for us as we work and travel to these different villages. December 2007 was tough when the rain began to fall, making the paths difficult to travel. However, by the grace of our Lord, I was able to reach the communities of Zondane, Sambonete, Mpango and Chemba. We purchased a truck in December, which will help a lot once the roads dry up after the rainy season.

In January, it continued to rain heavily and the main road from Sena to Caia was flooded, and even the narrow paths were turned into rivers. As a result, my bicycle rides to churches in Kapasseni and Murrema came to a stop.

The heavy rain and floods seriously damaged our temporary church building in Sena. The church was made out of mud and thick tree branches. The water entered in the church and stripped the mud floor and walls and part of the grass roof was blown away. Plans are underway to fix the damage, and the Kapasseni Project would like to raise funds to help build six permanent buildings that can withstand the elements in the rainy season. This can only go ahead if the funds are raised.

Baby receiving blankets sent from Ontario have been a blessing to give to mothers who are in need. Your donations can be sent to the Kapasseni Project to help purchase more of these items, or you can mail flannelette baby blankets to the Kapasseni Project, CP.737, Beira, Mozambique.

I would also like to thank you for praying and welcoming our two children, Rafael and Sara back home to Canada. It was unfortunate that they could not continue with their studies in Kenya, due to political instability after the recent election.



Joseph sings with the children in Sena

Your gifts and prayers are making a difference in the lives of many people in Mozambique. Special thanks to the women's groups, CLMS, churches, Sunday Schools and friends across Canada who have supported Joseph's mission work.

Perpetua's daughter, Mazalari Alfazema writes, "My Aunt Lucia in Chimoio, Mozambique passed away April 25, 2008. My mom asked me to thank our Kapasseni friends in Canada for all the prayers and financial support people provided for Lucia's medications since June 2003. *Lucia (Perpetua's sister) was able to live another 5 years with ARV medication and see her four children grow up.*"



Kapasseni breakfast program cooks Ana Joao and Laura Eusebio prepare breakfast and lunch in the new kitchen, which was built with your donations. This simple structure has a cement floor and a fuel efficient stove. A roof provides shade from the extreme noonday sun and shelter from the heavy rain.



Kuwangisana Gift Cards

More and more children are orphaned as their mothers succumb to AIDS. There are 200 orphans receiving food support at the Kuwangisana program run by Perpetua Alfazema in the town of Sena. This program provides support for people and families living with HIV/AIDS. Food costs are skyrocketing with increased world food prices and after recent crops were destroyed in floods and eaten by a hippo! Your donation will help to buy much-needed food and baby formula for these orphans. \$10 will feed a child for one month. Gift cards can be purchased at the fund raising concerts on June 13 and 14, or by contacting gloria@gettinhigherchoir.ca

- Give a gift card in someone's name
 - Donations to Kuwangisana can be made on-line at www.givemeaning.com/project/sena
 - Corporate donations are also welcome
- 100% of your donation will go directly to Kuwangisana, and charitable tax receipts will be provided by GiveMeaning. All you need is an email address and you can join in this opportunity to help with the response to the AIDS epidemic in Africa. A portion of the June 13th and 14th concert proceeds will provide funding to complete the community centre for Kuwangisana, so buy a ticket and enjoy the concert too!

Here's another way to help! Are you looking for a beautiful place to holiday in July? How about a week on Cortes Island right on the waterfront? The weekly rental fee in July for this home will go directly to help with the Kuwangisana community centre! FMI call Carol London at CORTES ISLAND VACATION RENTALS phone/fax 1-800-939-6644, or Shivon Robinsong at 250-386-3184

Life During A Flood

by Perpetua Alfazema

The road from Sena to Caia is flooded and has not been passable for the last three weeks. From Sena to Caia is about 60km. The most serious floods are taking place at Checha, only 14 km from Sena. The only way to get to Caia right now is by boat. The water is very deep and moving fast. Yesterday a staff member from Kuwangisana was coming from Murraça to visit a patient. When there was no boat, he decided to cross the water on foot. He heard sounds like birds in the water, but it was very brown and bubbling so he couldn't tell what the sound was. As he plodded along, he saw two water cobras raised their heads! He was very scared, and walked very carefully until he made it to the dry land.

Kuwangisana's two-hectare food farm is covered by water. All the maize crops, beans, pumpkins, okra, cucumbers, watermelons and sesame have been lost to the flood. Last night a hippopotamus entered into our field and ate whatever looked green and tasty. During the day, from afar, we watched the young hippo basking in the sun. When the floods started, people used to come to the well to catch catfish. Now they have stopped because there is a crocodile roaming around in the flood waters in the farm.

The water level is overwhelming and yet the forecast says it is going to get worse! The flood waters are not caused by rain but due to the opening of the Cahoras Bassa dams in Tete, Mozambique and other dams on the Zambezi River in neighbouring countries. The weather is extremely hot.

Mosquitos, crickets and grasshoppers are in full gear but they are very helpful to most people because they are used as food. At the market the food is very expensive and there is not a great variety to choose from.

