



BMC

Black Methodist Consultation

A formation within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa

**44th ANNUAL CONVOCATION
11th-14th JULY 2019 PORT EDWARD
HOLIDAY RESORT > NATAL WEST.**

[1975 - 2019]

THE MINUTES

***THEME_2019: "BURNING TO LIGHT UP
FOR GOD'S JUSTICE"***

TEXT – ST. MATTHEW 5:1-16

JULY 2019 WAS YEAR-END 5 IN THE 2ND TERM OFFICE. JULY 2020 MARKS YEAR-END 6 ...

Chairperson	:	Rev. Mzwandile W. Molo
General Secretary	:	Mr. Xhanti T. Mhlubulwana
Recording Secretary	:	Ms. Nokuzola Mbangula
Treasurer General	:	Ms. Buhle A. Sigabi

MCSA: LEFA LABATSWADI BARONA! ILIFA LABAZALI BETHU!



THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

a Christ-healed Africa for the healing of the nations



BMC

Black Methodist Consultation

VISION

A Transformed MCSA that is resourceful, inclusive and Christ-centred African Church

MISSION STATEMENT

The BMC exists for the Transformation of the MCSA into a truly African Church (*in character, doctrine, ethos, identity and practice*) by challenging and equipping Black Methodists to contribute meaningfully, actively and intelligently in the MCSA given the context of Africans.

KEY FOCUS AREAS OF THE BMC

- 1) Strategically influence transformation agenda of the MCSA;
- 2) Organisational renewal for effectiveness;
- 3) Cutting edge capacity building & empowerment programmes; *with targeted programme interventions e.g.*
 - a. **Cultivating Culture of Accountability and Good Governance;**
 - b. **The Art and Importance of Leadership (including Spirituality of Leadership; Consciousness Leadership);**
 - c. Strategic Mission Planning (Biblical and Pragmatic);
 - d. Organisational Design Theory (Effectiveness, Change Management, Knowledge Management, etc.)
 - e. 21st Century Church, Back to Basics: Stewardship as the Administrative Centre that must hold; Class/Small Group Leadership; Role Clarity – President/Chairperson/Vice-Chair; Secretariat; Finance Management; CCS/DDSR; etc.
- 4) Gender equity; and
- 5) Develop theoretical handles about being black and blackness in the 21st century.

BMC CORE DRIVING VALUES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Theology • Black Consciousness • Black Theology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultative • Empowerment • Excellence • Fairness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive • Influential • Integrity • Intellectual • Justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive • Prophetic • Responsive • Strategic • Transformative • Truthfulness
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1. THE 44TH BMC ANNUAL CONVOCATION OPENING DIVINE SERVICE (WITH - SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION)

The opening service liturgy and worship was led by the Vice-Chair of the Natal West, **Rev TJ Fakude**, on behalf of **Bishop TW. Dlamini** of Natal West and the Synod Executive Leadership Team. After *Hymn 278 Nguni – Nkosi Sihlangene* was sung the **Rev V. Hadebe** led with the opening prayer. The Scripture Reading was taken from the gospel of **St. Mark 5:21-43**, after which Syakudumisa Thixo (Te Deum) was sung. The key message premised on verse St. Mark 5 verse 34 of the text, **“Daughter, your faith has healed you”**

The Vice-Chair of the Natal West Synod, **Rev TJ Fakude** delivered the message at the opening service. He acknowledged the theme, **“Burning to light up for Gods Justice”**, then proposed to use a sub-theme for the message, **“Disturb the protocol”**

Highlights of the Message

The story of the bleeding woman was the one **that saw the very bleeding woman disturbing the protocol**. The procession was on its way to Jairus’ house and he touched the hem of Jesus’ robe thus causing Jesus to stand and address the crowd, **disturbing the protocol**.

Four issues were isolated in the story:

- **Sexuality Challenges** – This woman could not touch her husband or even get closer to him for 12years. Due to her condition, she was an outcast. *“can you be in a marriage for 12 years without touching your husband?”* – those in assembly were asked.
- **Maternal Health Issues** – This woman could not bear children, maybe she suffered ‘*somehow*’ when she entered into marriage with her husband thus making it impossible for her to conceive.
- **Domestically** – anything that this woman touched was considered “unclean” and “impure”. This woman heard about Jesus and she waited for the moment to be healed from her disease. In Her courage and patient faith, we learnt to wait upon the Lord for justice, healing and salvation.
- **Spiritual Outcast** – this woman could not go to the temple. Are there people who are excluded in our church assembly?
 - Indeed, the church has excluded many people – woman falling pregnant out of wedlock were once excluded; the same sex orientated ...

This woman’s wish was just to touch the hem of Jesus’ garments and by doing that, she disturbed the protocol. The woman had an **‘aimed touch and on intentional touch’**. Rev TJ Fakude encouraged those in assembly to approach Jesus with clarity of intentions. The status of this woman was changed instantly by power that was in Jesus that colluded with her patient faith. *‘Her status changed to that of a daughter to*

Jesus' (Max Lucado – He still moves the stones). The Sermon was followed by a **Sacrament of Holy Communion Service**.

On behalf of the BMC **Rev Kobuoe** thanked the Vice-Bishop **Rev TJ Fakude**.

2. WELCOME TO THE NATAL WEST SYNOD

The Vice-Chair of the Natal West Synod Executive **Rev TJ Fakude** extended a warm welcome to the Connexional BMC. He tendered an apology on behalf of the **Synod Bishop, Rev TW Dlamini** who could not be available due to other prior church commitments at the same time.

On behalf of the BMC Natal West Synod, **Rev TC Dimaza**, the Synod BMC Chairperson welcomed the consultation to Natal West, stating He was very much humbled by BMC presence and the high numbers. He expressed hope that the 44th BMC Annual Convocation presence at Natal West Synod would enable and enhance recruitment and social mobilisation for BMC new members. He shared with those present that the Natal West Synod was big and vast geographically and in numbers however BMC at Natal West Synod was experiencing a challenge with regards to low numbers as the then membership was not more than fifty (50) committed to the BMC cause.

He shared with enthusiasm that at the gathered consultation at Port Edward there was a Natal West BMC Synod Executive Committee that started work in 2015 building up to the hosting 44th BMC Annual Convocation with thirty-one (31) members of Natal West registered for conferencing.

After the 44th Annual convocation **Rev TC Dimaza**, expressed the hope of doubling the number of committed BMC Membership at Natal West and for the 2020 BMC Annual July Convocation, **with God's Help!**

Rev TC Dimaza concluded by tendering apology for the venue constraints and the related inconveniences of those who were standing inside and outside at the Port Edward Methodist Church listening and following proceedings through the open windows. The numbers in attendance, registered on Day One (01) before lunch hour were already recorded at more than three hundred and fifty (350). **Rev TC Dimaza** further expressed hope for better conferencing experience at the Port Edward Holiday Resort Hall from Day Two, Friday 12th July 2019.

3. ROLL CALL, APOLOGIES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

a. ROLL CALL

SYNODS	#REG. 2019	#COM. 2019	#REG. 2018	#COM. 2018	#REG. 2017	#COM. 2017	#REG. 2016	#COM. 2016	#REG. 2015	#COM. 2015
Cape of Good Hope	11	12	15	15	11	11	8	10	19	13
Grahamstown	26	26	32	32	46	45	42	41	33	26
Queenstown	25	30	6	5	25	25	23	23	34	34
Kimberley Namibia & Bloemfontein	53	55	33	37	31	30	24	27	35	36
Northern Free State & Lesotho	19	43	18	37	16	19	10	21	10	34

SYNODS	#REG. 2019	#COM. 2019	#REG. 2018	#COM. 2018	#REG. 2017	#COM. 2017	#REG. 2016	#COM. 2016	#REG. 2015	#COM. 2015
Natal Coastal	136	188	65	146	58	112	70	110	80	80
Natal West	38	31	22	22	23	23	29	29	46	48
Central	16	16	13	13	21	21	18	20	28	23
Highveld & Swaziland	10	10	7	12	11	17	14	18	44	46
Limpopo	46	46	40	31	47	45	41	41	65	65
Clarkebury	13	24	13	21	14	14	11	17	17	36
Connexional YWM	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
Total	395	483	266	373	302	362	290	357	415	445

b. APOLOGIES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rev Z. Siwa, MCSA Presiding Bishop • Rev C. Morgan, MCSA Gen Secretary • Mr J.M Nkosi, MCSA Lay President • Ms Lindeni Madlala, LIM • Rev O.T Dlamini, NCS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Mdu Dlamini, NCS • Ms Nomagugu Ncemane, NCS • Mr Muzi Mtaka, NCS • Rev Ayanda Nyobole, HISWA • Mr Thembani Piyose, HISWA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs Jerminah Hlanyane, HISWA • Mr Sikupela, HISWA • Rev. Dr. Sox Leleki, GRH • Rev V Mngxuma, GHT • Ms July Mthembu, NCS
<p>Delayed Late Arrivals: - Rev. Nomsa Nomqolo; Rev. Angela More; Mr. Mteteli K. Caba; Rev. M. Mkizwana; Ms. Buhle Sigabi.</p>		

c. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- **Rev. Michel Hansrod** – MCSA Gen-Secretary Elect (Representing MCO)
- **Rev. RS. Mokgothu** – Bishop of Limpopo Synod
- **Rev TJ Fakude**, Vice - Bishop Natal West Synod
- **Rev V. Dlamini**, Bishop Elect Natal West Synod
- **Synod Lay Leaders and Synod Lay Leaders – Elect.**
- **Guests on the Program 2019 July**
 - Dr Brigalia Bam
 - Mr Manqoba Zungu
 - Rev. Dr. Mgojo Family

4. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Secretary General tabled the program of the consultation. The following insertions and changes were made and adopted by the consultation:

- Page 4 – Epilogue for Friday evening by **Rev Angela More**
- Page 5 – Closing Devotion for Saturday evening by **Mr Mteteli Caba**
- The Chairperson's address was moved from 14h00 – 14h45 slot on Thursday to Friday morning after the 1st Bible Study
- The Elections were moved from 09h20 to 10h30 on Friday
- The Financial Report was moved from Thursday 11th July to Saturday 13th July during the time slot of the Black Unity Report
- The Bursary Committee Report was moved to Friday after the Black History Public Lecture by Dr. Bam

The Consultation Agreed to ALL changes by Consensus

5. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

RESOLUTIONS	LISTENING COMMITTEE	SCRUTINEERS
Ms. Mamzola Moremi – Convener Ms. Popi Hlubi Mr. Thabisho Lethebe Rev. Bongani Mquqo Ms Ayanda Mjali	Rev. Sva Waqu – Convener Mr. Sizwe Mvusi Ms. Fikiswa Mapoma Ms. Zanele Didiza Ms. Queenie Xulubana	Ms. Nandi Sinyanya Ms. Niniza Ntuli – Convener Mr. Siphon Yende Ms Ndlovukazi Mehlomakhulu Mr. Ben Makgothle Ms. Phumla Mhlanga
CHAPLAINCY	TIME KEEPERS	LETTER WRITERS
Rev. Malusi Radebe Rev Kobuo Ms. Thuli Nkomonde	Ms. Abigail Majola Rev. Kubu Seekoei	Ms. Nokuzola Mbangula Ms. Nombasa Hlathi Ms. Nomthandazo Chirwa
PRECENTORS		GUESTS HANDLING – [CONCIERGE]
Khutsho Mashego Agness Mthethwa Nomajama Benya Bathabile Madwe	Lindelwa Shude Nonelwa Gonondo Siphon Gidi	Ms. Nokuzola Mbangula Ms. Thembisa Zihlangu

6. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The General Secretary apologised for not getting the minutes out to all members timeously since 12th to the 15th July 2018 at the Cape of Good Hope 43rd Annual BMC July Convocation. The consultation

was requested to simply receive the minutes then read the minutes on Thursday 11th July 2019 overnight for adoption on Friday 12th July and the consultation agreed by consensus.

The minutes were tabled Friday 12th July 2019 and were thus taken as read and confirmed as a true reflection of the previous consultation that took place from the 12th to the 15th July 2018 at the Cape of Good Hope Synod, 43rd Annual BMC July Convocation.

