



BLACK METHODIST CONSULTATION

**BLACK METHODIST CONSULTATION
(A Formation within the MCSA)**

MINUTES OF THE

34th ANNUAL MEETING 2009

**THEME – Stand Up Straight and Walk. Luke
13: 12**

16 – 19 JULY 2009

**KIMBERLY, NAMIBIA & BLOEMFONTEIN
DISTRICT**



DAY 1, 16 July 2009

1. OPENING SERVICE AND WELCOME

The consultation was officially opened by Bishop Litaba Mothibi of the host district, the Kimberly, Namibia and Bloemfontein district. He set the tone of the consultation by opening with a scripture reading from the book of Numbers 2:1-2. He challenged the BMC to raise the flag of the movement high. The scripture reminded members about the importance and significance of a flag. He challenged the BMC to create tension whenever they meet and should not be bordered by the irrelevant questions about the BMC relevancy in the church. The movement should lift the BMC flag high to be seen by all even those at the periphery.

The chairperson of the hosting district Rev. Mosiako welcomed the consultation to the District and the City of Mangaung. He was accompanied by the Executive Mayor of Motheo District Cllr Eva Moiloa who also welcomed members to the beautiful City of Roses. She reminded members to invite the presence of God in everything that the BMC will be deliberating on and planning.

2. CONSTITUTING THE CONSULTATION AND APOLOGIES – ROLL CALL

The Secretary General recorded the following Districts as present:

- Kimberly, Namibia and Bloemfontein
- Northern Free State and Lesotho
- Queenstown
- Natal West
- Natal Coastal
- Highveld and Swaziland
- Central
- Limpopo
- Clarkebury
- Grahamstown
- Cape of Good Hope
- Mozambique

3. RECOGNITION OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP & GUESTS

- Rev Ivan Abrahams Presiding Bishop
- Rev Vuyani Nyobole Secretary of Conference
- Rev Litaba Mothibi Bishop, KNB
- Rev Ziphozihle Siwa Bishop, Highveld & Swaziland
- Rev Musi Losaba Bishop, Grahamstown
- Mr. Fungile Dotwana Lay President
- Mr. Zandile Jakavula President Connexional LPA
- Ms Nobuntu Madwe President Connexional WM
- Ms Gretta Makhwenkwe President Queenstown WM
- Rev Moagi Sekhejane Connexional Youth Co-ordinator
- Rev Sethunya Mothlodi Limpopo Youth Co-ordinator
- Mr. Filemano Delegate, Mozambique District
- Ministers and their Wives

4. APOLOGIES

4.1 NATAL COASTAL

- Mr. Mdu Dlamini
- Mr. Sandile Dampo
- Ms Rose Majozi
- Ms Doly Ngcingweni
- Ms Lindiwe
- Ms Beatrice Dube
- Rev OT Dlamini
- Ms Fikile Makhanya

4.2 CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

- Rev Nomsa Nomqolo

4.3 HIGHVELD AND SWAZILAND

- Mr. Bruce Tashe
- Ms Yolisa Tashe
- Mr. Muzi Magengenene

4.4 QUEENSTOWN

- Rev M.R. Vithi

4.5 SMME

- Rev Vuyokazi May

5. APPOINTMENTS OF COMIITTEES

- 5.1 Resolutions - Mr. Percy Nhlapho
- 5.2 Listening - Rev Mbatu Bosman
- 5.3 Precentors - Rev Linda Mandindi
- 5.4 Letter Writer - Ms Step Mpepho

6. NOTICES OF MOTION S AND RESOLUTIONS

The chairperson reminded the consultation of the February 2009 resolution that all notices of motion should be presented by district representatives and or from the delegated individuals from the floor. This is inteded to decease from speaking own views on behalf of others thus unable to implement the resolution.

- This was rejected by the house.
- Notices of motion were raised as per tradition and forwarded to the resolutions committee.

Resolutions Committee constituted by:

Mr Percy Nhlapo Convenor
Ms Nokuthula Mndaweni
Ms Thoko
Mr Hinsa Meke
Mr Milile Tolo

6.1 In the light and spirit of the BMC connectional chairman's (Rev S. Leleki) address that admonished the black Methodist consultation against making resolutions that are not practical or/and implement able.

The BMC 34th meeting sitting in Bloemfontein hosted by KNB district from 16 to 19 July 2009 at Eunice Girls Boarding School Resolved:

Noting the continued and increasing conflict in the black churches and embarrassment it causes

- (a) resolves to set up a task team to study this phenomenon; its impact in the life of the church and proposed practical interventions to mitigate against it and create healthy and missional circuits and societies

Proposed by Rev. Sidwel Mokgothu Seconded by Rev Thanduxolo Ntshuntshe

6.2 Noting the global meltdown and the economic crisis –the recession and the impact it is causing on our people

- (a) Calls on the executive to establish a task team to reflect and guide the church on how to pastor and care for God’s people during this difficult time.

The committee’s understanding of the work of the ministers among other things is to pastor and care for God’s people who suffer different difficulties in life; and believe that ministers as counselors have been trained and guided through theological studies to be able to respond to situations to the extent of dealing with financial difficult times.

Resolution rejected.

Proposed by Rev. Sidwel Mokgothu Seconded by Rev Mthunzi Nyembe

1. Acknowledging the Methodist son who contributed enormously and sacrificed his life. A person whom went on to become a legend and an icon in our country and internationally. We call upon the BMC to :

- (a) Take an active part and the 67 minutes of community work observing the outstanding life and leadership in particular of Nelson Rholihlahla Mandela on the 18th July (Saturday) on his birthday.

Joining the South African and international community in Celebrating the 91st birthday of the world political icon and the member of the Methodist church and recognizing the sacrifices he has made to salvage the people who were in bondage the committee resolve that:

- (a) Each member of the consultation contributes R10 towards an organization that provide relief to the community members who are in need; that organization should be identified by the CE assisted by the hosting district and circuit.

(b) This will serve as a contribution towards the 67 minutes of community work; and the amount should be handed over to the particular organization during the Gala dinner on 18th July 2009.

Proposed by Rev. L. Mantini Seconded by L. Makhathini

6.3 The BMC resolved to continue with funding of the needy MCSA ministers who wish to pursue post graduate studies that will lead to qualifications that could be used to the benefit of the Methodist people or community at large.

(b) It was further resolved to limit this assistance to ministers only and that the recipients of this fund should commit to:

(i) Refund the BMC in the event of not passing the course

(ii) Submit the results to the bursary committee as and when required

(iii) Be available to utilize the knowledge gained to benefit the Methodist people or the community at large.

Proposed by Mr. ZM Jakavula Seconded by Rev Sidwel Mokgothu

6.4 The Black Methodist Consultation executive noting the need for continued engagement and dialogue among members to promote active and encourage full participation resolves that

(a) All notices of motion intended to be tabled at national consultation should first be discussed and agreed upon at district level

(b) The motion should then be presented at the national consultation in a written format with clear visible names and signature of the person who made the proposal and the person who seconded it.

Guidelines for mind application into the resolutions

1. Realistic
2. Practical/Implementable
3. Time bound
4. Measurable

7. LETTER WRITER

The Consultaion resolved to write letters to the following:

- Rev. Letlabika on the occation of his 100 years birth day.
- Rev. Mgojo who is not well to be wished well and a speedy recovery.
- Dr. Nelson Mandela on his 91st birthday.
- South Africa's State President J.Z. Zuma on his appointment as president of South Africa.
- Ms Makhwenkwe for her appointment as president of

8. MINUTES OF THE 2008 CONSULTATION

The minutes of the 2008 consultation were distributed at the 2009 February meeting of the District Executives. It was agreed then that these were to be circulated widely at District level to their committed members. The minutes were then taken as read.

The Secretary General rose to call for ommisions, corrections and matters arising from the minutes. The consultation sought to be clarified about the 2007 and 2008 EBF figures. The treasurer addressed all the quirries and assured the meeting that the figures will appear again in the 2010 budget statement.

The minutes were adopted as a true reflection of the last consultation.

9. CHAIRPERSON'S ADDRESS

The Consultation was addressed by the chairperson, Rev Sox Leleki. See Annexure 1.

The chairperson raised amongst other things, the following:

- He made a call to the BMC to think and do things differently in this consultation, not to be just a talk show. He emphasised the implementation of decisions, resolutuons and programmes of action – in this way the growth of the movement will be realised.
- He higlighted the lack of co-operation between Ministers and between Ministers and Laity.

- There is a noticeable creative tension between being a member of the BMC and being in the governing structures of the church, hence the question on the relevancy of the BMC in this era. The tension between the past and present continue to live with us.
- He reminded us about the theological education on the African soil that must be deeply rooted on what it means to be an African. It is his hope that the SMME will help our church to put an emphasis on the contextualisation of the theological education. The SMME should consider offering political ethics as one of the courses in the curriculum to enrich the political climate.
- He be-cried that BMC must help black people in particular to be creators of good ideas instead of being just consumers.
- The chairperson louded the sentiments that, if we evaluate the previous consultations, we will find that they did a lot in helping the head and the heart but not much in helping the hands. This consultation should be about hands, delivery and action.
- The movement must work hard in attracting others in to participate and carry the work of the BMC forward. People who will grow the movement. The transformation agenda has a long way to go.
- In the true sense of transformation, the movement must desist from speaking on behalf of the disempowered such as the youth, women and disabled – space must be created for them.
- He brought to the attention of the consultation the serious lack of documented information in relation to BMC hence the introduction of uMrabulo business.
- The chair announced the following strategic imperatives to guide the actualisation of the BMC programmes:
 - Implementation of the Grant Plan
 - Leadership development programme driven through ToT sas key for the next three years.
- In conclusion, he made a call to members to support the Mandela Day by performing a community service and make a donation towards the needy and vulnerable.

10. SECRETARY GENERAL'S REPORT

The Secretary reported on the business of the BMC for the preceeding year. (See Annexure 2). The report covered the following matters:

11. FINANCIAL REPORT BY THE TREASURER

The treasurer tabled her report and the discusion that ensued was further reffered to the task team that will table its report at next consultation. A PDF version of the Financial Statement is attached separately.

See also the report from the Investment Committee report below (Item 11) from task teams.

