

# “Just a South African Girl Living in an Alabama World”

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.” – Hebrews 10:23

An idea which seemed only possible as a daydream, God molded into a reality. In the late hours of a Monday night, in early 2016, random thoughts were being tossed about in respect of a fun, compelling, and dynamic event, in which various businesses, churches, community groups, non-profits, colleges and schools could be incorporated, with the aim of uniting individuals regardless of race, gender, age or belief system.

With Africa being so ingrained in the roots of a number of our community members, God not only birthed the idea, but grew such an excitement within the hearts of the community to host a “Bambelela Drum Circle” in support of Kwathu Children’s Home in Livingstone, Zambia, a ministry partner of Grace Klein Community.

“What is a Drum Circle?” you may ask. Simply put, a drum circle is a group of people, from a few to many, sitting with chairs arranged in a circle, experiencing the spontaneous creation of music on a variety of drums and percussion instruments.



*“The first sound we ever heard while still in our mother’s womb, was the beating of her heart, and the rhythm of her breath. No matter our race, gender, age, religion or belief system, this common experience exists for all human beings. When newcomers are first introduced to drumming, they often say: “Oh, I don’t have any rhythm,” in an attempt to excuse themselves for their imagined inadequacy. **The truth is: WE ALL HAVE RHYTHM!** Rhythm is our natural inheritance. It exists in our bodies, our hearts, our breath. It exists in the vibration of atoms, the cycles of the seasons, the ticking of clocks, the orbit of the earth. There is no part of creation that is without rhythm!” – Author Unknown*



Our heart behind the event was for all to experience true Koinonia, a deep unity and fellowship that *should* exist amongst all Christ followers, the Body of Christ. Communion, joint participation, the “share” in which one has in anything, and joint contribution, all play a vital role in the planning, preparation, and roll out of the event. A beautiful representation of the Body of Christ, actively working together, each part just as important as the other.

**“But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as He wanted them to be.” – 1 Corinthians 12:18**

Yesterday, everything was fine. Today, I had a mini meltdown. Why? Event’s such as these should be filled with excitement, enthusiasm, and laughter as we journey through the preparation phases. Shouldn’t they? Let me be vulnerable here for a sec. I am a ball of stress during event planning. I enjoy every minute of behind the scene engagements, getting things done without being noticed, and not having to deal face to face with folks, at the risk of being “rejected.” It’s “easy” to send an email requesting a door prize; the burn of “no” doesn’t hurt too bad. It’s “easy” to text a friend asking if they could volunteer for a couple hours during the event; no need to take it personally when they already have plans right? It’s “easy” to promote the event on social media, I won’t know if people just scroll past the post. Why am I so scared of what people think?

When a flyer needs to be designed, created by the “limited” amount of creativity in my bones, the fear of others’ thoughts toward my design sets in. I see junk, others see beauty? Receiving one email after another with the response of “we’re unable to meet your request at this time” starts to set in.

I become desperate when volunteers have made family plans months in advance, wishing they could cancel to help me. Why do I receive this as rejection? I place myself on an island, feeling alone, and inadequate to handle the responsibility of a successful event. The enemy slyly injects deception into my mind, telling me that the success of the event determines my worth. The enemy fills my head with shame. Suddenly, what isn't true, "is." I worry that I'm inconveniencing others when asking them to bake a cake, volunteer for an hour, or pray for me in my many moments of selfishness. I get lost. Lost in my thoughts. Lost in lies, deception, the many untruths. I forget to see what the Lord is doing and continues to do...

The day I received an email from Pinky Fancy Faces willing to donate two hours of their time to bless us with a professional face painter for the event, a joy! This is their second year of participation! A friend found an expired coupon from Aveda Institute and encouraged me to contact them to consider donating a door prize, today I hold a \$100 worth "day of beauty" for one lucky winner. A \$25 "lunch for two" Ashley Mac's gift card practically landed in my lap after completing an online application form. Buffalo Rock offered to share cases of drinks for attendees, even after sponsoring another Grace Klein Community event earlier in the year. Buds Best Cookies never hesitate to share cookies, cases at a time! After a social media post asking volunteers to consider baking homemade treats for the event, ten people offered to bake goodies, some folks I've never even met. The Church at Brook Hills graciously loaned us their student building to host the event, while Chick-Fil-A, Hoover Commons contributed fifteen gift cards as door prizes, and The Hedgerow Folk from Auburn, AL, mailed ten copies of their brand new album to bless participants. The Birmingham Zoo climbed on board providing a family pack of four tickets as a door prize, while Hoover Auto Mall and Christian Brothers said "yes" to Silver Sponsorship. Express Oil, WayFM Radio, and the Birmingham Barons never hesitate to donate gift cards or merchandise items either! Greystone and Rocky Ridge Elementary School gladly offer to share the use of their drums and other unpitched percussion instruments, making the event possible each year. Friends travel from Atlanta to volunteer, willing to take on whatever task we assign them. Such love. Such givers. Such sacrifice.

Funny how the event is named the "Bambelela Drum Circle." Bambelela is a Zulu (one of the official languages in South Africa) word meaning: "**Hold On.**" All this work, all this effort, "the acceptance," "the rejection," all to remind me to **Hold On** to Jesus!

So often I can lose sight of the Father's heart, forgetting the first step taken in obedience, and need daily reminders to walk the rest with open ears to His voice. "**Hold on**" He tells me, over and over again. Truly, God's got this. Look at His provision! "**We walk by faith, not by sight.**" – 2 Corinthians 5:7

What am I worried about? What a comfort it is to know the Lord! With that being said, if you're in need of encouragement, a good laugh with fellow believers, or even just an evening out with your family, I'd encourage you to save the date for the next "Bambelela Drum Circle." Come as you are, kick your shoes off, relax, and enjoy worshipping the Lord in new way, through music, in unison with the Body, **holding on** to what's true. I sure needed the reminder.

**"But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do."** – Galatians 5:15-17

**Will you get on your knees for me?**

Pray that God's TRUTH would continue to rest in my heart and mind with only a few days left before the event.

Pray that the hearts of attendees would be fully open to hearing from the Lord as they worship together in unity with the body through various instruments.

Pray for the volunteers who have graciously taken time out of their busy schedules providing a helping hand where ever the need.

