

STORIES  
OF  
*Hope*

*Healing for brokenness*  
HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

# Stories of Hope

## FAMILY CONNECTIONS

Sharing lives across diverse cultures and ages

**A growing and diverse community of >200 people** gather regularly on Sundays to worship together and to grow. However, it is the intentional relationship building within this mixed group, where lives are changing and cultural barriers are being crossed, that is so desperately needed in South Africa.

**Examples of some of the stories of hope include:**

- A man moving from his affluent home to live in the local informal settlement;
- A couple working to overcome divisions of the past to engage in community and foster children of a different race;
- A couple making place in their home and lives for foreign refugees;
- Former gangsters/drug addicts finding restoration and a home at CHS.

**Many others are stepping out of their comfort zones to share their stories and lives across division.** This kind of integration that becomes authentic relationship is happening and those involved are modelling real life leadership in both the church and home communities.

*Connecting spaces at CHS have become extremely limited as we have grown and this is restricting opportunities to bring people together.*



**Imagine if** multiple opportunities for relationship building, healing, development and service could resource a movement of empowered and engaged peacemakers and builders of hope.

**Imagine if** real discussions, storytelling & hospitality happened in a Life Café that welcomed and brought us all together. Such spaces are so scarce even though apartheid is gone.

“After years of feeling on the outside, for the first time I felt I belonged.” CHS MEMBER

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## GROWTH & EDUCATION OF YOUNGSTERS Building bridges through shared activities & teaching

**Spiritual growth of children:** Age-appropriate groups empower >60 children per week from a wide range of backgrounds to grow in many dimensions of life - in relating to God, to others and in expressing their gifts. Instead of a child-care service, this is a greenhouse of personal growth. Around 20 teenagers and young adults are also connected through social and discussion groups, providing a safe place to address critical issues of life facing young people today.

*Yet the children meet in wooden huts and cluttered rooms, and every available space is taken. The social connecting spaces are too limited to encourage and attract teens from local neighbourhoods.*

**Schooling:** The SNAP (Special Needs Adapted Programme) primary school has used the CHS premises to house and educate around 20 special needs children and teachers in their non-mainstream programme. The building has been alive with the sounds of children learning and playing throughout the week.

*This school has sadly had to move due to insufficient space for growth on our current premises.*

“The children love to come and their parents & carers are getting great feedback; more families are coming.” CHS CARER



**Imagine if** we could house groups in age-appropriate safe and stimulating spaces, where creative and engaging programmes could be delivered to more children in more groups.

**Imagine if** more children could be supported in growing spiritually and emotionally to become creative and characterful leaders for our future.

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## STRENGTHENING OF FAMILIES & RELATIONSHIPS

Support networks across the ages

**MomSpace for children & carers:** Many parents and caregivers feel isolated, exhausted and under pressure. They are looking for encouragement and equipping to give life and joy to caregiving. This group welcomes a diverse range of people, building a sense of community and providing a secure and stimulating space for safe play, good coffee and cake. The group has grown to **>50 caregivers and little ones**, who have found a place to belong, grow relationships and share advice.



**Imagine if** there were secure and welcoming facilities to resource, encourage and support vulnerable people across gender and age.

**'Sisterhood' for vulnerable girls & women:** This group meets in the community to engage with around **60 young vulnerable girls** weekly to build relationships and grow life skills using creative and artistic activities. Many of the mothers of these young girls have now also started a weekly gathering to encourage and resource each other.

*Current facilities are stretched to the maximum and space is too limited for free play and connection; alternative public gathering spaces are too expensive or unsafe and potential to bring teams together is lost.*



“I used to live a life involving alcohol and inappropriate relationships; through Sisterhood, I have decided to refocus on developing my own life. I also think it is really important to encourage my friends in the same way.”