The following corrections were made to the minutes:

- ***'Ms Maletse Mtshewa'*** and ***'Loli Maletse'*** – same person
- *Chairperson's address – fully attached to the 2019 July Conference Pack as it was not received in hardcopy in July 2018*
- Listening statement and reports are not distributed in hard copies, they are also attached
- Page 21 of the Minutes it's not Selai but Molai

There were no further corrections to the minutes. The minutes were re-tabled for adoption 12th July 2019 and were thus taken as read and confirmed as a true reflection of the previous consultation that took place from the 12th to the 15th July 2018 at the Cape of Good Hope Synod [43rd Annual BMC July Convocation].

7. NOTICES OF MOTION - RESOLUTIONS

a. CHANGE IN BMC BURSARY POLICY TO ACCOMMODATE LOCAL PREACHERS

Noting the escalation of training costs for Local Preachers, which resulted in the inability of God's messengers to further their studies and thus denting the call to preach process. We therefore propose a move from the current funding option closed to other trainees, to include funding of Local Preachers development who would be members in good standing of the BMC.

Proposed by : Mabutho Sithole

Seconded by : Mbatu Bosman

RECOMMENDATIONS: REJECTED

Decision already taken by BMC as per Bursary Policy that it caters for Ministers who will do courses that will contribute to church.

Financial reasons- due to number of people who are pursuing studies for local preachers.

b. PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES – HIV/AIDS & MENTAL HEALTH

Noting the state of emotional, mental and health in our circuits where illnesses like HIV & AIDS, depression, trauma are prevalent in black communities. Noting secondly that our church does not seem to be responding adequately and comprehensively.

- 1st That BMC develop a strategy that is going to respond comprehensively to the challenge of mental, physical and emotional health of our black people in our circuits.
- 2nd That we encourage the EBF to try and encourage those who apply as ministers to be equipped more than just Theology but for them to be equipped to pursue studies on mental, psychological and emotional health of our people and for the BMC to start advertising that as soon as possible
- 3rd Districts to be encouraged to begin to converse in their districts as to what they can do comprehensively.

Proposed by: Poppy Hlubi

Seconded by: Sizwe Mvusi

RECOMMENDATIONS: REJECTED

MCSA Mission Unit Health desk exists that addresses with all this; Districts to encourage utilization. Bursary already in place, ministers to be encouraged to pursue studies covering this.

c. BMC RESEARCH, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY FOR JUSTICE RESPONSE

As HESWA having seen and recognised the fundamental role of the BMC as the advocate for the promotion and protector of justice, a change agent and catalyst within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Furthermore, in the light of the 44th BMC theme “*Burning to light up for God’s justice*” and in the spirit of the General Secretary’s organisational 2018/2019 report that emphasised the importance of deepening the role of the BMC to ensure that justice is seen to be done in the life of the MCSA.

- We therefore recommend and propose that the BMC establish fulltime research, training and development office.
- The office must be resourced with full time staff carry the research work of a full-time basis working within the framework and terms of reference developed for it by the BMC.

Proposed by: Mr Percy Nhlapho

Seconded by: Mrs Nombasa Hlathi

RECOMMENDATIONS: REJECTED

Financial reasons – We encourage ministers to utilise BMC bursary. When there is a need for research adhoc committee will be appoint

d. LPD/LPA GENDER TRANSFORMATION AND LGBTIQ+ ISSUES

An intervention required to assist LPA to align to processes of transformation and/or adaptations- In order to relate to current life realities – WITHOUT FEAR e.g. Gender Equality and LGBTIQ+

The BMC to create space for this

Not discussed as there was no seconder

e. INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES DEMISE AND IMPACT ON AFRICAN CULTURE(S), NORMS AND VALUES

Noting the contradiction displayed by majority rule era clearly failing to enhance majority citizens of SA their cultural heritage and Restoration of Dignity expressed through the Demise of Indigenous Languages, by extension evoking cultural erosion, derailing African norms and Values

We therefore resolve to call on the BMC through structures of MCSA to partner with the Faith Based communities to refuse to embrace the voluntary colonialisation reality emanating from Indigenous languages plight, and in an offensive to combat the reality herein and Re affirm and Reclaim majority s dignity and identity of the programmes of action and other actions.

Moved by: Mabutho Sithole

Seconded by: Mawande Ndakisa

ACCEPTED BY CONSENSUS

f. RECOMMENDATIONS EXECUTIVE ORGANISATIONAL REPORT 2018/2019

- That, the 44th BMC Convocation mandates the BMC Connexion Executive to continue engaging other organisations (WM, YWM, etc.) with the intention of: Developing Leadership Study guide as an output of the Leadership Symposium Content as well as project and explore options for sustainability:

APPROVED

- Source and procure collation and compilation (hardcopy and digital) of the symposium be the study guide with full papers as were presented at the symposium be annexed to the study guide (for Dissemination to the BMC executives per Synod, Archive, as well as other Organisations executives who participated)

APPROVED

- That, 44th BMC Convocation mandated its Connexional Executive to introduce new Awards, propose clear criteria e.g. Most Improved for EBF e.g. based on % improvement year on year for 2020 implementation July 45th Convocation, perhaps with baseline not just simply %) for Ext.CGEC February Meeting 2020 to finalize

APPROVED

- That, the 44th BMC Convocation “considers options” regarding floating trophies either won three consecutive years by the same district (ownership)and explore options,

where do the retired/owned floating trophies get placed? Bishops office; SMMS, District Executive to decide where to place it. Archives, (negotiate a glass cabinet cost to the BMC) – For Ext.CGEC February meeting 2020 to finalise

APPROVED

- That, the implementation of the 2017, Being church and forming organisations for mission” be effected by or on July 2020
- The BMC to set up a team to look into a proposed MCSA One stop shop for community Services’; for the people

APPROVED

CHAIRPERSONS ADDRESS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE BMC

g. “BMC AND THE MCSA PART OF AN INITIATIVE OF A BROAD-BASED MOVEMENT FOR POVERTY ERADICATION”

BMC convenes a colloquium on poverty eradication to help us understand its depth then shape an agenda for the church and engage society.

APPROVED

h. CONSCIENTISATION OF YOUNG BOYS IN MODELLING MASCULINITY

working with YMG and MICYU developing a comprehensive strategy for advocacy, teaching and mentorship targeting young boys in the new models of masculinity.

APPROVED – Work with YMG and LPD/A

i. CREATE SPACES IN THE BMC AND THE MCSA for the marginalised LGBTQI+ voices to be heard as a matter of justice and dignity

APPROVED – Working with BMC Gender Equity

j. BMC ADVOCACY FOR CHURCHES TO OPEN UP TO CHILDREN including creating safe spaces for children who experienced various forms of injustice.

APPROVED – Work with MICYU

k. BMC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE keeping track of the new synods developments proactively isolating emerging issues to the attention of the MCSA as well as advice BMC approach for recruitment and establishment to the new synods.

8. LETTERS TO BE WRITTEN

8.1 Celebratory Letters

- Rev Dr M. Molale** on nomination as Bishop of Molopo (Botswana) Synod
- Rev Y. Moses** on nomination as Bishop of Cape of Good Hope Synod
- Rev F. Whitby** on nomination as Bishop of Central Synod
- Rev V. Dlamini** on nomination as Bishop of Natal West Synod
- Rev L. Williams** on nomination as Bishop of Camdeboo (Karoo) Synod

- f. **Rev Mothibi** on nomination as Bishop of NFSL Synod
- g. **Rev P. Jamjam** on appointment as General President YMG
- h. **Rev T. Mdingi** on appointment as Synod Secretary of Queenstown
- i. **Rev N. Ncombo** on appointment as Vice-Bishop of Central Synod
- j. **Mr X. Mhlubulwana** on appointment as Lay Leader of Central Synod

8.2 Condolences Letter

- a. Rev OT Dlamini Family on the loss of her Husband and Father to their children.

9. MEMORIAL SERVICE – REV VUYO DLAMINI

This service was opened by singing hymn 16 Sotho – Rea u boka Morena. The Rev M. Bosman led the service with prayer. The names of our fallen heroes and heroines were called and thereafter Siyakudumisa (Te Deum) was sung.

In remembering our fallen heroes and heroines, the **Rev V. Dlamini** read **Revelations 3:1-6**. We sang Hymn 260 Nguni – Ndinga ngakhe ndisithele. The message was based on vs 5 – **“If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord”**

The Rev V. Dlamini challenged the consultation that it is not enough to know the Gospel – it needs to impact every aspect of our lives for the Christian goal is that whether we live or die we belong to God

Our goal as Christians is to deny ourselves for Christ and follow Him and we must never live for ourselves but for the one who called us. We are not in the business of pleasing ourselves but one that pleases God.

... And I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Write this down: Blessed are those who die in the Lord from now on. Yes, says the Spirit, they are blessed indeed, for they will rest from their hard work; for their good deeds follow them!” Revelation 14:13

The following BMC Members were remembered:

Grahamstown		Natal Coastal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rev Selby Madwe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Josephine Ntsiane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Sizakele Mkhize • Ms Norah Nakasa • Ms Eunice Hlengwa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Thandi Monama

A total of 7 people were remembered in 2019, compared to 6 people in 2018

Closing hymn was 227 – Xhosa

Ms. Nandi conveyed words of Gratitude to **Rev V Dlamini on behalf of the BMC**

10. BLACK UNITY PROJECT

- The 2018 convocation pack includes a full paper from **Rev Sotu & Co**
- The Executive has subsequently engaged the committee regarding the work to be done
- No direct work is to be done by the BMC, most work is to be done by
 - o MCO/Presiding Bishop
 - o Stationing Committee
- No report received for this convocation with regards to The Quest and Research for Black Unity however Black Unity is imperative to the BMC

11. 40TH PUBLIC LECTURES

- The report was presented by **Rev SJ Motlhodi**
- The Lectures were conducted and celebrations held between 2015-2016 and confirmed by the July convocation
- The book will be launched, UNISA had confirmed and promised the final product in May 2019 however some papers were missing
- The communication received from UNISA was that they did not commit on publishing a book but received the papers for Oral History purposes
- There is currently a wrestling of emails and a need for long and robust conversations with regards to Intellectual Property Rights and publishing of information without the rights to do so
- A meeting has been scheduled for the 17th July 2019 to iron out issues

12. THE STATE OF MCSA – LED BY REV MICHEL HANSROD ON BEHALF OF MCO LEADERSHIP

- The **Rev Michel Hensrod** (General Secretary Elect of the MCSA) was delegated by the Presiding Bishop, Rev Z.D Siwa to bring warmest greetings from the MCO and to interact with the BMC
- He assured the BMC of their prayers as we convene
- Apologies of the Presiding Bishop, the General Secretary and the Lay President
- Alluded to the influence the BMC has in terms of policy and implementation to the MCSA's vision and mission of the gospel of healing and transformation to all nations
- With regards to the State of the Church he alluded to the following historical events
 - o Election of Rev Purity Malinga as the 1st female Presiding Bishop – this event has passed we need to wear tekkies for the task
 - o The people called Methodist celebrated 40 years of women to participate in the Ministry of Word and Sacrament and it is therefore befitting that a woman should sit in the chair of Mr Wesley
 - o 50th celebrations of the Swaziland Methodist Church
- The PB has taken the decision to retire from active ministry and the process of handover is underway

- The MCSA does exist in a vacuum but in a Socio-Economic and Political space and that we are not a national but an international church
- We are in the 6th Administration of Government in South Africa
- Lesotho has old political parties
- Mozambique continues to find its place – building of not only social and political system but also the economic system
- The church in all these countries continue with issues of democracy. A space that is defined by SADC not a comfortable one and yet the church seeks to fulfil its mission and vision
- Issues of economy continue to affect the South African Regions
- We have a number of social issues to grapple with – abuse of women and children, corruption. This is common to our story as a region and we continue to wrestle with these issues
- At times South Africa acts as the big brother it is however important how we treat each other
 - Africa belongs to us all
- We need to be careful as a church how we deal with other nations as we are seeking to bring healing and transformation
- The MCSA Boundary conversation continues – the conference has already established synods in Botswana and Namibia
- The MCSA has been on a journey of implementing the boundaries which is a multiplication rather than division
- The Methodist movement in Southern Africa has grown in leaps and bounds
- We will continue with the boundaries agenda for a long time, not yet complete as we are in conversation – the challenges of the past will continue to challenge us i.e. Ethnicity and Economics
- We recognise that change is not easy hence we need to enter into a conversation that be one to engage all members of the MCSA
- As much as we have elected a female Bishop, we have not fully dealt with issues of patriarchy – the next time we need not to only talk about this but put action in place
- The Rev Purity Malinga is the PB whom God has raised amongst us to be the leader of the church and it is an exciting time for MCSA
- There are 2 other women – we need to wait for the ensuing conference for their election
- The conference 40/40/20 Representative does not give us a right to see women as objects of mission but as participants
- We are also struggling with colonial issues – what it means to be a Methodist church in Africa, what it means to be an integrated church
- Demographics continue to change – people who previously occupied the church have moved out
- The MCSA seeks to actively join African Methodists and be part of the World Methodist family

