

ADDENDUM: REPORT FROM ZWAI MTYHOBILE & GRAHAM DUNCAN

THE STATE OF RAPTURE REPORT (RAPTURE ⇔ Racism + Capture)

Presbytery of Tshwane

Rev ME Mtyhobile

Many presbyters wonder why is it that the Rev ME Mtyhobile and the Rev GA Duncan have not attended Presbytery meetings for six years and have reached their own conclusions. Yet, they know the answer to the question and some were told the reasons and interestingly enough none have ever bothered to ask the Presbytery for an answer from the two to the Presbytery. It is a privilege to finally be given a chance to explain our side of the story as the Presbytery refused to hear our side on the May special presbytery in 2013 to date. The reasons are explained below and in the period since 2013 when the presenting problem of racism came to a head, a number of other historical and other incompetencies have come to light.

2006

The Rev W Smart decided to do the unthinkable in the Presbytery, and invited a black child from South Africa to do Probation in a white congregation. Presbytery licenced the Probationer at St Columba's, Hatfield, Pretoria. Within five months, the Rev Smart left the country for Ireland leaving behind the black probationer in a white congregation, a congregation of the UPCSA. On May Presbytery 2006 a report to this effect is tabled on the floor of the Presbytery and the Presbytery decides to maintain the status quo. An interim moderator was appointed In the very first Session meeting after the Presbytery sitting, a problem arose between the Interim Moderator and the Probationer. The probationer decided that he cannot continue in the same congregation where this interim Moderator is. Presbytery is not informed about the situation. A good Samaritan comes along and rescues the situation. The Black probationer is moved to another congregation to finish his probation and the new minister by default becomes the new supervisor.

2010

In the sitting of the Presbytery in 2010 November, at St Andrew's, while a point on ministers who are battling in black congregations was being discussed, a senior white minister of this Church said "the bible says we will always have the poor amongst us, why should the presbytery waste its time discussing this point". Fortunately, a few of the ministers objected to this notion and this kind of interpretation. But this to me was the symptom of the deeper problem within the presbytery. The Minister was never taken to task by the presbytery on his interpretation, even though the Presbytery knew the danger posed by such to those who were living with the pain of poverty. And unfortunately, the face of poverty is a black child, and the only person who will understand how it feels to be poor is the one who knows it as the one feels it. For such reckless statements and the Presbytery's lack of response was problematic for me.

2011/12

At the University of Pretoria in a discussion with one of the Professors and some Presbytery ministers, a comment is made by a white Presbytery Minister that they do not like black South Africans but prefer the black foreigners as they have some level of maturity. I wrestled with the concept of maturity and the meaning of it and concluded that the problem with some black people in South Africa is that they refuse to be lapdogs hence creating problems for some white people. That statement is so evident even today if you look around the probationers that are supervised by white ministers in this presbytery are non-whites from outside of South Africa. If this is not racism then I must be very dumb and stupid.

STUDENT FROM ZIMBABWE

This is the student who was accused by another of sleeping with someone's wife. His case was dealt with and eventually the student resigned from ministry. His case was handled by the Moderator and the Clerk of the presbytery as the student was under the care and discipline of the presbytery. Processes were followed to the letter, with no interference from the ministers of the presbytery including the chaplains to Sedibeng. Please note that there was no "interference from the chaplains".

STUDENT FROM SOUTH AFRICA

By comparison, a student that was accused of impregnating a member of the youth fellowship in Polokwane. Before knowing about the situation and before dealing with it, two white ministers from the Presbytery became involved in the matter without the mandate of the Presbytery. They came to represent the presbytery in the matter, while the black Presbytery Clerk and the black Ministry Cwere

ignored in the process. The student won his appeal case at the AARP, and the Presbytery invited the Ministry Secretary to come present the case to the Presbytery in the absence of the student (this is how blacks from South Africa get treated). This matter at this stage is already closed, but because the Ministry Secretary is white, he came to the presbytery and say all the wrong things and unproven ones about the black South African Student and was believed by the presbytery without the presbytery hearing both sides of the story. I wonder why the treatment is different?

2013

In an ordinary meeting in Rustenburg, the Rev M Mtyhobile raised the matter of racism and his concern on how the student from South Africa was treated, and other issues that he sees as being racist. Prof Duncan supported him and substantiated these accusations. The Presbytery was up in arms and the Rev Zwai decided to go and sit outside while the Presbytery continues with its business.