NB: The electronic financial statement is available on request from the treasurer.

12. ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDING BISHOP'S OFFICE

Presiding Bishop, Revs Ivan Abrahams and the Secretary of Conference, the Rev Vido Nyobole addressed the Consultation.

The PB recalled the inauguration of the BMC in Bloemfontein 34 years ago as we gather again in the of the BMC's birth. He encouraged the movement to engage in the debates of the church in conferences and give support to other church projects and programmes as done with the contributions towards the Seth Mokitimi seminary. He challanged the BMC to be vocal on church issues; stories told on truth remain true. The movement must ask painful questions. Open our history for flowering. He called for a new history of the church to be written. The Seth Mokitimi Seminary is fat with history in building and the BMC is part of that history. There is now a building named after Z.A. Mahabane at the SMME in to honour our forebearers.

There are two major anniversaries taking place in the coming year, namely;

- The translation of the Xhosa bible
- Formation of the 170th Summerset west league.

He said that, we are called by names to do something good – for God invite all Mankind.

He announced the revival of the Dimension as the voice of the mainstream for the renewal of the church. The BMC must contribute to the medium. The PB asked the question – where are the voices we hear in the BMC in our conference floor? BMC is not in the margins of the MCSA. The L&D and Yearbook are not challenged. The voices of quality debates that we display in BMC are needed in conferences for policy making. People with energy are needed to drive and implement policies that we have in our Methodist books. Few individuals are needed to turn the course of the universe. Together we can.

2011 is an important year of Methodist in Southern Africa. We will be hosting a global conference in Durban.

Lastly, the following is in place in MCSA:

- HIV desk is in place
- children's desk is formed
- Appeal to establish a woman's desk.
- We need to re establish our identity.

The Secretary of Conference added his voice to the fact that:

The status of training in the seminary for the training of ministers was highlighted. There is a debate about calling of Ministers whether it should be before or after completing the training. The BMC needs to be part of the debate.

The SG expressed a concern that there is a tendency among blacks promising support but no action – he called the movement to support the office in action. When blacks are given tasks they do not perform they do not show commitment and they have a lot of excuses. They need the BMC's support because they cannot do everything themselves. He made an appeal for the support in the implementation of tasks not only in the elections. Avail yourselves to perform and carry out duties, he concluded.

13. TASK TEAMS REPORTS and COMMISSIONS FEEDBACKS FROM DETAILED DISCUSSIONS ON THE NEW MANDATE OF THE TASK TEAMS:

The different task teams of the BMC presented their report for the previous year.

13.1 INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

The purpose of the committee is to generate more funds for the BMC. A policy already exists that gives direction towards the attainment of the purpose. The committee has been instructed to work with the connexional treasurer in investing the the BMC funds.

The consultation suggested that the investment committee should be in dialogue with the MCO and advised to follow the MCO route in terms of investments.

Further, the commission on investment made the following recommendations;

Investment Policy

Purpose of the investment policy:

The Black Methodist Consultation (BMC) has developed the investment policy that will guide it in this process. In particular it identifies the investment goals and objectives sets out decision-making processes for selecting investments. The investment policy statement will be used as the basis for measuring and evaluating future investment performance and will (itself) be reviewed, at least annually, by the investment committee.

Investment Philosophy

Investment options offered shall be selected in order to:

- (1) Provide a wide range of investment opportunities in various asset classes, so as to allow for diversification and cover a wide risk/return spectrum;
- (2) maximize returns within reasonable and prudent levels of risk;
- (3) Provide returns comparable to returns for similar investment options; and
- (4) Control administrative and management costs.

The investment committee in consultation with professional advisors will select a range of investment vehicles (asset classes). The Connexional Executive will approve the selection.

Taking into consideration that the BMC and by extension the MCSA is a Christian institution, the committee will invest in those vehicles whose businesses do not conflict with the Christian character of the Church.

Investment vehicles

The movement's funds will be managed by professional money managers selected by the Investment Committee in conformance with the asset allocation guidelines and approved by the Connexional Executive.

The investment of funds shall be in the following classes:

- MCO money market account
- Short term investments in commercial banks
- Equity in public listed companies
- Government and private bonds

Roles and Responsibilities

The parties involved in the management of the assets include, but are not limited to:

- a) Investment committee: The investment committee shall supervise the investment of the assets and make all decisions concerning selection and retention of the investment options available under the plan. Accordingly, the investment committee shall have authority both to select and monitor funds, and to appoint investment managers. Decisions of the investment committee on investment policy, the selection of investments and/or investment managers, performance analysis and investment monitoring, etc., may need not be based on the recommendations of an investment advisor / manager engaged to advise the investment committee on such matters.
- b) Investment advisor / manager. An investment advisor must be appointed to assist the investment committee in the overall supervision of the

investments. The investment advisor may offer guidance and recommendations to the investment committee in the selection and retention of investment options available under the plan, and assistance in the periodic monitoring of fund performance.

c) Connexional Executive: Has overall responsibility of the funds under management directive and approve all policy matters related to investments.

13.2 SUCCESSION PLANNING

(Succession Planning & Leadership excellence)

The 2009 consultation discussed the task in the form of definition for the last time. There is enough body of literature for comprehension. The ensuing year 2010 must be the year for action and progress reporting on the actual implementation towards developing leadership and identifying individuals to lead in positions of leadership at all levels of the church's structures.

Further, the commission on the task team recommended the following;

Leadership Excellence

Type of leadership - we are looking at

- As the BMC we need to think of people that (we think) can lead us
- Making preparations for this, the following should happen first : -
 - Pray for our leaders
 - Capacity building
- We need to create a pool where we have to put people for training
 - To have empowerment program's – to empower everyone in the church
- We prepare this people to be broad minded and be ready for tomorrow
- We need to plant spiritual leadership
 - Every Christian to be spiritually fed through bible studies (to eliminate chances of conflicts & disputes in our church)
- Portraying Christian values in church, as we represent God not the church (Ubuntu, honesty, passion)
- We need to develop basic human relations amongst the clergies up to the bishops

- Working with ministers (for any obstacles that can arise)

All these have to be done in a positive & accommodative approach

We have agreed on training programmes from *basic training* to *advance stage* for all people.

1. Basic Training

- Spiritual formation
- Personal mastery
- Faith & life
- Christian counseling
- Conflict management
- Ethics
- In conducting & coordinating meetings
- Report writing
- Communication skills
- Financial management
- Asset management

2. Advance Training

- Strategic planning
- Politics & religion
- Church & society
- Risk management
- Talent management (including spotting)
- Mentoring & coaching

Succession planning

As a starting point we suggest Talent Management rather than succession planning, as the latter seek or might raise hopes for people

- We pilot this before we cascade to the broader church
- Each district to formulate Talent management teams

- Identify a pool of people (3 clergy & three lay people)
- Identify skills & do a gap analysis of each candidate in a pool
- A well documented Job Profile for all these leadership position
- A well documented career plans, after identifying the aspiration of each person in a pool
- Training matrix – working closely with TOT (Training of Trainers) programme
- Coaching & mentoring process be developed
- Monitoring & evaluation – for people to account (substantive written report with supporting documents)

14. EPILOGUE

Rev Makumsha conducted the Epilogue to mark the end of day one.

DAY 2, 17 JULY 2009

15. BIBLE STUDY 1

The two part Bible Study was conducted by Rev Jeremiah Lesshope from the Ecumenical Forum of the Free State Council of Churches.

He read from the book of Luke 30:10 – 17. Jusus heals a crippled woman.

I heard him say: Jesus commanded and things happened just like in the creation. Through faith at that moment she was healed. In Jesus there is a presence of GOD.

He asked (Lesshope) who gets healed. In that era women were viewed as second class beings. Jesus uplifted the status of a woman to that of a man, even her she is a daughter of Abraham.

Jesus was accused of disrespecting the Sabbath day.

- He is for all of us, Man and women.

Membership in churches dwindles because of lack of the healing gospel. It is rare that our Sabbath is viewed as Sabbath of healing.

It is rare that the Church afford its people to express their concerns, preach with authority and bring healing.

- We must honor the fore leaders who stood up for the truth.

Why at this era talking about BMC.

- We are still having infringements.
- Who is and must stand up straight.
- Where are we going to?

Why are we supposed to walk?

The theme comes clearly from Jesus' mouth.

Human nature of selfish comes out - every one wants the best for him/her. The challenge of standing up gives us an identity.

16. GUEST SPEAKER

The Guest Speaker, Mr Mzikisi Madlavu, Deputy Director General in the Department of Arts and Culture addressed the Consultation on the topic: The Role of Black Theology in Democratic South Africa. (See Annexure 4)

17. SCHOOLS REPORT BACK

The different Schools gave the following reports with the following action plans.

17.1 African Spirituality

CHALLENGES	ACTION PLAN
Style of Worship	Promote use of African instruments (e.g. Marimbas)
Humanity/Ubuntu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Going back to our basics. b) Understanding yourself leads to understanding God. c) Instill African values.
Healing Ministry	Utilization of people's gifts (e.g. ministers and laity).
Empowerment on African spirituality	Workshop people across the board

17.2 Gender Transformation

CHALLENGES	ACTION PLAN
Gender	Mind shift through empowerment workshop, valuing our diversity.
Inferiority complex of women/oppressing	Gender empowerment workshop

ourselves	
-----------	--

17.3 Good Governance

CHALLENGES	ACTION PLAN
Governance	Utilization of available skills and resources in the church (e.g. financial, structural and human).
Leadership	Empowerment of leaders, induction courses
Accountability	Accounting system
Gap of information from conference to local levels	Pre and post of workshops (e.g. Conventions, conferences and Synod)

17.4 Economic Development Of The Black Church

CHALLENGES	ACTION PLAN
Handling of Finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Utilization of people with financial skills. b) Do needs analysis.
Self sustainability from dependency to independency	Move from dependency to independency from job seekers to job creators.

17.5 Youth Involvement

CHALLENGES	ACTION PLAN
Youth involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Invest in the youth and be influential. b) Church leadership to take youth seriously and have interest in their programmes.