- In the ecumenical space we have much to celebrate – the SACC is setting up ecumenical in MCSA, the 75th anniversary of Swaziland Mission – we are the oldest denomination and there is much to celebrate in the ecumenical space
- The economy continues to affect us – conversation on assessment, how do we do this including new ways of resourcing for mission and ministry – we are called to participate
- We are all partners with God individually and collectively to ensure a mission possible of a Christ-Healed Africa

Q&A Session

The questions and notes raised were as follows:

- The BMC commissioned a study which was triggered by Rev Peter Witbooi in opening the BMC Consultation in 2015 in the Central Synod, beyond demographics why is it only black ministers who are on the foot of the stations
- Conflict in black circuits trying to make sense of the challenges and the perpetuation thereof
- With regards to the training of Ministers, what is happening with SMMS
- During the heated days of apartheid, the MCSA has been foremost in terms of articulating the situation to an extent of driving programs to combat
 - o Black on Black violence
 - o Hostel Residents violence
 - o With many interventions – now it seems that the church has removed herself from the day to day challenges. Why has the MCSA taken the back seat
- Advice – years back the Rev Proff Lizo Jafta made a very powerful statement “***Be careful our church is encroaching into an arena where organizational approach is overtaking the congregational approach, Mission groups turning to become the church***”
- The boundaries in Southern Africa are seen as divide and rule policies of colonialists - the issue of boundaries is currently a thorny issue.

The answers

- All of us and not just Leadership made the church
- Stationing was linked to economy and the general state of where the church was
- Ministry formation was high in Leadership.
- The SMMS was seating with an acting President and the Leadership was infused regarding the Council and the Board, we are awaiting the announcement of the new President
- Congregationalism had crippled the MCSA
- With regards to issues affecting the nation, we need to envision a church in a post-democratic era and move from critical solidarity
- Boundaries was a conversation and there were a number of matters raised ... continuously in conversation with regards to being:

- Divisive for control
- Understanding the Theological/Administrative perspective
- Challenge that continues to face us as a church

The **Rev Malusi Hadebe** closed the day in prayer and benediction

13. **BIBLE STUDIES**

- Opening Prayer was led by **Ms Thuli Nkomonde**
- The Bible studies were conducted over 2 days by **Rev Philani Dlamini**
- The title/theme of the bible studies was: **“His Church bit not as we know it – Reformation and Orthodoxy”**
- The Scripture Readings were: Matthew 15: 21 – 28 - The Canaanite’s woman’s faith

Key points

- Religia – different expressions of faith
- There was Religious intolerance in the church amongst Christians
- Women had to keep a safe distance from men
- Women were considered unclean every month
- The woman in Matthew were not only unclean inside but also outside
- She defied cultural stereotypes
- This showed that women stop at nothing and will not be stopped by anything to get what they wanted
- The disciples were behaving as gatekeepers – the ones that decided who gets help and who doesn’t
- The Master and Land Owner read the bible differently from the slave so were the rich and the poor, black and white, Madam and the domestic worker
- Jesus had a basket of lessons – related to people and affirmed the Canaanite woman
- This woman was longing for her child to be healed – this was a plea of a desperate mother
- Jesus ignored her and she was prepared to accept what she was called so as to help her daughter

Q&A Session

Questions:

- When things go wrong – the state of the church what are the key lessons to take home
- As a church we were often treading carefully on controversial subjects not going straight to those issues – the elephant in the room was the issue of LGBTQI+
- The disciples were seen as gatekeepers – how do we conscientize/intensify people in the church who act as gatekeepers unaware that they were ... in order to shape tomorrow today

Answers:

- Take home what you want – deconstruction, there was no loyalty to a particular outlook to life/way of doing things
- Different fields of interest exist – speak on fields where you exists and leave those where you do not exist
- In life some people think and some talk – people miss their calling when doing things they were not supposed to do

14. THE 4TH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

- The presentation was done by **Mr Manqoba Zungu**

1IR – 1st Industrial Revolution

- In the 1st Industrial Revolution there were tools and no machines/tractors – these were developed to revolutionised farming

2IR – 2nd Industrial Revolution

- Few years later was the 2nd Industrial Revolution which changed the assembly line in the 1800's. It used to take 8 months to make a car, people lined up, specialists per part of the car i.e. door, wheels, windscreen

3IR – 3rd Industrial Revolution

- Y2K – this is when it was said electronic devices will crash, was the start of the 3rd Industrial Revolution – computers/internet. There was no Facebook, Whats Up, Twitter and it was difficult to communicate with people in other provinces and countries however the 3rd Industrial Revolution has changed all that
- Kodak owned the camera space but does no longer exists due to the 3IR
- Reset Motion owned the BBM – Blackberry, 3310 was the leading phone company and Nokia was bought out
- The question was – did these companies not know or identified and or ignored what was coming

4IR – 4th Industrial Revolution

- This revolution asks how you raise your kids, your workplace – are you aware of what's coming or not, if yes what are you doing
- Processes that made us successful makes it hard to see what would come as these are winning formulas as of today – in 2years time these would be your losing formulas

- How 3IR has impacted the JSE (Johannesburg Stock Exchange) – The biggest companies in the JSE used to be those of Mining – Anglo, Exxaro currently they are not even on top 10. Now it was Technology companies that are on top at JSE
- ***Every revolution has casualties and opportunities. Are you the casualty or will benefit from the revolution?***
- The 4IR will wait for us to get water and electricity – currently there are people without these – we cannot wait for the 4IR and think the world will wait for us
- Business are not only competing with people from South Africa and Africa but globally – Amazon as an example is the biggest online shopping website which started selling books but now they sell everything and they are cheaper with better quality
- The reality of globalization is that completion was now Global, we therefore needed to embrace the 4IR

Elements of the 4IR

- The 4IR used **AI – Artificial Intelligence** which thinks 1000 times quicker than the human being and is linked to robotics
- Robotics have an element of Robocop which was the robots doing what men used to do e.g. building houses, bricklaying and packing stock
- Robotics are macros – Bill Gates from Microsoft created excel in Lotus where you could sum data as A1+A2+A3 and later developed formulas which macros and can obtain the sum quicker in seconds i.e. =Sum(A1:A20)
- Cyber Security was recommended as it was a lack in South Africa – an example of this was when the FNB system was hacked and started distribute money making deposits in people’s accounts
- Cyber Security fights hackers not to access the system of the company and was the highest paid job due to risk as of 2019

- ***The last element of was Data Analytics – the church has access to a lot of data***

- ***Data to budget and plan – how can we interrogate this data***

- When you google search Methodist Hymns, advert linked to Christianity pop-up because google keeps the data every time you search
- Most companies i.e. Standard Bank, ABSA, Multichoice and Accelomittal are retrenching – did they not see this coming

- ***We have the information, we need to prepare adequately for what is coming – the church will also be affected***

4IR and Church Context

- EFT's (Electronic Funds Transfer) – are all our churches utilising this
- The youth does not carry cash and when in a church service might be moved to donate. This includes the snap scan and PayPal

- Fundraising in church – no speed points and therefore no payment can be made – this is cheap and easy to use
- Projector to project hymns was revolutionary back in the days but now there is an app that allows one to be able to sing with no 4 different hymn books and the app is always up to date
- Podcast – when not in church but want to listen to the sermons
- **Youth Channel – YouTube pays £2 for every clip, why can't we tap into this space, there are a lot of IT people who can assist**
- **Let's create YouTube channels, post and make money**
- Currently in Singapore there is only one card used and all other cards are linked to it ID Card, Driver's Licence Card, Bank Card etc
- In bus stops while waiting for the bus you can use your laptop in the computer booths
- If working late you can switch on the lights wherever you are from your phone
- **The question was: What are you doing regarding the 4IR, are we going to be casualties or opportunities**
- **We are the generation that can change the future of South Africa and the Methodist Church**

Ms Ndlovukazi Memhlomane thanked on behalf of the BMC - **Mr Manqoba Zungu**

15. **BLACK HISTORY PROJECT**

- Public Lecture in honour of Rev. Dr. Khoza Elliot Mbuyisa Mgojo was presented by Dr Brigalia Bam (to be circulated on receipt)

Ms Thuli Nkomonde conveyed words of gratitude to **Dr Bam on behalf of the BMC**

16. **CHAIRPERSONS ADDRESS**

Rev M Molo delivered his address to the 44th BMC Convocation address at the Port Edward Holiday Resort - analysing the theme ***“Burning to light up for God's justice”*** and charging into action all present.

The full Chairpersons Address was made available to ALL in Hard Copies per Synod. Highlights of the address:-

On the theme of the consultation: Burning to Light up got God's Justice

- A theme that has a definitive connection to the reading in Matthew 5
- The word “Burning” – a verb built on the word “burn” which means to be or set on fire
- Includes feelings of hot, being passionate, to use the purpose for heat, light or power. It's about blaze, flame, glow
- The burning is so that we light up and in the process of lighting up is the gift of making sight possible
- The BMC must take upon itself the responsibility to be the light within the life of the MCSA

- The BMC and the Church must take seriously the call of God's Justice which was given to us through the prophetic tradition and personified in Jesus Christ
- For the BMC to light up for God's Justice, we must be ready to burn ourselves
- May the BMC never betray the cause of God's Justice and may it never tire in service for God's Justice

Q&A Session

The questions

- In the Anglican Church when they meet everyone was interested in the outcome of the gathering – we as the BMC have a challenge of leading discussions in the public, we are not leading but following.
 - o We lament where was the church going and what has gone wrong with the church
- How can the BMC influence children and youth work
- ***With regards to poverty which was a matter of justice what can the BMC do ... perhaps in coalition in the ways of poverty eradicating***
- What's your view on Black Excellence vs corruption? *All Black professionals in the name of being corrupt were succeed by minority group*

The Answers

- *This was about our interventions and how to best intervene requires deepened conversations and key indicators*
- *Possibly set-up a task team in the February meeting to work on this*
- *Poverty – linking it with liturgical and worship side the DEWCOM to develop this and the BMC to spearhead the content of liturgy*

17. ORGANISATIONAL SECRETARIAT REPORT

The General Secretary Mr **Xhanti Mhlubulwana** presented the BMC Organisational Report for the period July 2018 until June 2019. The full report is available as **ANNEXURE A**.

Pertinent were the following:-

Burning to Light Up for God's Justice is a charge to be intense and concentrated in doing our organisational work as the BMC. Let us reignite our passion for greatness in service and in modelling black excellence. There is something deep-seated and profound about BMC members who are fully conscious about who they are and their blackness, they light up wholeheartedly for God's Justice to be done in the decision making. I would argue that it is more urgent now more than ever before for every BMC District to reignite enthusiasm and zeal in the implementation of BMC programmes.

REFERRING TO ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE AND THE ROLE OF THE BMC IN THE MCSA, GENERAL SECRETARY DISCUSSED THE FOLLOWING WITH ILLUSTRATED EXAMPLES ON MINISTERIAL STATIONING IN THE MCSA.

- **Distributive justice** is conceptualized as the fairness associated with decision outcomes and distribution of resources. The outcomes or resources distributed may be tangible (e.g., pay) or intangible (e.g., praise). Perceptions of distributive justice can be fostered when outcomes are perceived to be equally applied
- **Procedural justice** is defined as the fairness of the processes that lead to outcomes. When individuals feel that they have a voice in the process or that the process involves characteristics such as consistency, accuracy, ethicality, and lack of bias then procedural justice is enhanced
- **Interactional justice** refers to the treatment that an individual receives as decisions are made and can be promoted by providing explanations for decisions and delivering the news with sensitivity and respect. Interactional justice should be broken into two components:
 - **Interpersonal and informational justice** refers to perceptions of respect and propriety in one's treatment while **informational justice** relates to the adequacy of the explanations given in terms of their timeliness, specificity, and truthfulness.
 - o **Interpersonal justice** "reflects the degree to which people are treated with politeness, dignity, and respect by authorities and third parties involved in executing procedures or determining outcomes".
 - o **Informational justice** "focuses on explanations provided to people that convey information about why procedures were used in a certain way or why outcomes were distributed in a certain fashion".

