

NECTAMEN CONSUMEBATUR

Presbyterian Link

April 2012

A Publication of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa

Editorial



After a long period of recess, Presbyterian Link is back in circulation. This break gave us, the editorial team, sufficient time to evaluate and assess the previous issues with a view to come out with a revamped newspaper for the church.

This Easter edition of our newspaper represents the breathing of fresh air into the publication. We have attempted to create a revamped, easy-to-read paper filled with messages, information and stories which reflect something of the life, work and witness of the UPCSA.

Presbyterian Link represents a platform where information will be shared by various stakeholders in the denomination. We urge you all to use this medium by submitting articles and news to us so it can be shared with other members of our denomination. It is our intention to produce a quarterly newspaper. The success of this church mouthpiece lies in your hands, so please do supply us with news regularly.

Two challenges were experienced with the previous publications. The first was that many Presbyteries failed to submit news for publication. The second challenge was distribution. Both these stumbling blocks represented inadequate cooperation from our members and structures.

To overcome this, please feed us with the news and ensure that once the publication reaches the Presbyteries, it is adequately and effectively distributed to all our members. Remember the more we give our members information, the more we empower them.

This publication will also be posted on the church website to improve distribution, ensuring that those who do not receive hard copies have access to electronic versions. With cellphone web-browsing and computer access being what it is, we hope to reach almost every corner of the geographic space our church occupies.

As the editorial team we are extremely excited to bring you this Easter edition. This issue is distributed free of charge, but future ones will be sold for a minimal sum to cover the production costs.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions on how we can improve. Views and articles should please be sent to Tom Coulter at clerk@presbyterian.org.za

Enjoy reading and have fruitful Easter celebrations,
Benny Boshielo

*Our Lord died on Good Friday,
But the cross did not destroy
His resurrection on Easter morn
That fills our hearts with joy.*

*Now we know our earthly death,
Like His, is just a rest.
We'll be forever with Him
In heaven, where life is best.*

*So we live our lives for Jesus,
Think of Him in all we do.
Thank you Saviour; Thank you Lord,
Help us love like you!*

Letter from George

Dear friends,

It feels like a long time since I have written to you. It has certainly been a good while since you received a newsletter publication from the UPCSA! The Church is well. That is not to say that the Church is without challenge. The consolation is the discovery that what seems an insurmountable challenge today becomes, by God's grace, a short time of trial amidst the long flowing tide of God's favour.

The English mystic Evelyn Underhill wrote in 1921 that the Church should not be dismayed at the spiritual fervour of the mystics because there was nothing that could not be corrected by "the general good sense of the Church". Perhaps that is what we should pray for: a little good sense!

As I write this message, I am about to tour the Presbytery of the Central Cape. I am humbled to be the recipient of the Church's generous hospitality and to be the ambassador of your warmth to the brothers and the sisters in Central Cape.

Easter takes me on a "roller-coaster" pilgrimage. It's not all "sweetness and light". I'm not suggesting a psychotic episode, but it is a sometimes sad – sometimes happy journey. From his entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to his death on Good Friday, Jesus' face was turned determinedly toward the events that would split history in two. Easter reinterprets the deep pain and suffering of the world. Walter Brueggemann expresses this helpfully in his prayer:

Easter in the Very Belly of Nothingness

*Death will be all right for us when it comes.
But dying is another matter –
so slow,
so painful,
so humiliating.*

*Death will be a quick turn,
the winking of an eye
but dying turns and twists and waits and teases.*

*We have not died,
but we know about dying:
We watch the inching pain of cancer,
the oozing ache of alienation,
the tears of stored-up hurt.
We watch close or distant;
we brace and stiffen
and grow cynical or uncaring.*

*And death, wins –
we, robbed of vitality, brought low by failed hope,
lost innocence,
emptied childhood,
and stillness.*

*We keep going, but barely;
we gather at the grave,
watching the sting and
the victory of dread.*

*But you stir late Saturday;
we gather early Sunday with balm and embalming,
close to the body
waiting for the smell but not;
dreading the withered site...but not;
cringing before love lost...but not here.*

*Not here...but risen,
Gone,
awakened,
alive!*

*How lovely to see death loose its sting,
To see the grave burst in the presence of victory,
To see silence burst into song,
To see dread turn into dancing,
And tribulation thoroughly overcome!*

Remember, the night holds no more darkness. Hallelujah.