18. MISSION STRATEGY REVIEW REPORT

Our task was to review the implementation of the Mission statement in the wider church. This not a formal review, but it is the ideas and opinions of the members of the group.

The mission statement:

God calls the Methodist people to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ for healing and transformation.

The mission statement is supported by the four imperatives (pillars) of mission, i.e.

- Evangelism and Church growth
- Spirituality
- Justice and service
- Human and Economic Development and Empowerment

Our approach is to review each pillar and Healing and transformation then have an overall view of the mission status.

Evangelism and growth

The church attracts new members but struggle to retain them. Some circuits and districts show growth in membership.

Spirituality

Services delivered promote spiritual growth.

There is a perception that our services are not fulfilling thus leading to people joining charismatic churches.

Justice and service

There are perceived injustices in the church, especially against the Youth and women.

Human and Economic Development and Empowerment

Access to resources: (e.g. Funds from the Millennium Fund)

Under resourced circuits do not benefit from available funds because they do not have capacity to prepare the required business plans to access the funds.

Few people doing good work to support mission. The church has no systems but depend brilliance of certain individuals.

Skilled people and skills available within societies and communities are not used.

Skills audits are not conducted – How does the church access the skills?

Healing and transformation

Conduct education around transformation in the church.

Are we one Methodist Church?

Healing – There are various forms of healing that the church addresses it self to. Some of these are:

- Spiritual - fulfillment by the Gospel, healing ministry
- Life – heal the sick
- Economic – support for the poor
- Social

Conclusion / Findings

There is a gap between what is happening on the ground and what is reported in official church documents, as confirmed by Bishops' reports.

It is not clear who champion the mission

Project in support of mission are disjointed.

The policies, strategies and theology of mission are good but the implementation is weak and not coordinated. The church must drive total implementation across all levels.

It is important to note that projects are not mission. Mission is the total church business.

19. REPORT FROM THE SCHOOL: TRAIN THE TRAINER (ToT)

WHERE:	ACTIVITIES	RESOURCE	TIME LINE	TARGET GROUP	STAKEHOLDERS	RESPONSIBILITY
MICRO-within the Methodist	<p>Approach the following in marketing the product:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presiding Bishop's Office • District Bishops • District Executives-WM,YMG, Youth, etc • Circuit Superintendents and Ministers <p>Advertise using the following methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Brochures • Word-of-mouth 	<p>Training Material-CD</p> <p>Specialists-the original trainers</p>	<p>Minimum of 150 people should be trained by 2010 and the composition be;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 women • 50 Men • 50 Young people <p>NB:as the number trained trainers increase, new challenges will emerge.</p> <p>Its important to note that training is on-going.</p>	<p>Executives of all organisations</p> <p>Woman</p> <p>Men</p> <p>Young people</p>	<p>Presiding Bishop's Office</p> <p>District Bishops</p> <p>Ministers</p> <p>Methodist church members</p>	<p>Connexional BMC</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Districts</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Circuits</p>
NB:The product means the Train the Trainer programme/project						
MACRO-other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zwelonke 					

denominations

- South African Council of Churches
- Ecumenical Churches

NB: Macro will pay for the product

20. BMC BURSARY REPORT

- This report covers the period July 2008 to July 2009
- We finally received 4 applications after a drought of 3 years.

Name	Degree	Field of study	University	Amount awarded	Total amount requested
Rev Bosman	Masters	Spiritual formation of the MCSA ministers	UNISA	R 7 500	R 8 500 2 nd yr of study
Rev Motlhodi	Masters	Mission & Transformation	Stellenbosch	R 7 500	R 14 200
Rev Geja	B Philosophy	Bible Interpretation	Stellenbosch	R 7 500	R 21 000
Rev Madwe	B Theology		Fort Hare	R 7000	R7000
TOTAL				R 29 500	

1. The income of the bursary fund is 30% of the Baartman Fund annually, which means we are within our budget of last year's EBF.
2. The issue of opening the fund still hangs in a balance unresolved. The dilemma was that who stands to benefit from the fund, members or their children. The many questions we raised in February 2007.
3. The process now is such that the district Executives would receive and forward the application forms and endorse with a letter of recommendation from the district executive about the state of membership of the applicant.
4. The forms are now available from all district secretaries, in electronic format.
5. All completed forms will be forwarded to the Bursary Committee who will be sitting in a selection meeting coordinated by the National Assistant Secretary.

A debate ensued as to the effectiveness of the once off bursary policy. Different views and suggestions emerged as follows:

- Some proposed for the name change and suggested that the fund be called a grant if it were to continue to be a once off payment.

- Some suggested that the policy be reviewed to allow the BMC to pay the same amount of R7500 until the bursary holder complete studies.
- The fund must be limited to ministers only but include those at the college.

The matter was referred back to the basary committee for refinement and be presented to the 2010 Consultation as a resolution for adoption.

21. RESEARCH ABOUT CONFLICT IN BLACK CHURCHES WITHIN THE MCSA

Operational Plan

Goal: To assists the MCSA; to be able to mitigate conflict in the black churches that causes embarrassment to the church and particular black churches.

The question of the research study: What causes conflict in the black churches within the MCSA and the embarrassment it causes?

- What is the impact of the conflict in the church
- How can conflict be mitigated in black churches
- Make recommendations to resolve the problem of conflicts in black churches.

Mission: The mission of the task team is to do fact finding work about the causes, impact and recommend strategies that can help mitigate conflict in the black churches.

Objective

Phase	Activities	Time Frame	Responsible Person	Comment (tick box)		
				<u>O/standing</u>	<u>progress</u>	<u>done</u>
1	Develop fact finding and data collection tool (questionnaire) Bounce it with Vido Nyobole Build Task Team Recruit Field Workers	20 Jul–30 Oct 2009	Percy Nhlapo Nokuthula Mndaweni			
	Distribute fact finding and data collection tool		District Coordinators			

	(questionnaire) Collect responses from respondents		Circuit Coordinators Fieldworkers			
2	Collate and analyze statistical data Capture statistical data	1 – 30 Nov 2009	Nozibele Mbangula Percy Nokuthula			
	Collate substantive/qualitative data Analyze information					
	Produce first draft report Present 1 st draft report in the February Meeting	Feb 2010				
3	Process and analyze information Document findings Draw and document conclusion Make and document recommendations Produce 2 nd draft report	1 Dec 09–31 Jan 2010	Percy Nozibele Nokuthula Mbali Mbatha			
4	Comments on & Edit 2 nd draft report Incorporate comments and editing Produce final report Develop an executive summary of the final report Develop power point presentation of the report	1 March – 30 May 2010	Mbali Mbatha N. Mbombo Percy Nokuthula Nozibele			
5	Print and bind a report document Duplicate 13 copies of the report document	1-30 June 2010	Percy Nhlapo Nokuthula Mndaweni Nozibele			

			Mbangula			
	Present report to BMC 35 th meeting Conclude business	July 2010				

Description of human resource personnel

1. Task team convener: Person Nhlapo elected by July meeting 2009
2. Task team members: Nokuthula Mndaweni; Nozibele Mbangula; Mbali Mbatha; N. Mbombo appointed by task team convener.
3. District Coordinator: BMC district secretary requested by task team convener to assist with the research worker
4. Circuit Coordinator: BMC circuit secretary requested by task team convener to assist with the research worker
5. Field worker: BMC or church member designated by circuit coordinator.

22. SITE SEEING

The Consultation was taken on a site seeing experience to Thaba Nchu which was a Mission Station of the Methodist Church, and to St John's Methodist Church in Bloemfontein where the BMC as launched in 1975 and to the grave of the late Rev Seth Mokitimi in Bloemfontein.

22.1 Thaba Nchu

After lunch, the consultation undertook the much-awaited drive to Thaba Nchu. It was the planned site-seeing tour courtesy of the hosting district to some of the important places in Bloemfontein including St Paul's Methodist Church, Rev. Seth Mokitimi's grave and St John's Methodist Church.

The buses and cars arrived at St Paul's Methodist Church and the mood was jubilant and excited while singing as we entered the Church. Rev. Fandaleki opened his afternoon's devotions with hymn D10 from the BMC Hymn Book. The scripture reading was from the book of Acts 3 v 4 – 7. "Isilivere negolide andinayo kodwa endinako ndikunika kona. Sukuma uhambe." His message showed that the two men spoken of in the verse had nothing, but were carrying the message of God. They were bringing the healing and

transforming God to the people. The BMC therefore needed to hold on to this God in order to achieve its mission. The devotions were closed with a prayer.

Then there was an opportunity to reflect on the “History of St Paul’s Methodist Church and its significance as a heritage site” as presented by ... The church is 170 years old and has been officially declared as a heritage site. The plot was allocated by Chief Moroka to the Methodist ministers who landed in Thaba Nchu for settlement in 1833 (James Archbell, J Edwards, T Edwards Hodjson and Jenkins). They then built a small chapel. The missionaries also built 23 schools (Mrs Tollip School, St Paul’s Missionary School & St Paul’s Coulored School). Between 1837 – 1838, the Church was built and a decision was made to use it as a sanctuary and a place of worship.

It was this church which produced the first black preacher, Dr SM Molema. It was from a request by Swaziland of a bible from this church that missionaries came to be established in Swaziland and later Botswana. This church played a significant role in shaping the lives of men and women around and it became frequented by many black ministers and other prominent black people (Rev. Z.R. Mahabane and Dr James Mororka, former presidents of the ANC). It really is a site with a rich history which deserves to be remembered.

It was then time to show our gratitude. As a token of the BMC’s appreciation, gifts were presented to Rev. I Abrahams and Rev. Nyobole for their time and contributions to the consultation.

The BMC also acknowledged and responded to the call for a contribution to the Nelson Mandela 91st birthday social responsibility initiative. A special collection was collected, which was later announced to have totalled R3,711.

We then all made our way back to the buses, so as to make the journey to the graveyard.

22.2 Rev Seth Mokitimi’s Grave site

At arrival at the gravesite, Rev. Somngezi led us with a prayer. After which point, Rev. E Baartman shared with us and spoke about Rev. Seth Mokitimi as he knew him. He had met him when he was a boarding master at Hilltown College. He was very strict, a disciplinarian and hence the nickname as the grand bomber. He was a great preacher. He went to Transkei and then became the first black President of Conference in 1964.