Several days after the meeting Rev Zwai received and insulting letter from the Ministry Secretary that suggests his inability to read the *Manual of Faith and Order* and the suggestion was that he will make himself available to come teach me the Manual of Faith and Order of the UPCSA [the law of the UPCSA had been changed during the previous General Assembly at the petition of the Presbytery of Tshwane as the result of the Ministry Secretary's mishandling of the student issue outlined above where the student won his appeal]. Emails were exchanged between the two people. The email from the Ministry Secretary raises details of what had been discussed in the Presbytery meeting and my responses. This occasioned a notice of motion in the subsequent special presbytery meeting regarding the revelation of presbytery discussions and decisions even before the relevant minute is in the hands of presbyters (and the presbytery condoned this). Surely by this time the Rev Mtyhobile was very upset that his name is dragged in the mud like this. By the way, this is the same ministry secretary who was in Scotland and insinuated that black students from the University of Pretoria are very irresponsible and reckless; that they visited Scotland in an exchange programme during term time and I had to challenge him and I was charged by ministry committee through him of bringing the church to disrepute when I challenged the issue and told him that he was being racist. The fact is that students did go to Scotland during their Christmas break only after they had sat and passed their examinations as a condition of going. These students are now ministers in this presbytery.

2013 May special meeting

Both the Rev Mtyhobile and the Rev Duncan requested the moderator of the Presbytery to call a special meeting to address the emails that were coming from the Ministry with the request that the Presbytery rebukes those who sent this information to the Ministry secretary.

A white Minister of this Presbytery came the day with small papers with a proposal that the meeting should not take place. This proposal was irrelevant as the Manual requires that the first item of business is that the Moderator asks the presbytery to affirm his calling of the meeting. This proposal was tabled on the floor of the Presbytery and it fell away. Then the Moderator recused himself from the chair as the matter directly affects him with his clerk and the very same person who did not want the meeting to take place was appointed to chair the meeting without deferring to the previous moderator. The Moderator and the meeting refused to receive the evidence from those who requested this meeting from the Moderator. Eventually the two Ministers after a long debate from the floor of the Presbytery decided to leave the presbytery meeting.

The Rev Prof Duncan makes it very clear before leaving in tears why he is deciding to leave the Presbytery. The Rev Zwai after some minutes stands up and addresses the Presbytery and makes it very clear that he can no more be part of an unjust, racist presbytery, and will come back when the presbytery is willing to address the issues of racism, injustice and capture of the Presbytery.

No one attempts to stop the Rev Mtyhobile from leaving; good riddance the devil is gone.

It is very surprising that when you read the minutes of this special meeting nothing is said about the attempt to stop the meeting from happening, no proposal and no decision. I wondered why the Clerk of Presbytery never saw the need to record such an important part of the meeting? Was he told not to record that part? What would one call the omission of such valued part of the minute of the Presbytery, if it cannot be called Presbytery capture? Why is it that nothing is recorded on the emails that we had brought as evidence to the Presbytery and were refused to be received through votes? Why is that vote not recorded? Conveniently so - Capture! Why is there no mention in the minutes

that we had both addressed the Presbytery before leaving? Presbytery Capture? Minutes are censored and incorrect why? - Capture. Racism and Presbytery Capture worms need to remain deep in the belly of the beast so that no one will know about them.

These are just the few incidences that really are an irritation and that the Presbytery is unable and unwilling to address. When ministers are appointed the process is inconsistent and this depends on the colour of the Minister. Black Ministers in this Presbytery cannot be appointed to some white congregations even though those congregations can afford it, they will rather take a retired minister than a Black young, educated and capable Minister.

WHO DOES APPOINTMENTS TO CONGREGATIONS?

It is a norm in our Presbytery to move Ministers around after they have finished their terms in congregations where they are interim Moderators or appointed as stated supply or on a two-year appointment. The Presbytery will always be quick to point out that your term is over, but this happens more to black ministers. This does not happen with a CDE. The Presbytery will always be told that they are doing a sterling job, and this report of a good job always comes at the floor of the presbytery by the same minister who is so conscious of the period of black ministers in a congregation. I always wonder what is a good job if these congregations are not growing to a point of being able to call a minister? Who determines good and in whose terms? Is this some sort of protection to individuals? An example may be found in the minutes of the February 2014 presbytery meeting where it was reported that the Session intimated that it expected to be able to call a minister in two years (ie. 2016). The question arises, why then after receiving so many very positive reports about the progress of work at Rustenberg, this has not happened and why the presbytery has not intervened to ascertain the reasons for the inability to reach the stated goal?

