

ANOTHER DIMENSION

DECEMBER 2023



The Methodist Church
of Southern Africa

CELEBRATING A GIFT OF NEWNESS: REV PUMLA NZIMANDE NEW PB FOR THE MCSA

“Be strong and work, for I am with you - declares the Lord Almighty”.

The MCSA celebrated with great rejoicing the induction of a new Presiding Bishop, Rev Pumla Nzimande on 12 November at the Durban Exhibition Centre, Natal Coastal District by the retiring Presiding Bishop, Rev Purity Malinga.

In line with Bishop Malinga's trailblazing ministry, the Induction Service saw for the first time, a woman Presiding bishop handing over the baton and mantle of leadership to another woman.

“A day of the induction of a new leader of the church, or any entity for that matter, is a day of receiving and celebrating a gift of newness,” Malinga said as she welcomed everyone to the service.

Rev Malinga began her charge by referencing the introspection that the MCSA undertook at Conference 2023.

“At our recent Conference, we as a church looked carefully at ourselves. We acknowledged with shame the failures and shortcomings in our midst.

We acknowledged among other things,

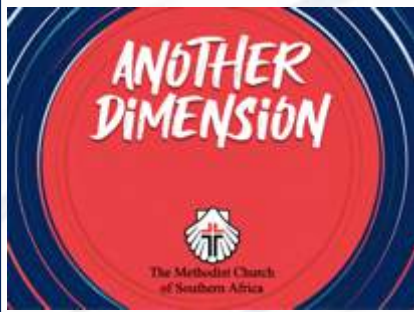
- Our lack of adherence to discipline, policies and doctrines of our church,
- The continued humiliation and pain experienced by women in ministry and in leadership due to the toxic patriarchal environment prevailing among us,
- The reputational damage of our church through the behaviour of our members and clergy in social media spaces

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- The continued opulent expenditure on meetings and events in the context of increasing human poverty.

We confessed that we are showing signs of a dying church, a house at war with itself, a people with unclean lips, living among a people with unclean lips. (Isaiah 6:5)"

"At the same time we remembered that the church is a creation of God through Jesus Christ who is her foundation - the rock - and the Head! It is Him who declared "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not overcome it". (Matt 16:18) No amount of evil will prevail against the church of Christ! We therefore re-committed ourselves to return to God, listen anew to the call of being the ones sent out to the world. Conference endorsed the call through the Presiding Bishop Elect to 'Awaken prophetic urgency and agency and revive the church of Christ'."

Rev Malinga lamented some of the challenges faced by many in the six countries of the Connexion but also said it's time to get to work and rebuild.

"We live with the realities of extreme poverty, high levels of unemployment, majority of people battling to make ends meet. We live with the reality of GBVF, crime, corrupt political leaders, killings, physical and mental ill-health, etc. Covid-19 brought with it so many complexities, socially and economically. There is need for rebuilding in all sectors of society." she said.

What then is God's message to people engaged in re-building?

"Be strong and work - for I am with you"

Basing her Charge on Haggai 2:1-9, Rev Malinga took the congregation on a historical journey about the returned Jewish Babylonian exiles who were rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem. The work of rebuilding the Temple however, had halted because the builders faced opposition and



hostility from amongst the Jews themselves and from without!

In Chapter 1, the prophet Haggai challenges the people:

"Is it a time for you to be living in your paneled houses while the house of the Lord remains in ruins? Give careful thought to your ways! Go up into the mountains and bring timber and build my house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored; says the Lord". (1:4-8)

In Chapter 2 Haggai continues to encourage the people of God. The message here is directed to all people - the leaders and the led. God says to the prophet: Speak to Zerubbabel - the governor; speak to Joshua - the High Priest and speak to the remnant of the people!

Rev Malinga challenged the MCSA: **"If the rebuilding is to happen the leaders and the led are to work together!"**

"God's message in Haggai starts with a question that addresses the thoughts, words and feelings within the nation. There were those who were stuck in the old Temple - feeling and believing that the new building was inferior. They were stuck in the past and finding it hard to move forward..." Rev Malinga said.

"It is in reading Ezra 3:10-13 that one gets why God asked the question. At the dedication of the completed foundation of the new Temple when everyone shouted for joy, many old priests and Levites and the people who had seen the old Temple wept aloud as they saw the foundation as inferior to that of the old temple. Ezra reports:

"No one could distinguish the sound of the shouts of joy from the sound of weeping". (Ezra 3:12-13)

But the God who distinguishes what is in the hearts and minds did! He asked Haggai to ask them:

"Ask them, says God; "Who of you is left who saw this house in its former glory? How does it look now? Does it not seem to you like nothing? But now be strong Zerubbabel, be strong Joshua, be strong all you people of the land, for I am with you!"