Q&A Session

The question was raised on the analysis done regarding growth in numbers and whether the 2016 elections contributed to the decline

The answer was that there is more work to be done on consciousness. It is clear that Synods are not mindful of our consciousness, we need strategies on how to build consciousness of our members in who we are

18. FINANCIAL REPORT

Presented by Ms **Buhle A. Sigabi** audited Annual Financial Statements for the period 1 June 2018 to 31 May 2019 year end. Presented financial statements were part of the conference package; every member received a hard copy.

The Financial Position and Performance were adopted by consensus at the 44th Annual Convocation.

The Treasurer presented the budget for the year 2019 – 2020. The budget was adopted by the meeting.

19. REFLECTIONS & CONVERSATIONS: DISCERNMENT JOURNEY MCSA PB ELECT 2019

This matter was discussed extensively during the February Meeting however the Chairperson in his address thanked the people called Methodists for the bold decision they have taken in electing Rev Purity Malinga as the next Presiding Bishop.

It was a moment not only timeous but one that was inspired by God's Spirit. A holy moment that makes us see what we can do when we transcend patriarchy, race, tribalism and only see the image of God deposited in all of us.

The BMC takes pride in our role in allowing God to use us as the vehicle for discernment and participate with all our people in this gift to the church and the nation.

We (the BMC) commit ourselves to walk with her (Rev Purity Malinga) in the bright sunshine of a Karoo Summer and lift her up in our prayers in the moments of wilderness in our common service to God.

20. BURSARY COMMITTEE

- Led by the convener **Ms Nomsa Molai; highlighted:-**
- The report covers what transpired between July 2018 and July 2019

- **Bursary Committee Members**
 - o *The team has 3 members however 1 was not reachable and they request the member to be replaced*
- The team members were as follows
 - o **Ms Nomsa Molai**
 - o **Mr Takalani Ramabulana**
 - o **Ms Mpume Mhlongo (willing to serve in the committee)**
- The bursary committee mandate was renewed

- **Reminder:**
 - o Only serving Ministers to receive the bursary
 - o 2 x intakes per year – 1st Semester (Jan) and 2nd Semester (Jul)

- **Synods to:**
 - o Receive the application forms
 - o Assist Ministers to complete the forms

- Content, Courses and names of applicants are then submitted to the Feb or Jul meeting and a decision taken
- The expectation was that the Synod Executives to have looked at the minutes and ensure that the Minister was a BMC Member in good standing.

▪ ***What criteria do the Synod Executive Use to determine BMC Membership in Good Standing was never stipulated and or made explicit by the BMC Collective ... remains an unresolved issue needing attention.***

- Late receipt of forms from applicants create challenges. Applicants were requested to submit the forms at least a month in advance so to allow the committee to meet and deliberate on the application
- In July 2018, Synods were requested to submit additional information to assist the committee to do their work regarding the fields of study – there was no definite answer as to which courses to be considered.
- In the February 2019 meeting, the matter was re-opened and Synods were requested to add to the working document and nothings has been received so far by the Bursary Committee;
- **30% of EBF was allocated to Bursaries Annually**
- **Ministers who applied in 2019 were:**
 - Rev Sidwell Rasebusi Mokgothu – PDH in Practical Theology an amount of R16 000.00 and ***was approved by the February 2019 meeting***
- **2017-2018**
 - One Minster received the bursary – 2 year study
 - 2017 – the results were submitted
 - 2018 – completed the course
 - Rev Sethunya Gaarekwe
- **Applications – Jul 2019**
 - Rev Sethunya Gaarekwe
 - 4 Year Course at R10 000.00
 - University of Free State
- **Recommendation from the floor LPD Accessing BMC Bursary**
 - The bursary to assist in preaching as currently there are challenges with regards to Preachers who need to pursue their studies
 - This recommendation was referred to the Resolutions Committee for processing.

21. **GENDER EQUITY REPORT**

- The report was tabled by **Ms Noloyiso Mhlubulwana**
- The report had 2 legs
 - 1) The resolution made that in the next elections no men to make themselves available for elections
 - 2) With regards to the resolution, if the number of candidates was 2, the consultation to be given time to make nominations.
 - 3) This opportunity was presented at the February meeting to increase the number before the cut-off date
 - 4) Principle Matter – the resolution took away any responsibility to nominate from the floor.
 - 5) The Nomination process for the Chairperson has begun and finished
 - 6) Gender work including the LGBTQI+
- ***The report was accepted leading to the Elections for the BMC Connexional Executive July 2020 until July 2023 (Three/03 Year Term)***

22. ELECTIONS

- The **Rev Malusi Radebe** prayed for the elections
- The elections were conducted by the former Chairperson and current Bishop of Limpopo Synod – **Rev SR Mokgothu**
- The elections were as follows:

	Nominations	Results
Chairperson	<i>Rev Nomsa Nomqolo</i>	<i>276 votes</i>
	Ms Zuzile Zungu	79
	Spoilt	9
General Secretary	Ms Zuzile Zungu	120
	<i>Mr Valentine Senkhane</i>	<i>220</i>
	Spoilt	14
Recording Secretary	Ms Nombasa Hlathi	81
	<i>Ms Zuzile Zungu</i>	<i>241</i>
	Spoilt	13
Treasurer	Ms Nombasa Hlathi	80
	<i>Ms Noloyiso Mhlubulwana</i>	<i>231</i>

	Spoilt	
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The elected committee was presented as follows:

- **Chairperson** : **Rev Nomsa Nomqolo**
- **General Secretary** : **Mr Valentine Senkhane**
- **Recording Secretary:** **Ms Zuzile Zungu**
- **Treasurer** : **Ms Noloyiso Mhlubulwana.**

The newly elected Chairperson, **Rev Nomsa Nomqolo** addressed the consultation: She expressed gratitude for trusting them as a team with the work of the BMC and requested the consultation to support the team as they would be taking Leadership.

23. **COMMISSIONS ON BMC THINK TANKS**

The BMC, in its quest to be an educational movement that always seeks to empower the people commissions were conducted on various topics affecting the MCSA and the BMC.

22.1 **COMMISSIONS**

AREA	TOPIC	FACILITATOR
Worship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctrine, Ethics and Worship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rev S. Motlhodi & Co.
MCSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Review Commission (focus on L&D) changes ands or reforms • Structures of the MCSA • Trust and Property in the MCSA • Ministerial Formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Mandla Gwambe & Co • Rev M. Bosman & Co • Mr Ricky Ngwenya & Co • Rev M. Seekoei

23.2 **FEEDBACK FROM COMMISSIONS**

23.2.1 **Doctrine, Ethics and Worship**

Liturgy

- People addressing a Bishop even if no longer one
- Clarify the role of Bishops in Induction Services
- Addressing Bishops e.g. Rev Sidwell Mokgothu, the Bishop of Limpopo Synod
- Agreed om rescinding of moratorium

Public Issues

- Process these further through papers through the life of the church
- DEWCOM meets in February and June annually – best time for the BMC February meeting

Worship and Liturgy

- The BMC to make an input into liturgy in an African manner
- Regulate SMMS – clear roles and not conflicting ones especially appointments

23.2.2 Ministerial Formation

- Ministers are trained by the church
- Now have to pay back 30% of Training – to engage the church because it is not a Financial Service Provider
- BMC to initiate conversation with the Financial Department of the Church – collection/issuing of loans
- Assist the church in a deeper understanding of the matter

Recommendations:

- Volunteers – Team for investigation of new models - Different candidature process exclusive of those who are differently able – reading and learning and living with disabilities
- BMC Process – make resolutions for ourselves – channel them through quarterly meetings

23.2.3 Structures

- Establishment of Camdeboo (Karoo) and Molopo (Botswana Synods)
- The BMC supports the work done so far – we however have to live with the consequences thereof and make it a smooth transition and support the work that is coming
- Structures are a constitutional and legal crisis to the church – most people including Society Stewards do not want structures
- The BMC Structures will remain until the work is done

Proposal

- Continue to support the structures process and journey
- Note that the work has been started, the process has moved further and is ongoing

24. EPILOGUE

Epilogue – Rev Angela More

- **Key points**

- Scripture Reading: Matthew 5: 1-16
- Beatitudes – fancy word for blessings
- 10 commandments – Dos' and Don'ts and Beatitudes is User Manual
- Negative words coming through the scripture: spiritually poor, mourn, hunger, persecuted and insulted
- Positive words coming through the scripture: meek, merciful, peacemakers and have an eye for compassion
- Every problem has a solution and the dark phases pass
- Do what you have to do cos you are blessed – never mind the reaction of not being appreciated
- We are a communal people and therefore need one another
- Life is rough however you have a capacity to make a change cos you are blessed
- We need to find space to connect with God
- The candle has 2 properties, the wax and the string – the wax without the strings cannot light up
- For light – the wax and the string need to work together (interconnectedness)
- For some of us there is no fire, wacima kudala umlilo – we need to cultivate/do things that keep the fire burning – take out the coal and wood to make a new fire
- Even if your health is compromised know that you are blessed
- **Challenge:** Even if you have your own justice issues and your own light flickers, continue to burn the light for God's justice

Manape thanked the Rev Angela More

25. RESEARCH PROGRESS

- The report was tabled by **Rev Dr Mtungwa Caba**
- Circuits/Society and Clergy to be reminded that Clergy facilitate Mission
- **Reflection Point:** Structure is in a relationship with Personal accountability
- **Recommendations:**
 - o Workshops to be conducted
 - o Critique our interventions regarding Society/Circuit – when does the Minister take accountability /Personal Responsibility
 - o Conversation between Clergy and Stewards on the role of Clergy to facilitate Mission
 - o Ministers kicked out of database after 3 years not addressed in committees reports to be investigated further

26. ERNEST BAARTMAN FUND 2018

Led by **Ms Zuzile Zungu** and **Mr Valentine Senkhane**. All Synods contributed again to the EBFFund

SYNOD / DISTRICT	2019 Position	2019 (R)	2018 (R)	2017 (R)	2016 (R)	2015 (R)
Umkhumezelo		1, 422.00	834,00	645.00	1, 977.00	1, 5677.00
Executive			554,60	1, 040.00	0,00	0,00
Central	2	58, 770.00	63, 540.00	61,170.00	53, 200.00	51, 460.00
Grahamstown	6	17, 390.00	16, 405.00	3,180.00	24, 777.30	27, 609.50
Clarkebury	8	10, 430.00	16, 530.00	15,260.00	20, 975.00	25, 005.00
Limpopo	3	53, 040.00	71, 635.00	42,990.00	18, 796.00	30, 129.00
Queenstown	9	7, 200.00	1, 187.00	7,126.00	14, 130.00	19, 726.00

SYNOD / DISTRICT	2019 Position	2019 (R)	2018 (R)	2017 (R)	2016 (R)	2015 (R)
Natal Coastal	1	105,000.00	51, 684.00	14,461.00	12, 703.00	14, 755.00
KN&B	4	30, 251.00	19, 901.00	21,750.00	12, 020.00	12, 850.00
NFSL	5	18, 945.00	11, 265.00	11,000.00	8, 556.00	7 834,00
Cape of Good Hope	11	3, 905.00	788,00	3, 930.00	8, 210.00	4, 796.00
HISWA	10	3, 980,00	3, 225.00	3, 060.00	7,571.00	22, 609.50
Natal West	7	10, 962.00	12, 157.00	8, 273.00	6, 445.00	5, 778.50
TOTALS		321 609, 00	269 705,60	193 876,00	189 361,00	224 293,00

- EBF 2019 reached highest target ever attained IN HISTORY of the BMC since the beginning of **“John Wesley Fund, now Ernest Baartman Fund”**
- **2019 EBF increased by R51 904.00 (16%) more than the previous year**
- **Congratulations to Natal Coastal, The Champions #19 EBF**

27. EPILOGUE

Epilogue – Mr Mteteli Caba

- Scripture Reading: Genesis 28:10-22
- **Message:** Encounter God through the night
- The **Rev Sidwell Mokgothu** closed with the benediction