The rest can be said some other time, these are just the lowlights of the Presbytery and the reason why are left the Presbytery. Now you can judge me!

WHAT HAVE I LEARNED?

I grew up in a township. Dogs in a township wander on the streets looking for something to eat, they look after themselves with no boundaries. A white friend of mine one day when he visited me almost ran over one of these dogs while it was feeding on the road in a carcass (and he called this dog a scavenger. He never understood why dogs were so thin and feeding on dead bodies when they have owners who should look after them.

I then looked around my township and saw many of our dogs were doing the same, some looked very sick and nobody cared, some looked very hungry and nobody cared, some without energy as they were sleep near the road waiting for something they can consume and nobody cared, some had scars from fighting over food and other things and nobody cared.

I came to the suburbs. All I saw were the nice-looking dogs that were well looked after. Dogs that will be taken to salons for a hair wash, dogs with medical aid for when they are sick, dogs with a food budget and will never see a day without food, dogs that are well looked after. These dogs they are taken for a walk in the mornings and or evenings by their masters or by the domestic workers. They are not allowed at anytime to be outside the yard by themselves otherwise they will be disciplined. These dogs are well trained, they know who to bark at. They are looking very beautiful and healthy. They are really loved by the owners

The beauty in this story of mine is that the dogs from the township remained dogs who had the full freedom to move around and do whatever they wanted to do without accounting to the owners. Yes they look thin and horrible but have their souls, integrity and everybody know that they are real dogs.

I can never be a non-white, I will forever remain a black with my integrity and can never sell my soul for a piece of a frozen chicken. The Presbytery either accepts that this is 2019 and black people can say what they like and do what they like as the whites do.

Rev GA Duncan

The Notice of Motion to Discipline Graham Duncan & Zwai Mtyhobile

This has to be dealt with because this is what brought the matter of dissension in the Presbytery to a head. The first issue is what constitutes an apology and what does it mean? It means that a person who is not able to attend a meeting with reasons given is required to tender an apology. I have regularly done this with regard to the requirements of the Manual of Faith and Order (MOFO:10.67).

Further the Presbytery has always sustained my apologies; that is it has acknowledged my absences and condoned them. The complainant has never raised an issue here. Hence, what is the problem? Further, the complainant, a bible believing Christian, has failed to submit himself to scripture in terms of his ordination vows:

I accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as inspired by the Holy Spirit to be the uniquely authoritative and sufficient witness to Jesus Christ and as such the Word of God and the final rule of faith and life

Has he not, then, read and implemented Matthew 18:15ff?

If your brother does wrong, go and take the matter up with him, strictly Between yourselves. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over But if he will not listen, take one or two others with you, so that every case may be settled on the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, report the matter to the congregation.

This has never happened although the complainant by his actions has skipped two stages in the biblical injunction. Only one member of the presbytery has offered any form of care during the last six years (apart from Pat Baxter's recent intervention). Presbytery may well remember that I left the special presbytery meeting on 23 May 2013, following the 11 May 2013 statutory meeting, saying that this presbytery neither cares for nor disciplines its ministers. This demonstrates a persistent lack of moral courage in the members of Presbytery.

The question of motivation, therefore arises. Why and why at this time and in the manner of a notice of motion? It is clearly not:

to maintain the unity and peace of the Church, to help those who go astray, to repent and be restored, and to discourage others from being tempted by bad examples. The aim of discipline is, therefore, to care for and correct rather than punish. Every member of the church is subject to discipline (MOFO 8.1).

The presbytery has experienced neither peace nor unity during the past five years, and this action does not promote peace and unity. This raises the question of who, in this case is culpable? There seems to be little regard for submission to the MOFO (see below). There is a clear attempt to alienate those who stand by the MOFO and apply it consistently. This makes the issue personal. Here, scripture is clear:

Anyone who nurses anger against his brother must be brought to justice (Matt 5:22)

On the 25 May 2013, we made it explicitly clear that this would be our last attendance at Presbytery until it dealt with the issue of racism

I have deviated from this declaration on several occasions as the result of continuing to participate in presbytery activities. I have responded positively to all requests from the presbytery:

1. I prepared and presented a paper on Rev Tiyo Soga for a conference where only two presbytery ministers turned up and, as far as I know, none apologised;
2. I Moderated Presbytery at the request of the former Moderator in order to licence Zoro Dube and the complainant did not offer an apology;
3. I have been supervising a probationer as the result of a decision of the presbytery.