I pray that the Easter services you conduct, attend, participate in will be full, brimming with of hope.



Living in the Power of the Resurrection

Dear Friends,

As we celebrate Easter, we are reminded again of the true message of the Gospel which proclaims the crucifixion, death and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

It is sad to realise that many Christians and churches have distorted this message, lost focus or allowed themselves to crowd out the truth. May our celebration of Easter draw us to the cross and the empty tomb. May it remind us afresh of what Jesus has done for us and, indeed, bring us to the core purpose of the church - which is to proclaim Christ as the Saviour of the world. May we find a holy distraction from the lesser things that seem to drain our energy and taint our Christian witness in the world. My prayer is that the UPCSA will continue to discover what it means to live in the power of the resurrection.

I am pleased that we have now been able to resurrect the Presbyterian newspaper. We hope to print a further two publications this year: one after the General Assembly and the other in December as our Christmas edition.

Please send us any newsworthy or interesting stories you have about your congregation, Presbytery and how God is working among you, so that it can be shared with the rest of the UPCSA. Allow me to alert you to some developments in the UPCSA:

1. The Priorities and Resources Committee of the General Assembly is currently evaluating the UPCSA Mission, Vision statements and Mission priorities. We have sent a questionnaire to Presbyteries, ministers and congregations to ask what God is doing among you and through you in the UPCSA. Please help us in this process. We are hoping that this will help us discern what God is doing and calling us to do as a church.

2. We had an ecumenical conversation on 15 March 2012 with some of the committees of the general assembly and other ecumenical organisations to discuss the UPCSA engagement in community matters, social and world issues such as HIV/AIDS, education, poverty and environmental issues. We hope and pray that our denomination's involvement in these areas will make us relevant in our times as we proclaim the good news.

3. We will be having our moderators, clerks and treasurers meeting from 19 to 20 April where we will discuss crucial aspects in the life and work of Presbyteries. We have started to implement our Presbytery empowerment plan to strengthen the effectiveness

and efficiency of Presbyteries. At this consultation we will be looking at the action plan of Presbyteries as they attempt to address some of their needs and challenges.

4. We will be having our General Assembly from 14 to 20 July within the bounds of the Western Cape Presbytery at Stellenbosch University. We will discuss some very significant issues related to the life, work and witness of the UPCSA. We request your prayers for our preparations for this assembly and for God's spirit to guide us as we deliberate on various matters.

5. We give thanks for the conversations we have been having with the women's groups and the men's groups in our attempts to address the conflicts we are encountering among the church associations. We can only hope and pray that we will be able to claim, embrace and nurture the unity we have in the Risen Lord as we seek to witness to the rest of the world.

6. We give thanks for what God is doing in and through the ministries of many of our congregations. It is true that many congregations face numerous challenges, including financial, but it is also encouraging to know that despite these struggles, they continue to keep the light shining in their witness to Jesus Christ. It is our endeavour at the central office to journey with you in your struggles and joys as we seek to faithfully proclaim the good news of the Risen Christ. My prayer is that the good news of the resurrection of Jesus Christ will resurrect your hope, joy, and love for God, the church, your congregation and ministry. May the joy of the Lord be your strength! Blessings!

Jerry Pillay, General Secretary.



Countdown to General Assembly 2012

Tom Coulter

This year the General Assembly will be held at Stellenbosch University within the bounds of the Presbytery of the Western Cape.