He had an empowering effect not only on the Hilltown students but on everyone who knew him. He taught them how to protect their dignity and integrity. He understood the nature of people and was able to advise accordingly. He crossed racial lines and will be remembered by both blacks and whites.

Also present were some of the Mokitimi family members. His daughter expressed an overwhelming feeling at the day's events. She acknowledged God's purpose in everything and the history being made in that moment. She shared the family tree and shared about the wonderful person her father was.

Bishop Siwa concluded the gathering with benediction. It was then time for the journey to St John's Methodist Church.

22.3 St John Methodist Church where the BMC was Launched in 1975.

An introduction of Rev. Baartman was presented by Rev. Molo, as he was about to share with us the history of the BMC at the venue where the BMC Launch happened, in 1975. (See Annexure 5)

As presented by Rev. Baartman, these are some of the points he raised in his presentation:

- The BMC was a response to Church politics & politics outside the church; not a specific person's brainchild.
 - Apartheid existed in the Church and the ministers were the obvious victims with issues around stipend issues (which were based on the colour of one's skin).
 - This was then the first trigger for the meeting of the black ministers in 1975 in the very hall we were all in.
- Twelve ministers, with no money, met that day and considered issues such as the statistics of the Church and the lack of black participation in the Church.
 - There was only 1 black and 1 coloured Bishop out of 11 Bishops (Chairmen, at the time).
- Black people within the Church kept quiet about their issues amongst white people. "It was easy to be black amongst blacks, but not amongst whites."
- Our people did not "participate" when one considered the following questions:
 - How many actually read the Blue Booko?
 - How many prepared before the Synods?
 - How many followed up on the agenda items and researched?

- Therefore, a need for black representation within the Church structures was identified.
- However, even though black ministers' issues such as stipends and stationing were high on the agenda, it became clear that the Church was not just ministers alone.
- Therefore, there was a duty to include the laity, which then resulted in the first Consultation.
- Attendance at the first meeting was much more than expected; young and old, ministers and laity, all were there.
- The BMC always had an intention to remain within the MCSA; it never intended to leave the Church -> Black people have been part of the Church for over 200 years.
- Hence, referring to the Church as "Ilifa lobawo". Every member should fully understand this.
- The intention was also to be a "movement" to permeate the rest of the Church.
 - Not an organisation of the Church
 - Part of the intention was raise the uncomfortable questions and to do so, we had to be "outside" the structures of the Church.
 - "If you want to create change, you have to rock the boat."
- Many of the decision-makers in the Church were members of the BMC.
 - This is one of the factors which made the BMC of that time effective.
- In 1978, a break-away group in Clarkebury formed the Methodist Church of Transkei.
 - They claimed it was as a result of the BMC; forgetting the original intention to never leave the Church.
 - The BMC vowed it would never accept break-aways; in effective leaving the legacy within.
- This all results in the misunderstood perceptions of the BMC.
- However, were in not for the BMC, in 1978 the MCSA would've split in the middle with blacks and whites on either side.
- The movement's positive contributions need to be recognised from time to time and this was one of them.
- However, some of the movement's recommendations were distorted e.g. geographical circuits.

In his closing remarks, Rev. Baartman said:

- The BMC needs to look very carefully at the question of wanting to become an organisation vs a movement. At a minimum, the BMC is there to unite the Church.
- We must also remember that there is not 1 person who tried to bring about change, who has not suffered.

- “Whenever you try to liberate an oppressed person, you are likely to create an enemy.”
- As one quote says “Black man, you are on your own.”
 - If you seek change, you are on your own; if you seek to free people, you are on your own.
- We also cannot stand up straight & walk, without God playing His part.
- We mu also remember to stand up, look the other person in the eye & walk.
- That is what the BMC should be and should be doing.

Bishop Mtibi closed the session with benediction.

DAY 3, 18 JULY 2009

23. BIBLE STUDY 2

Rev Jeremiah Lesshope presented part two of the bible study. The following are some of the points that he raised.

The challenge of standing up is that - transformation happens.

- the text read in the time of the day challenges us to broaden our horizon to the level of understanding the bible.
- the future of a woman comes like an instruction
- Jesus came to seek the lost (not the lost Jews)
- The kingdom has nothing to do with nationality.
- as the BMC we need to move towards across the borders of Methodism

The question to be raised is, what about others who do not belong to Methodist - how about allow them to be members of the BMC ?

24. BMC IN CONVERSATION WITH ITSELF

The Chairperson opened up the floor for the membership to converse with itself, while he had requested the Bishops to partake in another exercise while this session continues. By way of getting started, the chairperson presented some questions:

- How can we journey with other denominations?

- How do we creatively deal with the tension of being presented by the duality of membership in BMC and being in the structures of the Church while ensuring the Church still moves on?
 - E.g. the PB and Exec. Secretary address vs engaging with them on specific issues of clarity
 - Rocking the Church vs being part of the governance of the Church

At this point, many took the opportunity to air their concerns and some to venture responses to the Chair's questions.

These are listed below as they were raised by people from different districts:

Limpopo district

- Transformation – The BMC needs to be serious about the issue of transformation. Is the BMC supportive of gender transformation and how is this demonstrated? A metamorphosis needs to happen i.e. a permanent change.
- Accountability of leaders – When the movement mobilises around candidates and they get elected, then there is an expectation to account back to the movement. However, then the same leaders forget about the BMC. How do we bridge the gap – ensuring that once leaders are elected, they remember where they come from?
- Umrhabulo – Is the BMC documenting its history well? When new members join, there is no documented history which can be used as a point of reference. The communication is then oral and somewhat subjective.
- Other denominations – There is recollection of a mandate being given to the previous committee to communicate with other denominations. Therefore, maybe the Chair should clarify his question further.
- Bishops absence – A concern was raised regarding the Bishops being asked by the Chairperson to leave this session, as they are bound to receive the reports anyway. However, they might then be distorted by that time. Therefore, a request was put forward to ask them to return and this was seconded.
- The chairperson explained the background to the Bishops' request to be excused i.e. so as to allow the members to feel free to share their concerns. He also cautioned that the session should then not be a stone-throwing session at the Bishops.

... district

- Black Unity - A conversation with our brothers and sisters in the wilderness is necessary in order to truly demonstrate black unity i.e. beyond the borders of MCSA.

Central district

- SMMS – The agreement at conference was that the President of the seminary was to be a black academic. However, this was not followed to the letter and thus an explanation should be provided to the stakeholders including the BMC as we have continued to support this venture.

Limpopo

- BMC Literature – The movement needs to take it upon itself to archive its history, while our forefathers are still around and we need to translate it as well. This process needs to be managed appropriately with deadlines (milestones) and progress reports.
- Digital age – We also need to go paperless, considering for example the number of laptops in the room. We need to make use of tools such as websites, even through the MCSA link.

Cape of Good Hope

- Gender transformation – It is a matter of concern when the movement still refers to this as “development” of women, as of course the assumption is that women are already developed. The issue should rather be about creating spaces where their leadership can shine through.
- Empowering ministers – Educating our ministers on how to write their own CV’s as an example.
- Minister invitations – Invitations in geographic circuits need to be looked at, in terms of the quality and calibre of ministers placed.
- Documentation - There needs to be flexibility in how we capture and document things for the BMC as some people are comfortable with certain methods.

Queenstown

- Laws & discipline – The notion of not being allowed to take the Church to a court of law from a specific clause with the Laws & Discipline of the Church provides some discomfort. This is difficult as we are citizens of 2 countries (the church vs the community). This becomes a problem when wrong-doings cannot be taken

outside and end up being decided upon by Pastoral Commissions made up of friends of the defendant.

Central:

- Gender – Resolutions was taken in the previous year in the transformation school session but was not implemented?

Grahamstown:

- Relevance Q – This is inappropriate when it is coming from within.
- Connexional membership – Many members are only active at the connexional level resulting in the assumption that there is a known agenda.

Northern Free State and Lesotho

- BMC Youth – The BMC does not take young people as part of the movement. There is no space given / catered for young people.
- Umrhabulo – There is no document to teach our people about the BMC.

Grahamstown

- BMC Youth – This must not be a platform to speak against elders.
- Participation – BMC members only go to synods / conferences to vote but not deliberate on issues. The BMC should move away from that.

Highveld and Swaziland

- Consolidation of issues – A concern expressed about a manner in which we can facilitate a process to ensure that all the issues / concerns expressed do not fall through the cracks. Important issues being raised will be lost if not properly captured; thus a session with the Exco with suggestions can be held outside this forum.

Central

- Synergy / Continuity – There seem to be a lack of synergy and continuity from one administration to the next. There is no seamless progression or tracking of issues.
- Tension between BMC and structures - This is seen as a healthy, creative & necessary tension acting as a conscience for Bishops in the BMC membership. Therefore, it should not be avoided.
- Focus agenda issues – The BMC needs to recognise that not everyone wants to be part of the BMC and rather define for itself 4/5 key black agenda issues and sell them as starting points. That way it is speaking in one voice and not just canvassing for support.
- Role & Purpose of Consultation – This gathering should be a Policy and Strategic conversation forum where fundamental change can happen in the Church. Therefore, the people here (at least half) should come from the leadership structures at the local level.

The Chair then closed the session by recognising that as long as the movement moves from Consultation to Consultation, there will be no real influence. At the end of each Consultation, there should be 3 or 4 key issues which we take forward and all commit ourselves to implementing. Then the February meeting is a pulse check of where we are.

However, this session was not to produce one concrete plan immediately. All the concerns have been captured and will be dealt with accordingly.

25. DEVOTIONS

Devotions were conducted by by Ms Nokuzola Mbangula who based here message on Luke 5: 17 – 24.

26. ERNEST BAARTMAN FUND (EBF)

The fundraising was conducted by Rev Sidwell Mokgothu and Mr Mhlubulwana Xhanti.

The event received briefing and estimionies from current basary holders about their studies. This provided value in raising awaresness and assurance among members that the EBF is playing a vital role in developing Ministers and the big benefactor is the MCSA.

