



Rev. Dr. Denise Kingdom Grier – South Africa

A glimpse at what your support made possible:

Thanks to you, 2022 was a remarkable year for Setshabelo Family and Child Services (SFCS), South Africa's first black-owned child adoption agency. Here's a reflection from one of the social workers: "A mother came to Setshabelo Family and Child Services because she was concerned about her parenting skills. She became so enthused and engaged that she qualified to be a "temporary place of safety" home for abandoned babies. She now hopes to adopt a little guy who has been identified and temporarily placed in her home."

SFCS at its conception offered housing for orphaned children at the Children Youth Care Center [CYCC]. Now that they are a child-placing agency, they work with the local churches to identify homes for children as an alternative to an isolated setting. The CYCC has been repurposed to provide temporary housing for children in need of therapeutic services. Seventeen children with intellectual disabilities and conduct disorders from all over the Free State Province found a home at the CYCC in 2022. This is the only facility in the Free State of this kind so parents are willing to travel many miles to visit their children and learn from the SFCS staff how to care for their children. **These families would be helpless without you.**



Our challenges of 2022

Ms. M arrived at the police station in February 2022, here are the notes from the interview: "The complainant alleged she was sleeping at home when she woke up and saw someone entering the house through the window on February 5. She noticed it was Vungile, who had a knife. He overpowered the victim and raped her. At that stage, she was afraid of the suspect as he threatened to kill her and therefore decided not to report the case. On 2022-02-11, the suspect caught her fetching water outside, forced her again into her house, and raped her several times through the night. In the morning, the complainant managed to report the incidents to the police..." where

she was greeted by SFCS Social workers who are stationed at the police station to offer psychosocial support to victims of rape.

Gender-based violence continues to bring challenges to the life of women and girls living in Botshabelo. SFCS collaborates with the two police station offices in Botshabelo, via their Victim Empowerment Centre, where our social workers meet and counsel victims of physical and sexual abuse. They aim to protect children in families where abuse is present and help heal the community so adopted children can find healthy loving families.

My greatest challenge as the mission liaison for this project was connected to the inability to travel to South Africa because of COVID risks. I haven't been on the ground in Botshabelo since February 2020. Communication with the staff at SFCS has been limited to Video Chat, email, and WhatsApp, which limits the free-flowing exchange of information and the intimate connection to the people and the work. I'm eager to return to Botshabelo in February 2023.

Botshabelo Victim Empowerment Centre



Please Pray

Please pray for me as I prepare to return to South Africa in February with General Synod President Rev. Dwayne Jackson and a group of other RCA pastors and leaders. In addition to spending quality time with partners in Botshabelo, we intend to also visit Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (URCSA) Belhar in Cape Town to experience the source of the RCA Standard, [The Belhar Confession](http://www.rca.org/belhar) (www.rca.org/belhar).

Please continue to pray for God to completely eradicate Gender-based violence in the world. Ask God to protect Kaybe and the entire staff's minds, bodies, and spirits as they navigate places of violence for the sake of vulnerable children.

Please pray for the churches, both in Botshabelo and in North America, to listen and respond to God's call to participate in the work of redemption and revealing God's Kingdom on Earth as in Heaven so that infertile parents find children and orphaned children find loving families.

Thank you,
Denise