A number of changes will be introduced this year to make Assembly more user-friendly:

- ✦ The Agenda will be translated from English to seSotho and isiXhosa.
- ✦ New translations of terms used at Assembly will also be introduced such as Listening Session, Decision Session, transactional and missional proposals. These will again be translated into seSotho and isiXhosa.
- ✦ The Insaka Sessions will be improved by: Training of facilitators and scribes. Compulsory attendance at all sessions to ensure maximum participation. Inclusion of a seSotho and isiXhosa speaker in each Insaka Group to improve communication.
- ✦ Inclusion of an in-depth orientation session, which will be more interactive.
- ✦ To allow commissioners to hear the proceedings in their own language, there will be translations in seSotho and isiXhosa. This service will only be available to 20 delegates at present as it is really only an experiment and we have to hire the equipment from the university.
- ✦ Commissioners will be asked to complete an evaluation form on the consensus model which will hopefully aid us in improving things into the future. This will take place on the Thursday evening to allow sufficient time.

We are always trying to improve the Assembly particularly as it relates to our transnationality and cultural diversity, and look forward to receiving your feedback to allow us to continue doing this into the future.

Celebrating the Life of the UPCSA

Compassionate churches campaign: Beating the stigma of HIV/Aids in congregations

Rev. Buhle Mpofo

"I had the pleasure of worshipping at the UPCSA congregation in Newcastle, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, on Sunday 26 March 2012. The congregation demonstrated three hallmarks in which they have successfully defeated the stigma of HIV/ and AIDS.

They have broken the silence - the terms "HIV" and "AIDS" are used easily and consistently in sermons, and prayers and announcements. A Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT) tent was set up right by the front door to the sanctuary and it was used after the service.

They are reaching out to the community, working together with other churches and governmental agencies to bring a coordinated community action against the pandemic. I found it very inspiring - a model of what churches and congregations can do when they take proactive steps to fight the stigma and to care for those infected living with and affected by HIV/Aids."

(Dr. David Barstow, President, EMPACT Africa after visiting a UPCSA Congregation)



Here is an encouraging message of a church that is socially involved and reaching out to the community. Historically, churches are known to have been "slow to act", choosing rather to be judgmental. Now Churches and Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) are contributing immensely towards addressing the complex challenges posed by HIV/Aids and AIDS through education campaigns, health care services, counselling, candle-lighting services and programmes offering social support or care to both infected those living with HIV/Aids and those affected by it.

However the stigma and discrimination directed to People Living With Aids (PLWA) emanating from the very institutions that are leading the fight; within church corridors, in the pews, in church choirs, conferences and even worship services remains a major challenge.

Is this where we are losing the battle against HIV and AIDS? By the grace of God, there are congregations that have refused to be ordinary and are changing this phenomenon, setting an example of community mobilisation not just by word of mouth, but also through practical deeds.

Addressing Stigma and Discrimination - Practising what we preach

Stigma and discrimination still pose a great challenge in most African communities. Existing side by side with our care and counselling for PLWA, it exposes our hypocrisy where we preach "love and compassion" but act negatively and judgementally towards these people.

We can have VCT tents on at our church doors, but unless we have learnt to practice acceptance of all people with love and compassion, people will be afraid to get tested for

HIV.

The UPCSA is piloting a programme with Presbyteries in South Africa through a partnership with Lesotho Evangelical Presbyterian Church (LEC), Presbyterian Church of Africa (PCA), and Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa.

The initiative to address Stigma and Discrimination is being funded by Empowering Pastors To Act (EMPTAC), with the support from members of the Presbyterian Church of USA.

A pilot four-day training programme called "Compassionate Churches Campaign" seeks to equip local leaders with the skills to address stigma and discrimination.

Psycho-Social support training programmes

Some Presbyteries have conducted training for care-givers, equipping them with skills, an understanding of poverty, HIV/AIDS and other factors contributing to risk and vulnerability. This will help in developing strategies for working with families and communities to provide care to the sick and provision of support to widows, orphans and vulnerable children.

community which previously had to travel long distances.

With limited resources, similar initiatives are currently under way in Glogag and David Livingstone schools.

Candle lighting services and memorials

To raise awareness and disseminate information about HIV and AIDS, congregations run workshops and cooperate with church associations to host annual candle-lighting services in remembrance of people who died from HIV related illnesses.

The services encourage support to those of us living with HIV/AIDS who are invited to share their experiences and are used to promote healing and disseminate information on HIV prevention and care.

However we are yet to see more men and youth involved in these services.