28. RECEPTION AND AWARDS

28.1 SETH MOKITIMI AWARD

Methodist and Non-Methodists for outstanding service and loyalty to society in general and the black church in particular

a. NIL Nominations

28.2 DAPHNE TASHE MEMORIAL

To Synods that has shown commitment, dedication and drive towards the eradication of the social ills prevalent in our daily life

a. NIL Nominations

28.3 AMOS GADI SHIELD

To Synods with more recruitment, committed and sustained membership

a. Natal Coastal Synod

28.4 ERNEST BAARTMAN FUND CHAMPIONS AWARDS

To the Synod that has outperforming previous standards and all other districts in the EBF efforts

a. Natal Coastal Synod

DAY 4 – SUNDAY 14TH JULY 2018

29. DIVINE SERVICE AND CLOSURE

- The service was held at Gamalakhe Circuit
- The worship and liturgy were led by **Rev P. JamJam**
- The sermon by **Rev M Molo**

Key Points

- Scripture Readings: Isaiah 58:1-14 & Matthew 5: 1-16
- Pre-Sermon Hymn: Sotho 181 – Mele, Pelo le Moea
- Proud of Natal West people who did not only give their best but emptied themselves

- The BMC has elected its 1st Female Chairperson
- In Gospel of Matthew – the kingdom belongs to those who are meek so does God’s justice
- We heard God saying to us, **you are the salt of the earth** – if we are not happy and willing to melt, there is no way we can be the salt
- We heard God saying to us, **you are the light of the world** and today God speaks to us in the book of Prophet Isaiah 58 verse 10 – **“Then your light will rise in the darkness”**
- Those who are far from God are safe from God’s criticism for all God does kukubafuna, kukuthuma abantu abalapha phakathi enkonzweni ukwenzela into yokuba baphume bayobafuna
- The other people who are in trouble with God’s word is people who love power – in the Old Testament the Israelites came to God and said they wanted a King like other nations. God struggled with this request and was reluctant
- Every Sabbath the Israelite community went to the temple and at the time of fasting they fast, at the time of prayer they pray – God is not captured by the temple, you can capture the church but you cannot capture God
- The Church can be full of Christians who are far from God – Christians when you talk about Gender justice, they know what Paul says and they go and find the scripture and will tell you the entire bible
- There are Christians who hide homophobia through the bible – they go and find the verse and quote the religion
- Sometimes religion becomes a stumbling block to transformation and therefore God rejects that kind of transformation
- If we need to burn to light up for God’s justice, if we want to change the world we need love then our light will rise in the darkness
- Let your light shine in the moment of darkness
- If you want to see how bright the star is, be in the darkness – the star shines in the night – all you need to do raise up your head and look up the sky

**ANNEXURES HARDCOPIED CIRCULATED
CHAIRPERSONS ADDRESS 2019
ORGANISATIONAL REPORT
FINANCE REPORT
ETC.**

PENDING PUBLIC LECTURES – BLACK HISTORY PROJECT 2018 AND 2017

**43rd Black Methodist Consultation
Memorial Lecture to honour Rev. Abel E Hendricks**

**“A rich legacy of breaching the gap between the seminary, sanctuary and the street
with hope and dignity.”**

Cape Town, South Africa

14 July 2018

“Nations and people are largely stories they feed themselves. If they tell themselves stories that are lies, they will suffer the future consequences of those lies, if they tell themselves that stories that face their own truths, they free their histories for future flowerings.”

Ben Okri

Introduction

Mr. Chairman, Executive officers, and members of the Black Methodist Consultation,
Bishop of the Cape of Good of District,
The Hendricks family members,
Distinguished guest,
Sisters and brothers in Christ

I invoke the words of St Paul, warmly greeting you; “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ”. (1Cor1:3)

It is with a deep sense of challenge and responsibility that I share in the Black History Project to honour stalwards of the Methodist Movement. Thank you for keeping the memory of Rev ZR Mahabane, Prof Mungaliso Robert Sobukwe. Rev Dr Stanley Mmutlanyane Mogoba, Rev Dr TSN Gqubule, Rev JC Mvusi and now Rev Abel E Hendricks alive by writing them back into the history of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA).

Chinua Achebe, the prolific Nigerian writer is correct that “until the lion tells his side of the story, the tale of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.” It is important for us to articulate our stories of Black achievement, struggle, pride, and pain, otherwise, it will always be told by the dominant groups in society. Abel was always proud to reminded that the Rev. William Threlfall, Rev. Jacob Links (the first indigenous minister of the MCSA) and Evangelist Johannes Jager were the first martyrs of the faith in Southern Africa and therefore we need to “serve without counting the cost to be considers followers of Jesus in the company of the Wesleys”. Cheeseman (1910:126) and Fredericks (2017:3—38) give a detailed account of these valiant sons of Methodism.

Abel is one of South Africa’s great sons. We give thanks to God that many clergy and laity have been privileged to journey alongside him. Many were deeply shaped by his work, witness, and his

prophetic voice continue to prompt many in their struggle for justice. He had a unique gift and calling to help others identify God's gifting in their lives. His impish smile, sardonic laughter, effervescent personality and insanely quick wit could disarm the most virulent detractor. He was a courageous torchbearer who gave creative leadership and kept the flame of hope burning through the darkest days of the apartheid struggle. He was a fountain of wisdom, a confidante and ally in times of need who kept things together when the Transkei schism was brewing, apartheid activist like Steve Biko was murdered and clergy like Theo Kotze and Brian Brown banned. Abel inspired the "restless and impatient" 1976 generation. He became the lodestar for many as they navigated their way in church and society.

Any attempt to write about Abel's contribution to the MCSA must include his dogged resistance to racism. The best way to understand Abel's protests is to look at how other churches and their leaders stood up to racism. This is illuminated especially as we examine the response of different churches towards the World Council of Churches and the Program to Combat Racism. Abel endured criticism from within the MCSA as well as from right wing Christian groups like, The Defence League of Southern Africa who supported the government's apartheid policies.

While people like Beyers Naude, Desmond Tutu and Allan Boesak stood out as role models in the struggle against apartheid, Abel can be considered the 'quiet sanctuary prophet'. He could have easily used his role as President and District Chairman of the MCSA to make visitations to Mandela as a pretext for media coverage, and join Tutu and Boesak on public platforms, but he saw the local church as the most significant arena for disciple making and social change. He was fully committed to rebuilding the lives for people, most who were forcefully removed from their ancestral homes at the foot of Table Mountain and other place on the Cape Peninsula and relocated to a Sandy wasteland called the Cape Flats by the notorious Group Areas Act of 1950. Abel firmly believed that the church could not acquiesce in the face of discrimination, widespread unemployment, bad housing and job reservation. He choose to express his faith in solidarity with the poorest of the poor. He went against the grain and suffered for his convictions.

It is difficult to speak about Abel without mention of Freda who was essential to his perseverance, courage, and accomplishments. Their relationship had integrity and modelled "team ministry". Freda's ministry to children and emphasis on primary health care and Abel's dynamic preaching and unique blend of pastoral care that shared the tears, struggles, failures and successes, shattered dreams and resurgent hopes of people made them a very dynamic team. They breached the gap between the seminary, sanctuary, and the dusty streets of the Cape Flats. I am proud to have been under the tutelage of this couple and consider myself a graduate of, "the university of the streets."

I am very conscious that what is shared here today will not do justice to the immeasurable stature of a person like Abel. I only offer a glimpse into his life - only God knows the full extent of his labours. I

trust that this memorial lecture will allow us to drink from the calabash of collective wisdom, awaken our memory and rekindle our spirits to add to the rich tapestry of Abel and Freda's legacy. I will briefly recall:

Abel and Freda's journey to the Cape Flats

Abel and Freda as advocates for human dignity and justice.

Abel a Globally acknowledge Peace Agent.

Abel Edward Hendricks' life is a fascinating story of poverty, humiliation, standing firm against injustice and transforming the lives of people around him.

Abel was born in Potchefstroom on 13 March 1931. At the age of 13 he made a commitment to Christ. After his schooling Abel worked in a Potchefstroom shoe factory and then his own general dealer store. He answered the call to ministry in 1956 and served as a probation minister in Pretoria and Goodwood. He studied at Lovedale Bible College, later to become the Federal Theological Seminary. During this period Abel met Miss Freda Adams and they were married on 17 December 1960. The marriage was blessed with two children Heloise and Andrew.

Abel's childhood experiences in Potchefstroom left an indelible mark on his life and provided the metaphors, the cultural touchstones and the prism through which he viewed the world. He was not as a passive observer to oppression rather his life was shaped on the anvil of the apartheid struggle.

While stationed in the Buitenkant Circuit (196-65) Abel was called to pioneer Methodist work on the Cape Flats where people were forcefully relocated by the apartheid government.

Abel adopted a mission strategy that took context seriously. In Wesley's dictum for mission, Abel held together a holiness that knew no distinction from "social holiness." He personified what it meant to be an unwavering follower of Jesus in the Wesleyan tradition by translating his deep spirituality into action. Put simply, he was a pragmatist and so the early years on the Cape Flats were spent winning the trust of the people. His car became his office and he conducted services in homes where "kitchen tables" became the "Lord Table" as they shared in the sacrament of Holy Communion. He established congregations by reaching out to people who were bereaved and burying their loved ones with compassion and dignity. After a weekend of violence on the Flats, we would find him going through the local newspaper to establish who was hospitalized or bereaved so that he could offer pastoral care. He introduced a "street shepherds" programme, a six weeks lay leaders programme where people went to knock on doors and gathered information of each household. Abel equipped his team in literacy, communication, first aid, hospital visitation and preaching. He contextualized the Wesleyan Class Meetings and demanded gospel-based accountability from everyone who worked with him.

In 1969 Abel and Freda spent a year in the United States, they came back more committed to empower women, young people, the elderly and children. The first pre-school was launched in Bonteheuwel. Freda was a pioneer in Early Childhood Development. By 1990 she headed a consortium of pre-schools in Methodist, Lutheran and Moravian churches stretching across every township on the Cape Flats. They organized “rainbow clubs” where children of the community could play in a safe environment, hear a Bible story and receive refreshments. A great emphasis was placed on “youth ministry” and many “youth workers” discovered their vocation in the ordained ministry. There were many “festivals” and celebrations which helped people acquire skills and discover their potential.

The blood of both the settler community and indigenous people coursed through his veins and in many instances helped him to be a bridge builder, reconciler and peacemaker. Addressing the 8th Connexional Youth Conference at Modderpoort in 1985, Hendricks referred to himself as, “a bridge over which black and white can walk to find each other”. He further reminded the youth that there could be no peace until it was “soaked with justice.” (Dimension January 1985)

Abel had ink in his veins and wrote extensively. It is a pity that nobody has cared to collect all his letters, sermons, poetry and prose. Allow me to take the liberty of sharing one of his poems that has good rhyme, maintains unity, integrity and balance. It is simply entitled, “**Bonteheuwel**”.

What is this place like? It bounces with the letter “B” and built on 747 acres of sandy soil on the Cape Flats.

There are babble and bad baffling beggars around every corner ready to barter and to break you .

Babies are crying and Benjamin looks down into the big brown eyes of Betty, tenderly caressing her bony cheeks, then starts singing in a deep full, rich baritone voice “Blessed assurance Jesus is mine”.

Bonteheuwel is a place of some narrow road, surrounded by bushes where backward hearts beat, and wrongly directed brains work overtime. Where the hands that tickle the banjo., also brandish a knife and belong to the same gang of bandits; it’s a place of battles, burdens and burglars.

Yet look around you and see people walking with Bibles, Smiling, beaming, blushing brides, walking out of their homes with brown painted doors. And in the blooming garden, butterflies are seen, and buzzing bees heard. The bride looks up and behold her beauty of the clear blue sky, and feels the breeze of the world kissing her brown shining face.

Many feel here we belong – this is our home and behave. Here freshly baked bread is broken, meals enjoyed and Christ thanked for blessings He bestows, in all his crosses are borne, bereavement experienced and friends betrayed.

Bonteheuwel is a baffling situation, where bazaars are held, boys playing with broken bicycles – broken pieces of bottles lie scattered in Bitterblaar Street, where blood stains the narrow cement road, later brothers stand and weep, round a cheap brown coffin.

Where some youngers adopt a barbaric pattern of behaviour – and some bitter against all –whose eyes tell you, beware! And continue to blunder.

In a backyard sits an elderly couple basking in the sun, while the “south Easter” blows papers against the fence, with bowed heads in deep meditation.

