



BLACK METHODIST CONSULTATION

2013 MINUTES

Prepared by:

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www.methodistbmc.yolasite.com

Black Methodist Consultation

(A formation within the MCSA)

2013 CONSULTATION MINUTES

Woord in Aksie Camp Site – Pretoria, Limpopo District

Theme: *Together with Christ in a Life-Changing Economy (John 21:2)*

DAY 1, 11 July 2013

1. OPENING DEVOTIONS AND WELCOME

Bishop Themba Mntambo of the Limpopo District led the devotions.

Scripture Reading : Matthew 23: 1 -12- A warning against hypocrisy

Text Matthew 23: 2- 4 : ²“The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat

³ So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach

⁴ They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them

Background to the text:

- Jesus spoke these words within a religious climate dominated by Pharisaism
- Pharisees were a movement sector which started after the Jews returned from exile, who believed that the Jews were exiled because they did not keep the law
- They sought to do everything to get the people to keep the law
- They established rules and regulations about everything
- Jesus encouraged the people to do whatever the Pharisees taught, but warned them to beware and not to practice what they preached

Reflections:

William Barclay, one of the greatest bible scholars in recent times suggests that one way to test any presentation of religion is to ask the following questions:

- Does it give wings to lift a person up or a dead weight to drag the person down
- Does it make for joy or depression
- Is a person helped by his/her religion or is the person haunted by it
- Does religion carry the person or does the person carry the religion

He then makes a comment that “whenever religion becomes a depressing affair of burdens and prohibitions; it ceases to be a true religion.

This passage challenges the Scribes and Pharisees for the way in which they had made religion a burden for people. This abusive religion can be identified by four things:

- **Their Religion was Hypocritical** – they had the content right but their behaviour was not consistent with the content. They are expert in bible, but their behaviour did not match their teaching. Rather than seeing themselves as servants of what they taught, they believed that they were masters who were above their subject matter
- **Their Religion was Oppressive** – they saw religion as being about rules and regulation – however in Jesus’ ministry it was clear that true religion was about a relationship with God
- **Their Religion was Pretentious** – it was about showbiz and a stage where they were main actors. They presented outward appearances as if that mattered more than the heart
- **Their Religion had Arrogance about it** – they were filled with self and self –importance, when a soul is filled with self, there’s no room for God. The arrogant heart which loves the “places of honour” and the “best seats” is a heart that has no place for God

Challenge:

- **Have a Spirit of Openness** – there is equality amongst the followers of Christ as all are learners and students. There is none who is greater than the other
- **Have a Spirit of Humility** – sacrifices self to lift up others. When Jesus had washed His disciples’ feet, he declared: “The greatest among you will be your servant”

Conclusion:

In his message, he urged us to be real, consistent and not to wear masks i.e. portray different personality in varying company

He reminded us that if we are together with Christ, if we journey with Him we can be complete in Him because God knows us inside out – “Morena otseba di kwena tsa pelo tsarona.”

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF CHURCH LEADERS IN ATTENDANCE

• Presiding Bishop MCSA	-	Rev	Ziphozihle	Siwa
• Executive Secretary MCSA	-	Rev	Vuyani	Nyobole
• Gen President YMG	-	Rev	Motlalepula	Leseba
• Gen President Elect YMG	-	Rev		Nhlapo
• Gen President WM	-	Mrs	Nobuntu	Madwe
• Lay leader Elect Highveld and Swaziland	-	Mr	Sibewu	Ndlumbini
• EMMU Director	-	Rev	Norman	Raphahlele
• EMMU Lay Training Coordinator	-	Rev	Morapedi	Diutlwileng
• Connexional Youth Coordinator	-	Rev	Luxolo	Mantini
• MEC Social Development	-	Ms	Penny	Majodina

Welcome by the BMC District Chairperson

The Rev. Norman Raphahlele on behalf of the hosting District extended a word of welcome to the BMC delegates in the Limpopo district.

In his welcoming speech he alluded to the forebears in Limpopo – Bo Sekhukhune, Bo-Tshwane, Bo-Mphephu, Bo-Makhado, Bo-Tshilwa, Bosikatsha – Ramabulana, Bo Modjadji – the Rain Queen – when we stop and put our ear on the ground, we will not miss to hear the songs of our people. He further gave us a glimpse into the richness of the culture of Limpopo, putting emphasis on the fact that the District was happy to host us and urged us to be together in Christ so that we may continue to be the tree of hope for the church

He related stories by two African writers/poets, one from Senegal by the name of David Drop - a story of a map of Africa – he sees it as a person standing with his / her back bent and starts talking to this figure “Africa, tell me Africa – Is this you, this back that is bent – this back that breaks under the weight of humiliation”. The other is from Zimbabwe – Freedom Nyamubaya who interrupts David about a marriage between a gentleman called Independence and a lady called Freedom. Independence the groom waited for Freedom but sadly Freedom never arrived for the wedding.

Today Independence has grown to be a senior bachelor that is very dangerous. Nyamubaya says that this is the story of Africa – we saw independence but no freedom. He quoted that, “The white flowers that subjected Africa into humiliation are fading away. There over there, there is a young strong tree, coming up to save Africa. This tree is a tree that brings hope and perhaps the tree of hope within the church is BMC.”

In conclusion, he extended a word of gratitude in all members of the Limpopo District in particular the Executive in preparing for the Consultation

A SPECIAL WORD OF WELCOME TO NEW BMC MEMBERS ATTENDING THE CONSULTATION FOR THE FIRST TIME: Rev. Ayanda Nyobole

In welcoming the new BMC members, the Rev Ayanda Nyobole urged them to participate as the consultation is a place where we all think, communicate and combine our hearts and minds to shape the direction of the church. He assured them that the BMC was not like any other organisation or movement within the church, once you joined the movement one was at liberty to share thoughts and give input.

2. CONSTITUTION OF THE CONSULTATION AND APOLOGIES

Roll call and Apologies: The following apologies were recorded:

1. Rev Dr Mvumelwano Dandala
2. Mrs Phumzile Dandala
3. Ms Thobile Dlamini
4. Rev Siphon Nyembezi
5. Mrs Zime Nyembezi
6. Rev Olga Dlamini
7. Mr Mduduzi Dlamini
8. Ms Kgomotso Moima
9. Mrs Nombasa Hlathi
10. Ms Siphokazi Mbatha
11. Ms Lorraine Makunyane
12. Mr Siphon Phewa
13. Mrs Phewa

The following districts were represented:

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

3. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

- Mr Patient Ndlumbini - Convenor
- Ms Nokuthula Mndaweni
- Rev Philani Dlamini
- Rev Sethunya Motlhodi
- Ms Bakhile Lukhele

LISTENING COMMITTEE

- Ms Siphokazi Nogaye - Convenor
- Mr Manqoba Ngubo
- Mr Sizwe Mvusi
- Rev Lucky Mgabhi
- Ms Welekazi Matiwane

SCRUTINEERS

- Mr Tshepo Makhubiri - Convenor
- Mr Luxolo Rasimeni
- Ms Nolulamo Landu

PRESENTERS

- Ms Nomajama Bhenya - Convener
- Ms Agnes Mthethwa
- Ms Nozibele Mbangula
- Mr Thamsanqa Mazibuko
- Rev Orapeleng Ngwane

LETTER WRITERS

- Mr Mteteli Caba - Convener
- Ms Sibongile Zulu

4. NOTICES OF MOTION

The following notices of motions were tabled and resolutions made:

1. Resolution 1 - Chaplaincy

- Noting the rules regarding Chaplaincy as outlined in Chapter 15, pages 173-175 of the Laws and Discipline, 11th Edition. And further noting that this chapter only covers in the main ministers not in circuit appointment as contemplated by paragraph 4.94, pages 43-44 of the Laws and Discipline, 11th Edition, recognising that ministers in circuit appointments do become chaplains of institutions and or organisations (i.e. institutions of traditional leadership, schools, and organisation).
- Affirming the role of chaplaincy in giving pastoral care to all sectors of society, and in that context advancing the mission of the church,

It is therefore moved that,

- Persons approached or intending to serve as Chaplains outside the scope outlined in chapter 4 and 15, must receive permission in writing to serve as such from the District Bishop or the presiding Bishop depending on the level in which one intends to serve.
- The person serving as chaplain to whichever institution or organisation be governed similarly as those covered under chapter 15
- Chapter 15 be amended such that it covers these clear gaps in our regulations.

Recommendation:

- a. **Rejected:**— see 4.94 page 42
- b. See 15.5.3 and 15.5.4 page 174
- c. **Rejected:** in our views there are no gaps

2. Resolution 2 - Membership to statutory Structures of the MCSA by persons holding positions outside the MCSA – Resolution 1, page 79 of the 2013 Yearbook

- Noting that the statutory structures of the MCSA are representative structures (e.g. one becomes a member of a structure by representing a structure or office of the MCSA) and not simply by membership to the church.
- Further noting and affirming that members of the church do get appointed, in their personal capacity in other ecumenical structures
- And further noting Resolution 1 of the 2012 Annual Conference mandating the Revision Committee to give consideration to such members being made of Conference.

It is moved that,

- Such members not be considered for membership in their external capacities in internal statutory of the church,
- Relevant structures directly related to that person's role in the external structure be encouraged to create space for them to share their experience in insights in those bodies
- Relevant structures directly related to that person's role in the external structure be encouraged to actively engage and influence that person's work in the external structure

Recommendation

- a. **Agree:** They should not be considered automatically. However, they can be members by being elected as delegates by official structures
- b. **Agree:** This will be of benefit to the relevant internal structures
- c. It is given that this is part of their role

3. Amendment to Appendix 11

- Recognising that elections are a democratic process that allows contestation,
- Understanding that a person elected through a contest must enjoy support from a majority of voters,
- Acknowledging that paragraphs 6-9 of Appendix 11, page 211 of the Laws and Discipline, 11th edition deal with that,
- And noting the possible ambiguity of paragraph 6 as well as a possibility of a candidate be elected by just half plus one and or even less of the electorate in terms of paragraphs 8 and 9.

The following amendments are proposed;

- a. Paragraph 6 to read: The synod shall proceed to vote by ballot. The required majority for a nominee to be elected is 52% of the votes cast when there are more than three candidates, 55% of votes cast when there three candidates and 60% when there are two candidates
- b. Paragraph 7 to read: If nominee receives the required majority in the first ballot, synod shall proceed to vote again, having eliminated the one with the least ballot until the required majority is received
- c. Paragraph 8 to read: Synod will not vote for more than four times

- d. Paragraph 9 to read: No person shall be allowed to serve for more than three consecutive terms
- e. The last paragraph be numbered 10.