UPCSA HIV and AIDS Resources and Policy documents

To ensure we have scripturally relevant HIV and AIDS messages, resources have been made available to Presbyteries and are also available at Central Office. These include printed banners, bookmarks, candles with red ribbons and copies of HIV and AIDS policy documents providing practical guidelines for congregations.

We need to speak out against all forms of injustice and express our faith through acts of love and compassion. HIV and AIDS is not just a medical issue, it brings with it a multitude of theological and pastoral challenges that require our action.

We need to hear more statements by our leaders, publicly committing ourselves to addressing this challenge and ensuring that messages preached are inclusive, promote love and compassion and address the needs of our communities. We are called to be welcoming, caring and loving to all.

*Jesus came to earth,
To show us how to live,
How to put others first,
How to love and how to give.*



Legae Community Childcare Centre

Five years ago, St Andrew's Uniting Presbyterian Church in Rynfield, St Mark's Uniting Presbyterian Church in Daveyton and SKF in Boksburg, formed a Section 21 company, Legae Community Childcare Centre in Daveyton, to serve the needs of orphans and vulnerable children, especially those affected and/or living with or infected by HIV/ AIDS. Legae is in the seSotho word "home".

SKF, a Swedish bearing-manufacturing company, with the South African head office in Boksburg, provides most of the funding for the outreach project. St Andrew's Church manages the project. St Mark's Church

owns the premises from which the project is run and their involvement in the local community provides us with an entry into the area and "buy-in" from the community. Some of our staff members also belong to St Mark's congregation.

We operate a pre-school and care centre for up to 50 children between the ages of three and six and an after-care facility for 26 primary school children.

Attendance at Legae is free of charge and staffed mainly by people, trained for the purpose, from the surrounding community. This helps the people living in the area to respond and accept responsibility for the needs of their society.

Legae has a wider impact on the community with the pre-school teacher training that is offered at minimal cost on the premises on Saturday mornings.

Training is run by a member of St Andrew's, Christine Roberts, who has worked for Youth for Christ for many years. Over the past 4 four years her students numbers have continued to increase as nursery schools in the area send their staff to for training and unemployed women enrol to equip themselves better for employment.

Last year more than 70 students attended her 2 her basic and advanced courses.

Children receive 2 two meals a day, as well as snacks and the occasional food parcel to take home.

Children are provided with basic medical services (in co-operation with a local doctor), HIV education and resilience building. Several staff members have been trained in play therapy and child counselling.

The pre-school syllabus has a strong Christian slant. This year we have employed a qualified Grade R teacher, and now incorporate the Grade R syllabus into the teaching of the older pre-school class.

Children attending the after-care section also receive lunch and help with their homework. The programme also includes regular art lessons by teachers and volunteers, music lessons by a musician from the community, and a computer skills programme.


During the July school holidays, we run a holiday programme with various activities and outings. The aim is to keep the children constructively busy and off the streets. We usually have close to 100 children attending.

At Legae we are passionate about making a difference to the lives of disadvantaged children by unlocking their potential; thereby and paving the way for a generation that can contribute to society. We aim to bring Christ to the hurt and needy. This can be seen in the following story:


Khanyi (12) and Thabo (9) are a brother and sister who attend our after-care. Their father is deceased and both the children and their mother are HIV-positive. No-one in the household has work.




Through Legae, St Francis clinic placed the children on ARVs's. However, their mother did not bring the children to the clinic regularly, nor did she give them their medication regularly. Several meetings were held with the children's mother and grandmother; to educate and encourage them to comply with the medication regimen, but this was ineffective.



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF



ASSISTING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE TO RECEIVE AN
EDUCATION



WATCH OUT FOR A SPECIAL 'PEF' EDITION IN
MAY 2012

Thabo regularly missed school due to illness and Khanyi showed signs of becoming ARV-resistant. She contracted TB and was in and out of hospital with various infections. Eventually she weighed only 16kg. During this period, the mother had another baby and was often away from home.

After various attempts to involve the authorities, Legae made a formal report to the local clinic and the Benoni Child Welfare Society. The latter removed the older children from the mother's care and placed them in a hospice in Germiston, where they stayed for several weeks. Once they had recovered, they were returned to their home. The court made an order that they have to attend Legae every weekday to ensure that they are well and looked after. Both children are looking healthy and happy these days.