This is more participation than that of many who attend all meetings and sit

Silently contributing little or nothing to the business.

- In addition, I have undertaken denominational responsibilities at the request of the General Secretary, Convener of the Church Unity Commission and Moderator of the General Assembly

Further, has the Presbytery taken no notice of decisions of the General Assembly?:

1. The General Assembly encourages all in the UPCSA to familiarise themselves with the content of the plan to address inequalities and inequities and instructs the structures of the UPCSA to implement its tenets as guided.
2. The GA instructs Presbyteries to identify any areas of injustices, inequalities and inequities within their bounds and to communicate the action they have taken to the Church in Society Committee through the Presbytery Conveners.
3. **The General Assembly urges the members of the UPCSA to give chance to mediation process for dispute resolution before following the legal processes as resolved in 2016.** (PROCEEDINGS AND DECISIONS OF THE 13TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2018. DECISIONS AFFECTING PRESBYTERIES - THE GENERAL SECRETARY:647-648)

Further to this, what has the presbytery done to investigate the poor attendance of other commissioners? Is this a selective exercise or are all presbyters subject to the same rules?

RACISM

This is the matter which caused disruption in the presbytery when on 11 May 2013, Zwai Mtyhobile and I objected to the racist handling of a student matter by the presbytery in which two white ministers, one of whom was the Moderator were involved. In that meeting the Moderator admitted that a matter of discipline was involved, yet he had not insisted that the matter be referred to presbytery but colluded in the Ministry's Secretary taking the matter out of the presbytery's hands. Zwai Mtyhobile and I then petitioned for a special meeting of presbytery to be called. This exacerbated the situation and Zwai and I left the meeting. The student successfully appealed against this action; yet, the Moderator was found by presbytery to have acted correctly.

An earlier example occurred when there was an attempt to induct Rev Jaco Bester to Middleburg without the documentation being complete, when two black ministers' appointments were held up for a period of three months, for the same reason, thereby causing them lack of clarity regarding their future as well as financial hardship.

At the next presbytery meeting I raised the issue with the presbytery by saying that the benefit of applying the *Mauual* strictly was that it meant that no one could use the charge of racism. The Presbytery studiously avoids this issue which I raised several times when I was Moderator. Further, I am not aware of any presbytery or congregation which followed the General Assembly's instruction to hold services of repentance following the change in the political dispensation of 1994. I raised the issue of who determines what is racist the perpetrator or the victim? No response has been forthcoming or any discussion of the question.

MY STATUS

How and why the matter of my status was raised remains a mystery to me despite my many attempts to get to the bottom of this matter. Even at the point of three months after the matter was raised no one could remember who raised it although a proposal was accepted and agreed to although it did not appear in the Clerk's report to Presbytery, which means that it was dealt with illegally since it did not come in the form of correspondence, a notice of motion or a petition. In terms of our polity proposals can only be considered if they are raised in the report to avoid rogue proposals, such as this to be infiltrated into the agenda. The matter should have been raised as a notice of motion if anyone had the courage to do so and expose themselves.

Once it was raised it was left hanging in the air. It was only due to my persistence that the presbytery appointed the Ministry Convener and then two successive moderators to meet with me. Not one made any attempt to meet with me. Despite being instructed by the presbytery, they have never been held to account and none have apologised for their inaction. It was only when Frikkie Botha became Presbytery Clerk that he found this matter had not been attended to. On 13 August 2016, it

was noted that the matter came from the GA Ministry Committee. So why was there no communication tabled relating to this? And why would this be of interest to that committee when I was no longer a seconded minister? Eventually, I was declared me a minister without charge without ever having been spoken to or written to. Six years later at the Presbytery meeting held on 9 February 2019 it was agreed: 'P_5.2.3. Presbytery requests the Moderator and Clerk to meet pastorally with Graham Duncan and Zwai Mtyhobile prior to the May Presbytery meeting. It was proposed, seconded and agreed'. Why was this a request and not an instruction because it left the Moderator and clerk free to not fulfil the 'request'. Again, no action has been taken – resulting in the Presbytery's failure to administer care or discipline of ministers. A subsequent meeting was held, arranged by the Moderator, but the presence of the Clerk became an issue and the Moderator denied that he had been instructed by the General Secretary to meet with me 'as a matter of urgency'. The meeting ended at that point.

Would it be too much to understand the feelings of alienation and lack of caring I experience? Again, this appears to have a malicious origin.