Recommendation

- **Withdraw the resolution:** The MCSA through the Structures Committee is currently reviewing its election process

4. Nelson Mandela Day Contributions

- Noting and affirming the resolution of the BMC Annual Meeting held in Bloemfontein in 2009 to participate in the United Nations' proclaimed programme of recognising and living out the values ascribed to the world icon Dr Nelson R Mandela by spending at least 67 minutes doing good to others, in particular the less fortunate on his birthday;
- Acknowledging that the said consultation resolved that each member attending consultation contributes a mere R6.70 towards this cause.

It is noted that on a very good day (where good number of say 500 people attend and contribute), the BMC could collect about R3,350.00, thus making little if any impact especially in the context of the broader world agenda.

It is further noted that not all members who attend consultation do make this contribution. A case in point is that in 2012 in Mtata most districts did not as such the Clarkebury District did not receive the Nelson Mandela Day Contribution

It is now moved that;

- The Connexional BMC be more coherent, contextual and focused in its contribution in this global programme by,
 1. Linking the contribution to the membership and not attendance so that it becomes a BMC programme and not an event one
 2. The amount be increased from 6.70 per member, however the total contribution be R67,000.00 the remainder to be collected from the EBF contributions
 3. A delegation from the consultation be tasked to visit and the work identified with the beneficiary identified by Connexional Executive working together with the District for the appropriate time of not less than 67 minutes if possible.

Recommendation

- We agree with the spirit of the resolution
- However, the amount be reviewed and a substantial amount be allocated to be spent on a relevant project of 67 minutes

5. Natal West District BMC Leadership Structure

With reference to Natal West District BMC Leadership Structure we hereby wish to elucidate as follows:

- i. That it was towards the end of 2009 when the then District Bishop convened a meeting of all Superintendent Ministers, Circuit Stewards and other which took place at Imbali Society in Pietermaritzburg Howick Circuit.

It was at the meeting that Revs Mnyandu and Khuboni as Chair and Secretary respectively and other were elected for a three year term starting from 2010 supposedly to 2012.

- ii. During the aforementioned term, the gentlemen failed to convene even a single meeting despite encouragement by some individuals who know the importance of BMC in our church
- iii. An appeal has been made to National Chairperson who has been a Minister in the District but in vain.
- iv. In the circumstances we have no alternative but to solicit in block that the National Office and Consultation intervene in an endeavour to ensure that BMC once again is alive and active in the district.

Recommendation

The Connexional Executive to convene a general meeting and ensure that elections are held.

5. MINUTES OF THE 2012 CONSULTATION – ETHEL KHOZA

Minutes of the previous consultation were presented by the Recording Secretary, Mrs Ethel Khoza.

They were read and dealt with, corrections were done.

Matters arising:

- SMMS President – Rev Dr Mvumelwano Hamilton Dandala was appointed
- SACC donation was made – will reflect in the financial report

It was noted that the minutes do not give the reflection of the consultation. A meeting was held in Bloemfontein as a continuation of Umtata however there is no record of such a meeting.

The Bloemfontein meeting was a continuation of the Umtata consultation which was adjourned and therefore the (Bloemfontein) meeting was the completion of the Umtata agenda and should have formed part of the minutes. Furthermore consultation was never closed because there's no "Listening Committee" Statement which marked the closure of the consultation.

After much deliberation, the meeting agreed to adopt the minutes without the Bloemfontein record.

5. CHAIRPERSON'S ADDRESS – REV SOX LELEKI

The Chairperson Rev Sox Leleki addressed the consultation and unpacked the theme:

"Together with Christ in a Life-Changing Economy"

Reflections on the scripture

Chairperson thanked the BMC members for supporting the Presiding Bishop and welcomed them to the 38th annual Consultation at the city of Tshwane

In unpacking the theme, the Chairperson captured the context of the scripture as follows:

- Jesus Christ appearing to His disciples to display a life-changing economy
- The disciples went back to their original trade of fishing because they needed to be fed
- The story of Jesus together with His disciples in this incident is about empowering them for a life changing economy (John 20:2)

Reflections on the address

- He highlighted the shortcomings and achievements of the movement, reminding us all that although we may have tried and failed, we did not fail to try – in that there is triumph especially when we work together in Christ.
- He encouraged us to own our identity and not to be misguided by the ever apparent perception that white is better than black. “John Wesley compels us to work hard to perfect who we are”
- He urged us to note that tomorrows economic leaders are the children of today, together we must instil economic sense in our children in order to ensure a change in the life of our people.
- He emphasized the point that the BMC is not anti-white or racist.
- He reminded us to include Christ in all that we do as that would ensure that our transformational agenda was Christ filled and therefore will result in a positive and lasting impact.
- He concluded that, “The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams,” Eleanor Roosevelt

The full address is attached (appendix A)

6. GENERAL SECRETARY’S REPORT – JOE MAVUSO

- The General Secretary posed the question, are we a movement or an organisation - he encouraged members to work together to ensure finding our identity within the church without losing our focus.
- He cautioned that our focus should be 70% outwardly in order to support the church and emphasized that it is the members that have the power to drive and implement programmes.
- He alluded to the fact that although there is a high attendance at Consultation and February meetings, a large percentage of those who attend are inactive at District and Circuit level.
- He presented reports from Districts, it was apparent that there’s a need for a uniform template for these reports and to standardize the work that we do across Districts.
- He encouraged the consultation that as we go about our BMC business we must together in Christ remember or recognize the fact that we are the yeast in creating better Methodists who can make a difference in and outside the church.

He concluded by challenging the movement that - as we come up with ways to re-brand the BMC and continue to lobby individuals, encourage educational platforms, move for practical resolutions for implementation and push a Christ filled transformation agenda.

7. FINANCIAL REPORT – LINDI MJEZA

The Connexional Treasurer presented the financial statement for 2012-2013 and the budget for 2013 – 2014. The consultation engaged the report for clarification. The report reflects a deficit:

- There was a drop in EBF
- Also noted is a drop in interest received
- Increase in Bursary Funds
- Funding of the Bloemfontein continuation meeting
- Donations

A challenge is to how are we going to deal with wasteful / fruitless spending – we need controls in place to ensure non-recurrence of such a huge amount of deficit. After many deliberations, both the statement and the budget were adopted.

8. PRESIDING BISHOP’S OFFICE – REV VUYANI NYOBOLE

The Rev V Nyobole challenged us that as the MCSA, “we are over churching and under disciple”. He further encouraged the BMC to claim the church as, ‘Ilifa labazali bethu’, and not to go outside the church and form splinter groups but rather influence change from within. He conveyed fraternal greetings from the Presiding Bishop and wished the BMC well as it proceeds with the work of God.

Looking at the conference themes of togetherness,

- 2012 Together a healing community
- 2013 Together a transforming discipleship movement

He highlighted that it is imperative to note that it forces us to ensure that we work together with the leadership; they can’t do the work alone. We must ensure that we do not edge God out (EGO) but rather strive for an ECO environment, which takes into consideration all and is inclusive of God

He addressed the following Connexional issues:

- **Shared the PB’s 2013 Conference Theme as, “A transforming discipleship movement” and the items to be tabled at conference as follows:**
 - Respect and affirming Family life
 - August – focus on Women’s work/ministry
 - Divorce of ministers - breakdown in family life
 - Curtailment of Conferencing expenses
 - Establishment of a Justice and Service Desk

- Bill on Traditional Affairs
- Ministers taking political parties posts (L&D 4.90, MR 1.20)
- Liturgical wear
- Structures Conversation – sections, stationing, election procedures
- Branding, Archiving and Record keeping
- Re-configuration of boundaries
- Transformation (alive or dead)

- **Branding – Image of the Church**

- As Methodists and BMC members we all have an obligation to take care of the image of the church in a way that is inclusive of Christ and will therefore reflect Christ.
- “Some people do not have the opportunity to read the Bible, some will never have the chance to take sacraments – we ought to be a Bible and sacraments to those people.

- **Transformation Agenda**

- As part of the transformation agenda the office of the PB has called on all churches to recognize work done by women, in and outside of the church in the month of August.
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9. BURSARY COMMITTEE REPORT – SIBUSISO NXASANA

Through the Bursaries committee, bursaries were awarded to a number of applicants. Even though we were not able to meet the requested amounts in some cases we have however managed to assist our brothers with their educational endeavours.

The bursary initiatives further proves that when work together and make Christ the centre of our work we can, be it a small or big way, change lives.

The Recipients shared their journey with the consultation and appreciated the contribution they have received and for 2013 they are:

Name	Level	Field of Study	Institution	Amount Granted
Rev S. Mokgothu	M. Phil	Christian Spirituality	St Augustine College	R11350.00
Rev S S Mthembu	M Com	Systems thinking and Organizational Leadership	UKZN	R27400.00
Rev Z N Tsawu	M Phil	Management and Leadership	University of Stellenbosch	R9000.00
Rev S C Seitisho		Systematic theology	UKZN through SMMS	R17 250.00
				R65 000.00

- Mr Sibusiso Nxasana thanked his predecessor Mr Muzi Magengenene for the good work he has done and the swift handover.
- They still have to review the processes and procedures

10. MEMORIAL SERVICE – REV MORAPEDI DIUTLWILENG

Hymn 264 Sesotho ushered the preacher.

The service was led by Rev M.M Diutwileng in memory of the dearly departed members of the movement in between the consultations of 2012 – 2013.

The scripture reading was taken from Revelations 5: 1 – 12. As we reminisce about their lives, the Rev M.M Diutwileng read the following text Revelations 5:13 – **“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lambbe praise and honour and glory and power forever and ever!”** (NIV)

We paid tribute to the stalwarts of our Church the Rev (s) KEM Mgojo and A Mnaba – the snippets of their lives were shared and the contribution they have made in the life of the church through highlighting their achievement and dedication.

The Rev M.M Diutwileng gave us hope and assured us that though in life there will be challenges if we are with Christ and journey with Him, we will surely overcome, even in death Christ and His love prevails

DAY 2, 12 JULY 2013

11. BIBLE STUDY – REV PROFESSOR ITUMELENG JERRY MOSALA

Scripture Reading : 2 Samuel 19: 1-8

Theme : Love

Focus Text : “You love those who hate you; and you hate those who love you”

- There is not enough of Love
- In fact, there is a chronic shortage of love in the world in general and in South Africa in particular
- We have an extremely dangerous situation in our hands!
- There is no Love – Lerato le fedile!!
- No battles are fought on behalf of love. No campaign is underway to defend and protect love
- There are no legal frameworks to undergird the importance of love

There is a crisis

- The crisis is the death of Love
- It is our crisis now but it is an old crisis. It goes back to the time of David in the Bible. It is a 10th century BC crisis when the people of God who were once slaves in Egypt were involved in the national project of establishing a just and democratic State and Nation

Reflections of the Love crisis from three women writers

Sister Souljah in her book reflects on the problem of racism and its effects on black people as well as white people

- She argues that the effects of racism on black people are more far reaching than on whites
- The reason is that we black people are the victims of racism. She says that the effect of racism on white people is severe in that it deforms their thinking and distorts their perception of the world
- “But because the economics of racism is inarguably in their favour, most whites learn to live with it, even to deny it”.
- “We cannot live with it (racism) or deny it. Racism has turned our communities into war zones where we are dying every day. It is black on black hate, created by racism and white supremacy that is killing us. Black people killing black people”.