Human Trafficking

Nomvula Nkonyane

It is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, or fraud.

It could be sexual exploitation including prostitution and pornography, forced labour including agriculture, manufacturing (sweatshops), domestic servitude, forced marriage and illegal adoption, soldiers or organ trafficking.

How big is the problem in South Africa?

The Southern Africa Development Community - (SADC) with its youthful population, great economic disparities and porous borders hosts a diverse range of human trafficking activity, from the global operations of transnational criminal organisations to small-scale local syndicates that recruit acquaintances, friends and family members.

South Africa as a gateway to the region is a source, transit and destination for women and children that are trafficked. Human trafficking can no longer be relegated to being an international problem. It is a South African problem and happening on our door step.

The five major streams are, trafficking to South Africa from outside of Africa, trafficking to South Africa from within Africa, trafficking within the national borders of South Africa, trafficking that uses South Africa as a transit



point to other countries and South Africans trafficked abroad.

In KwaZulu-Natal during February 2012 the biggest raid against human trafficking took place. Young girls who had once hoped for a better life had been held in a Durban hotel for nearly 2 years.

Police spokesperson Colonel Vincent Mdungo said that 16 girls, eight of them under age, were being held "in transit" in the brothel, and were apparently soon to be sent to other countries, either as prostitutes, or drug mules. Three men were arrested and were refused bail.

What then is our responsibility as the UPCSAs?

In light of our calling as God's people we seek to uphold the dignity of God's creation and strive to offer prevention, protection and restoration to those who are vulnerable in our society. Christians need to see the dehumanising nature of trafficking and identify it as a challenge for the church. We can not keep silent. We need to ask ourselves what role and impact can we as the UPCSAs make on helping victims and stopping the problem. What measures can the church put in place to combat this problem? Where should the focus areas be for the church and our local congregations?

The UPCSAs need to be involved in Prosecution, Protection and Prevention.

We need to break the silence on trafficking and encourage members to actively live out their call to mission in dealing with this problem in our society.



Church and Poverty summit

Rev. Sello P. Molepo

The Justice and Social Responsibility – South Africa committee held the Church and Poverty Summit from 4 to 6 November 2011 in Rosettenville to examine how the poor could influence the structures of the UPCSAs to their benefit.

Various key speakers unpacked a variety of topics: Rev Dr Jerry Pillay spoke on the biblical background of poverty; Thabisile Msezane from South African Council of Churches spoke on the South African context of poverty; Rev Glynis Goyns discussed the practical aspects of poverty; Mr. B. Boshelo spoke on poverty eradication as the church and Rev Dr Vuyani Vellem on the church polity.

Participants contributed their personal experiences and gave feedback on how poverty reduction can be integrated in church activities, practical ways in which the poor can participate in decision-making processes, the role of reconciliation in the UPCSAs, whether an audit of the UPCSAs' role in poverty eradication is necessary and if so what form this should take.

Summit participants suggested that the next event of this kind should be held in the rural areas among the poorest of the poor. It was also suggested that the event be addressed by impoverished members of the UPCSAs, not only by academics and intellectuals.

The church and poverty summit was well attended by a variety of role-players. The next summit will be in 2013



Life in Zimbabwe

Jerry Pillay

It is wonderful to know that a number of our congregations in the Presbytery of Zimbabwe are engaged in various projects and ministries funded by the Council for World Mission (CWM). For example, a HIV and AIDS Project are run by the Highfield Congregation. A group of women make peanut butter, bottle them and sell them to people in the community.



They also make and sell cobra polish and now have aspirations to start a poultry business. The money made from these projects is used to support HIV positive women and pay school fees for children who cannot afford to be at school. This is indeed very moving!