The event further raised the following amounts (subject to adjustment after reconcilations):

ENERST BAARTMAN FUND

1. Natal Coastal	= R27432.00
2. Queens Town	= R24525.80
3. Limpopo	= R16082.00
4. KNB	= R 11952.00
5. Highveld & Swaziland	= R11864.00
6. Grahamstown	= R11569.00
7. Clarkbury	= R8479.00
8. Central	= R6784.55
9. Cape of Good hope	= R5931.00
10. Natal West	= R4619.05
11. Northern Free State & Lesotho	=R1654.30
12. Mozambique	=R 565.53
13. Cleaning of table	=R 662.90.
TOTAL	=R132217.80

The Ernest Baartman shield was awarded to the Natal Coastal District.

27. EPILOGUE

The epilogue was conducted by Rev Z Zide.

29. GALA DINNER

The hosting district organised a succesfull and well organised gala dinner. The dinner was addressed by Her Excellency, The Executive Mayor of Motheo District Municipality,

Cllr, ME Moila. She began by paying tribute to Dr Nelson Mandela on the occasion of his birthday and what he stood for as an example of good leadership, especially his involvement in the programme of HIV/AIDS. True to Mandela's teachings, her municipality intends to provide school uniforms to the affected and infected, as well as vulnerable learners in thirty schools to be identified in the district. They also intend to identify orphanages for support by providing food parcels. She made a call in a true spirit of celebrating the legacy of our legendary Madiba by urging all to say "IT IS IN OUR HANDS".

The BMC honoured the following at the gala dinner:

1. Seth Mokitimi Award
Rev J. Letlabika on his occasion of attaining 100 years of age and the role he played in the Methodist church and in South Africa.
2. Daphne Tashe Award
Ms Mary Lwate from Pretoria was nominated for her role in keeping kids off the streets, for providing shelter and for winning the 2004 Shoprite/SABC2 Women of the Year Award.

DAY 4, 19 JULY 2009

30. DIVINE SERVICE AND HOLY COMMUNION

The Devine Service and Holy Communion were led by Bishop Musi Losaba.

31. LISTENING COMMITTEE STATEMENT OF THE 34rd ANNUAL MEETING

The Listening Committee presented their report which was accepted by Consultation delegates by standing up.

ANNEXURE 1 : CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS – Rev Sox Leleki

To the Presiding Bishop, Executive Secretary, Past Presidents of our church, General Presidents, District Bishops here today, members of the executive, distinguished guests and members of our movement, allow me to greet you all in the wonderful name of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ.

Let me take this opportunity to welcome you all to this wonderful city known as the S.A. s judicial capital. This is the home of the B.M.C. As you know it is here in 1975 when this mighty movement was born. It is in this soil where the umbilical cord of the B.M.C. is buried. Many of liberation movements see Bloemfontein as their home.

Thank you K.N.B. for deciding on this historical city when organizing for our consultation so that we can link up with our roots once again.

I wish to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude as the executive for the confidence shown by electing us to lead this mighty movement for the period of three years. We wish to thank leaders of this movement and the church at large for their support and prayers.

Comrades, brothers and sisters, this is my first chairman's address. For this reason I would like to start by paying tribute to my predecessors, for the outstanding service and leadership they provided during their term of office. I also want to thank them for their support and willingness to help us whenever we were in need of their assistance.

Comrades although I knew a lot about B.M.C. before I become its Chairman, I could never have been able to appreciate the extent of the ministry of this movement until I was given this privilege of seeing it from inside.

It is sad to report that at the beginning of the year we have lost our General Secretary through resignation. We wish to thank her for standing off this long journey with us and her contribution cannot go unnoticed.

I had a privilege to visit the four of our districts; indeed the expectations about B.M.C. are enormous.

As we begin our 34th annual consultation, we have the opportunity and responsibility to review the actual implementation strategy of both B.M.C. and MCSA regarding the transformation agenda. It is my sincere hope that this year's gathering will not to be another talk show. If the direction itself is inappropriate and that impacts negatively on transformation agenda it must be changed. We hope that the consultation of 2009,

offers us an opportunity to make a fundamental review of the transformation package as a whole. If the transformation agenda of the B.M.C. is going in the wrong direction, speeding it up can only result in getting to the wrong destination quicker.

The transformation question remains a clear barometer of continuing struggle for justice and equality with the MCSA. Any assessment of impact made by transformation agenda must begin with some understanding of the history that preceded it.

The tension between the past and present continue to live with us. That tension continues to be evident between historical and contextual perspective. Many of us try to run away from today's challenges by basking in the past glory of our movement, hence the same question day in and day out "the relevance of the B.M.C. today". There is a noticeable creative tension between being a member of the B.M.C and being in the governing structuring of the church.

John Baur points out that the delivery of the church in Africa is disappointing and leaves much to be desired. Many of us don't want to hear that as the truth.

The disunity displayed by some members of the B.M.C. and members of our church, is not helpful in addressing the issues of transformation. A living example is the ministers and members of BMC in some Districts.

Theological education on the African soil must be deeply rooted on what it means to be an African. The lack of adequate theological training deprives us an opportunity to engage on intense debate on theological matters. My hope is that the establishment of SMMS will help our church to put an emphasis on contextualization of the theological education. The political climate in our country requires the church to have political literate leaders, for the church to avoid seeing Christians singing from the same hymn book with the Government.

Our newly established S.M.M.S. should consider offering political ethics as one of the courses in their curriculum. Sound theological training is the key for church renewal life and maturity. The future lies with those who are to be equipped for better future.

B.M.C. must help black people in particular, to be creators of good ideas instead of being good recipients of well packaged ideas imported somewhere else.

The theme of this Consultation "Stand up straight and walk" offers us an opportunity to develop concrete strategies to translate our good ideas into action. To stand up requires one to be in action, you can't stand up by just generating good ideas. For one to walk with confidence to his/her destination one must be straight.

HIV/AIDS compiles many churches to do something to deal with the pandemic, failing which all of us stand a better chance to parish, doing nothing. This pandemic is still characterized by silence, secrecy and shame. I am convinced that there is not much done by the church so far to help our communities to deal with this pandemic. I am not suggesting that all is gloom and doom. As one writer once said we have crossed many drivers but ocean lies ahead.

If you can evaluate the previous consultations, they did a lot in helping the head and heart but not much in helping the hands. This consultation should be about hands, delivery or action. We are made in the image of what we desire. What we truly desire is our tool to know God and know ourselves. Looking for God is the ultimate desire of those people called Christians.

We seriously underestimated the impact of the legacy of apartheid in the lives of the black people. We thought it could be changed overnight. The apartheid system was designed to fail the majority of this country not only that but to produce failures and victims. The theme of this consultation gives us a chance to choose our destiny. It gives an opportunity to do what is right. We must look at the capacity of our movement to deliver.

How people vote and elect leaders of quality is one of the important tasks we must concentrate on at this consultation. The election processes must be interrogated. Those elected to positions in our church must be men and women of integrity. They must be ethical, accountable and responsive leaders.

They must be able to influence a strong and sustainable economy. As the church we have consciously or unconsciously lowered our standards of what we expect of our leaders. Once we elect our people to leadership the culture changes. It is all me, me, me and the wealth I can acquire in the short space of time.

As this consultation we must find time to deal with the question of how do we responsibly and sustainably grow our economy to implement the transformation agenda. I know our treasurer will lead in the correct direction when she tables her budget.

We have come a long way as the movement within the M.C.S.A, despite our legacy and daunting challenges we inherited. As the movement we have achieved a great deal, but we have also made some serious mistakes that threatened our future.

This consultation must help us to develop a strategy to grow our commitment and local involvement. Each one of us sitting must ask this question “What can I do to ensure that a bright future for the next generations to come. Those who attended our February meeting will reverse that we have agreed to raise the following for the purpose of spending more time for the B.M.C. conversation with itself, with a view of making it more effective.

It is my pleasure and honour to highlight the elements of our programme of action. The transformation agenda remain at the centre of discussion and implementation at this consultation. We have to work very hard to attract more clergy to participate fully in the activities of our movement.

The transformation must be in support of women, youth and people living with disabilities. This consultation must create space for them to consult among themselves on issues affecting them in relation to transformation agenda. Let’s discourage people from speaking on behalf of others. We are seriously concern about the lack of information in relation to B.M.C. and what it stands for, hence the introduction of Mrabulo Business. The draft discussion document will be tabled and discussed at this consultation for critical engagement. We hope that the Mrabulo Business will promote life- long information sharing sessions at all levels of our movement.

We are paying attention to the issue of B.M.C. influencing the Policy decision making structures of our church by ensuring the implementation of the Grand Plan as agreed by February Meeting. We are mindful of the need to make the B.M.C. our daily bread. We must move away from knowing B.M.C. as consultation to consultation affair. We promise to increase our efforts to encourage our cadres to talk B.M.C. in the morning, at noon and in the evening.

The implementation of the T.O.T. will be the key priority for the next three years. We hope to use it to build a B.M.C. brand. It is also critically important to improve the efficiency of our District and circuit structures. The success of our movement depends on good working relations of mutual respect between the structures of B.M.C. at all level.

Allow me to use this opportunity to congratulate the following: Revs Bhangushe, Bosman, Noqhayi, Ndzimande, Hansrod and many others on their elections to positions of leadership and responsibility in our church. There are some challenges I have noted in the decision making process of our consultation. The random way in which resolutions

are taken without careful assessment of the issues involved and whether it is possible to implement or not. As a result many resolutions are taken and are never implemented. We need to begin to address this issue as it is embarrassing especially on crucial matters of transformation.

I have pleasure in announcing that Ethel has been co-opted to be our assistant secretary. I believe her co-option will enable us to carry our work more effectively than before. In conclusion we wish to call on all our members to support Mandela Day in whatever possible way and all other endeavours aimed at promoting nation building.

I would also like to express my gratitude to members of my executive for their co-operation and for promoting the spirit of team building.

Shalom.

ANNEXURE 2: SECRETARYS' REPORT – Mr Joe Mavuso

Chairperson and the BMC Executive
The Presiding Bishop
The Secretary of Conference
Church Leadership
Fellow, BMC Members,

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to account on the last twelve (12) months since we were elected to the office, connecting with the initiatives of our predecessors. Chairperson, first, allow me also to extend my heart felt gratitude and pay tribute to the past BMC executives (a list thereof is with other hand outs) for the good work they have been doing in advancing the interest and objectives of the movement.