Not if Black-on- Black love is dead. Not if we are still too scared to admit there is a problem while our families fall apart. Not if our young men continue to refer to young women as “bitches”, or our young women refer to young men as “motherfuckers”, or all of us refer to each other as “niggas”.

“It is a sad measure of our profound contempt for each other and of our thoroughgoing and self-loathing that we continue to persist in this ugly practice” p. 350.

Naomi Kleins, in the Shock Doctrine, one of her latest books, transports us, in the first chapter, to the disaster that was wrought by the incredible Hurricane Katrina, which exposed the bareness of New Orleans, the crisis of the death of love

- “The news racing around the shelter that day was that Richard Baker, a prominent Republican congressman from the city, had told a group of lobbyists, ‘We finally cleaned up public housing in New Orleans
- We couldn’t do it, but God did.’ Joseph Ganizano, one of New Orleans’s wealthiest developers, had just expressed a similar sentiment: ‘I think we have a clean sheet to start again
- Over at the shelter, Jamar could think of nothing else. “I really don’t see it as cleaning up the city. What I see is that a lot of people got killed uptown. People who shouldn’t have died”

Loretta Napoleoni, Her book is entitled: Rogue Economics. Our biblical reading for today is not only full of politics, warfare, rivalry, and murder but it is also littered with references to sexuality, rape, and official prostitution

- Addresses how prostitution eclipses love
- Her prime example is the role of prostitution in rogue economics in modern Israel
- Today, modern globalized society tacitly condones prostitution. Prostitution has been re-branded as an extension of the entertainment industry
- And studies suggest that one in 10 British men – 2.3 million – has already been entertained, stated the Sunday Times. Nobody wants to miss out on the fun; everybody wants to be part of the game in town

The Rev. Prof. Itumeleng Jerry Mosala concluded:

From a biblical scholarly point of view, it is instructive to note the difference in themes between texts that deal with the formation and management of the State and those that depict the movement of people for freedom, struggle and justice.

The issues are different. There is less murder, prostitution, war, chicanery, conflict etc in the latter than in the former.

There is a massive thematic difference between the Exodus texts and the 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings or the Hexateuch and the Deuteronomic history.

Be that as it may the crisis continues in our time:

- Churches don’t preach about love anymore
- Education systems don’t have a place for love anymore
- Economies don’t invoke the love of people to address economic relationships anymore
- Families don’t ground their households and personal relationships in love anymore
- Marriages don’t seek to survive and grow on the basis of love anymore

Christians don't factor love as an essential ingredient in their portfolio of spiritual arsenal anymore. Love is dead, and so nations are dead, communities are dead, leaders are dead, legislatures are dead, parliaments are dead, Christians are dead, men and women are dead, young people are dead; **because love is dead.**

12. CONNEXIONAL WESLEY GUILD

The Connexional Methodist Youth Unit (MYU) President Rev Luxolo Mantini, on behalf of the Wesley Guild requested a donation for the mission fund to be launched in the Connexional Wesley Guild event at Port Edward at the end of August 2013. After many deliberations, the donation could not be granted.

13. ELECTIONS – REV VUYANI NYOBOLE

The elections were conducted by the Executive Secretary of the MCSA. Under the control and the guidance of the Holy Spirit and by the Grace of God, the following members were elected for the term 2015 – 2017

Chairperson	:	Rev Mzwandile Molo
General Secretary	:	Mr Xhanti Mhlubulwana
Recording Secretary	:	Ms Nokuzola Mbangula
Treasurer	:	Ms Mandy Motloun

The newly elected Executive Committee will be inducted in 2014 at the Highveld and Swaziland District Consultation.

14. CONSULTATION ISSUES –SCHOOLS– FACILITATORS

The Facilitators briefly shared with the consultation what their individual school entailed, the purpose and what they sought to achieve.

The Consultation spent the rest of this day on the following schools:

- The Role of the Church in a Democratic Dispensation - Rev Mbatu Bosman
- Strategic approach on Impacting MCSA decisions - Mr Gana Tagane

- Justice and Economic Empowerment - Ms Ntombentsha Mnconywa
- The Development of Emerging Leadership - Mrs Nambita Mekane

15. DEVOTIONS – REV MSIZI MSIBI

Opening Prayer : Rev Philani Dlamini

Scripture Reading : Genesis 37:18 – 31 “Joseph is sold and taken to Egypt”

Focus Text (vs 31) : Then they got Joseph’s robe, slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood

The Rev MsiziMsibi reminded us that through the blood all things are possible, if we allow the blood of Jesus to cover us as Joseph’s coat was covered with blood we will become new beings. When we are one with Christ we become new beings.

Emphasis was on the fact that the blood breaks barriers and brings us together in Christ regardless of our background and or race. He touched on the fact that the reason for Joseph’s brothers selling him was because of the preferential treatment his father gave him, however in Christ, there are no preferences we are all equal.

16. ERNEST BAARTMAN FUND

Programme Directors : Ms Zuzile Zungu & Mr Xhanti Mhlubulwana

1. Queenstown	R12 102
2. Grahamstown	R17 964
3. Clarkebury	R14 774
4. KN&B	R20 550
5. Natal Coastal	R12 822
6. Highveld & Swaziland	R21 890
7. Limpopo	R 9 968
8. Natal West	R 2 572
9. Cape of Good Hope	R 2 689
10. NFS& Lesotho	R 5 950
11. Central	R 5 477
12. Umkulukutwano	R 1 562

Total **R128 320**

DAY 3, 13 JULY 2013

17. BIBLE STUDY – REV PROFESSOR ITUMELENG JERRY MOSALA

Scripture reading : John 3: 14 - 17

Theme : God's Love

Focus Text : “For God so Loved the World that He gave his Only Begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him should not die but have eternal life”

Reflections on previous day study

- Love and how when it is dead, we are also dead; how when love is dead communities are dead; young people are dead; leaders are dead, nations are dead

Today' study

- God's Love – there is a difference between love and God's Love
- When there is no love, things and people are dead
- When the love of God is absent then *Nothing Is*
- The one is a state of affairs; the other is an *intervention*
- The text is of a Jewish Leader who was seized by his own existential problems. Leaders are often like that: they have their own demons, begotten of their own, often secret, dealings
- Other times they are bothered by genuine and serious matters related to their *calling* as leaders. When this happens, they can hardly brush things aside; they have to do something, to respond in some way
- The great intervention begins with a loop back to Moses and the leadership challenges he faced. The reference to Moses goes back to the narrative in Numbers 21:4-9 - “On the way, the people lost their patience and spoke against God and Moses”. Their complaint is instructive: “Why did you bring us out of Egypt to die in this desert where there is no food or water”
- God's anger against the people unleashed in poisonous snakes. They were beaten and many of them died
- Moses prayed for God's intervention. And God instructed Moses to make a bronze snake and hang it on a pole so that anyone who was bitten could look at it and be bitten

“And God loved the world so much; he gave his only son so that everyone who believes in him may not die, but have everlasting life” - Jesus was God's Love Project in the world

1. He was a Feeding Project:

It is impossible to love a hungry person unless you are prepared to something about their hunger

2. He was a Healing Project:

Physical and Spiritual Healing project. It is impossible to love a sick person unless at the same time you are doing something about their sickness

3. **He was a Prophetic Project:**

He pronounced against; he advised; he criticised and critiqued; he actively resisted

4. **He was a Crucifixion Project:**

Death was always part of the mix; prison and suffering were always part of the mix.

Why are we not in jail; because we are afraid; because we are dishonest; because we do not have courage of our conviction

18. LETTER WRITING –MTETELI CABA

Mr Mteteli Caba and Ms Sibongile Zulu read the five letters written to different families / individuals as follows:

- **Mandela Family**

A message of support at a time when they are cultivated by the ill health of Dr Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

- **Mrs Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka**

A congratulatory message on her appointment to serve the United Nations

- **Rev Victor Tshangela**

A message of condolence on passing of his wife

- **Ismael Coovadia**

A message of support and congratulations

- **Rev (s) Sox Leleki and Mthobeli Matyumza**

Congratulatory messages for being elected into the office of Bishops for Grahamstown and Queenstown Districts respectively

The Bishop appointments are pending conference approval and therefore these letters to be sent after the conference in September 2013.

19. CONSULTATION ISSUES - PLENARY SESSION SCHOOLS

A plenary session was conducted for schools

The representatives from the different schools gave feedback and way forward

See Appendices per schools.

20. MEMORIAL LECTURE ON REV Z.R MAHABANE – HON. THABO MBEKI

A memorial lecture in honour of the late Rev Z.R Mahabane - a clergyman, teacher, politician and president of the African National Congress, who combined politics and Christian ethics to fight racism and dedicated his whole adult life selflessly to serve the people as a whole.

This common cause centred on the vitally important task of his day, of the liberation of all the black oppressed and the transformation of South Africa into a non-racial democracy. His rise to prominence in this regard was marked by his election in 1919 at the age of 38 as Provincial President of the Cape Province African National Congress, and then a mere 5 years later, in 1942, as President-General of the ANC.