Others enter as benefactors and bring joy to broken spirits and bruised minds, making the heart beat faster, for the gifts they bestowed.

With rapt attention the people listen as the Preachers says: “Blessed are the pure in heart...” as they bow their heads he pronounces the benediction, and points them to the Beyond. Bonteheuwel you’re “bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh.”

Abel E. Hendricks

Abel and Freda as advocates for human dignity and justice.

Abel’s commitment to his wife and marriage modelled a partnership in ministry. One particular example might be the food program they began in Kalksteentfontein. In an interview for the World Methodist First Friday Letter. <http://firstfridayletter.worldmethodistcouncil.org/2012/09/freda-hendricks-visits-the-world-methodist-council/> she described the beginnings of the program:

“There was an accident further up the road and we were in a long queue of cars. From outside I heard voices. The voices were coming from the inside of a garbage dump. My husband and I left our car and we walked over to see what was going on. We discovered a group of children playing and foraging. Some were looking for things for their homes, others were looking for food.”

“After my husband was ordained, he resigned from his settlement so that he could move to an area to help people who had been forced to move to the Cape Flats in South Africa.”

“In the beginning there was no place to hold church, so we held it in people’s homes.”

The economic disparity and desperate poverty of the Apartheid-era South Africa galvanized both Freda and her husband. It led Abel in the fight against Apartheid and for Freda it served as a calling to help the children of South Africa.

The husband and wife started with nothing but a mission to help others but together, they built a sanctuary for people on the fringes of an already marginalized society.

In a recent book, **God Is Not Fair, Thank God!: Biblical Paradox in the Life and Worship of the Parish**, George Thompson memorializes this project of the couple:

Through the years, they have been able to expand that program, and invite Christians in North America to assist in order that many thousands may be fed. Tears have been transformed into tangible hope. (*Thompson, 2014, p. Sec. 13*)

A major focus of Abel and Freda's minister was on equipping young people for leadership. Besides the many pre-schools initiated by the couple, they ministered at the training institutions in the area; the Nico Malan Nurses College the Bishop Lavis Police Training Academy and Sallie Davies Teachers Training School and in this way influenced whole generations of young people who now hold important positions of leadership in church and society. The Mission was home for many young activists who were attracted by the couple's warm hearts, magnetism and the fact that they bore upon their heads and hands the invisible consecration to the ideal of duty and honour which ennobled young people to make their hostile environment a more humane place.

In the 1970's and 80's many ministries for sustainable livelihood and enhancing dignity were spawned on the Cape Flats. There was the Community Action for receptive Enablers, a community based advice office, a medical doctor, George Drapper and Shelly Rhodes a social worker was part of the ministry team. Abel convinced Dr Grant Bebee to offer dental services and there was an active team that did primary health care and offered services to geriatrics and those "shut-in" their homes. The Cape Flats Methodist Mission initiated many service projects that were later taken over by the City Council.

Abel a Globally acknowledged Peace Agent

Of many that could have been selected, John De Gruchy quotes Abel Hendricks in his book, **The Church Struggle in South Africa**, to epitomize the call for the church to resist passivity and the status quo, and to join the struggle for Black liberation:

South Africa stands on the threshold of war and peace. The last three months have seen the outpouring of years of Black frustration, suppression and anger that has burst into manifestations, of protests, strikes, and peaceful marches, but also violence, death and destruction. The White status

quo has in turn allowed their fear, confusion and ignorance of Black suffering and aspirations to manifest itself in violence, brutality and the detention of those crying out for liberation...Time is running out and the Church of God must raise her voice for justice so that there may be peace. If we fail here, we will not only be disobeying the call of the Lord, to cry aloud and lift up our voices like a trumpet in declaring to our people their transgression (Isaiah 58:1), but we will be judged by history to be simply irrelevant.”(De Gruchy, 1986, p. 170 citing ecunews)

At the Methodist Conference in 1975 President

1977 President

The 1977 Conference was held in the wake of the country-wide student uprising, the death of Steve Biko in detention (12 September) and the banning of major Black organisations. Headlines in Dimension, November 1977, read; “The calm exterior of the Conference 1977 was a deceptive one. More peaceful by far than that of 1976 and with remarkable consensus in most debates, the decisions taken in Benoni packed a considerable punch both in the social and domestic sphere’ Much of what transpired at the Conference can be attributed to Abel’s leadership style. His induction address set the tone for Conference:

“We meet at a time when men’s (sic) hearts fail them for fear and where one who is called to be the Chief Pastor of a church such as ours bears a heavy responsibility to speak plainly and clearly of the things of God’. (Dimension, November 1977)

The Conference dealt “plainly and clearly” with contentious issues like; the call for the resignation of the Minister of Justice for his complicity in the death of Steve Biko, the call to withdraw from military chaplaincies and the issue of the sale of historical Methodist Institutions. There were also twenty resolutions apposing government policy.

Abel chartered stormy waters during his second Presidential term. Besides South Africa being caught in a vortex of violence, he had to deal with Bantustan politics in the form of the Transkei schism. Maxwell Lungu in his work; ***The 1978 Methodist Schism in Transkei: A Missional Analysis***, (UNISA, 1995) narrates Abel’s response to the banning of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (26 May 1978) and the formation of the Methodist Church in Transkei (2 June 1978) in detail.

In 1978 Abel was part of the planning team for the South African Christian Leadership Assembly (SACLA) in 1979 where more than 6,000 Christians gathered in one of the largest ecumenical gathering in the country.

At the Fourteenth World Methodist Conference in Honolulu, 1981 Abel became the first third recipient of the World Methodist Peace Prize.

<http://place.asburyseminary.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1004&context=wmcproceedings> This award is given to an individual in recognition for outstanding courage, creativity and consistency in peacemaking. The first award was presented to Miss Saidie Patterson in Belfast, Ireland; two years later, in another part of the world there was a ceremony in Cairo, Egypt, at which President Anwar Sadat received the second Peace Award. Subsequent awardees include: Mikhail Gorbachev, leader of the U.S.S. R. (1990), Stanley Mogoba, Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations (1998), Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires, who resisted the disappearance of over 10,000 persons (1999), Nelson Mandela, President of South Africa, (2000), Boris Trajkovski, President of Macedonia, who averted civil war during the Kosovo crisis (2002) and Millard Fuller founded Habitat for Humanity International (2004)

In his acceptance speech Abel focussed on the “ongoing care for people,” especially the most downtrodden and marginalized, the renewal of the earth and hope as the engine that powers our actions towards liberation.

Along with Nico Smith, Beyers Naudè, Wolfram Kistner, Charles Villa Vicencio, Pro John De Gruchy, Caesar Molebatsi, Margaret Nash and many others, Abel Hendricks was a signatory to the Kairos Document. The 1985 Kairos Document’s assertions continue to be relevant. The Kairos Document made clear the need for siding with the oppressed to transform church activities and the apartheid government. It was a powerful tool of resistance, and theologically revolutionary.

The Kairos Document in summary, addressed the bankruptcy and inadequacy of state theology and church theology; advanced “prophetic theology” as urgently required; privileged the oppressed; ejected tyrannical State authority’s legitimacy to govern; named as a moral duty the duty to resist oppression and to struggle for liberation; advocated for mass civil disobedience; and refused to condemn the use of physically violence as a resistance tactic.

On 28 March 1985 Abel was amongst a group of church and youth leaders who were arrested in a marched called by Allan Boesak in support of the release of Nelson Mandela. They were detained at Polmoor prison. Stories abound of how Abel cared for many of the young people during his incarceration that will be saved for another occasion.

Andrew’s passing, letter from Mandela

Later years at Norwood

Death

Conclusion

Given Abel's vision leadership and the important role that he played in the history of the MCSA and the struggle for justice in the face of unbridled apartheid oppression, there is a paucity of archival material, academic research and publication on the work and witness of Abel and Freda. After all, Abel was President of the MCSA on two occasions but more importantly he has touched the lives of many gathered here. His legacy cannot be ignored and therefore I appeal to you to share your stories of this amazing couple.

It is also painful to acknowledge that despite the dawning of democracy, many people on the Cape Flats have not tasted the fruits of liberation. The area and the community still bear the brutal scars of the legacy of apartheid, they are heirs of their painful history and they and their children still face the challenges of their damaged past. I am convinced that Abel's message of "authentic hope" that empower lives and change pernicious systems of injustice is more important now than ever. Unfortunately, many of the clergy who succeeded Abel and Freda on the Cape Flats have little institutional memory of the struggle against the apartheid and rather than nurturing Abel's vision for the Cape Flats, they focused on his shortcomings and missed opportunities. They killed the dream before it could be fully incubated. In acknowledging his flaws, Abel's greatness and humility shines brightly. It is a virtue sorely missing from contemporary leaders.

In Abel's restless and courageous pursuit of justice, no issues were sacrosanct. He was not afraid to address the issue of class, poverty and race head on. The MCSA despite claiming to be "one and undivided" in 1958, was complicit in following apartheid policies in its administration. Until 1977 stipends were still paid on racial basis. Our theological training was only integrated by an act of defiance in 1979 while Abel called for one place of theological training early in 1977 (Dimension November 1977). Unless we learn to talk about economic inequality that is ethnically based and racially informed, like a poisonous mushroom it will continue to grow in the dark.

Friends, as followers of Jesus in the company of the Wesley's, the greatest gift that we can bestow upon this and the future generations is to be harbingers and repositories of hope as we wrestle with the challenges of our time to build a more human and prosperous society.

Long live the spirit of Abel and Freda's prophetic imagination and relentless hope. They sought justice, loved mercy and walked humbly before God!

Long live!

Thank you for your attention.

Full Speech:

ONE HOPE

By Dr. Abel Hendricks

Dr. Hendricks, twice-elected President of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, received the 1980 "World Methodist Peace Award" during the Fourteenth World Methodist Conference.

I am most grateful to so many most capable, distinguished and brilliant speakers and scholars that already in such a masterly way elaborated, explained, unfolded, gave fresh, new and very challenging and thought-provoking insights on the theme of Hope. Hope is the hallmark of the Christian faith. Wherein lies hope? We live and work hopefully because we are not alone, if we were, there would be no hope. The event of Pentecost and the overwhelming evidence that the Holy Spirit can and does transform man inspiring him to go forward. Yet if we look back and we draw inspiration from the past we are bound to recognise, that results depend on our willingness to cooperate with God. What does this mean? Simply that we are striving to follow the example of Jesus Christ, if our minds are open to God's influences we will have eyes to see the world as Christ sees it, we will see problems as He sees it, and by the grace of God we shall have both the desire and the will to solve them.

Hope opens our eyes to Christ's glorious all-embracing plan for our world. Our hope lies in the reawakening of the Church's mission to exercise an ongoing care for people. Whenever there is a national calamity ♦ floods, earthquakes, etc., ♦ Christians are usually to the fore giving what help they can, yet when the disaster of hopelessness strikes, many Christians are totally paralyzed, forgetting that the Christian God is the God of the exodus and of the resurrection. Therefore, it is an awakening to its life as a community of trust in mission that grows out of being a community in full obedience to Jesus Christ as Lord. He is not only the Eternal Presence embodying all the ingredients of hope, but He is God in front, the God with a future which is His essential nature, upon whom we wait and follow with active hope.

There must always remain for the Christian the mystical unknown, the intervention of God that cannot be explained ♦ the contradiction must remain ♦ because only then, and then only Christian hope emerges not merely as a theological or philosophical debate, but finds itself translated into the daily actions and lives of men and women who struggle with the forces of evil. This spirit in mankind announces and exerts an influence in our hopeless situation the eternal promises of God, that the believer holds on to, that the cynic brushes aside: For the believer it is not Utopian, it is not clinging to a straw, it is not seeking an escape route, it is not closing one's eyes to reality, it is not telling people tomorrow will be better. It is hope wrapped in Christian love, directed towards mankind who is standing naked [101] in the rain crying out to be wrapped in hope. For this to happen we need a community of hope, therefore, the Church as the Body of Christ must surely be this community of hope. This is hope directed to those in our world who live in the twilight zones, the non-existent, the worthless, the lonely, the unemployed, the discriminated, the oppressed, the man forsaken masses.

It is in such situations that God introduces an Incarnational hope that brings a new vitality, exuberance and faith. It says that God is in control there is an Eternal plan ♦ that God's history, will replace man's history, that this God who shapes the destiny of nations is the God who holds out forever Christian hope to enable the blind to see, the deaf to hear. So that mankind in their struggles, in their hopes and fears may continue to believe that there is a God who cares ♦ because "Righteousness exalts a nation" this is the foundation upon which Christians build their symbols of hope.