Secondly chair, this consultation sitting is taking place three (3) days before the birthday of our fellow Methodist, the world's icon of freedom and democracy, the former President of South Africa Mr. Nelson Mandela's 91st birthday on the 18th July. The BMC also join the many around the world wishing him, a HAPPY BIRTHDAY. We also wish a happy birthday to all those who share the same month with Madiba. May you all continue to receive God's blessing!

BUSINESS

Changes in the original BMC Executive Structure:

The notice is herby for the consultation to note the withdrawal of Mrs Tashe from the executive as indicated by the chairperson in his address. The matter was reported to the 2009 February meeting (also known as the meeting of the District Executives) wherein; the meeting recommended that the assistant secretary ascends the position of the secretary general and further mandated the executive committee to find a replacement for the position of the assistant secretary.

The new complexion of the executive is as follows:

- Chairpesron : Rev Soxs Leleki
- Secreatry General : Mr Joe Mavuso
- Assistant Secreaty : Mrs Ethel Khoza

- Treasurer : Ms Lindi Ginindza

The Executive requests that the 2009 consultation ratify and confirm its approval to the changes.

Decentralisation of Communication Structure and building of strong Districts:

It has become evident from district reports and the past Secretary General's report, when he highlighted the challenge of inconsistent growth as well as monitoring and communication that, the BMC has become strong and livid during the July consultation only.

Therefore, it is our aim to remedy the challenge and discourage connexional commitment only at the expense of districts strong hold and local structure building.

Hence, the connexional executive proposal (to the February meeting) to communicate (formal business) directly to the district executives and in turn (they) communicate with circuit membership. The general membership will in turn up scale any communication via their district executives to the connexional executive. This will only be strictly in formal business but will allow a free flow of discussions and debates that are not binding to the district executives. We will endeavour to be clear in our communication and shorten the turn around time in response, avoid bundling and bureaucracy and inaccessibility. There will be general communication at the discretion of the executive. This form of communication will still be postal and/or electronically where necessary.

Further benefits are that, there will be clear lines of communication, lessen the volume and amount of communication (given the movement does not have a full-time office) and most importantly, to serve committed members.

Paramount to this is the mechanism to build a much stronger and active BMC at the level of districts, fulfilling and implementing decisions and resolutions reached at consultation, synod and conference. Let us all be reminded that the July Consultation is meant for consulting one another (in the form of seeking information or advice, spiritual revival, capacity development and mandate seeking) and we are all expected to return back to our respective districts to implement decisions and resolutions towards the movement's objectives for growth. Be an Action oriented movement through projects.

To support this initiative, the executive deployed the connexion chair to visit all districts starting with those that are functional but less optimal due to challenges of leadership, direction or some form of setback. In addition, districts will be strengthened from the new capacity building ToT programme that chair referred to in building a BMC brand – more on this will be discussed below (see 2.3).

The latter also respond to the call(s) by the past chair, Rev Selby Madwe in his address when he called on the BMC to throw the net into the deep, with transformation beginning with “us” influencing the MCSA.

Dr TSN Gqubule also in his bible study emphasised the importance of unconscious goodness and righteousness, “The left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing and without keeping the record”.

He further said, and also stated by the Secretary of conference Rev Vido Nyobole, that Small Talk Trap has become the substitute for Action. We need to act more and implement resolutions taken. The intention is to develop a framework that would provide coherence in an integrated approach for implementation of the BMC resolutions and MCSA mission imperatives. The primary purpose is to maximise the impact of activities at District level and strengthen the movement to be a formidable force.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

In line with previous resolutions to empower the leadership and general membership to engage in an educated and informed manner at quarterly meetings, synods, conference and also at BMC meetings, the executive has moved swiftly to organise a Training of Trainers (ToT) programme.

The approach to the event was tested at the 2009 February meeting and approved.

ToT Objectives:

- To prepare a pool of trainers to carry out training in districts
- To build capacity of the BMC and broader church membership

It is with great pleasure to report to the consultation that the ToT workshop was held on the 13th – 16th June 2009 at EMMU Kilnerton Centre, Pretoria.

Three delegates were invited from each district to attend.

The following districts attended - along with the number of delegates as stipulated:

DISTRICIT	No of Delegates
Cape of Good Hope	3
Limpopo	3
Grahamstown	3 + 1
Clarkebury	3
Highveld & Swaziland	2
Kimberly, Namibia & Bloemfontein	3
Natal Coastal	3
Natal West	3
Queenstown	3
Mozambique	2
TOTAL	29

It is with great regret that the following Districts did not attend:

- Central
- Northern Free State & Lesotho

All delegates were tasked to develop district work plans demonstrating how they will implement training programme acquired at the workshop. We call upon district executives to support the initiates and call upon the church to utilise the trainees.

The training was based on the following strategic topical areas of paramount interventions. Along each topic, is the trainer(s) name:

Training and Facilitation skills – Joe Mavuso
Spiritual Leadership – Sidwell Mokgothu
Personal Mystery – Norman Raphahlele
Leadership skills – Mogomotsi Diutlwileng
Roles of Committees – Nambitha Mekana
How to conduct meetings – Sox Leleki
Financial Management – Lindi Ginindza and Mike Tsukudu

The connexional executive committee would like to express its most appreciation to all delegates and most importantly, the trainers who selflessly dedicated time to making the training a resounding success. The trainers have made themselves available to be called upon whenever required to mentor the trainees.

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

We have mooted the introduction of the Website for the BMC at the February meeting. We further investigated various forms of being on line.

Ms Mombassa Hlathi and the Secretary General approached the MCSA webmaster (Ms Hayley Walker of Pluto Internet) and discussed the following options that the consultation needs to engage and approve if found to be viable:

Option One – Once off fee

Qty	Description	Unit Price	Ext Price
1	Drupal theme Design This would be the basic look and feel of the website as well as the modules that required. A framework must be in place and clear directive for what the website should look and feel like.	2.500	2 500
1	Additional consultation on design – this is per hour if we need to do strategic design consultation at meetings/conferences. This does not include travel.	250	250
1	Annual fee Domain registration for org.za	250	250
1	Monthly costs Web hosting – this includes hosting and 1GB traffic. Additional traffic will be per GB.	250	250
	Sub Total		3 250
	VAT		455
	TOTAL		3705

Option Two: Maintenance of the BMC website

Qty	Description	Unit Price	Ext. Price
20	Option 1 Monthly maintenance Control @ 20 hours per month	300	6 000
1	Option 2 Ad hoc Web Content Loading	350	350
1	Training of people to use Drupal This would be for a morning training including local travel in Gauteng. Travel outside of Gauteng will be charged additionally.	1500	1500
	Sub Total		7 850
	VAT		0 000
	Total		7 850

PUBLICATION

The consultation resolved in the past year to pursue the idea of producing a publication. In addition to the uMrabulo Business that the Chairperson alluded to, we need to discuss and agree on the concept and set up an editorial task team to further investigate and recommend a way forward.

THE BMC AND THE MCSA CONNEXIONAL EXECUTIVE (CE) RELATIONSHIP

The 2008 consultation mandated a team comprising of the immediate past executive committee and the incoming committee to meet with the CE to respond to the PB's call to bring the works of BMC to the centre stage of the MCSA in order to benefit the church as a whole. A joint working group developed a working document aimed at the BMC being understood as a movement within the church with its activities aimed at supporting and growing the church and as an integral part of the official structures of our church. (A full text of the response is available for perusal on request). A formal response is still awaited from the CE.

DATA GATHERING AND SKILLS AUDIT

We are requesting that members assist the executive to provide correct details of each and every one who consider him or herself a committed member of the BMC. The aim is to develop a data base that will be hence forth, shared and managed together as

Districts and the connexional office. New in this approach, is the request to fill in the skills audit form aimed at gathering a data of requisite skills in the movement. This will enable us to call upon members to provide a particular skilled service according to people's abilities and qualifications. The assistant secretary general will be the officer responsible to manage the data.

CONCLUSION

Chairperson, I would like to echo your sentiments that let this consultation not be another talk shop, but an opportunity to yet add more value in building the movement on our quest to transform and build the MCSA. Let's use the programme as adopted, to attain our goals. Allow nothing to divide us BUT emerge more resolute, more united and live this place as agents of change and bearers of good news, in Gods name I pray.

ANNEXURE 3: TREASURER'S REPORT – Ms Lindi Ginindza

See the attached Financial Statement.

THE ROLE OF BLACK THEOLOGY IN DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA

1. INTRODUCTION

Today I have the honour and privilege to address an assembly of Ministers of Religion, Black Theologians, scholars and the like on the role and relevance of Black Theology in Democratic South Africa. \many people, scholars, academics, political activists, revolutionaries, Black Theologians and other members of the educated social group – the intelligentsia, have addressed the subject and role of theology in society including Black Theology in the historical and recent past. Although these writings and contributions varied, the common feature in all of them is that all of them reflected political, philosophical and ideological orientations of their authors. This includes Ministers of Religion and theologians across the race and class divide as well as academics and apologists who falsely claimed that their respective approaches and views on theology, be it American, Western, African, Black or White were non-political, non-ideological and neutral. I contend in this paper that there are no neutral and non-ideological Priests and Ministers of Religion in this world. At least they are not yet born.

At the outset, therefore, before anything can be said, written and expressed, I declare and acknowledge openly, here and now that my views, thoughts and approach toward Black Theology is not neutral and non-ideological. Actually, I do not believe that there exists in society and the world human beings who are neither fish nor fowl. Even those persons and individuals who claim neutrality and non-ideological positions express ideas and thoughts which reflect specific philosophical and ideological orientations, either of the dominant ruling class or of the oppressed and exploited people in a specific way. Their views and thoughts represent the views of either the rich or the poor. There are no fence sitters. Actually, people who become unconscious victims of dominant ideas in society experience, ad infinitum, prescribed thinking and prescribed social action and activity.