Z.R Mahabane stated his life's commitments in his address at the 1921 Conference of the Cape ANC in these words:

“Chiefs, ladies and gentlemen, I want to declare, in conclusion, that South Africa will never attain a noble ideal of peacefulness, happiness, prosperity, greatness and national unity, of which the Prime Minister and all lovers of Africa have been rightly dreaming, without the full and free co-operation of all white and black races of the land and of all classes and conditions of men. Industrially, agriculturally and commercially we have been working together for the development of our common country. Let this policy of full co-operation be extended to our political system; let no race or class or creed be driven to such a condition of despair as it might be compelled to adopt Gandhian policy of “non-co-operation” – taxation without representation leads to this. And then when our common task in this country has been completed and the end of all things has fully come, we can look back and exclaim – “All’s well that ends well”

Mahabane the Priest and Politician:

- He opposed the 1935 the then Hertzog Bills and said “How long shall
- These words and their sense of pain were echoed in freedom songs that were popular certainly during the 1950’s – early 1960’s. Songs such as “Senzenina? Sono sethu bubumnyama and “Sikhalela izwe lakithi, elona lazothathwa ngaboGalajane, Zulu, Mxhosa, mSotho hlanganani”
- He represented the soul certainly of the African majority in our country
- At the 1921 Conference, he captured the vision of our liberation movement and struggle until freedom was achieved in 1994
- Throughout his life, the Rev Z.R Mahabane was an eminent Pastor of the Methodist Church
- This draws attention to the historic role of the Christian Church in our struggle for liberation including the pathfinders like Tiyo Soga in terms of taking actions and positions that led to the establishment in our country of the modern liberation movement
- Since then the Christian Church in our country has celebrated and taken pride in the role which leading Christians like Z.R Mahabane played in the struggle for our liberation from colonialism and apartheid
- He also led the Interdenominational African Ministers Federation (IDAMF) and more particularly the South African Council of Churches (SACC)

- The inspiring story about the SACC, its leaders and the affiliated Churches will always be told by our liberation struggle particularly during the very bloody and challenging two decades leading to our liberation in 1994
- What is understood by the African people in our country that brought so much of the Christian community and its leaders into our struggle is that *“It was in the garden of Eden – right in the beginning of things – that the Almighty gave man perfect freedom to choose between right and wrong, good and evil, life and death. Why should we now submit to a condition of things which does not give us this God-given right, the inalienable right of self-determination and self-government...God forbid that we, as human beings, made in the image of and after the likeness of Himself, should permit other human beings, made in like manner, to abrogate to themselves a position of superiority over us”*
- The reading of the Holy Scriptures as explained by Rev Z.R Mahabane and what is said in the book of Psalms, which told the eminent African Christians in our country, for over a century that they could not stand aside in terms of the struggle for the liberation of the black oppressed

Reflections:

- The Hon. Thabo Mbeki, challenged us that he remain firmly convinced that in the same way that our Christian community played a vital role in the struggle of the liberation of our people, as exemplified by what the Rev Z. R Mahabane did, so must this community play an important role with regard to what we do with our liberation, almost two decades after the achievement of the historic 1994 victory
- Our country’s Christian community must do everything to act in unity, and therefore respond as an organised collective informed by its faith – he referred to the serious efforts in which Rev Z.R Mahabane engaged to encourage unity among those who shared and share common suffering and common cause
- He cited the context by Rev Z. R Mahabane, *“The Bantu community may profitably learn the great lessons and sink their petty. Weakening, destructive differences purely on racial or tribal personal lines make a new start by uniting all their labor and political forces under one great national organization embracing all the various Bantu tribes of Southern Africa. Such an amalgamation of forces would certainly help to solve what is known as the ‘Native Problem’”.*
- In this regard, he is convinced that we as members of the esteemed Methodist Church, all other Christians in our country, and all of us as activists for the fulfillment of the dreams of South Africans, must pose to ourselves and answer this question seriously whether, today, there exist the mechanisms to enable the Christian Church to act in the same unity and with the same sustained determination to which I have referred
- It would seem to me that part of the painful reality to which our Christian community and all of us must respond in this regard is that all of us have allowed the SACC, the central, national and truly representative home of the entirety of our Christian community, to fall into serious ‘disrepair’ and ineffectiveness.
- This is particularly painful given the outstanding role the SACC played to help bring our liberation and the vital role it must play as we attend to the imperative successfully to achieve the reconstruction and development of our country, consistent with the objectives to which our nation agreed, as expressed in our Consultation
- He sincerely hopes that our Churches will do everything possible to rebuild the SACC. Perhaps the Black Methodist Consultation can take this as one of its urgent responsibilities

On the NDP System

- He explained the NDP among other things as, *“Eighteen years into democracy, South Africa remains a highly unequal society where too many people live in poverty and too many few work. The quality of school education for most black learners is poor. The apartheid spatial divide continues to dominate the landscape. A large proportion of young people feel that the odds are against them. And the legacy of apartheid continues to determine the life opportunities for the vast majority.”*
- This makes the critical point that almost two decades after what Rev Mahabane fought for was accomplished, our country still faces many serious challenges with regard to the central task of eradicating the legacy of colonialism and apartheid, and achieving the objective we have been pursuing to achieve a better life for all our people.
- In this regard, to achieve the objectives of the National Development Plan (NDP), *“To accelerate development, South Africa needs the active support of all citizens, leadership in all sectors that puts the country’s collective interests ahead of narrow, short-term goals, and racially improved government performance.”*
- He believes that this call contained in the NDP is correct. It recalls the perspective we sought to sustain during the years of struggle - *which the people must be their own liberators* – to which the masses of our people responded in a magnificent manner.
- As he has said as we know very well, our religious communities, in particular the Christian Church, were very much part of and mobiliser for the magnificent response.
- He strongly believe that the Christian community, as well as all the other Faiths, must seriously consider what they should do to respond to the call made in the NDP to bring about the transformation our country needs - *the active support of all citizens, leadership in all sectors that puts the country’s collective interests ahead of narrow, short-term goals*
- On the face of it there are at least three areas identified by the NDP in which Christian and other Faith communities can and should play an important role. These are: Addressing the scourge of crime, to improve the safety and security of the citizens; Confronting corruption; and, Cultivating social cohesion

Conclusion:

He is often haunted by the words of the poet, S.E.K. Mqhayi:

*“Kunamhlanj’ilizweliyazuza;
Kunamhlanjelomhlab’ uyalunywa.
Int’esesiswini maze niyilumkele,
Loo nt’isesizalwenimazenyindwebele;
Ngathikuzakuzalw’ uGilikankgo.
Ngathikuzakuzalw’ isiloesingaziwamngxuma.”*

In this day, the poet said that our nation was unsettled and disturbed and was troubled by the pains of the possible birth of a frightening animal it had never known and therefore could not even describe. He called on our people, then, to be on guard against costly tragedy that might befall the nation.

Today, taking into account everything that is happening in our country, we must together consider the question seriously whether we too do not face the prospect of the birth of a frightening animal we have never known and therefore cannot even describe!

The outstanding patriot, the Rev Z.R.Mahabane, would be right to demand of all of us to answer the urgent question – what are all of us doing today, almost 20 years after the birth of our democracy, to fulfill the hopes shared by the millions of our people when they celebrated our New Dawn in 1994!

We can and must respond to this question honestly, courageously and in a steadfast manner, through our practical action

21. GALA DINNER

The programme was professionally conducted by Ms Zodwa Fanele .

Opening prayer: Rev .Sharon Simelane.

Performance – Acappella Music group

Introduction of the Guest speaker: Ms Vuyokazi. Mdingi

The guest speaker - Adv. Andile Mini.

He spoke about the role of the church in transforming the society on issues like:

- *Xenophobia
- *Uplifting the society
- *Relevancy in the society
- *Satanism
- *Legacy of the church.

SETH MOKITIMI AWARDS PRESENTED FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE AND LOYALTY TO SOCIETY IN GENERAL AND THE BLACK CHURCH IN PARTICULAR.

The awards went to:

- *BMC Ebenezer – KNB District
- *Ms Thembisa Elgina Mgwanza – Grahamstown District
- *Johnson Cornelia Nellie Nomvula – CoGH District
- *Dr Samuel Motswenyane – Limpopo District
- Mr Phillip Kgosana - Limpopo District

Mr. Louise Maseko led with a closing prayer.

DAY 4, 14 JULY 2013

22. DIVINE SERVICE AND HOLY COMMUNION

The service was led by the Chairperson :	Rev. Sox Leleki
The Preacher was :	Rev Dr Frank Chikane
Scripture Reading :	John 21
Hymn Xhosa 81 :	Nzuluyemfihlakalo, Nzuluyesimanga!

God spoke to the consultation through the Rev Dr Frank Chikane

Introduction

- Alluded to the theme “**together in Christ in a life-changing economy**” and said the key word is “**together**”
- Everything in our faith happens when we are together - communal and collective approach
- However together with Christ is not church.
- What is unique about our organisation that we are together in Christ and it is **in that togetherness that we are able to have a life-changing economy**
- A way in which Christ is involved – there’s a change in it.
- Where there is Christ there is a measurement of justice and the reference point of Jesus Christ that does not change, neither does it depend on the colour, work and or positions of people – it remains the same.
- Human beings and politics change however Christ does not change

Background to the text

- The disciples were prepared for 3 years by Jesus
- Jesus’ mission was to prepare the church for the war and though prepared they could not understand Jesus
- Appeared to them twice in Jerusalem and now for the third time – Peter

Reflections

- When Christ appears and you see Him, you first look at yourself
- He is a Lord of light and when He appears kubonakala lento oyiyo
- We need to recognise Him, acknowledge Him and wrap up
- If you don’t want to be seen for what you really are, don’t get closer to Christ
- We struggle without Jesus but He always provides
- The dramatic outcomes of His provision happens to an extent that you cannot manage

Challenge:

- What type of Church are we that has deviated from God and working in silos
- The church is putting its nets in the wrong places and not asking the commander for a technical 1 advice - where to put the nets
- The church is occupied with a lot of things and wants to do it on her own hence she fails
- The church needs to go where the people are in the name of Christ and He will tell us where to put our nets
- Everything will happen through our collective approach

AMEN!

23. APPENDICES

A. Listening Committee Report

B. Chairpersons Address

C. General Secretary's report

D. Bible Studies

E. Schools Reports

E.1 The Role of the Church in a Democratic Dispensation

E.2 Strategic approach on Impacting MCSA decisions

E.3 Justice and Economic Empowerment

E.4 The Development of Emerging Leadership

A. LISTENING COMMITTEE REPORT

The 38th annual Black Methodist Consultation “A Formation within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa”, met on the 11th – 14th July 2013 in the Limpopo District under the theme, “**TOGETHER WITH CHRIST IN A LIFE - CHANGING ECONOMY (JOHN 21: 2)** . The consultation met at a time of formation of “Economic Freedom Fighters”, a political party that advocates economic freedom in our country, we met at a time where we are cultivated by the ill health of Dr Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela and it is in this context that the Chairperson is calling us through the theme of the consultation to “being together in Christ in a Life-Changing Economy”

We note with excitement, encouragement and fulfilment that this consultation was characterised by vibrant worship, powerful lessons and God speaking with us through his servants in various ways. We were well fed in all aspects and these connected us to God in our quest to pursue His agenda of transformation.

The warm weather liberated us to praise God and in a true Wesleyan tradition and style, we declared in opening this consultation, “Rea o bokaMorena, re ntse re thabela uena”. The Bishop Rev Themba Mntambo set the tone through the text in Matthew 23:1-12. He challenged consultation not to live a life that is similar to the life of scribes and pharisees who added burdens to people’s life but instead we need to be a movement that eases people’s burdens. He further posed a fundamental question, “are we being carried by religion or do we carry the religion? He cautioned consultation to move away from an attitude of arrogance but to have the spirit of servanthood. He left us with a task of being a movement that seeks to continue with God’s business which is that of transformation.