Praise to the Lord there have not been any serious cases of cholera reported yet. However, many people right now are suffering from malaria, eye infections and diarrhea. Today, I attended a community meeting in Sena and the police warned everyone to avoid walking in the water because of crocodiles, snakes, hippopotamuses and other unknown creatures that are running loose in search of food.

This report was sent at the end of January just before Sarah Petrescu was to leave for her trip to Sena and Kapasseni. Kapasseni gets cut off when the roads are flooded, but the village is not seriously affected as they are on higher ground and away from the Zambezi River. Supplies can run short though, so it is important to be prepared. Food, material and school supplies were purchased in December with your generous gift card donations. Gift cards to support Kapasseni will be available for purchase at the June concerts.



The road to Sena was flooded and Sarah could not get through. Instead, they drove to Sena along the old colonial railway tracks.



Sarah and Perpetua in the Kapasseni machemba (orchard)

Community Development Projects In Kapasseni

The Kapasseni Project is a cooperative effort of work between the village of Kapasseni and funding partners from the Kapasseni Committee in Canada. The goal has always been to foster independence and self-sufficiency for the local Kapasseni community in planning and working on community development projects.

Chico Fungulane, the headmaster of Kapasseni School, has been in Kapasseni for many years and has been a constant role model for the school children and the community. The community has recently formed their own community development committee, and appointed Chico and project assistant Dorcas Tomas to head the committee. The committee will work with the Kapasseni Society and Lutheran World Federation (LWF) on strategic planning for future projects based on community social-economic development needs, focusing on self-sustaining goals. The committee has some good ideas already, and funds we raise this year will support Kapasseni in their community development projects. The ideas they are working on include helping to improve agriculture and food security. Many plants, bushes and trees have been planted this past year, thanks to your donations.

LWF has an excellent reputation for community development work and is well known in Mozambique. Their assistance will be very helpful to Kapasseni, as they are on the ground in Sofala Province and can provide information and resources for the community development committee in Kapasseni. Perpetua said she learned so much from going to see one of LWF's projects in March. Your continued support will make Kapasseni's plans a reality!

The Kapasseni Project is an all-volunteer partnership between the Kapasseni Project Committee of Redeemer Lutheran Church and the 300-member community-based Gettin' Higher Choir, who work together with other volunteers and partners, Joseph and Perpetua, and the people of Kapasseni.

The Committee consists of Carol Kerr (Chair), Mona Achtzener (Secretary), Deborah Gruben (Treasurer), Sylvia Gledhill (Financial Secretary), Howard Blair, Dorothy Pearson and Pastor Phillip Washeim. Special thanks to Byron Biller, Treasurer of Redeemer Lutheran Church.

Participants from the Gettin' Higher Choir include Shvon Robinsong, Denis Donnelly, Bill Hanson, Gloria Hansen, Sabine Laubental, Ian McLachlan, and all other choir members.

PROJECTED 2008 BUDGET

Projected General Funds

Balance from 2007	\$61,958
Donations	14,500
GHC concert proceeds	10,000
Scholarship and music program	3,000
Gift cards	<u>7,000</u>
Total	\$96,458

Projected General Expenses

School	- salaries	\$ 5,200
	- breakfast program	2,200
	- uniforms/material	4,000
	- school supplies/resources	4,300
	- maintenance	1,500
	- transportation	1,000
	- AIDS education	600
Scholarships		4,100
Training/site visits/microcredit		2,500
Health Centre	- salaries	3,000
	- supplies	1,000
Agriculture/food security/wells		5,648
Administration in Mozambique	- project workers	4,692
	- transportation	1,500
	- bank fees	1,000
	- office and communication	800
Kapasseni Society		1,700
Admin in Canada (newsletters, office supplies, bank)		1,700
Travel expenses		1,000
Community development projects		<u>45,000</u>
Total		\$92,440

Mission Work Projected Funds

Balance from 2007	\$29,391
Donations	20,000
Grants	<u>7,000</u>
Total	\$56,391

Mission Work Projected Expenses

Joseph's salary, benefits, housing, school expenses	\$32,067
Supplies/printed material/office rental	4,700
Transportation, bicycles/security	4,000
Special Projects – Food For Work	1,000
Training/site visits*	2,500
Buildings/shelters*	<u>9,116</u>
Total	\$53,383

Making Donations

Thank-you for your continued support for the Kapasseni Project. Please indicate clearly if your donation is for "general funds" or "mission work". Separate accounts are kept for development work and for Joseph's mission work. General donations do not go to mission work. Mission work funds do not go to general funds work.

- **Kapasseni Project - General Donations:** for the school, music program, scholarships, breakfast program, health care, HIV/AIDS education, food security and community development work.

- **Kapasseni Project - Joseph's Mission Work:** *these projects will only be completed if enough funds are raised.

Mail donations to: Redeemer Lutheran Church
911 Jenkins Ave, Victoria, BC V9B2N8

Charitable donation tax receipts will be issued.

FMI contact Carol Kerr (250) 478-9296 email kapasseni@yahoo.ca

Visit our website at www.kapasseni.org