Another project is the establishment of a new Clinic situated at the Presbyterian Secondary School in Mhondoro. The Clinic cost \$11, 000, 00 to build and it services

about 100 people from the community per week and pupils at the Secondary School. It provides basic services mainly attending to Diabetes and Blood Pressure control, all serious illness are referred to other medical centres run by the State. They are in dire need of medication and other medical supplies to support their work in caring for the sick and wish to connect with people from within our denomination who are in the medical profession. If you or anyone you know could help, please be in touch with the General Secretary

Do you know that we have 9 Presbyterian Schools in Zimbabwe with over 3000 pupils ranging from primary to secondary levels? Our Church is playing a very vital role in the educational development of children in Zimbabwe. In fact, the Presbyterian Secondary School which has over 420 pupils earned first position in the District. We are greatly encouraged that our congregations in Zimbabwe are making a difference in the lives of children and communities in which they are found.



St Columba's Kokstad celebrates 100 years as a Presbyterian Congregation

Rev Michael Craig

In 1911 the then English Congregational Church in Kokstad was faced with an old

problem. Services had started in 1875, the congregation formally constituted in 1883 and the Church built in 1890. But, after their first Pastor, the Rev William Dower left Kokstad in December 1891 the then Congregational Union was seldom able to supply a minister. This time around their minister, the Rev Morgan had resigned after preaching a series of unpopular sermons. The Rev Hunter, a Presbyterian Missionary at Gillespie Mission near Mount Ayliff, came to their rescue riding his horse across Brook's Nek to ensure that services continued. The records show that Rev Hunter was thanked for his services and a certain widow in the town was thanked for accommodating Rev Hunter and his horse. A good few members were Scottish born so being Presbyterian was not a novelty. However there were those in the congregation that were staunchly Congregational. They believed in the idea of a locally gathered Church in covenant with each other and independent of outside control. These convictions however would not supply a minister and so an approach was made to the Presbytery of Natal. In response the Presbytery commissioned the Rev Hunter to "convene a meeting of all those interested in the formation of a Presbyterian Church in Kokstad".

This meeting was held on Saturday 27 May 1911 with 32 present. Mr J. Adam was in the chair. The minute books reflect that at the time the congregation was strongly in favour of becoming Presbyterian - initially 5 were against, 2 of which were won over to the majority.

Post Academic Training Conference 5-16 March 2012

Eddie Germequet

Before being ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament, each candidate for the ministry needs to spend at least one year in probation. The purpose of probation is to help bridge the gap between academic studies and the practicalities of the ministry. The number of Probationers varies from year to year. 2012 has a rather small group of 7 probationers who have completed academic studies and 2 ordained Ministers who have recently been provisionally admitted into the UPCSAs.

These 9 Probationers gathered together at the Rocky Valley Camp (Krugersdorp) for an extended period of reflection on various topics such as the purpose of the church; clarity in the responsibilities of a minister; "Ordination Vows"; Primary Duties of a Minister; Order of Service and for a deeper understanding of our Confession of Faith.

Another dimension of the conference was to expose Probationers to the varied experiences of Ministers with their congregations and of Elders with their ministers. Thus a number of Ministers and an Elder spent time with the Probationers to reflect on the responsibilities of ministering.

The Probationers also had the opportunity to visit the Central Office of the UPCSAs Tiyo Soga House, to meet the personnel and acquaint themselves with the people behind the voices they hear on the telephone.

Another aspect of the conference was to enable the Probationers to develop into a mutually supportive group that will last for years to come. Some of the activities were therefore "team building" in nature.

Finally, the Probationers also visited Constitution Hill and spent some time in the prisons in which now famous people were incarcerated. The visit also provided the opportunity to reflect on the future with hope, for the new Constitutional Court not only shares the same site but is also built with the bricks that were once prison walls.

At the end of the two weeks the Probationers returned to their respective congregations in South Africa and Zimbabwe with a new sense of inspiration and enthusiasm to serve God's people with integrity and clarity of purpose. The next Probationers' Conference will take place in Port Elizabeth in August, where it is hoped that 2 Probationers from the Church of Scotland will also be able to join us.



Joseph Gugushe, Malungelo Jita, Rev Nkululeko Manxoyi, Rev Eddie Germequet, Kuraone Mutimwii, Stephen Seoe, Professor Hansie Wolmarans, Christine Kasambara, Nigel Chikanya, Strauss Joubert, Rev Pat Baxter and Anna Banda.