In addressing the consultation, the Chairperson Rev. S. Leleki related to the theme basing it on John 21:2. He captured the theme in line with the text as a story of Jesus together with His disciples in a mission of empowering them in a life-changing economy. We were spell bound as we listened attentively to hear the direction from the Chairperson. In articulating the theme, the Chairperson alluded to the fact that we as Black people are still struggling to attain a liberating language to express our experiences such that we make foreign methods to solve our existential problems. He further warned that we can never forget the voices of scores of liberation veterans whose courageous and selfless battle against apartheid legacy exacted high price in the form of being side-lined and sometimes rendered irrelevant.

Through his theme, the Chairperson reminded us that we need to have a sound understanding and interpretation of our theology that we are Black people created in the image of God. He urged us to own our identity and not to be misguided by the ever apparent perception that white is better than black. “John Wesley compels us to work hard to perfect who we are”, he said. He urged us to note that tomorrows economic leaders are the children of today; together we must instil economic sense in our children in order to ensure a change in the life of our people.

The Secretary General’s Report gave us the state of our activities. He encouraged members to work together to ensure finding our identity within the church without losing our focus It was indeed inspiring to hear through the districts reports that some districts are working hard to lift the name of the movement and yet disappointing to learn that some districts are inactive and that we have a tourist mentality in the consultation.

The financial report by the Treasurer was well projected and adopted but we note with concern that the movement is in a deficit which poses a challenge to all members to do better in managing our own resources effectively. We should at all times, in all our work strive to ensure that our work is reflective of Christ, we should work together in support of our leaders to ensure that at all times the work of the BMC does in fact reflect and encourage a culture of togetherness that is inclusive of Christ.

In addressing the consultation, the Executive Secretary of the MCSA, the Rev Vuyani Nyobole cautioned, “We are over churchd and under discipld.” He shared the PB’s 2013 conference theme as, “**A transforming discipleship movement**”. He alluded to the resolutions taken by conference that as part of the transformation agenda all churches need to recognize work done by women, in and outside of the church in the month of August. He further challenged consultation to strengthen family life owing to breakdown of family structures.

As Methodists and as BMC members we all have an obligation to take care of the image of the church in a way that is inclusive of Christ and will therefore reflect Christ. “Some people do not have the opportunity to read the Bible, he said and some will never have the chance to take sacraments – we therefore ought to be a Bible and sacraments to those people, people should look at us and think, ”I wish I was a Methodist.” Looking at the theme of togetherness, he highlighted that it is imperative to note that it forces us to ensure that we work together with the leadership; they can’t do the work alone. We must ensure that we do not edge God out (EGO) but rather strive for an ECO environment, which takes into consideration all and is inclusive of God.

Through the Bursaries committee, bursaries were awarded to a number of applicants, even though we were not able to meet the requested amounts in some cases we have however managed to assist. The bursary initiatives further prove that when we work together and make Christ the centre of our work we can be it a small or big way, change lives.

Xalitshon’ ilanga, in honour of our departed mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, we celebrated and remembered their lives through the memorial service. In remembering our departed members, the Reverend Morapedi Diutwllileng ushered them into the heavenly gates through the text in Revelations 5:1-12. He concluded by giving us hope and re-assurance, even though in life there will be challenges if we are with Christ, if we journey with Him we will surely overcome, even in death Christ’s love prevails ngoba ubukumkani, amandla nobungcwalisa bubobakhe.

The bible study offered us spiritual insight on the theme of “LOVE”. In a deliberate and profound teaching on human Love and God’s Love, the Reverend Professor Itumeleng Mosala, made us aware that we are living at a time where communities are dead, families are dead and leaders are dead because there is no love. “There are no structures in place to perpetuate love; we live in a loveless world.” He urged us to explore ways of finding love and channelling loving relationships within the church. In conclusion, he alluded to human love as a state of affairs and God’s love As God’s divine intervention through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Under the direction of the Holy Spirit and by the grace of God, the consultation elected new Leaders for the term 2015 – 2017.

In its quest to be an educational movement, the consultation took time to empower the members through different schools. It was evident from the school’s reports that there is still so much work to be done.

The devotions were conducted and served the purpose of driving us to seek God. We felt a greater intimacy with God through these devotions as they renewed our minds and refreshed and nurtured our spirits. The central message from the devotions is that the blood breaks barriers and brings us together in Christ regardless of background and race and that we need to be united in Christ.

The Consultation through the EBF displayed healthy competition that showed togetherness, love and passion to change lives. It was heart-warming to see BMC members come together for a common cause – to support those of us who have been called to lead, care for and guide within the church by collecting funds to ensure that Ministers are assisted with their studies. Indeed if we come together in Christ we can do all things.

Through the written letters we sought to remember, encourage and give hope to our brothers and sister.

As we continue to receive teachings, njengamantshontsho ehobe elindeleku mama wawo, we listened to the Former President of the RSA, the honourable Thabo Mvuyelwa Mbeki. We gained a much richer understanding of the Rev. Z.R Mahabane through this lecture. The former President thanked the eminent Pastor for his unwavering contribution in the liberation struggle of the African nation. We were reminded how

this great giant led the SACC and he challenged the Christian community to rekindle the relationship with SACC so that it continues to achieve the reconstruction and development of our country.

He further challenged the MCSA to first fully understand the objectives of the NDP so that we can actively participate in its realization and assist to address the scourge of crime, to improve safety and security, to confront corruption and to cultivate social cohesion. This is in line with what the founder of Methodism John Wesley believed, that we have nothing else to do but to save souls, he concluded.

From the resolutions we agreed that we need to continue the culture of influencing the direction and path of the MCSA.

We were reconnected to Christ through the Holy Communion service. The Rev Frank Chikane reminded us that as a Christian community we need to be different from earthly organizations, we need to be together with Christ who is the first one of all creation, the author and finisher of our faith who does not change. What came clear from the Rev Chikane is that the church is ineffective and allows the world to take a lead in matters of transforming our communities.

To what felt like a transfiguration mountain top experience, we were challenged that as a church we need to be at the right position with Christ, recognise when he is together with us and also clothe ourselves with His love and grace so we can restore our prophetic responsibility.

Throughout the consultation we heard God speaking and challenging us through various speakers and activities to take our role as BMC seriously so as to continue to shape the character and path of the church.

HambaniBakhonzi, elozwelelethu!

To the glory of God, Chairperson and the Executive, Ministers and the congregation at large we now move this report for adoption by this consultation

B. THE CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

To the Presiding Bishop, Executive Secretary, Bishops present, Leaders of manyano's and departments, distinguished guests, members of this consultation, allow me, your servant to greet you all this afternoon in the wonderful name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The BMC executive takes this opportunity to welcome the 38th BMC consultation here at the City of Tshwane. This is the Capital city of the Republic of South Africa. It is a place of rich diverse cultures. Much has already said about this district and this beautiful city.

The BMC is delighted by the overwhelming support given to our Presiding Bishop on his elections for the second term as the Chief spiritual leader of our church. Our Zikhali is indeed a seasoned Christian leader and he has managed to steer our connexion along the correct path. Thank you Butsolobentonga for leading us well.

We also wish to applaud the elections of Revs Matyhumza and Vorster in the Queenstown and Natal Coastal Districts respectively.

Mandela's critical health condition has continued to be a cause for concern to many people around the world. As the BMC sitting here at Tshwane we wish to add our voice in support and prayers for the Madiba family.

The Western Cape "poo protest" is the latest is the latest indication yet that not all is well in our country.

The theme of our consultation this year says, "Together with Christ in a Life-changing Economy. The passage is about the story of a resurrected Jesus Christ appearing to his disciples to display a life-changing economy. Seven of the disciples were together and in their unity Jesus joined them early in the morning. The disciples went back to their original trade of fishing because they needed to be fed. Hunger comes to everyone even a disciple of Jesus! The story of Jesus together with his disciples in this incident is about empowering them for a life-changing economy.(John 20:2)

We thank God who with his un-measurable love which has guided us through these past five years. The Lord has been good to us through difficult, trying and challenging times. Believe you me, we have achieved a lot in the past five years and we are grateful to God for all the good and positive achievements accomplished by this mighty movement within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Yes there are those areas in which we did not do so well, what is important about the latter is that we have tried and failed but we did not fail to try.

To have been colonized is a fate with long lasting and unfair results especially after democracy had been achieved. The status of the colonized people, such as we were, has a danger of failing to recognize our God-given abilities and talents. The fierce struggle we have to wage and win before we can claim to be free is to discover the African mirror through which we can see

ourselves and not use the ones given to us by our colonizers when they were in the land grabbing business.

The contradiction between theocracy and democracy could contribute to the belief that the church is irrelevant and as such it should be on the periphery when people talk of issues of democratic principles.

We can never forget the voices of scores of liberation veterans whose courageous and selfless battle against apartheid legacy exacted high price in the form of being sidelined and sometimes rendered irrelevant. One of the down sides of the Western theology through which we are to base our theological training is that it refuses us an opportunity to acknowledge the truth of knowing that the Western theology is geared toward answering questions asked by the white people in dealing with problems encountered by them as white people in Africa. There is a hidden assumption that there is what called “pure theology” (as practiced by Western academics) and “contextual theology”(theology mixed with politics).

Black people still struggle to attain a liberating language to express our experiences, in fact we make use of the foreign methods to solve our existential problems. The good living example of a black person trying to contextualize his understanding of the Bible is in the book of Acts Chapter 8 verse 34. This remains a relevant question to ask even today “Of whom is this man writing here, of himself or of someone else?

It is when we begin asking questions, that we see the limitation of this much accepted theology handed down to us from one generation to another.

There is no longer any doubt that South Africa is slowly, steadily and surely becoming a police state in front of our eyes as the church. The question how can we be proactive in preventing unfortunate incidence like Marikana and others.

Bonhoeffer teaches us that you cannot solve the problems and answer the questions that arise in places and times other than your own.

If we are going to do justice in our understanding of why are we not seeing significant progress economically as black people in particular, we must see the naked truth of brutality of colonialism. We still reap the systematic under development of black people by white colonizers in all spheres of society including economic depression. One other important aspect was the subtle inculcation of self-hate and self-depreciation of the black people. Black people seem to admire and adore white people more than themselves. We like it when we are referred to as moderates and reasonable people. The doctrine of Christian Perfection by John Wesley compels us to work hard toward perfecting who we are.

It is not hard to see that in many African countries freedom is enjoyed by elite minority mainly those in power and their friends. Those in power continue to manipulate the poor especially those illiterate into believing that all is well in their countries.

We have been thrown into the 21st century and have moved from our family bases, where everybody was around us and our children were growing up among their nieces and nephews and were getting the care and guidance from up grand-parents. This had led to situation where we have a new generation of children who do not speak their mother tongue and hardly ever see their relatives. Tomorrow's economic leaders will be today's children or youth whose parents have raised them with economic skills.