Perhaps, the time has come for all of us to reflect and think deeply in a more serious way on the significance and meaning of the words expressed by Imamu Baraka in his article on the objectivity in poetry and other art forms, published in 1971, in *Dynamite Voices*, Volume 1. In his article, Imamu Baraka states:

“Speak the truth to the people.

Talk sense to the people.
Free them with reason.
Free them with honesty.
Free the people with \love and Courage and Care for their
being... (Cone, J.H. 1977:16)

Having openly that my approach towards Black Theology, its relevance and applications is not neutral but is heavily influenced by ideology and politics, especially the political and ideological orientation of the working class, I intend to illustrate in the following sections of this paper, that the position I have adopted is not unheard of in history and in theological discourse. But before doing so, allow me to make a second confession and this will be the last confession, I am not a Black Theologian or a potential Black Priest. I am simply a lay person. This is not a disadvantage to me today even though I am addressing an assembly of Ministers of Religion and Black Theologians. I am not in the business of engaging in dialogue on the interpretations and meanings of biblical texts, even though I may refer to these on occasions. The dialogue is rooted on the role and relevance of Black Theology in Democratic South Africa to which I shall now turn.

2. THE ROLE AND RELEVANCE OF BLACK THEOLOGY IN DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA

2.1 THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF BLACK THEOLOGY

Prhaps, it is fair to say that all major black theological studies in South Africa relate themselves in one way or another to the work of James Cone. Similarly, lay persons like me are easily attracted towards reading James Cone's book: "God of the Oppressed" than reading and extremely confusing book called "The Bible." James Cone's work is easy to relate to, for it places theology in a social context and avoids theoretical obstructions about the relationship of human beings with God. For instance, Cone states that: "Although God, the subject of theology, is eternal, theology itself is like those who articulate it, limited by history and time. Theology is not universal language, it is interested language and thus always a reflection of the goals and aspirations of a particular people in a definite social setting." (Cone, J. 1971:39).

Cone stresses that: “Theologians must face the relativity of their thought processes; their ideas about God are the reflections of social conditioning; their dreams and visioning are derived from this world. The those who are accustomed to speaking ex cathedra (i.e with the full authority of office especially that of the Pope, implying infallibility as defined in Roman Catholic doctrine) on matters of faith, this will be difficult pill to swallow. Nor do I have the Pope in mind, though he is certainly included.” Cone states that the assumptions that theological thinking is objective or universal is ridiculous. For Cone there is an inescapable interplay between theology and society whether white or Black Theology. This means that theology is political language. What people think about God, Jesus Christ and the Church cannot be separated from their own social and political status in a given society.

Indeed many people have made a similar point differently. A fellow South African and a Black academic who lives in the city of Tshwane, J.M. Tibane explains the tendency of limited thinking in the following manner:

“Your mother conceived you in a womb – that was a box. She then gave birth to you and wrapped you in some blanket – that was a box.

If you escaped the blankets, you were put in a pram and pushed around – that was another box.

You went to kindergarten and the care giver said: “You shall not play beyond these boundaries” – that was another box.

You then went to school and got a matric certificate after studying a number of prescribed subjects – that was another box.

If you went to college or university, you degree or diploma was yet another box.

You probably got employed and they gave you a job description – that was another box.

And guess what, when you die, they will throw you in a coffin – that is just another box.

As if that is not enough, that coffin will also be lain in a grave – which is just another box” (Tibane, J.M 2007:43-44)

Tibane concludes: “What a shame. You are conceived in a box, and you will end in a box! Unfortunately, as long as you are in your box, you can only influence those things that are with you in you box. You see, I am not in you box. If you want ton influence me, you must think outside your box. Your followers are not in your box. Your colleagues are not in your box. If you want to make an impact in this world, you will

have to think outside your box” (Tibane, 2007:44 – An author of the book titled: Turbo Think. Enrich Your Thinking. Enlarge Your Territory).

Implied in Tibane’s philosophy of thinking is the requirement to delink and disengage from prescribed thinking. For thinking and acting outside the box involves, first and foremost, acceptance on our part that social life and the world we live in have prescribed parameters, limited and trained us to think and engage in activities that are limited by the box we live in. Consequently any movement both inside and outside the box requires consciousness and purpose. Consciousness and purpose must be initiated inside the box in order to facilitate delinking and total disengagement. Equally, even in the context of a simplistic conceptions the theme: Rise Up And Walk” there must be an intention and a purpose to engage in this process. However, the starting point of rising up and walking is becoming and remaining awake. This also must have an intentions purpose. For there may be little and an insignificant gain in waking up, rising up and walking if the intentions is to go back to sleep again. People who rises up and walk about in his or her bedroom does not have to open up his/her eyes and switch the lights on in order to perform the task at hand. The eyes can remain closed and the lights remain off as the intention is to go back to sleep again.

For us to delink and disengage from thinking and acting inside the box, therefore, requires first and foremost an awareness and consciousness that there is a box which prescribes and limits our thinking and actions. Secondly, there must be an intention and a deliberate, conscious action and purpose to delink and disengage completely from the box.

This is made more vividly by Mosala in his book “Biblical Hermeneutics and Black Theology in South Africa,” published in 1989. Referring to Cone, Mosala indicates that Black theology’s exegetical starting point expresses itself in the notion that the Bible is the revealed Word of God. The black theologian’s task is to reveal God’s Word to those who are oppressed and humiliated in this world. For Cone, the Word of God, therefore, represents on structuring pole of the biblical hermeneutics of black theology, while the black experience constitutes the other. He summarizes black theology’s hermeneutical position in this way.

“The Bible is the witness to God’s self-disclosure in Jesus Christ. Thus the black experience requires that Scripture be a source of Black Theology. For it was Scripture that enabled slaves to affirm a view of God that differed radically from that of the slave masters. The slave masters’ intention was to present a “Jesus” who would make the

slave obedient and docile. Jesus was supposed to make black people better slaves, that is, faithful servants of white masters. But many blacks rejected that view of Jesus, not only because it contradicted their African heritage, but because it contradicted the witness of scripture.”

According to Mosala “Paradoxically, black theology’s notion of the Bible as the Word of God carries the implication that there is such a thing as a non-ideological appropriation of Scripture. Black theologians condemn white people’s views of God and Jesus Christ as apolitical, that is, above ideologies, on the one hand; but they maintain a view of Scripture as the absolute, non-ideological Word of God that can be made ideological only by being applied to the situation of oppression, on the other hand.” (1989: 15-16).

Mosala points out that the belief in the Bible as the Word of God has had the effect of being pro-humanity but anti black working class and anti black women. It has, to all intents and purposes been bourgeois in its explanation and interpretation as applied to the working class situation. He indicates that the theoretical tragedy of such a state of affairs is that claims in that direction have been made with confidence and pride. Mosala makes reference and is critical of Allan Boesak’s understanding of perception of the theology of liberation. Equally he does not spare other black theologians who fail to link or understand the relationship between black theology and ideology, as these theologians simply make references to human expressions of solidarity without appropriating and conceptualising these in the context of human realities and conditions and the existence of social classes and society.

Without be labouring the point we need to stress however that there is and urgent need to engage seriously on the role, content, purpose, intention and direction of black theology as a weapon of struggle especially in the African continent. This is more important and quite urgent in post independent Africa where the silence of black theologians including former revolutionaries and political activists of the pre-independent era is deafening. The problem in the post independent Africa appears more complex for all these categories referred to above, have assumed the empty title of being an African citizen. Little regard is given to the conditions of the poor and the ills of society in which the majority of our people live. Emphasis has now shifted from concern with total liberation both political, social, cultural, spiritual and economic. Towards development which in itself is not well defined and understood. Small wonder therefore that even Heads of States or so called black or African academics can easily make reference to the existence of two economies within one economic system without any fear of being challenged or criticised.

The point must be made though that one is not critical of the need for development be it economic, social or community driven. These processes of development however co-exist both internationally and nationally with the process of underdevelopment which is a historical product of exploitation on a global scale. It becomes imperative for all of us to fashion tools of liberation in all spheres including the political, cultural and other spheres of our social activity. Black theology can play an important leadership role in this regard. Secondly, whereas there may be a need for black theologians to organise themselves and enter into a constructive relationship with the state and government of a country, that relationship needs to be critical in order for it provide constructive, positive and beneficial results to the majority of our people. States and governments of countries are prone to be critical of anyone in society who simply criticises the state or government without showing direction and contributing towards solutions to the problems at hand. Indeed it is imperative for all of us to make this contribution for the benefit of our society and our people. However such activities and positive steps should not limit us from being critical of the actions of the state and government. Certainly, it is a sorry state of affairs to witness continuous hunger, poverty, crime and increasing crisis of goods and services in silence. If this is perceived as the reward of our relationship with the state then there must be something seriously wrong both with the relationship as well as our state of mind. This is applicable to all of us who have an important role to articulate the aspirations and interests of our people in all spheres of social life, be it in the church, in the communities, in trade unions or any political or social formation in our societies. This is the task before us and we must never fail to remember that both in colonial and in neo-colonial society there is a job to be done. We can never hope to guarantee and ensure our safety from the ills of society unless we engage seriously in social mobilisation of our people and provide a clear direction on the way ahead.

ANNEXURE 5: HISTORY OF THE BMC – Rev Ernest N Baarman

The black Methodist Consultation was not a brain child of a particular person or a group.

It came into existence as a movement responding to accepted racism in South Africa.

It was covered by the Holy sounding words, phrases and sentences, couched in fine theological terms in church. Somehow Black men and women were to sober up after being intoxicated by phrases like “It is the will of God.....”

It was rude awakening to realise apartheid was not out there but it was alive and strong in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Ministers were the obvious victims of discrimination in the church.

The church had adopted the apartheid classification of the races. On top were the Europeans (as they were labelled) secondly were coloureds and Indians and at the bottom of the file were Africans (The natives, The Bantus).

The stipend as laid down by Conference was determined by the colour of one’s skin. This was the triggering fact. The first meeting was called for black ministers to look at inequalities within the MCSA.

In 1975 after much thought a meeting of twelve black ministers was called to meet in Bloemfontein. With torturous bending of coincidence of history some by a very fertile creative form of reasoning they put the choice of Bloemfontein as based on the ANC’s choice of the city of Roses, Bloemfontein.

