

OUR WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA

BACKGROUND

ON THE CROSSROADS/CHARITY PARTNERSHIP

Crossroads in Cincinnati, Ohio, began its partnership with Charity and Faith Mission Church in Mamelodi, South Africa, several years ago when the leaders of both churches, Brian Tome and Titus Sithole, met at a conference in Chicago. As Brian and Titus grew to know each other they found that the missions of their churches were similar. Specifically, both churches strongly believed that they must be a blessing to their communities by helping to solve the real issues they faced.

Titus was the only pastor in Mamelodi who was actively confronting the AIDS epidemic. Mamelodi is a township community of one million people where between 30%-40% of the population is HIV positive. Titus built an AIDS crisis center on his church property that provides free testing and counseling for hundreds of people both inside and outside of the church. He also established a large home-based care team to provide vital services to AIDS patients throughout Mamelodi.

In 2003, Titus had a vision to build a full-service AIDS hospice that would both: A) serve as a base for in-home care of AIDS patients, and B) provide a place where people in the final stages of AIDS could be taken from private homes that were often abusive and be placed in a caring environment.

Concurrently, Crossroads was beginning a building campaign to double the size of its facility in Cincinnati. Brian and Titus agreed that a portion of the funding raised in the campaign would be dedicated to make Titus' hospice vision a reality.

Funding for what is now known as Bophelong Community Hospice was secured in May 2004, and the facility officially opened in April 2006.

PARTNERSHIP VISION

Both churches believe that the AIDS hospice in Mamelodi was only the beginning of a long-term partnership. Crossroads employs full-time staff, supported by a strong volunteer team, to lead the partnership in the U.S. Charity & Faith has also developed a team of leaders in Mamelodi dedicated to the partnership.

The ideological foundation of the partnership is that Titus and his church best understand the needs in the local community and that the role of the church in Cincinnati is to support his vision. Currently, core initiatives in the partnership are:

- Providing health care services, beginning with the AIDS hospice and expanding to other capabilities.
- Creating jobs and sustainable revenue that offset the operating costs of these services.
- Meeting immediate needs such as food and medical supplies.
- Personally connecting individuals from both communities to accelerate volunteerism and engagement.

HEALTH CARE SERVICES

Crossroads has assembled a team of over 40 health care professionals who partner with Charity and Faith to:

- Volunteer their time on mission trips, providing medical, dental and eye care to the community and building relationships with the local health care community.
- Develop a plan to provide a continuous presence of U.S. health care professionals on the ground in Mamelodi.

JOBS AND REVENUE GENERATION

A Crossroads business team has focused on several projects to combat crushing unemployment in Mamelodi, and to generate revenue to help offset the cost of health care services.

IT professionals from Crossroads installed a fully-functional adult education center on the Charity campus, complete with dozens of computers and one of the only high-speed Internet connections in Mamelodi. Two Crossroads volunteers spent almost a year teaching English and typing classes. Five South African women were trained as medical transcriptionists and are currently working out of the computer center for a Cincinnati-based medical transcription firm.

A team of Crossroads business experts have created a business development program in Mamelodi that envisions quarterly job-seeker and entrepreneurship classes as well as business mentoring for Mamelodi-based entrepreneurs. The team is also actively seeking out business opportunities in South Africa to create jobs.

And Crossroads has assembled a team of grant-writing experts to seek out long-term funding for the various initiatives. In fact, Crossroads received its first monetary award as a top ten finisher out of 100 churches in the 2007 Award for Courageous Leadership in HIV/AIDS.

www.courageousleadershipaward.com/2007_crossroads_community.html

CONTINUED ON BACK

JOBS AND REVENUE GENERATION (CONTINUED)

Crossroads and Charity also helped establish a non-profit business called "Beaded Hope" (www.beadedhope.com) that connects a community of South African women affected by HIV who create beaded jewelry to a receptive market in Cincinnati. This provides much needed income for these women who are severely disadvantaged in the local employment market.

MEETING IMMEDIATE NEEDS

Crossroads has mobilized a team of volunteer shipping and logistics experts to facilitate the deployment of much-needed food and supplies in Mamelodi. Over the past two years, the team has shipped over \$225,000 worth of medical, construction and business supplies to Charity. Also, as part of its annual Thanksgiving Food Drive, Crossroads has collected and shipped over 140,000 pounds of food to be distributed by Charity to those in Mamelodi who are starving.

PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

In the past two years, a project entitled "GO Mamelodi" brought nearly 900 members of Crossroads to meet and serve alongside members of Charity and Faith Mission. As a result of these trips:

- Hundreds of Americans and South Africans formed strong, lasting relationships, with many still communicating via e-mail.
- Hundreds of Americans spent an evening in the homes of the people of Mamelodi. This is groundbreaking as very few Americans have ever set foot in Mamelodi and many South Africans refuse to visit the townships.
- Hundreds of backyard gardens were planted in Mamelodi's squatter villages providing much-needed vegetables to those who are dying of malnutrition.
- Dozens of homes were constructed using both South African block construction and American wood construction.
- Thousands of Mamelodi kids attended programs with music and games designed just for them, a first in the township.
- Nearly 900 suitcases packed full of children's classroom supplies were delivered and teachers from Crossroads partnered with teachers at Charity's school to discuss best practices in education, classroom management and administration.
- A children's library was set up at Charity's school, complete with 6,000 donated books.

- Because of the extraordinary presence of hundreds of Americans in the township, important public officials, including the South African Minister of Social Development, the Mayor of the City of Pretoria and the Deputy Speaker of the South African Parliament visited Charity and committed to help Charity in its efforts.
- Both Crossroads and Charity leaders were interviewed on several national TV and radio programs.
- After the first trip, Titus received a call from the South African Vice President saying, "I've seen your church and those Americans all over the news, and I want to learn more about what you're doing and how your model can be expanded nationwide."
- After the second trip, the Minister of Social Development was so impressed with what was accomplished and the hope that Charity & Faith is bringing to the people of Mamelodi that he instructed his staff to begin negotiations with Titus to rent the second floor of the hospice, thus providing additional support services to the poor of Mamelodi and helping to offset a majority of the hospice's operating costs.

2008 AND BEYOND

Crossroads is now sending three or four teams to Mamelodi each year, and we plan to send up to 400 people to Mamelodi in November 2008, with regular annual trips thereafter.

Crossroads hosted 35 Charity members in our homes in May 2007, and we are bringing more of our South African partners to the U.S. in May 2008. Charity members join us in a one-day "mega serving" opportunity where 4000 church attendees volunteer at over 175 projects of non-profit organizations in Cincinnati and surrounding areas.

Crossroads and Charity both hope to hire full-time professionals in Mamelodi to manage the partnership, and are working diligently to ensure the long-term stability of the infrastructure we have already built.

Finally, Crossroads and Charity are both 100% committed to the partnership and believe this model of relationship and service can change the world, through widespread replication with other churches and organizations in the US and Africa.