The leadership development in South Africa is influenced by three things viz skin colour, accent and power dynamics. It is a known factor that more often than not people who trained others are those of economic and cultural dominance. One of the main factors is the belief that black people are inherently less capable and cannot be on the same level as their white counterparts. A growing issues of concern in South Africa is to develop an authentic black leadership programmes aimed at empowering those given responsibility to lead, doing so with confidence and comfort of knowing that there is nothing wrong with being black and beautiful in South Africa.

Being black is not a matter of pigmentation but being black is reflection of a mental attitude. As black people we must challenge all forces that seek to want to use our blackness as a stamp that marks us out as subservient beings. Black people should know that they are not appendages to white society and cultures.

Since we took over five years ago, we put a special emphasis on what we believe to be the core business of this august movement and that is Transformation, Leadership Development and Unity. The word "transformation" has become a fashionable word. The truth of the matter is that transformation does not come by merely talking about it. When does transformation come? Transformation comes when we believe in our vision and live the mission of God (Missio Dei)

More often than not the process of transformation hurts because it shakes the very traditional foundations of our institutions. It can bring about uncertainties, anxieties and lack of balance because it is about something new. For people called Christians, their understanding of transformation is based on their personal knowledge of the saving power of Jesus Christ.

When we are together with Christ in our transformational agenda we are then made new creatures.

"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he/she is a new creation, the old has gone, the new has come."

The leadership development we talk about is that one which helps us to understand what it means to be in charge or to rule, or lead, with the mass of people in mind. We may wonder, if leadership is such a strong force behind almost everything we do, why does society suffer, even in the face of good leadership? The quality of leadership and the people's ability to recognize good leaders when they are present are important.

Life under a democratic government is more vague than others. Democracy is defined as a "government for the people by the people" but such government is actually impossible to achieve under this system. Democracy is based on which party or group has the great influence, which can mean that the group with the most money to spend on advertising will generally win. Democracy doesn't really bring equality to the citizens, although it pretends to. In democracy there is no room for discernment.

It is a known fact that black leaders face the challenge of being able to receive negative feedback from their own colleagues despite how much one tries to satisfy their needs. Other challenge faced by black leadership is a lack of appreciation and understanding of African culture and the assumption that western culture is the right one. Black leadership must help itself to develop leadership skills in line with current times and issues.

The BMC remains the backbone of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa to ensure the implementation of transformation agenda and continues to be the hope of many hopeless people in our societies, circuits and districts.

Let us remind this consultation of what programmes we committed ourselves to as this movement viz the Grand Plan, Mandela Day, Mrabulo Business later known as Kalabashe, Transformation Agenda, BMC Rebranding Programme, The Development of our Economic Muscle, BMC Day which falls on the 14th September this year and the creation of space for discernment in all activities.

We wish to express our sincere gratitude to the Discernment Committee for making our lives easy this time by taking the process of nominating the proposed name for the Executive Secretary position seriously. Let us be reminded once more that the BMC is not anti-white or a racist organization. In its wisdom the BMC has decided on the name of Rev. Charmaine Morgan as our candidate for the office of the Executive Secretary.

The schools this year are geared toward ensuring implementation of the great ideas we usually generate whenever we attend consultations.

This year, I am not going to lament about the life of the BMC in the districts except to say what we see in some districts leaves much to be desired. However there are those which still try very hard to hold high the flag of the movement at their district events.

In conclusion, we must remind ourselves that to make a significant contribution in a life-changing economy means that we should be prepared to work hard for the best results. We have noted with dismay that intellectual fatigue appears to have set in at our gatherings and that results to lack of robust debate and informed conversation.

A good economic justice system is extremely important to the proper functioning of any community. The economic growth and development is not going to happen unless we commit ourselves to transparent, accountable non-corrupt institutions.

It is with great sense of pleasure and privilege to announce the much anticipated visit of the Former President of the Republic of South Africa in the name of uTatauThabo Mbeki on Saturday as promised last year.

Let me end this address by quoting the words of the international saying” A bright future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams”

Shalom!

C. THE GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

ANNUAL CONSULTATION 2013

1. INTRODUCTION

The Black Methodist Consultation (BMC) congratulate our connexional Chairperson Rev. Sox Leleki in being elected Bishop-Elect of the Grahamstown District in the May 2013 Synod. Also we congratulate Rev. Dr. Mvume Dandala in being appointed the President of the Seth Mokitimi Methodist Seminary. To both we celebrate your leadership and you can be assured of the BMC support. May God grant you the leadership vision and skills to lead His way.

The BMC is very much alive and continues to fulfil its aims and objectives, albeit challenges on the ground. This report is an attempt to diagnostically review some of the movement's practices. Practice which will either derail and/or grow the existence of the movement. This is largely brought about the tendency to confuse the role or purpose of the movement as in the founding of the BMC and that of gravitating towards being an organisation, pretty much like the rest of the "manyanos" in the churches' structure.

There is an urgent need to comprehend the difference between the "movement" and an "organisation". Once this is realised, there will be a reconciliation between our founding vision, objectives and the programmes we follow in the quest to live up to the existence of the BMC.

The following is an attempt to define the two concepts of being a movement versus an organisation to support this report and set us on the equal footing of understanding, how we needed to be a Black Methodist Consultation Movement.

2. DEFINATION

2.1 AN ORGANISATION

An "organization" may be more loosely understood as the planned, coordinated and purposeful action of human beings working through collective action to reach a common goal or construct a tangible product. This action is usually framed by formal membership and form (institutional rules). Sociology analyses organizations in the first line from an institutional perspective. In this sense, organization is a permanent arrangement of elements. These elements and their actions are determined by rules so that a certain task can be fulfilled through a system of coordinated division of labour.

Economic approaches to organizations also take the division of labour as a starting point. The division of labour allows for (economies of) specialization. Increasing specialization necessitates coordination. From an economic point of view, markets and organizations are alternative coordination mechanisms for the execution of transactions.

An organization is defined by the elements that are part of it, its communication, its autonomy, and its rules of action compared to outside events (what causes an organization to act as a collective actor?).

By coordinated and planned cooperation of the elements, the organization is able to solve tasks that lie beyond the abilities of the single elements.

The study of organizations includes a focus on optimising organizational structure. A hierarchy exemplifies an arrangement with a leader who leads other individual members of the organization. This arrangement is often associated with bureaucracy.

These structures are formed on the basis that there are enough people under the leader to give him support. Just as one would imagine a real pyramid, if there are not enough stone blocks to hold up the higher ones, gravity would irrevocably bring down the monumental structure.

2.2 A MOVEMENT

Is the act or an instance of moving; a change in place or position. A particular manner of moving. A change in the location of human and capital resources for tactical or strategic purposes. A series of actions and events taking place over a period of time and working to foster a principle or policy. A group of people with a common ideology, as a socio-political or religious one. The organized action of such a group

Targets:

Group-focus movements (like the BMC) - focused on affecting groups or society in general, for example, advocating the change of the political system (science of the state of the church affairs or questions on policy). The BMC remain outside the reformist party political system.

Individual-focused movements - focused on affecting individuals. Most religious movements would fall under this category. The BMC will employ both above targets.

Therefore, we need to identify and target actions that will, through the movement's objectives and mission - Advocate and Lobby individuals and groups in an attempt to support and grow the church.

However, over the years we have functioned as an organisation and sometimes as a movement. Where we have acted as an organisation we have created expectations that we are unable to meet, expectations that an organisation with structures and full-time staffing can function.

There is a need to once more return to the BMC roots and purpose of existence whilst moving with times but focus on transformation, education, capacity building and spiritual development as defined by the movement's mission.

The rebranding discussion should be the beginning of introspection and rediscovering our essence and purpose. The BMC must spend only 20% of its time addressing internal matters and 70% (external) outwardly focused, in the quest to support the growth of the church.

The above awareness and the below report says that the BMC still enjoys a measurable following and support. BUT if we do not understand that the BMC is a movement we maybe marking time with little or no impact in chasing our purpose.

3. STATE OF THE MOVEMENT

The BMC of today is the product of its resolutions, district activities, and leadership style and membership commitment. We are the product of our own decisions and actions. There are areas of success as can be noted by the fact that every year we able to convene as a consultation. The quality of the consultation programme attracts interest among people called Methodists.

Equally, there are moments of frustrations as a result of none responsiveness when called to act. The lack of coherent decentralised programmes and strongly powered activism at district level.

A trend has developed wherein; the BMC draws large support or attendance at the July Consultation than at district level. The below statistics will tell the tale. This trend has been consistent such that we need to confront this phenomenon maybe to allow such a rudiment membership but not discourage active membership at local level.

The BMC needs to devolve power to the districts to drive and implement the decisions of the July consultation. The Connexional leadership and Consultation must strategically manage and lead the BMC but allow districts room to implement such resolutions.

The following statistics describe the level of commitment and support of the BMC:

YEAR	DISTRICT	REG	COMMITTED	FEB	EBF R0.00
2009	KNB	347	370	89	135 017.00
2010	NFL	350	425	97	202 217.00
2011	QUEENSTOWN	252	360	67	223 940. 00
2012	CLARKEBURY	343	393	98	171 169.00
2013	LIMPOPO				
2014	H&SD				

4. DECENTRALISATION OF ACTIVITIES AT DISTRICT LEVEL

The BMC can be strong and effective if it function and implement firstly, the resolutions and agreed programmes out of the July Consultation as the highest decision making body. Secondly, in line with Connexional programme tailor make these programmes as best fitting the uniqueness of districts. The resolutions committee must therefore emerge with resolutions that realistic, measurable, time bound and characteristic of a movement, like the BMC in realising its objectives and mission.