SISTERHOOD GIRL

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## LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Equipping leaders to train & mentor teenagers

**Equipping leaders and mentors:** Ronald from Capricorn used to be homeless and addicted to drugs. CHS invested in Ronald's life through coaching in relating and job readiness skills and **he has found purpose and capacity** to oversee the 'Future Life' programme, including:

- Future Talk (life skills for primary schools),
- Future Stars (reaching young lives through sport),
- Cross Life (safe places for >50 Westlake youngsters to hang out, play games & share food),
- Future Hope (after-school fellowship & Bible study for high school children in Capricorn), and
- Sisterhood (building hope for young vulnerable women).

Ronald's passion in life is to encourage others to take the lead in their own lives and work within their own communities. Overall, **more than 350 children** are engaged weekly and lives are being transformed.

David from Malawi, stood on the side of the road waiting for work. He found hope at CHS and was inspired to start 'Future Talk', a program that engages with primary school children to enlarge their hope of a different future. **More than 110 youngsters** attend classes weekly and camps annually. David also launched 'Future Stars', mentoring and sports development of primary school children in Capricorn and Sea Winds communities; this includes league soccer teams of **more than 40 boys** who are resourced weekly with food, mentoring and study material.

“Future Talk has helped me to picture a different future full of hope.”

FUTURE TALK STUDENT



**Imagine if** more like David and Ronald were reached, trained and deployed in our communities.

**Imagine if** we could use resources and facilities to extend life skills development to grow more young leaders in our diverse communities.

*Meeting places for these groups are scattered around the communities wherever space is available. Support resources are limited and there is untapped potential for growth.*

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## WELLBEING OF WOMEN & MEN Networks to connect, grow & encourage

### ‘Ladies Linking’ to connect and grow women:

Many women in our local South African society carry heavy caring responsibilities, feel unsupported, lonely and without purpose. An inspired team started "Ladies Linking" to link women and enable them to encourage, support and grow together, as well as to share how God's love can shine through in both routine and tough situations. This dispersed and evolving network involves **more than 50 women who are realising that they are not alone** in facing life's issues and as a result families are more supported.

*Meetings are hosted at various venues with appropriate welcoming space to host talks, training courses and events; consistency of meeting and flexible response are therefore difficult.*

### ‘Sawubona’ to connect and encourage men:

This emerging group was created for men to connect and share breakfast and talk about the real issues they face in life. **Men from many walks of life and refugees from different countries** have been welcomed and included.

*“This group is amazing - we get to understand each other, we share the same Christly desires; it's uplifting and empowering.”*

SAWUBONA MEMBER



**Imagine if** many more men and women from local neighbourhoods could see the Life Centre as a place of refuge and family support could be multiplied.

**Imagine if** the Life Centre could include neutral and safe spaces with potential to host and share meals together.



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## PARTNERING WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Understanding and appreciating the value of relationships

**Capricorn and Vrygrond:** CHS has **strong links** with the Capricorn Community Centre and, together with NGOs like Yebo Life, Youth with a Mission (YWAM) and leaders from local churches, CHS runs life skills and discipleship programmes in Capricorn Primary School, sport and art clubs for children.

**Westlake:** CHS was a **founding member** of the Westlake United Churches Trust (WUCT) and partners with other churches to run life skills and discipleship programmes in Westlake Primary School as well as one of the only youth groups in the area.

**Kirstenhof:** CHS **provides a venue and works together** with the police and local community groups such as the Kirstenhof Neighborhood Watch, Kirstenhof and Environs Ratepayers Association (KERA) and Kirstenhof Community Parks. Each year these groups together arrange the Kirstenhof Community Carols and Christmas Market, creating a space to make connections and build community. CHS also prays regularly for our neighbourhoods with leaders from local independent, Baptist, Methodist and Anglican churches, leads prayers at Kirstenhof SAPS and takes services in local retirement villages.



**Imagine if** there were enough spaces and resources to facilitate widespread connection and sharing across the breadth and depth of different community groupings locally, thereby enabling mutual support and upliftment.

“It is the intentional investment in relationship building of CHS members into our local informal settlement which started to draw us all together to cross barriers and also support other informal communities close by.”

MEMBER OF CAPRICORN COMMUNITY

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We look forward to the  
stories of hope continuing  
as TOGETHER we  
heal for brokenness & build  
HOPE FOR THE FUTURE



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