The first service was held on the 28th May 1911. Some months later on 25 October 1911 the Rev George Peattie was inducted as the first minister. On the 17th December 2011 the first elders were ordained. We have been Presbyterian ever since.

On Sunday 29 January 2012 a special Centenary service was held. The Moderator of General Assembly, the Rt Revd Dr George Marchinkowski preached the sermon and celebrated Communion. A former Minister of the Congregation Rev Dirk Gevers led us in the prayers of intercession. Former ministers Rev John Cruickshank, Rev Ian van der Lingen and the General Secretary sent messages that were read out.



Adelaide Presbyterian Church's 50th Anniversary

One of the earliest Presbyterian churches was established in 1820, at Glen Lynden in the area between the towns of Bedford, Adelaide, Balfour and Alice, in the Eastern Cape. In this area, too, Presbyterian missionaries first translated the Xhosa language into writing.

The foundation stone of the "Union Presbyterian and Free Church of Adelaide" was laid by the Rev. Mr Stegman of the Dutch Reform-ed Church, on the 6th November 1861.

Today the original building has been incorporated into a much larger building. The Congregation shared a supper on Saturday. On Sunday, the Moderator of the General Assembly, Dr. George Marchinkowski celebrated Holy Communion and then unveiled a plaque together with the Revs Jan Herbst

and Ed Cowie and past Ministers Ian Hawkrige and Eddie Germiquet.



Church Associations

Rev Lulamile Obose

The church association is a general assembly standing committee whose task it is to coordinate the work of the associations and give a report to the assembly or its executive commission.

The UPCSA has five associations whose constitutions have been adopted by the assembly. These comprise: the Uniting Presbyterian Women's Fellowship (UPWF), Men's Christian's Guild (MCG), Youth Fellowship (YF), Imanyano Yezintombi ZamaRhabe Amanyanayo (IYZA) (Young Girls Association) and the Association of Church Choirs and Musicians (ACCM). IYZA is still using a draft constitution. The associations have programmes which help the work of the church in various practical ways.

The UPWF prides itself in projects that improve the lives of their members through bursaries, empowerment and poverty-alleviation initiatives.

The MCG has embarked on leadership development and evangelism to empower members and make them eligible for key positions.

Evangelism is a core function of the IYZA as its members grow their congregations through imvuselelos (revival services) and support ministries by teaching individuals to

be better Christians. The young girls and the youth fellowships are experiencing growth both spiritually and numerically. It gives hope to the belief that Alize Litshe Liphele, which shows that the future of the church is in good hands.

Music, particularly choir festivals, are celebrated through the ACCM, which hopes to draw more participants over time.

Current challenges include some brothers and sisters disaffiliating while others call for co-existence, but the organisation is committed to the processes agreed to by the general assembly to work towards peace, unity and reconciliation.

Inkosiingu Mncediwethusiya kuphumelela. Modimo ele mothusi wa rona re tla phomella. The Lord being our provider we will succeed.



Ecumenical News

By Rev Prof Jerry Pillay

The UPCSA is affiliated to a number of Ecumenical organizations and plays a significant role in the leadership of most of them. In this section we wish to bring you a 'snippet' of what some of them is doing:

The South African Council of Churches (SACC), in the midst of huge financial constraints, is going through a reconfiguration exercise. Please keep them in your prayers. In recent times they have played an effective role in critically prophetically engaging government.

The Council for World Mission, the old London Missionary Society, is currently relocating to Singapore. This is indeed a very big move from London, bringing about a total restructuring of the organization with a majority of new staff. CWM is placing more emphasis on developing missional congregations and has directed their ministry to the pews.

The World Communion of Reformed Churches continues to play a vital role in bringing Reformed Churches together. The organization has also put in place a new Strategic Plan which focuses on mission, communion, justice, theology and ecumenical engagements and partnerships.

The World Council of Churches based in Geneva continues to have a huge impact on world issues in spite of its own financial challenges. They are currently preparing for their General Assembly in 2013.