The following reports indicate the activities and life at district level to support the mooted state of the movement:

DISTRICT	No. MEMBERSHIP	ACTIVITIES	CHALLENGES
Natal Coastal		EXCO MEETING CIRCUIT EXCOS DISTRICT GENERAL MEETING SYNOD PREP WRKSHOP DISTRICT CONSULTATION NATIONAL CONSULTATION WORKSHOP FEBRUARY PLANNING PICNIC/FAMILY DAY DISTRICT FUNDRAISING EVENT MISSION WORK EBF	
CoGH	26 Committed	On the 24th November 2012 the District BMC had a workshop with the Theme; “Communication, Leadership and Strategic Planning”. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen Relations with Ministers 2. Coalition building and a partnership model of intervention with Mission Groups 3. Capacity building (Youth skills training and Leadership education) 4. Demonstration projects to build relations with Church members in general 5. Branding, Marketing and 	Sincere apologies for the lateness of the Report but, once again, these are linked to not having enough hours in the day or week since most members have other commitments that relate to their livelihoods. New Committee no Hand over Minister Relations

		<p>Events Management to help recruit members</p> <p>6. Advocacy and lobbying MCSA on relevant issues</p>	
H&SD		<p>May 2012 Worksoop: Four Pillars are:</p> <p>Leadership excellence; Competency and Capacity Building; Managing Diversity; and Growth and Sustainability.</p> <p>Fundraising Event in preparation to host the 2014 Consultation.</p> <p>May 2013, held a Pre-synod workshop</p>	<p>Membership not stable (dwindling).</p> <p>Lack of active members at circuit level.</p>
Limpopo		<p>As hosts of the 2013 connexional consultation, we have been meeting every Friday in order to keep all members informed and to share duties of things to be done.</p> <p>The district had a leadership convocation that was attended by members from other districts, which was highly appreciated by the hosts. The event was highly successful.</p> <p>The Limpopo district is hosting the connexional July consultation</p> <p>DATE: 11-14.7.2013.</p>	
KNB		<p>The District in the Trans-Orangia region is continuing to look after the family of 8 orphanage children which is spear headed by one of the children who was doing Matric last year. These children depend entirely on government social grants for basic needs such food, clothing and pursuing their education. The BMC members from this Region they visit this</p>	

		<p>family regularly and provide food for them.</p> <p>property management of the church whereby the Trust Property Committee has failed to properly safeguard the assets of the church. The BMC members took upon themselves to ensure the safeguarding of the church's property. The church does not have title deeds for those property and most of them they have building structures.</p> <p>The second project is focusing on the social context of the Sunday school kids who are vulnerable and less fortunate. With the social responsibility the members have contributed a new uniform for the identified kids within different societies of the circuit.</p> <p>MBC is also addressing the other needs of the church whereby they presented the Baptism Stand at one the societies.</p> <p>With regard to capacity building and empowerment our trainers/training facilitator are presenting different topics to the church leaders and congregation around the District. During the month of October 2013, the District has conducted two trainings in Northern Cape Region with a good attendance. During the month of March; training was conducted at Postmasburg Circuit, Archibel and Tweespruit Circuit and Trinity. Further-more BMC was invited to the Youth Consultation and Local Preacher Convention. Those trainings are effective and change people's perspective about the</p>	
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		church and their role in the church's growth.	
Queenstown		No Report	
Grahamstown		No Report	
NFL		No Report	
Clarkebury		No Report	
Central		No Report	
Natal West		No Report	

5. REPORT BACK

As resolved at the last Consultation, the BMC donated an amount of R20 000.00 to the financially struggling South African Council of Churches and a letter of support.

Consultation also resolved and wrote a letter of get well and support to the ailing Rev. Dr. Khoza Mgojo.

6. CONSULTATION ROSTER

YEAR	DISTRICT
2013	Limpopo
2014	Highveld & Swaziland
2015	Central
2016	Natal Coastal
2017	Grahamstown
2018	Cape of Good Hope
2019	Natal West
2020	Kimberley, Namibia & Bloemfontein
2021	Northern Free State & Lesotho
2022	Queenstown
2023	Clarkebury

New Committee (2013) Natal Coastal District

Initials and Surname	Position	Contact No:
Rev MM Nyembe	Chairperson	0719650106 mxolisi.nyembe@gmail.com
Mrs Sibongile Zulu	Vice Chairperson	076 158 1218
Ms LP Ngcobo	General Secretary	073 259 3955/ (w) 031 7111100 cmcsa@telkomsa.net / ngcobolungile14@gmail.com
Mrs M Rametse	Recording Secretary	0721852153
Mr S Mkhize	Treasurer	0733551250 Sandile.Mkhize@kznIqa.co.za
Rev OT Dlamini	Fundraising Convener	0833682370
Mrs S Phewa	Social Concern Convener	0823384778

THE CURRENT LIMPOPO DISTRICT COMMITTEE IS:

CHAIRMAN: REV NORMAN RAPHAHLELA

SECRETARY: MS NOMSA MOLAI

DEP SEC: MR MANDLA GWAMBE

TREASURER: MS MANDY MOTAUNG

D. BIBLE STUDIES

BIBLE STUDY: FIRST DAY 12th July 2013

THEME: LOVE

2 Samuel 19: 1-8

Focus Text: “You love those who hate you; and you hate those who love you”.

There is not enough of it. In fact, there is a chronic shortage of love in the world in general and in South Africa in particular. We have an extremely dangerous situation in our hands! There is no Love – Lerato le fedile!! No battles are fought on behalf of love. No campaign is underway to defend and protect love. There are no legal frameworks to undergird the importance of love.

This was brought into sharp relief for me by one of my favourite writers/authors, Sister Souljah, in her powerful book: No Disrespect. In the final chapter of this incredible book, Sister Souljah reflects on the problem of racism and its effects on black people as well as white people. She argues that the effects of racism on black people are more far reaching than on whites. The reason is that we black people are the victims of racism. She says that the effect of racism on white people is severe in that it deforms their thinking and distorts their perception of the world. “But because the economics of racism is inarguably in their favour, most whites learn to live with it, even to deny it”.

And then, with her usual powerful stroke of the pen, she launches into heart of the issue. She writes:

“We cannot live with it (racism) or deny it. Racism has turned our communities into war zones where we are dying every day. It is black on black hate, created by racism and white supremacy that is killing us. Black people killing black people”. Then she asks the most crucial question: Can African male-female relationships survive in America?

And the answer is what I am interested in. Not if Black-on- Black love is dead. Not if we are still too scared to admit there is a problem while our families fall apart. Not if our young men continue to refer to young women as “bitches”, or our young women refer to young men as “motherfuckers”, or all of us refer to each other as “niggas”. It is a sad measure of our profound contempt for each other and of our thorough going self-loathing that we continue to persist in this ugly practice” p. 350.

So there is a crisis. The crisis is the death of love. It is our crisis now but it is an old crisis. It goes back to the time of David in the Bible. It is a 10th century BC crisis when the people of God who were once slaves in Egypt were involved in the national project of establishing a just and democratic State and Nation. They did what all new nations, new states, new democracies do. They developed the economy; they organised a might national army and defence force; they built magnificent cultural institutions; they created progress and enlightenment everywhere. But they lost the art of loving. Civilizations that experience the death of love eventually collapse.

And so let's keep it simple. Joab puts it painfully. He says to David about the crisis that engulfs the nation and people:

“Today you have humiliated your men – the men who have saved your life and the lives of your sons and daughters and your wives and concubines. You love those who hate you and hate those who love you!”

The second favourite woman writer/author of mine is Naomi Klein. In the Shock Doctrine, one of her latest books, she transports us, in the first chapter, to the disaster that was wrought by the incredible Hurricane Katrina, which exposed the bareness of New Orleans, the crisis of the death of love.

She is a Canadian journalist who follows and describes social struggles and has done so not least for the South African struggle.

“The news racing around the shelter that day was that Richard Baker, a prominent Republican congressman from the city, had told a group of lobbyists, ‘We finally cleaned up public housing in New Orleans. We couldn’t do it, but God did.’ Joseph Ganizano, one of New Orleans’s wealthiest developers, had just expressed a similar sentiment: ‘I think we have a clean sheet to start again. And with that clean sheet we have some very big opportunities. All that week the Louisiana State Legislature in Baton Rouge had been crawling with corporate lobbyists helping to lock in those opportunities: lower taxes, fewer regulations, cheaper workers and a smaller, safer city – which in practice meant plans to level the public housing projects and replace them with condos. Hearing all the “fresh starts” and “clean sheets”, you could almost forget the toxic stew of rubble, chemical outflows and human remains just a few miles down the highway.

Over at the shelter, Jamar could think of nothing else. “I really don’t see it as cleaning up the city. What I see is that a lot of people got killed uptown. People who shouldn’t have died”

He was speaking quietly, but an older man in line in front of us overheard and whipped around. “What is wrong with these people in Baton Rouge? This is not an opportunity. It’s a goddamned tragedy. Are they blind?”

A mother with two kids chimed in. “no, they’re not blind, they are evil. They see just fine.” P. 4

“Today you have humiliated your men – the men who have saved your life and the lives of your sons and daughters and your wives and concubines. You love those who hate you and hate those who love you!”

My third favourite woman author is Loretta Napoleoni, Her book is entitled: Rogue Economics. Our biblical reading for today is not only full of politics, warfare, rivalry, and murder but it is also littered with references to sexuality, rape, and official prostitution. And so I pick on the part of Napoleoni’s book that addresses how prostitution eclipses love. Her prime example is the role of prostitution in rogue economics in modern Israel. She writes:

“Israel represents one of the largest importers of Slavic prostitutes and various sources estimate that one million Israelis visit a prostitute every month. ...At the root of the growth of prostitution

in Israel are cultural and religious factors. Israel is cultural and religious factors. Israeli men, like most men, have a soft spot for tall, blond, Slavic women, whom they indiscriminately call 'Natasha!' like we were some kind of Russian dolls, 'recalls Marika, a Russian woman trafficked to Israel. Demand is particularly high among Haredim, the most conservative Orthodox Jews, many of whom are regular clients of brothels. 'When you go to the area of the stock exchange or the diamond exchange, you see a lot of prostitution and a lot of very, very religious men, because these men need sex but the women in their society cannot give them when they want it. ...

Today, modern globalized society tacitly condones prostitution. Prostitution has been re-branded as an extension of the entertainment industry. And studies suggest that one in 10 British men – 2.3 million – has already been entertained, stated the Sunday Times. Nobody wants to miss out on the fun; everybody wants to be part of the game in town. 'Once there was a guest who came in and asked for a show to be performed by a number of girls. He sat there and had his show, without touching the girls or anything. He just sat there, recalls Stephen, the Berlin pimp. 'And the funny thing is...he was blind" p. 16 and 17.

From a biblical scholarly point of view, it is instructive to note the difference in themes between texts that deal with the formation and management of the State and those that depict the movement of people for freedom, struggle and justice. The issues are different. There is less murder, prostitution, war, chicanery, conflict etc in the latter than in the former. There is a massive thematic difference between the Exodus texts and the 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings or the Hexateuch and the Deuteronomic history.

Be that as it may the crisis continues in our time:

- Churches don't preach about love anymore
- Education systems don't have a place for love anymore
- Economies don't invoke the love of people to address economic relationships anymore
- Families don't ground their households and personal relationships in love anymore
- Marriages don't seek to survive and grow on the basis of love anymore

Christians don't factor love as an essential ingredient in their portfolio of spiritual arsenal anymore. Love is dead, and so nations are dead, communities are dead, leaders are dead, legislatures are dead, parliaments are dead, Christians are dead, men and women are dead, young people are dead; because love is dead.

BIBLE STUDY: SECOND DAY 13th July 2013

THEME: LOVE

John 3: 14 - 17

Focus Text: “For God so Loved the World that He gave his Only Begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him should not die but have eternal life”.

