Dear friends,

As we enter the last quarter of 2008, we are all deeply under the impression of how God had journeyed with us over the past year. Starting with a small group of 36 volunteers in January 2006 (although, at that time we thought this was a large group!) - we now have ten groups with a total of around 350 volunteers working in the southern region of Swaziland, attempting to address the most pressing needs of the people in that area. As part of our ministry, each of the volunteers receive a food parcel every second month (some of which are shown in the picture) as it is important for us to keep them healthy so that they can continue with the work.

During the course of this coming month we plan to train at least one more group of home-based caregivers. But some time ago I reached the point where I just felt totally overwhelmed, not only by what we are already doing but, more than that, by the needs we keep on identifying in Swaziland. Recently I heard the latest report on the orphan situation in Swaziland. Until then I had believed that Swaziland had about 95,000 orphans (10% of the population.) The latest figures show that Swaziland has 137,000 double orphans (where both parents are dead) plus thousands more single orphans! Normally I don't have any problem sleeping, but lately there have been times when I wake up at night, with my mind immediately fixed on the situations we are faced with in Swaziland and when I struggle with the question what God has in mind for us.

I am convinced that God is preparing us for an even greater ministry. On the one hand I'm excited about this, but at the same time I'm also frightened. We have many stories to tell through which we can testify how God had provided in miraculous ways for our needs in the past - financially and otherwise. And we do believe that God will provide if we do what He wants us to do. But then, deep down, there is always that fear that we may not have heard God correctly. Therefore, I want to encourage you to keep on praying for us - more than ever.

Earlier this month I had the chance to visit the Fish Hoek Baptist Church (which had received the 2007 Courageous Leadership Award), during a conference hosted by USAID. What a blessing to be there. I had always thought that we were pretty involved in the fight against HIV and AIDS - that is, until I saw what these people are doing. It was such an encouragement to see the variety of ministries that have evolved from their vision to make a difference within their community. The conference I attended was primarily focussed on expanding our capacity to do the work that God has called us to do. And as I listened to what was being said and I thought back to our situation in Swaziland, I came to the conclusion that we definitely need to do more. Home-based caring is good. But it's not enough!

One of the things that I believe we will need to focus on, is a Biblically-based and culturally-relevant AIDS prevention program. Furthermore, as we are planning to erect a kitchen at
Dwaleni in order to expand our feeding program for orphans, I believe that we could also invest in their future by giving attention to their education. One possibility would be to have the children do their homework at the church with a teacher assisting them. A number of studies have shown that the higher the level of education, the lower the rate of AIDS infections. We have a few other long-term plans as well.

**BUT:** I cannot do this without help. And I believe the time may have come where we will need to find one or two volunteers who will be willing to spend a year or two in Swaziland to help with this work. And I also believe that the time may have come where we will need to find a board of directors who will be able to assist in the running of this work. (These are just some of the things I realised while attending the conference at Fish Hoek!)

Therefore, I want to ask you this month to pray specifically for a few issues:

- That God will show us clearly in which fields we need to expand our ministry
- That God will provide the necessary resources to do the work He wants us to do
- That God will help us to remain totally dependent upon Him
- That God will guide us to make the right decision about the building of the kitchen at Dwaleni. The farm on which our church is situated at Dwaleni is not our property. Some people are advising us against erecting a kitchen on this ground (although it is the only logical place to do it), while others are advising us to go ahead and build the kitchen and to trust God that it will not become a problem in the future.
- That God will provide partners who specialise in the fields in which we need to expand our ministry to guide us in the right direction (such as the prevention program)
- That God will provide volunteers who will be willing to assist with the work in Swaziland if He wants us to expand the ministry
- That God will show us the right people to serve on a Board of Directors, who will be able to carry out our vision of “becoming the hands and feet of Christ in our community.”

**Just a few snippets:**

- Our home-based caring project has been approved as a Section 21 company (non-profit). This should help us at the border when we import goods into Swaziland
- In the latest Joy Magazine (October 2008) an article was published on the Courageous Leadership Award which we received (page 14)
- I was recently interviewed on a radio program which will be on the Afrikaans radio service sometime in October or early November. It will be in the program, “Oop Gesprek” at 19h30 on a Sunday which still has to be determined
- Our 350 volunteers are taking care of 1462 clients and during July, 3831 visits were paid to these clients.

We are so thankful for every person involved with our work, in whatever way. May God continue to bless you richly.

Arnau & Wilma.