CHAPLAINS

In recent years at least three chaplains have left the Presbytery to submit to the care and discipline. No questions have been asked to discover the reasons. This is typical of the careless attitude of presbytery which is responsible for their care and discipline.

ACADEMICS

Despite presbyters being aware of it, no one has questioned or acted on the fact that there is an academic, who is a UPSCA minister residing in the presbytery who has not submitted to the care and discipline of the presbytery. What does this say about the Presbytery?

PAT BAXTER'S INTERVENTION

This was a serious attempt to move things forward. Pat Baxter, as a new and concerned member of presbytery, organised a series of meetings with Graham Duncan, Zwai Mtyhobile, Theo Groeneveld, Alan Cameron and Frikkie Botha (then Clerk of Presbytery).

RUSTENBERG – BAPTISMAL HERESY

Here there is no clearer evidence of the capture of the Presbytery; that the entire Presbytery has participated in heresy at the instigation of the person who has control of the situation (Interim Moderator) in Rustenburg and is responsible for leading the congregation astray and supporting the present incumbent in doing the same. Not one member of Presbytery voted against or dissented from Presbytery's decisions in this regard and all are therefore complicit in heresy. Further, the incumbent has been disallowed from celebrating one of the sacraments in a decision that is unprecedented in the history of global Presbyterianism. There is no such thing, and there has never been any such thing, as a minister of one sacrament. It has been suggested the action of Presbytery was 'pastoral'. The pastoral role of Presbytery is 'care and discipline'. How can a Presbytery act pastorally, when a congregation and others are being led away from the truth of the gospel and the historic faith and order of the church? The same question arises when a responsible person in a congregation is maintained in office rather than disciplined, by being helped to see the error of his ways or enabled to find a community where his faith position is acknowledged and supported:

MOFO 18.1 Discipline is necessary to maintain the unity and peace of the Church, to help those who go astray to repent and be restored, and to discourage others from being tempted by bad examples. The aim of discipline is, therefore, to care for and correct, rather than punish. Every member of this Church is subject to discipline.

Confession of Faith 8.10

As Christ died and rose for us, once and for all, baptism happens only once. Whenever received, it remains effective for the whole of a believer's life; the promise is permanent.

Manual of Faith & Order 3.18

The act of baptism must not be performed a second time on anyone, because baptism is the sacrament that initiates us into the death and resurrection of Christ as an event that was once for all (Rom 6:1-11, Hebrews 9:11-10:18). In having initiated us into his covenant, moreover, God does not play fast and loose with the promise that baptism signifies, as though we may need a second baptism.

Here is clear evidence of the Presbytery's deviation from the doctrine, law and practise of the UPCSA. Not only that how does the presbytery expect to maintain and develop work at Rustenberg when the situation is allowed to continue.

At the may Presbytery meeting a minute was agreed;

P_7.10.2. Presbytery, in terms of the powers granted it in terms of paragraph 16.136 of the Manual of Faith and Order, extends the appointment of Rean Fourie as Church Development Evangelist to Rustenburg Presbyterian Church, for one year, from 1 June 2019 to 31 May 2020. **(Presbytery also notes that Rean has completed the sacraments test as required and that the panel marking it, including the Ministry Committee Convener, were very satisfied with his answers)**

It was proposed, seconded and agreed.

No indication is given regarding whether or not the CDE was questioned regarding his heresy or whether or not he had recanted. Why this comment when others have also passed the exam well? The situation is further exacerbated by the fact that the majority of the UPCSA's candidates for the ministry are being trained in a heretical Presbytery. What example of faith, submission and obedience is the Presbytery conveying to them as it plays 'fast and loose' with the faith of the Church?

LEARNINGS

1. The Presbytery of Tshwane is dysfunctional and in an unsatisfactory state.
2. There is a distressing lack of understanding of the polity of the UPCSA manifested in disregard for the terms of the *Manual of Faith and Order*.
3. There is a lack of understanding of the concept and administration of discipline.
4. There is no effective pastoral care in the Presbytery manifested in the lack of action on the part of successive Moderators in the role of *pastor pastorum*.
5. There is almost no critical voice in presbytery.
6. The continued lack of participation of members of presbytery during meetings, particularly ministers, demonstrates the absence of moral courage in this council of the UPCSA.
7. For ourselves, we have come to the conclusion that any meaningful fellowship and spiritual care and development has to be sought outside of Presbytery.

**Rev GA Duncan
Rev ME Mtyhobile
5 July 2019**