The Church Unity Commission in South Africa consisting of the UPCSA, United Congregational Church of South Africa, Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Anglican Church and the Methodist Church are finding new ways of working together even though they were not able to agree on the concept of Full Communion and a Model for united churches.

The Southern African Faith Communities' Environment Institute (SAFCEI) has played an incredible role during the COP Convention at the end of 2011 in Durban to raise

awareness of environmental issues and climate change. We wish that most of our congregations would adopt an eco-friendly attitude as we respond to climate change and environmental issues.

More information about these organizations and their work can be accessed through our links on the UPCSA website. Please keep these organizations in your prayers as they seek to share in the common mission of proclaiming good news to the world in the name of our Triune God.



Turning Presbytery upside down

The Revd Vusi Mkhungo and the Revd Chris Judelsohn

The Presbytery of eGoli is made of 32 congregations, 7 of which are united charges. Moderator The Rev Christopher Judelsohn, Clerk The Rev John McKane, Treasurer Mr. Derick van Zyl and Presbytery Mission Enabler, The Rev Vusi Mkhungo

Some 7 years ago, the Council of the Presbytery of eGoli, engaged itself in a serious vision and reformation process. After many meetings and consultations, a process of "Turning Presbytery Upside Down" was adopted. This meant that instead of placing the Council on top of everyone, Congregations were to become our focus point.

Centralized Presbytery meetings now follow a 5 year schedule that allows the Council to meet in, and visit every congregation. While it is important for the Council to attend to its business as normal, we decided to also focus attention on the congregation hosting each Presbytery meeting.

To achieve this the hosting congregation would make a presentation on their ministry, which is then made an Order of the Day. In this way the entire Presbytery can celebrate the life and work of the congregation as well as share in its frustrations and concerns.

A part-time Presbytery Mission Enabler has been appointed to handle Communication and Networking, Construction and Maintenance of a Presbytery Database, Preparation and the co-ordination of Presbytery visitations as well as various Administrative Responsibilities.

The annual Presbytery Weekend is in August at the start of the Presbytery year. To make Presbytery a "communion of congregations", the Moderator's congregation hosts a time of shared learning and fellowship on Saturday. Sunday is dedicated to a Presbytery-wide pulpit swap where each Minister and a number of Lay Preachers visit another congregation to preach and bring the greetings of the Presbytery.

The Council of Presbytery recognises that the ministry of the Church is most effectively carried out and experienced at congregation level. Instead of running Presbytery-wide projects at the level of the Council, it puts congregations in contact with one another and encourages them to share resources and



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Highveld Presbytery's first Covenant service

Rev. Sello P. Molepo

The Highveld Presbytery of the UPCSA had its first own Covenant service at St Andrew's UPCSA, Germiston on 5 February 2012. The guest preacher was the Moderator of the General Assembly the Rt Rev Dr George Marchinkowski, and the General Secretary Rev Prof Jerry Pillay, together with the Presbytery ministers and their congregants, took part.

Praise and worship was celebrated in several languages. The moderator Rev Lulama Mshumpela celebrated Holy Communion and later invited the congregants to renew their vows with God and approach the altar to have their problems and needs prayed for. The service concluded with the presentation of the gift of a sheep by the Highveld Presbytery to the Moderator of General Assembly

It would be encouraging to see a multicultural congregation in future.



Events Calendar

March 05 - 16	Probationers PAT Johannesburg (Post Academic Training) HIV/AIDS Committees Joint Meeting
09	Ecumenical Relationship Committee Joint Meeting
15	Assembly Business Committee
28	Joint Values & P+R Committee
29	
April 13	Deadline for General Assembly Papers
19 - 20	Moderators, Clerks & Treasurers Consultation
May 31	Deadline for Supplementary Papers
June 07 - 09	Selection Conference
17	PEF Sunday
July 06 - 08	Youth Fellowship Transkei Presbytery
14 - 21	General Assembly, Stellenbosch, Western Cape Presbytery
August 06 - 09	MCG Conference Free State Presbytery
13 - 24	Probationers PAT Central Cape Presbytery
24 - 26	Association of Church Choirs (ACCM) Amatola Presbytery
December 1 - 2	IYZA Drakensberg Presbytery