In situations like these if the Church is bold enough with devastating honesty to face the challenge of our day and generation then "the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ and He will reign forever, and ever". All social life and all politics whether nations want to admit it or not is under the providence of a just God. We know only too well that Christianity did not begin from a vantage point of the comfortably well off. Christ's first appeal woke the hearts and minds of the outcasts, his love-hope appeal found entrance firstly not in the hearts of the Priests and Pharisees on the contrary. His love bulldozed an entrance into the lives of people who always lived in the shadow of a simple faith that waited for the shadow to pass so that the sun of hope will shine, forever. Therefore the Church can never betray her Lord. She must remain a sign of the Kingdom, a symbol of hope, a light set on a hill, it dare never allow any other forces to rob her of her calling, task, and mission, never must she ever dare to become an escape route. There is a dying process demanded here, otherwise the poor, dispersed and oppressed will turn away from the Church and work out their own liberation with Christ while the Church merely keeps the machinery moving.

Hope is Incarnational joy ♦ "My heart praises the Lord, my soul is glad because God is my Saviour" (Lk. 1:46). But hope is also suffering nerve wrecking pain ♦ soul crushing loneliness. Does Mary the mother of Jesus remember when she stood at the foot of the cross the words of long ago? O how could she forget? "Can a woman's tender care cease towards the child she bore". Yes as she stood there embracing His feet the haunting words hammered in her soul "And sorrow, like a sharp sword, will break your own heart" (Lk. 2:35). Thus hope lives in the midst of happiness and sorrow just because through that hope there comes into view a feature for all the wretched, dying, and dead. This means that he who has no hope no longer really lives. Hell is hope-lessness! "The cross ♦ and ♦ resurrection of Christ reveals the power of God who fulfils his pro mises beyond all expectations, who contradicts the present by initiating the new." This event becomes the central promise and basis of hope for this world.

The Christ event "sets the stage for history, on which there emerges the possibility of the engulfing of all things in nothingness and the new creation", he does not fulfil all promises but itself becomes a promise." "The Kingdom of God", the New Testament symbol for the content of Christian hope, is a double barrelled notion. It is used to denote both future and present reality. It is the future of God coming amongst His people so retaining the apocalyptic orientation." ♦ Moltmann. Hope is the question and exclamation mark of the Christian faith, believing that God works constantly in history; He raises up prophets; He gathers people to Himself. Therefore it is sunrise and dawn! Hope is

Light and Sound ♦ to enable the blind to see, and the deaf to hear. The believer does not stand in the clear light of day but in the twilight of a new dawn where day and night, past and future still combat each other. "But it is also in our midst ♦ at times identified with Jesus Himself at other times signifying the concrete community of believers. Christian hope must retain this tension, neither [102] demythologizing Jewish apocalyptic to such an extent that new events in salvation history are impossible, nor stressing eschatology to such an extent that the present movements in culture, whether in science, art or politics are totally rejected. "Christian hope which is an expectation for the future involves faith which is entry into communal history through the shading of past memories; and it involves love ♦ the acceptance and the response to men and women as they are now without sacrificing them for some abstract ideal" Richard Shaull Christian Faith and Scandal in a Technocratic World.

Colin Winter ♦ Bishop in Exile Namibia tells the following story to illustrate what hope means for this man.

"A Christian pastor was taken for questioning in Namibia by the Special Branch. Thrown into a cell for no obvious reason, he was deprived of his freedom. He felt an inner violence towards God. Frightened at the prospect of torture or prolonged arrest, he flung away from him a Bible which had been given him as his sole reading material. His anger blazed against God who had tolerated the daily suffering of the oppressed Namibian people for over one hundred years. He did not wish to read the Bible, let alone pray. After a while in the loneliness of the prison cell, he felt a prolonged calm. He felt no more fear, no more anger. Calmly he walked over to where he had flung the Bible, opened its pages and felt a peace such as he had never experienced in his life before. Later that day he told a confused police interrogator he was ready to die and that they could kill him immediately if they wished to. They had no longer any power over him. Within a week they released him. As he left he challenged his tormentors, I haven't finished with you yet', he told a startled captain of police, 'so you can't release me. I have a responsibility to God for your soul'. The breaking process had been met, conquered and a new man emerged. This is not a single once-and-for-all event, but a process that will have to be dealt with day in, day out as that pastor struggles each day with the evils of an apartheid regime. What was the gospel for him at that moment? I suppose he would say it was that which enabled him to conquer his fear."

Hope as Christian hope knows that its expectation will indeed arrive at a place some day, since reality is in the hands of God who assures us that "I will never leave you neither will I forsake you"

♦ If you go through the deep waters I will hold your hand ♦ When you pass through the fire I will be at your side". From these promises, hope receives patience and the freedom to make life new here and now "Behold I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5) and in doing so change the world.

Therefore from all over the world there goes up a cry from the hearts of the God's little people crying out with the prophet Habakkuk who broods hotly over the apparent dumbness of God in the face of oppression and tyranny "O Lord how much longer shall I cry and Thou will not hear?" Hope is calling men and women of goodwill for a new commitment to join the ongoing struggle against attacks of

common good, against racism and degradation, against the total attempt to fragment man's intellectual and spiritual life.

"Racial discrimination is but one form of evil which characterizes our times ♦ the presence of ideological hate within the world which denies the possibility in principle of the unity of man with man." Herbert Warren Richardson. "The centre of the problem in South Africa is racial discrimination ♦ apartheid. Whatever attitudes we hold and whatever legislation is put forward at the core, at the centre of it all we are a society motivated by colour consciousness and fear and this may well have parallels in other parts of the world. We still have to learn that "perfect love casts out all fear". Discrimination binds and blinds its victims and we cease to see human beings as God's own creation but as members of a certain racial group. One shudders at the thought what the vengeance that God must have for such a nation. Any indignity and any humiliadon we impose on anybody simply because of the colour of his skin, is an affront and assault on God Himself.

"Today's racism," according to Andre Bieler, "constitutes a source of violence capable of unleashing the greatest disorder. It removes all meaning from human rights and it is an imminent menace to world peace." [103] "Racism is a flagrant travesty of the work that Christ has undertaken in the world for the development of individuals and of mankind in general. It is a denial of the original unity of mankind predicted in the universal work of redemption which Christ came to carry out in order to restore in all men without distinction the marred image of God." Apartheid is today's version of slavery, all those who try and modify it must be warned like slavery the only action that must be taken is to abolish it! It is cancer that eventually will destroy those who practice it. Apartheid is sin, a titanic rebellion against God and destroying people created in God's image. Realistically, we must encourage every effort of solution in seeing clearly that racism can easily triumph and that only afterward will we be horrified to wonder how a nation could have let itself be led into allowing conflict and hatred to win over the powers of love and reconciliation. Some of us must document the tragedy so that at least we will not lie to history, and we must go on acting as though we had a chance, because we believe that God is on the throne. He did not abdicate ♦ His word still demands "Turn away from your sins and believe the Good News!" (Mk. 1:15)

This is why it is the Church's responsibility to proclaim that, faced with these inequalities, injustices and aberrations, the peoples of the earth must repent and change their mentality and behaviour. The Church's calling is to work for the establishment of a worldwide society and to call men and nations to repentance. To be complacent in the face of the world's need is to be guilty of practical heresy. The sin of neglect has its origin in the absence of hope.

The embracing of "One Hope" for all mankind, I sadly find more often in people and groups outside the Church it saddens me, because I owe all I am to the Church. I very often hear not in God language these folk articulate very deep thoughts about God, ♦ they express holiness, justice and caring in a way that very often makes some Christians look and feel "shop soiled ♦ second hand". Are situations such as these, becoming living symbols of hope? Are these the real pilgrims of hope, that we as fellow travellers fail to see as such? Perhaps we see them as tourist attractions instead of the very judgment of God on us? Therefore in a number of ways people are attempting to be

more explicit about their faith. I believe that these people are discovering God's Word for our times. However radical some people find such views. I find that these people are drawing attention to the fundamental human questions involved, not looking for solutions elsewhere but very often demonstrating it through their reckless commitment to Christ and people, their deep yearning after justice and holiness for all those who want to claim it.

On the South African scene the price such people pay of all races is intimidation ♦ harassment, imprisonment without the furnishing of reasons and family very often not knowing where their loved ones are. Others are banned, placed under house arrest ♦ and yet churches in general are full ♦ lots of people will tell you they are filled with the Holy Spirit ♦ South Africa sold more Bibles than even the U.S.A.! And my people ♦ the voteless and voiceless ♦ come and they say to me, "Abel, what do you say of these things ♦ can such people claim to be Christians?" I pause, my heart bleeds ♦ my spirit is torn, there is excruciating pain in my body, my mind boggles. I speak and say, "I see that there on a lonely hill in the hearts of such people Christ is crucified again and again. A young black girl stands up and says, "Father, forgive them they know what they are doing." Yes, she replies I know I did! Is it perhaps that such people have come to grips fully with what Dietrich Bonhoeffer termed "When Christ calls a man He bids him come and die." When oh when will humankind learn. When Oh when will we not only hear but put into practice the great commandment (Mk. 12:30-31.) How can we continue to profess our faith and loyalty to God, while at the same time and in the same breath we show such acts of extreme cruelty, not in line with people who are Christians, by daily locking up thousands of people in jails ♦ not because they are [104] criminals ♦ but simply because they possess the moral courage, the intellectual honesty ♦ the depth of compassion, the love for God and their fellowman ♦ not to tolerate the "status quo", wherever it may exist in the world. Perhaps this happens because of the absence of a strong, dynamic and caring community. Such people are embracing one hope for me when they protest against all forms of injustice ♦ while many people are sitting idly by, while thousands of men and women in terms of some country's "massive security laws", simply rot away in jail. How in the name of a Christ of compassion ♦ can we face God ♦ when we see children throughout the world dying from malnutrition? While others wallow in luxury and, in fact die from luxury? It seems to me that to give a firm affirmation to Christian hope does not lie in paying lip service to the process of change, but by being engaged in genuine efforts to establish a world society based on Christian hope, a society where the colour of a man's skin will no longer be the deciding factor; a society in which suspicion and fear do not play an important part in the hearts of man if and when they have to make decisions.

Yes, peace with God means opposition to the world, for the promised future is like a thorn in the flesh of our present situation, then we would, in one way or another, have reconciled ourselves to it. It is however, precisely the hope that God has given us through the resurrection of Christ that makes it impossible for us to be satisfied with the present: Hope keeps us dissatisfied until the day when all God's promises will be fulfilled. This hope makes the church a continual "agitation" in any

community that wants to retain the character of a "permanent city". Peter in his letters on hope reminds us "Be ready at all times to explain (to give an account of the hope you have in you". (Peter 3.15)

However one sees hope being celebrated on the Cape Flats where I work in events like celebrating Palm Sunday with the ringing assurance that they must walk this road to Calvary, however they are not dismayed, neither are they discouraged, principalities and powers cannot destroy them, here are persons who passionately believe that the vibrations of hope will be heard all around the globe that they are a new people reborn in hope that rests on Christ, therefore they are destined for liberty heralding the joyous assurance of the Resurrection!

Christian hope is the hope of resurrection, it is the protest of righteousness against sin, of life against death, of glory against suffering, of peace against disruption of this world. The promise of God arouses hope in Christians. That is why the New Testament says "Christ in you the hope of glory" or, rather "the glorious hope". (Col. 1:27) Christian hope is God's activity and presence in the world. Again this hope, is specific it is based on the presence and activity of God in Christ. God who sustains and perfects His creatures, and also demonstrated His work in Christ and His cross, is the ground of Christian hope. Christ is the ground for optimism in human achievement, guided and promoted by divine grace it can in the long run be brought to good effect. Thus Christian hope is a dynamic concept. "For it was by hope that we were saved; but if we see what we hope for, then it is not really hope. For who hopes for something he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience." (Romans 8:24-25)

Christian hope is eschatological, in the sense that it looks forward to the consummation of the divine work in creation and reconciliation this does not imply that it is an escapist route not an offer of "pie in the sky" Christian hope has to do with the present where we are now in this world and the final consummation depends to a large extent how we cooperate with God's work now. While it is right to emphasize God and His work as the ground of Christian hope we need equally to recognize that in the Christian life there is need for man's obedient responses. Christian hope is an outgrowth of Christian faith. Hope produces assurance, the latter stimulates discipleship, but faith is the mother-factor. Faith can withstand various disappointments thus hope remains alive Abraham is a good example (Gen. 12:1-7) requiring patience waiting for God's promises. [105]

Christian hope is God's offer to man. It is the hope of the resurrection. Christian hope is a struggle for righteousness against sin; life against death; glory against suffering; peace against disruption. To those on the way to death Christian hope is the promise of eternal life. Life is transitory yet a blessed resurrection is promised. Life is misery yet hope for blessedness. It sees hunger and thirst yet super abundance of good is promised. It is Christian hope that makes life worthwhile. No matter how hard we try to ignore it God sets it before us. The only answer to death is the hope God sets before us The hope of eternal life. Loved ones are buried, but God promises resurrection

absent from this earth yet God promises that they are with Him. Earthly death fades away in the presence of eternal life. This is the hope God sets before us as we move towards death.