For those who met in Bloemfontein, the choice was based on the fact that Bloemfontein was central geographically. Among the twelve were F de Waal Mahlasela, S Mahabane. Seane Sikhakhane, DD Dabula, Seeodi Senkhane, Masombula, Fikeni, Gorah, Gaba, Baartman who was tasked to convene a meeting of all Black Ministers .

Matters to be considered were:

- Whites were in power and making all the decisions. Of
- the eleven chairpersons of the districts, nine
- Were white and only two were black.

The Methodist Connexional office was White and only Blacks who made tea and worked as delivery persons.

Allowance to Blacks ,eg children's funds, funeral expenses etc were far less than those of whites.

Blacks were drunk with "Firstism" Im the first black to occupy this position.
Are all blacks free to hold this position after Mr or Miss first.

Secondly: We looked at the level of block participation, very low language could have been a barrier especially church (jargon) language.

Embarrassment could have been more.

Thirdly: Blacks did not prepare and equip themselves for meaningful engagement in discussions.

Empowering blacks would include helping representatives. To understand and dialogue with the agenda.

Fourthly: There is question of supportive participation. Just standing and making it known one supported the previous black speaker.

Fifthly: There was the need to widen black representation in the various structures of the MCSA.

There was the tendency to appoint the same black faces in various committees.
This does not refer to those in executive positions.

The first meeting of Black Ministers Consultation took place in Bloemfontein. Black Ministers issues were high on the agenda.

The question of stipends and stationing could have been a compelled factor.

The question of real power was not on a front burner Ministers came from every corner of connexion within South Africa.

The attendance exceeded the organisers' expectations. The present presiding Bishop and Executive secretary were past of those first meetings.

There were elderly, ministers' young ministers and probationers. In the discussions that took place it became quite clear that ministers alone were not the black church but only a part.

What was missing was the laity.

With one accord it was decided that lay people be invited to the next meeting.

All black laity was invited.

Men and women were to be invited.

The Black Methodist church of South Africa decided on some major issues:

1 We were and would always remain within the Methodist church of Southern Africa.

We had no intention of ever leaving the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

Methodist church of Southern Africa had black people since the nineteenth century "Ilifa loobawo"/

2. The Black Methodist Consultation was to be movement within the Church to permeate every area of the M.C.S.A. This made it imperative to have decision-making people from the Church. The B.M.C's influence was to be effected by the young as well as the departments, synods and Conference.

In 1978 the Methodists in the then Transkei decided to break away from the M.C.S.A. They formed the Methodist Church of Transkei. Some of them claimed that this was what the B.M.C. stood for. The B.M.C. did not accept this reason. Many people within the M.C.S.A came to realise that had it not been for the BMC there could have been a split in the Church. The BMC helped to bring to the surface very deep discontent in the Black constituency. This helped the church to try and address these areas of potential conflict.

The BMC at its highest goal sought to unite the MCSA. It brought to get Black members to stand on their feet, strengthen their backs and look everybody in the eye without apologising for their being.

The idea of a single multicultural church in a geographical area was first rooted in the BMC.

Some people hijacked this idea and came up with grossly handicapped and disadvantaged child, the geographic circuits in their present disfigured form.

Many formerly White Circuits have taken members from Black Circuits. Virtually all geographical circuits have cost Black circuits some of their members. Can you think of a white society taken out of a white circuit and incorporated into a Black circuit? I can give you many Black societies moved into white circuits to be a "burden" on our white circuits.

The Transkei schism went totally against these principles. From Obedience 81, Journey to New Land, the political angle they under girded the policy of separate development. They gave it theological and ecclesiastical respectability.

Some of the leaders in the M.C.T. were keen on positions. They found themselves in leadership in a pseudo connexion. Our condemnation of this breakaway was tampered by the knowledge there was a brotherhood even after ten years a good portion of the Methodist Church of Transkei were welcomed back in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

The BMC has opened the eyes to the leadership gifts in its Black membership not only male but female as well. The BMC has demonstrated its belief in the unity of the Church. Unity has to be nurtured all the time. The BMC has demonstrated its desire for development by contributing to the training of ministers financially.

I must conclude by saying that there is great need for the BMC not only to exist but to try and keep being a positive influence in the effectiveness of the Church in Southern Africa. We need to seek to be a formation in the Methodist Church that seeks to be obedient to the call, bear our cross and to be crucified to the cross that every Black woman, girl, man, and boy gets the Methodist Church to be born in Africa and thereby have Christ born in Africa.

I need to remind people that it is very easy to be Black amongst Blacks, but it is very difficult to be Black amongst Whites. Black women and men, you are on your own. No one is ever going to help us stand and walk, but ourselves.

Thank you!!! Thank you!!! Thank you!!!

ANNEXURE 6: THE LISTENING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Black Methodist Consultation met in its 34th^d Annual Meeting in the Kimberly Namibia and Bloemfontein District, at Eunice Girls College in Bloemfontein, under the theme *“Stand up straight and walk”*

District Bishop Mothibi in setting the tone of the Consultation conducted the opening devotions. Rev Mosiako and the Executive Mayor of Motheo welcomed the BMC in the district reminding us of the historical importance of the place.

Rev Sox Leleki in his address challenged the BMC that this annual meeting should not be just the talk show but implementation should take place going forward. He further challenged the Consultation on the following issues:

- To review implementation strategy of both the BMC and MCSA regarding the transformation agenda
- Influencing the MCSA’ decision making structures to improve their efficiency.
- Developing sound theological training and practical leadership development for church renewal and maturity
- Providing support to the HIV and AIDS affected and infected lives
- Attraction of more clergy and youth in our Movement
- The need to have documented information in relation to BMC and what it stands for
- Find time as the BMC to deal with growth and sustainability with regards to our economy
- Craft the strategy to grow our commitment and involvement at local level.

He concluded by requesting the BMC to honour and support Mandela’s birthday by performing the community service and donates towards the needy and vulnerable in this area.

The Secretary General in his report presented the crafted roadmap for the next three years in re-engineering the strategy of the BMC.

He highlighted the following:

- To improve our communication strategy

- Capacity development programme (Training of trainers)
- Website development initiative
- Data gathering and skills audit.
- Visiting the districts

The treasurer made a presentation on the state of the BMC finances. BMC applauded for her financial management skills.

The office of the Presiding Bishop encouraged the BMC to engage in the debates of the church especially at conference and also support their endeavors as we have done with the Seth Mokitimi Methodist Seminary.

God spoke to us throughout the consultation through the bible studies ,devotions and epilogues. God used his servants to remind us that we need to stand up and face the challenges and join the transformation wagon. Standing up straight implies, seeing new perspective, a clear view and, broadens our horizons.

We were reminded that not only men are to receive the grace of God even women belong to God. As the BMC we have the past, the present, we were then challenged to use that in developing and building our future.

We were further challenged not to become critiques but to be stretch carriers and not to allow paralysis within the movement. There are people who care about our crookedness and who want us to be straight up and walk.

In remembered those departed comrades of our movements our hopes were revived and reminded that if a blessing is not fulfilled at a particular time it changes and becomes a promise. What lies between the promise and fulfillment is not permanent, it is temporal whether its joy or pain, its going to pass. We were encouraged to carry on irrespective of the nature of our circumstances in the light of God's permanent love.

Our living ancestor,Tata Ernest Baartman gave us a lecture about the roots of this gigantic movement and also cautioned us about being very black amongst black people and loose our blackness amongst white people. He reminded us that BMC was formed as a reaction against white supremacy within our church. We felt connected as this movement to our Heritage when we visited the grave of Rev Seth Mokitimi, the first black Methodist president. We also appreciated the establishment of the first church by the missionaries in the area of Thaba Nchu from which missionary work was extended to Botswana and Swaziland. We felt very much captivated and inspired by all this experience.

The consultation had schools which were seeking to derive an agenda for the movement in the coming years. It is encouraged that we continue to link with other movements with similar aims and objectives to us. We had a session where we

ventilated our aspirations and challenges facing the movement. The movement resolved:

- To have a committee to do research on conflicts within our church and come up with the remedial strategy in dealing with the issue.
- To join the country in celebrating our son of the soil Mr. Holihlahla Mandela by contributing some fund to the identified group. This was actioned.
- Bursary recipients should not be expected to pay back the money in the case where the year was not successful for the candidate.

This consultation learnt that there is creative tension between politics and religion. African communities have always held together religion and politics. We learnt through case studies about Methodist ministers who became involved in party politics and how challenging it can be for an active minister to guide the flock whereas they are of opposing parties, it was encouraged that ministers remain impartial.

As if that was not enough another guest reminded us that there are no priests who are neutral, we are either with the dominant class or the oppressed. It was also illustrated that our lives start and end in the box.

For us to be able to influence our societies we as the BMC were encouraged to think out of the box. This therefore requires consciousness and purpose which must be initiated inside the box but practiced outside the box. WE were further encouraged to have the intention and purpose to engage in the process of rising up and walk

The highlight of the Consultation was the increase of EBF. We congratulate the Natal Coastal for lifting up the award and the dramatic improvement by most districts.

We give thanks and appreciate hospitality shown by the KNB district.

In closing the Consultation, during the Devine service we were reminded to let the inner person stand up before the out person stands and walk. In our walk we need to allow God to make us unconscious for him to use us in our communities.

As we leave we stand up straight and walk out of this place aware that our past has been a path to our present and we looking forward to our future. Yes we have been bent sometimes by disappointment, other times bruised, other times oppressed, other times crushed, yet throughout all those moments the God of our forefathers has been with us as we remember the song they sung in those trials and tribulations NKOSI THIXO UFIHLIWE NOKO NDIKUGULELAYO AKUBONAKALISIWE KUMI NOKO NDIFUNAYO. A God who continued to shine his face upon us, from generation to generation, when we wanted to give up and he held our hand, when we sat down paralised, he said rise up, stand up straight and walk. Today we stand up straight confident in our dignity as black people and we know that this church is a heritage of our forefathers and so it belongs to

us also. We embrace the future assured that we are not alone but with God, yes we will go to the future being an African church taking its own rightful place.
BMC!!!! ILIFA LABAZALI BETHU!!!!!!! LEFA LABATSADI BARONA!!!! BMC