

the michael project

---

# NEWSLETTER

---

December 2016

## THE VISION

To advocate for orphans and children at risk, by mobilizing the church to biblically care for vulnerable children.

## ZIMBABWE STATISTICS

- 1.2 million orphans
- 5 000 in Children's homes
- 15 legal adoptions annually
- 12 000 street kids
- 4500 child marriages in 2016

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- What a year
- Local Adoption Beliefs
- Shalom— A haven for children
- Pre-schools, transforming lives
- The Team evolves
- We value your support

## WHAT A YEAR!

As we come to the end of another year in Zimbabwe and face, yet again, an uncertain future in this beautiful land with its amazing people; we marvel at God's provision, greatness and overwhelming love for the children that he has brought to the Michael Project.

We have faced the unexpected, and deeply sad, loss of a staff member, the retirement of another, as well as celebrated a new baby in the family of a team member.

We have seen God provide for two of our special needs children in Shalom, to attend the best schools in town, and others at the home thrive in the school they attend down the road from their home.

As we look, in 2017, at taking the model of what we have been doing for orphaned and vulnerable children in our community to other churches across Zimbabwe; we are confident that many more children will be taken in and cared for through pre-schools, day care centers and loving families by adoption and foster care.

We are excited to see our team grow with the addition of Simba and Barbara Pfupajena, a wonderful couple who will be taking on much of the Michael Project's day to day operations, co-ordination and management. Simba and Barbara adopted their daughter two years ago with help from the Michael Project and have a passion and heart for orphaned and vulnerable children. We look forward with great excitement for what God has in store for The Michael Project in 2017.

Dave and Helen Hobbs

## LOCAL ADOPTION BELIEFS

ZIMBABWEANS have adopted children since time immemorial, but this has tended to be done informally within communities and between families. It is very common for children to be raised by parents who are not their biological parents, so it is not a foreign practice.

However, due to fear and ignorance, legal adoption tends to unnerve many people who then discourage other people, who may be open to it. They invariably tell horror tales of unknown spirits descending upon the adopted child later on in life.

The story is always the same with minor variations. The totem-less child always runs amok one day smashing the fine china and tearing the curtains in a demonic frenzy demanding to be returned to his or her people. These spirits punish the adoptive parents for having "taken" a child who was not theirs and they cause all sorts of misfortune and havoc just to put their point across.

(Extract from article by Miriam Tose Majome, Newsday, 30 January 2016)



**John 8 v 36: So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.**

The Michael Project works to breakdown strongholds of superstition and fear through the power of the Holy Spirit.

## SHALOM — A HAVEN FOR CHILDREN



Sixteen children live at Shalom. The home is divided into three family units with the children growing up in a healthy environment where they experience the care of loving parents, the community and of God.

Incredible opportunities have been given to one of our Shalom kids who attends a special needs senior school and now experiences horse-riding and golf as part of his weekly curriculum.

Three of the children also received awards from their school at the end of the year, being

- ♦ Most improved student and a certificate for neatness and a good attitude.
- ♦ Worker of the year .
- ♦ 1st place in grade 4.



Shalom Kids among friends at their local Sunday School Camp

*We have been so heartened by the continued commitment of a father who maintains contact with his children, visiting them at Shalom, and bringing gifts when he can. After tragically losing his wife, and the mother of his 3 children in childbirth, he voluntarily opted, due to extremely tough circumstances, to have his children placed and cared for at Shalom. What a selfless act of a father wanting the best for his children.*





## PRESCHOOLS TRANSFORMING LIVES



**The Michael Project runs three preschools, in Wingate, Greystone Park and Chikurubi Female Prison. We also run a day care center for babies.**

When Vimbai (not her real name) enrolled at Wingate Preschool, she was malnourished, sickly and missed many days of school.

During home visits our teachers found Vimbai's mother to be a closed off and bitter woman disillusioned by the harshness of life. After many visits and prayers Vimbai's mom finally opened up and revealed that she and her daughter were HIV positive and struggling to cope.

With support and encouragement from the teachers, mom and daughter sought treatment at a nearby clinic.

Vimbai is now 6 years old and thriving by the grace of God through the loving intervention of her teachers.

## THE TEAM EVOLVES

### CONNIE MAHUPETE



With mixed feelings we bid a fond farewell to Connie who joined the Michael Project in February 2008 as Gogo (Grandmother), confidante, nurse and general matriarch of

the children of Shalom Children's home.

Mixed because we are sad to see her leave and know what a gap this will create at Shalom, but happy to see the fruits of her labour in the wonderful children that she has raised over the last 8 years, culminating in one of her foster children taking 1st place in class at the end of this year.

We wish Gogo Connie God's richest blessings as she takes her well deserved rest and ask that she return regularly to visit her family in Shalom.

### SHEILA YINASHO

It is with great sadness that we write of the passing away of Sheila who was part of the Michael Project team from May 2010 to September 2016.

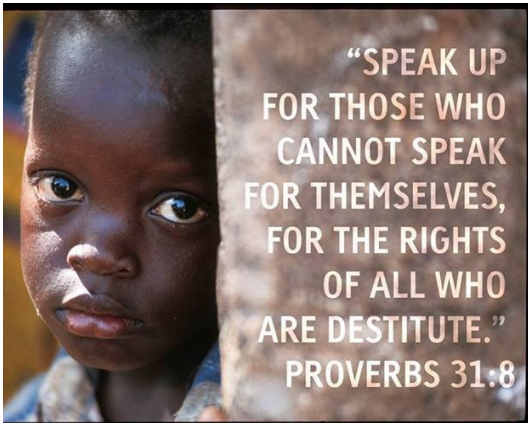
Sheila began teaching the Shalom toddlers in the home and then moved across to work in the nursery classroom at our Chikurubi Day Care Centre.

We remember Sheila's delight as we spoke of how, even though she didn't know how long the babies were going to be with her in the nursery, before their mothers were released from prison, or transferred, she had such wonderful opportunity to share the love of Jesus with these little ones and the joy of providing nurture and protection for them whilst they were with her. She loved the children, never having children of her own, and we thank God that he brought her to us to minister to the children of the prison mothers.

She is greatly missed.



# WE VALUE YOUR SUPPORT



## PRAY

- That the Church in Zimbabwe would rediscover the Biblical mandate to care for the fatherless .
- That God would comfort and provide for orphans. That they would experience His love as their heavenly Father.
- That every orphan would find a family.

## WHAT YOUR GIFT CAN DO PER MONTH

- \$40 will pay fees and buy uniforms for one child
- \$75 will buy food for one child at Shalom
- \$100 will purchase toiletries for children helped by the Michael Project

## GIVE

Give a **little** , give a **lot**

Every **dollar** counts and every **dollar** is put to good use.

Give quickly and easily via these sites or contact our offices for assistance.

[www.themichaelproject.org](http://www.themichaelproject.org)

[www.themichaelproject.org.uk](http://www.themichaelproject.org.uk)



## PROVIDE A HOME

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>Adopt</b>           | Legally accept a child into your family.                 |
| <b>Foster</b>          | Care for a child on behalf of the State.                 |
| <b>Place of safety</b> | Provide short term sanctuary for children in transition. |

## THE MICHAEL PROJECT

River of Life Church, Cnr Gaydon & Quinton Rd  
Greystone Park, Harare

Phone: +263 4 885374, 885375, +263 (0)86 7700 4009

Email: [enquiries@themichaelproject.org](mailto:enquiries@themichaelproject.org)