How vividly I still remember an incident of nearly thirty years ago. Travelling miles on a bicycle to go and officiate at a funeral on a farm ♦ a three year old baby died ♦ after a short service we walked to the far corner of the farm, the mother, four elderly women, myself with a wooden coffin on a bicycle ♦ we arrived and the grave was too small. I took the pick ♦ the mother took the spade, with tears flowing down her cheeks, the African sun pouring out its fury. I saw hope as a woman digging the grave to bury her child. Have I learnt without hope, faith lapses into "little faith" (Ma. 16: 18) and eventually into dead faith. This faith that leads us onto the path of true life, but it is hope and hope alone, that keeps us on that path. Christian hope was an anchor. Our anchor is in the eternal, grounded in God and in the power of His Risen Son. Christian hope hinges on a person ♦ Jesus Christ, because He was raised and lives for ever (1 Peter 1:5) Jesus is our High Priest ♦ the forerunner, securing our hope. Jesus' death was a sacrifice for our sins ♦ opening the way to forgiveness and the Kingdom of heaven to all believers.

Christian hope must be claimed. It is set before all men ♦ men need to forsake all and surrender to Christ. Christ is the only refuge for sinful men and world. To live without Christ is to live without hope. Surrendering to Christ allows Jesus to enter our lives as Lord. Conversion is a matter which affects the entire society. God's ultimate purpose is not simply new hearts, nor even simply new people, but a new earth, an entire new humanity and society. God intends to make something of this visible not only in the Church but also in the world. Conversion means a change in direction ♦ a change in life, working to bring about another kind of society ♦ based on love, peace, joy, sisterhood, justice and righteousness. The new birth, that is repentance and conversion, entails a repudiation of all forms of human degradation on the level of individuals, politics, economics and society, and the decisions to act that now flow in a different direction. It implies a certain break with conceptual traditions and the habits of one's surroundings, a critical attitude toward local conformity be it social or political. In a word, death to oneself, a new life, in both the individual responding to his calling and the community of believers on the path of sanctification, implies a new social and political behaviour. Christians who live by faith are forever torn anew from the limited and perverted life of the "old man" and from their natural sociological environment in order to put on the "new person". And this ongoing conversion is always expressed in concrete terms by a real change of attitude toward human relations, in politics and society. There is no conversion to God that does not lead one to consider his neighbour in a new light. The new life comes by breaking racial, national and religious barriers, and all others that divide humanity, to liberate man for community existence. The life of the Church, when it is directed by the renewing action of the Holy Spirit, is therefore made manifest in a continual renewal of all human relationships. In it the "new person" that makes his Kingdom manifest here below.

This life in the Church includes, [106] then, both a renewal of individual relationships between Christians within the community and the participation of this community and each of its members in the greater combat Christ is waging on the outside for the renewal of society and the world.

Hope is the fanning of God's Eternal Wind "The wind blows wherever it wishes. . ." (John 3) . The breeze that God allows to blow. Over those who are burnt and scorched in the heat of the day. This Jesus is with us as the Spirit who blows where he wills and transports us to new shores. The Spirit is the Spirit of God adventure, of liberation, conversion, the Spirit who enables us to cooperate in the Kingdom. Hope is God's lifeboat to the Church society and world so that she may not sink in the waters of silence or indifference. A Church with a clear vision of her purpose, of her destination as she remains faithful to her Lord. Hope for me as a Black South African is my complete faith in the integrity of the poor, out of their eyes and from their lips I often see and hear that the source of all hope will continue to fill us with joy and peace. Here exists a strange paradox who looks for the first of hope amongst the poor? Yet it is there rooted in reality, born out of despair. Hope is wrestling with despair and emerging as "more than conquerors through Him that loved us". (Romans 8:37). Hope is saying to mankind you cannot live without God. Hope is making an appointment with God and with the future that is wrapped up in the past and unveiling itself in the present faith secures it love believes in it, hope demonstrates it.

Rev Jotham Charles Mthetho Mvusi

Reverend J. C. Mvusi was born in 1903, in the land of his forefathers at the Deipkloof farm, eMzimkhulu. Together with his wife Vunina, from the influential Nxasana family, they were blessed with seven children. They both studied and matriculated at the Marianhill College, in Natal. His wife, Vunina, also coming from a family that loved education and devoted Christians, proceeded to Marianhill Teachers' Training College, the same institution from which Mvusi qualified as a teacher in 1923.

Mrs Mvusi, after graduating as a teacher, taught briefly before she married Reverend JC Mvusi. Mvusi registered himself to study theology at the University of Fort Hare in 1934. He was ordained in 1936, at the completion of his theological training. Rev. Mvusi was an epitome of excellence in every respect. He was never an admirer of mediocrity.

“Waye yindoda eyenza into ngocoselelo. Ayenze ayigqibe into ayiqalileyo. Waye ngazigqawagqwi izinto. Waye nge ngophath’ayeke”.

He was the President of the Young Men’s Guild for many years. He was in the Durban African Circuit for 12 years. And at Arthur Wellington Methodist Church in New Brighton, from 1955 to 1969.

As A Trailblazer

“ uGudl’unxweme”, as he was affectionately called, was the second African clergymen to be appointed President of the Methodist Church in SA in 1972. Reverend Seth Mokitimi (Black Bomber) was the first black person to be appointed to that position in 1964. (So Methodists were trailblazers)

His Ethos, Mission And Objective

This Christian faith leader believed in being the servant and a tool for socio-economic advancement of his people. He was not one of those who believed that the Church should concern itself exclusively with things of the spirit. He cared for the material, physical and spiritual needs of his people, across all divides , Christians and non Christians, black and white, for as long as they were human beings, they mattered to him. Through this lecture I will provide evidence to support my argument.

Affirmed The Dignity Of Africans

More than anything else, Mvusi passionately wanted to affirm the dignity of his people. Mvusi had confidence in his God, his people, and in himself.

His work and mission was to serve the human race with all his abilities and energies. J C Mvusi, a brilliant orator, believed that the privilege of the platform that he had access to, was to be used to lift his people, who were dealing with the most unfortunate human

behaviour, that is, racism and other social and economic anomalies that were ravaging his nation. JC Mvusi, who was a minister from 1936 to the time of his death in 1991, in his words and deeds, did not believe that Christians must put up with and tolerate the perverted and unjust social relations that existed in his time..

JC Mvusi's track record shows a person who wanted to bring Christian change in areas of opportunity, fellowship, sharing, caring, etc. It makes absolute sense for the BMC to invite someone to come forward and remind us about the best, great and greatest servants of this nation.

Speaking in Johannesburg on the 21 May 1964, at the National Conference of the Christian Council of South Africa, on his topic, The New Dimension of Mission in South Africa Today, Mvusi called for a new approach on the part of the Christian Churches. *Unless they are prepared to plan and consult with a view to action together in a new programme in which all hands must play some part regardless of colour, creed or caste, they are doomed to fail. In order to win this country for Christ, the first big impact by the Christian forces must revolutionise afresh all our large concentrations in cities.*

These concluding remarks by Mvusi were following a long lamentation by him of the social degradation caused by the poorly planned rapid industrialisation, in the aftermath of the destructive Second World War, WW2. He was calling upon the church to stand up and oppose the settlement of Africans on the fringes of all the large cities. Even in those days, Africans were being moved to the outskirts of the cities. On those occasions he raised all the anti social ills such as single-living quarters, the breaking down of the family unit, boys growing up without fathers, malnourishment, drunkenness, lack of sporting facilities, unwanted children born out of wedlock adding to juvenile

delinquency. Can you believe that Mvusi lamented “*men who could afford a comfortable home, spent their money in buying motor cars*”

Racism In The Church

When JC Mvusi graced this land, our country was a polarised environment. He may not have used radical theological theories that entered our vocabulary in later years. However, I can say without fear of contradiction that he was way ahead of his time in terms of diagnosing the problems our people faced then and are facing now. The man was spot on. He, together with other luminaries of our great nation, worked hard under difficult conditions, trying to bring unity in the church. In their time, the church was racially divided.

Education

J C Mvusi was not a sign post, that points the direction to Grahamstown, and does not move an inch. He practiced what he preached. He made sure that he equipped himself well if he wanted to have an impact, and to change the course of events. His propensity to travel, here at home and abroad shows that he knew that knowledge is power. “*Ukuhamba ngumbono*”. He travelled the globe and attended conferences and many other youth gatherings to far flung places like Asia, Europe and many African states. He was a believer of the saying, “to be conscious that you are ignorant of facts, is a great step to knowledge.” In some of those trips, he was with such African luminaries like Chief Albert Luthuli, Rev. S.S Tema and others.

He followed his own advice to the nation, by educating all his children. He encouraged parents to educate their children. He played a significant role in the troubles that flared after the proclamation of Bantu Education in the late 1950s. Together, with other church leaders

of his time, Rev JJR Jolobe, GB Molefe, and others worked very hard to sensitise the community during those trying times.

In a motivational speech to Limekhaya High School pupils, in Uitenhage, on the 2nd of December 1969, he said “ *A person can't learn unless he knows what he wants to learn*”.

This educationist and distinguished African went on to say “ *Learning is a process of organising knowledge for oneself through disciplined study*”. On that occasion, the clergyman counselled the students by saying the following “ *for the best results, a pupil should relate learning with his or her experience*”.

In today's language, he was saying *Bold and the Beautiful* is no appropriate model for an African child in Uganda, Nigeria, SA or Lesotho. For you to advance you must be 100% familiar with your own immediate surrounding and conditions, first, before you venture to unfamiliar areas.

The man loved education. He did a lot in the field of education and the development of the youth. Retired Methodist priest, Reverend Joseph Mahlasela, remembers JC Mvusi as a man who was “ *highly evangelical, particularly with the youth*”. He has associated himself and worked with numerous youth formations, said the younger Mahlasela to me. They include the YCMA, Student Christian Association, and others.

Contextualisation Of God

The responsibility of theology is to answer the question concerning what God means in the light of human existence, with all its distortions. After all God's relevance is meaningful in the light of what He does with His people. Black theology sought to dismiss the myth of divorcing Christianity from politics. The two cross-pollinate each other.

Then the question will be asked then where does politics fit into this jigsaw puzzle? Remember that politics, in broad terms, is an attempt by people to structure, construct and institutionalise their interpersonal and personal relationships. That is done for humanity to live in a just society and be able to realise their fullest potential. The Church then is called upon to monitor how this impact on the Children of God.

Black Theologians stepped into the fray precisely because they wanted to better the plight of our people who were facing racial discrimination, branded in various names such as separate development, parallel development or plural development. A system that promote separateness. Black Theology or Liberation Theology was born out of those realities.

Black Methodists Consultation

The Black Methodist Consultation, I want to thank and applaud the BMC for its role in, not only in the Methodist fraternity, more so for its mission and contribution to our nation's cause. Those militant clergies who raised their voices [at that time](#) were brave men and women were scare, we applaud you. BMC was relevant then, is more required and relevant again today. The call to be part of decisions that affect you and your communities was an act of bravery and courage.

The pioneers of this organisation wanted to make sure that Afro centrism was not left behind. With such gallant and all round fighters like Rev Mgojo, and Baartman, you were certainly destined to do good in the fight for social justice and the welfare of all. Encouraging and promoting unity amongst the Blacks, cross cutting ethnic groups, racial lines as well as amongst Blacks and Whites, was a master stroke. I thank you for creating this platform for knowledge empowerment.