1. Introduction

In the first Bible Study, I spoke of love and how when it is dead, we are also dead; how when love is dead communities are dead; young people are dead; leaders are dead, nations are dead. So we spoke of love.

Today, I want to go further. I want to speak about **God’s** love. There is a difference – a big difference. There is love then there is **God’s** love!

When there is no love, things and people are dead. When the love of God is absent then **Nothing Is**. The one is a state of affairs; the other is an **intervention**.

2. Our Text

“For God so loved the World that he gave his only begotten son so that whoever believes in Him should not die but have eternal life”

The text is situated in an awkward narrative that begins with the story of a certain Jewish leader called Nicodemus.

The latter was seized by his own existential problems. Leaders are often like that: they have their own demons, begotten of their own, often secret, dealings. Other times they are bothered by genuine and serious matters related to their **calling** as leaders. When this happens, they can hardly brush things aside; they have to do something, to respond in some way. Oftentimes leaders are victims of their own machinations; and so they suffer legitimately. Therefore, they need help. Evidently, Nicodemus needed help. So his story occupies the first part of our chapter. There is no connection between the narrative about the leader and the narrative of God's love's that follows.

3. The Intervention

The great intervention begins with a loop back to Moses and the leadership challenges he faced. The reference to Moses goes back to the narrative in Numbers 21:4-9. Let us read this piece. For me the key sentence is this: “On the way, the people lost their patience and spoke against God and Moses”. Their complained is instructive: “Why did you bring us out of Egypt to die in this desert where there is no food or water”.

Of course the anger of God against the people is expressed in decisive terms: He unleashed poisonous snakes on them. They were beaten and many of them died.

Moses prayed for God's intervention. And God instructed Moses to make a bronze snake and hang it on a pole so that anyone who was bitten could look at it and be bitten.

Now this is difficult stuff, theologically – let alone scientifically. I personally struggle to deal with these kinds of narrative. They remind of my own personal narrative. Many years ago when I first returned from England where I had gone to study my father pleaded with me to return straight home in Bloemfontein in the Free State. I had been appointed a lecturer at the University of Botswana. I think my father suspected that I would go to Botswana directly. He did not want that. He prepared me to touch base with home first.

I did as he instructed. I arrived home late at night and did not intend to stay long in view of the security situation in the country at that time. It was the immediate aftermath of the bombing of the Sasol plant, an indication of the intensification of the armed struggle against the white settler minority regime.

He did not say much to me that night and did not warn me of anything. Early in the morning at about 5am he woke me up and asked me to come to the main door of the house facing the exit to the street. There were my uncles with a bowl of water with some slimy green stuff in it and on the floor was the skin of a freshly slaughtered sheep. I was instructed to sit flat on the floor and before I knew it my father and uncles were doing the African thing on me and my father kept saying: Let us take the Englishman out of you before you go to Botswana to take your first job.

I have never forgotten that. I don't understand it but I have not forgotten it. I also do not understand Moses but I never forget this text. Unlike the story of Nicodemus that sits awkwardly in front of our text I understand that in this story of Moses there was an *intervention*! Tell them to look at the snake, and they will be healed. I know that my father's story was an *intervention*. I don't understand the intervention but I know that it was an *intervention*! Ever since, I have been wary of the Englishman in me.

And so my friends back to love. No, let me correct myself. Back to God's love. This one is an **INTERVENTION**. No not an *intervention*. An **INTERVENTION**.

“And God loved the world so much; he gave his only son so that everyone who believes in him may not die, but have everlasting life”

Jesus was God's Love Project in the world. Let us break it down:

- a. He was a Feeding Project. It is impossible to love a hungry person unless you are prepared to something about their hunger
- b. He was a Healing Project: Physical and Spiritual Healing project. It is impossible to love a sick person unless at the same time you are doing something about their sickness

- c. He was a Prophetic Project: he pronounced against; he advised; he criticised and critiqued; he actively resisted.
- d. He was a Crucifixion Project – death was always part of the mix; prison and suffering were always part of the mix. Why are we not in jail; cause we are afraid; cause we are dishonest; cause we do not have courage of our conviction.

PAUL's Summary

It is impossible to conclude a discussion of love in the Bible without Paul's magnificent summary on love:

In that powerful poetic piece in 1 Corinthians 13:4ff Paul sets it out for us:

“Love is patient and kind

It is not jealous or conceited or proud

Love is not ill-mannered or selfish or irritable

Love does not keep a record of wrongs

Love is not happy with evil but is happy with the truth

Love never gives up and

Its faith, hope and patience never fail

Love is eternal”

And later in the text he concludes: “Meanwhile these three remain: faith, hope and love; and the greatest among them is Love”

Not just any love, my friends, God's love. The love that intervenes! Active love!

E. THE SCHOOLS REPORTS

E.1 THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN A DEMOCRATIC DISPENSATION

E.2 STRATEGIC PPROACH ON IMPACTING MCSA DECISIONS

E.3 JUSTICE AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

E.4 THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMERGING LEADERSHIP

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMERGING LEADERSHIP – MS NAMBITHA MEKANE

FOCUS

- Building Culture not Leaders
- Potential – “God does not call the perfect but perfects the called”

CHALLENGES

Culture of Learning

- Even though opportunities are provided members do not appreciate or grab those
- Members do not read, e.g. leaders do not even bother to have current version of L&D and Year Book

Attitude

- Leaders/ministers organise training sessions for their “members” but do not attend. This create a perception that they are beyond development or people development is not important
- The same was evident here in this consultation during the time of schools
- Some BMC members are not active in the life of the church in their circuits

Lack of Consistency

- Too much creativity and variety has been allowed resulting in the collapse of leadership development and training of members in general(mediocrity)

Acknowledging That

- BMC is the yeast therefore its role is that of influencing
- Ministers are in most instances gatekeepers that will block most initiatives

- Need to Strengthen the Districts

The manner of approach is therefore critical

- BMC cannot impose but need to identify people with influence to break down the walls to gain access
- Identify opportunities and act on those- BMC members to volunteer more to do work where there is gap, that is, identify what is broken and volunteer to assist to find a solution. When that works well, definitely, the contribution will be recognised and the leadership will warm up to future suggestions
- Work or deal with issues that are deemed important by the recipients not what you “think” has to be done – “nothing for them without the” . Who are these people and what are their needs?

WHAT WILL DISTRICT DO WHEN THEY GET BACK

Understanding the Context (Environmental Analysis)

- Approach Minister (Influential leaders/stewards if this is a barrier) to sell the idea/business case for development of emerging leadership based on benefits that could arise for the circuit if adopted
- Profile of circuit membership – Database to inform decisions/strategies
- Identify partnerships for implementation (create space for others to be involved- it is an MCSA programme now not BMC)
- Conduct SWOT Analysis (Circuit including all organisations / associations)
- Write-up on the work of all ministries (What; who) for “recruitment”
- Profiling of all roles (What does it entail)

Identify talent pools – End October 2013

- What to look for/ Criteria
 - ✦ Curiosity/ Interest to go beyond the surface
 - ✦ Commitment
 - ✦ Drive to deliver on allocated projects
 - ✦ Ability, Availability; Willingness learn and to serve(Passionate)
 - ✦ Communication (Verbal & Written)
 - ✦ Fruits of the Holy Spirit
 - ✦ Team Player
 - ✦ Influential

✦ Critical and Enquiring Mind

- How can it be done?
 - Case Study Approach – observing people working e.g. Confirmation class or Discipleship class
 - Informally – Spot people with influence
 - Formally send out invitations for volunteers for those ministries that are in need of support (using information from SWOT); clearly stating what the ministry is about; role and profile of individuals required
 - Encourage Voluntarism(Priesthood of all believers)
 - Skills Audit

Strategies for development of identified pools

- Establish a team to focus on leadership development if not yet in place (it will free the executive to focus on providing strategic direction)
- Formalised / Structured Development Programs
- Interests / Gifts Analysis
- Identify mentors / coaches – guiding them also on what to do
- Place talent pool members with individuals/ministries/subcommittees for shadowing and Coaching – create space for them to practise what leaders are doing including observer status in leaders’ meetings (Model it; Mentor it; Motivate it; Multiply it)
- Budget for the leadership Development interventions- Be deliberate
- Monitor and Evaluate –(The pool members must never be allowed to disappear after training)

POSSIBLE FOCUS AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Develop foundation which will provide context

- Resuscitate class tradition (Not the administration structure it has developed into)
- Revive the focus on confirmation training
- The MCSA’s –
 - ✦ Vision
 - ✦ Mission Statement

- ✦ Mission Calls (7)
- ✦ Mission Pillars/Imperatives (5)
- ✦ Mission Priorities (13)

- Discipleship Classes

- Deepened spirituality

- Priesthood of all believers (Methodism)

BMC FOCUS – NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERSHIP

Finding our Niche

- Debating
- Decision Making and Resolution
- Advocacy and Lobbying
- Black Consciousness, African Renaissance and Non Racialism
- Human Rights
 - ✦ Justice
 - ✦ Gender
 - ✦ Racism
 - ✦ Environment
- History of Struggle
- Governance in the Church

POSSIBLE FOCUS AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Further Development

- Personal Growth (Emotional Intelligence; Spiritual Intelligence)
- Diversity Management
- Build character in a leader
- Spiritual Formation – Retreats
- Mentorship and Coaching

- Meeting Procedures and Processes

RESOURCES AND TOOLS

- There are adequate resources and tools (Trained Trainers 2009; Existing Programmes)
- Utilise/Invite facilitators from other districts or those that were involved in the 2009 programme if no local capacity
- As part of Skills Audit consider those who are involved in Learning & Development and engage them in the programme
- The connexional executive to also identify and approach those individuals that were involved in previous leadership programmes for input and possible committing of their time to revive/ develop and/or deliver some of those, e.g. National Youth Leadership Training Program (NYLTP)
- Templates to guide interest/gifts analysis to be developed and shared with all districts by end July 2013
- Templates to guide Skills Audit to be developed and shared with all districts by end July 2013

ACTION LIST

What	By When	Who
Appoint a champion	Today	Consultation
Appoint district Champions	Today	Districts Chairpersons
Develop and share a template to guide interest/gifts analysis	19 July 2013	N Mekane
Develop and share to guide Skills Audit	19 July 2013	N Mekane
Consult Resident Minister/Stewards	31 August	Circuit
Profile of circuit membership	31 August	Circuit
Conduct SWOT Analysis	31 August	Circuits
Identify partnerships for implementation	30 September	Circuits
Write-up on the work of all ministries	30 September	Circuits
Profiling of all roles	30 September	Circuits
Identify the first pool of emerging leaders	31 October 2013	Circuits
District Plans	31 October 2013	District Champions
Consolidated Plans	February Meeting	Connexional Champion
Proposed Development Programme	February Meeting	Connexional Champion/ 2009 Team