**Be strong Presiding Bishop Nzimande!
Be strong Methodist people, for I am with you – declares the Lord Almighty!**

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"The God who is able to distinguish between the sound and noise that has been going on in the MCSA since your election, is encouraging you Pumla!

"There has been a noise of joy at another woman who has been elected to lead the MCSA! At the same time the loud cries of disgust, revolt, worry, and fear has been heard and expressed in different platforms! Your identity, gender and age represent inferiority for some "old priests and Levites" of the MCSA.

"Old" does not just mean age in this case. In a patriarchal church like the Methodist church there are many young people who are stuck in the past when it comes to gender equality and women leadership."

Despite the noise: ***"Be strong and work, for the Lord Almighty is with you!"***

Listen as God makes further declarations:

"I will fill this house with glory because the silver is mine and the gold is mine. The glory of this present house will be greater than that of the former house!"
(2:8-9)

Note that this house that seems to be inferior will be great in glory, not because of the builders, but because of the presence of God who gives the glory.

Rev Malinga went on to further encourage Rev Nzimande, not only to work hard but to also be strong in obedience to the law and will of God as she takes up this responsibility of being a Chief Pastor of the church.

"Be strong in obedience to the law and will of God; the law of loving God with your whole being and the neighbour as self. Be strong in your faith in the One who has called you. Let prayer be the way of life so your ears and mind remain sharpened to the voice and mind of Christ. It is as you pray without ceasing that God will grant you wisdom necessary to lead His church at this time, the time where ungodliness is on the rise, the time where appetite for money and power is on the rise, the time where everything and everyone can be bought! In the words of Jesus, "Be wise as a serpent and humble as a dove," Malinga said.

"Be strong in integrity! The ability to be incorruptible is what this time demands of leaders if indeed they are serious about

re-building. It's not just what you say, but what you do that people will look at."

Be strong and WORK!

"The powers and duties of the PB are spelled out in the Laws and Discipline. Some of those duties are taxing! Most will take you away from home and from your children. You will be called to defend the church and to be the face of the church, to speak prophetically on behalf of the church! At this time, when the work ethic is at its lowest in the MCSA, especially for Clergy - model hard work in obedience to God."

"As you do your work, hold on and never forget the promise of God; "I am with you". The One who promises is faithful to His promises and I stand here as a witness to that! When you go through the loneliness and isolation of leadership - when you go through the betrayal and ridicule, when friends and colleagues turn into enemies - remember, you are never alone. The One who promised is carrying you."

Malinga addressed the members of the MCSA:

"To all MCSA members: be strong and work, for the Lord is with you! Each of us have a role to play and a gift to contribute to the rebuilding and reviving of our church. All members, all leaders, all clergy and lay leaders, all bishops - be strong and WORK!"

Malinga concluded with the words of Paul to the church in Rome.

"May God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept one another then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God." (Rom 15:5-7)

In her response to her induction, Rev Pumla Nzimande acknowledged her family and the support they have given her throughout her twenty-year journey in ministry.



"I was 18 when I became a fully accredited local preacher, and I subsequently offered myself for the ministry from the Durban Metropolitan Circuit. At 21 I reported for duty in my first station. At 40, I was elected by the Methodist people as the Presiding Bishop of the MCSA. Christ and his Church have been my love from the days of my youth and throughout all the seasons of my ministry. I mention this because I want to illustrate that thus far the Lord has been with me and has called me from deep unto deep in this ministry," Rev Nzimande said.

She acknowledged mentors who have guided and journeyed with her. The Reverends CCM Damoyi, DM Geveza, the Rev Themba Mntambo Purity Malinga, Charmaine Morgan, Libuseng Lebaka- Ketshabile and many more. In thanking the outgoing Presiding Bishop, Rev Purity Malinga, the new Presiding Bishop pleaded with Methodists to fully support women leadership. "I call upon us all to not only celebrate women in leadership across the Connexion but realise and engage in the work that needs to be done in equity, healing, restoration, support and the liberation of women so that women may lead authentically from a posture that is unapologetically feminine and masculine all of which are divinely bestowed"

Looking into the future, Rev Nzimande called on all Methodists to take hands and together work for the renewal and restoration of Christ's mission in the world.

Districts, Circuits and Societies, we have survived Covid-19 together let us now thrive together as we together awaken prophetic urgency and agency and revive the Church of Christ. On this my induction, I call upon the Methodist Church to re-position herself as a prophetic organism, I call upon all Methodists to be intentional in the work of reviving the church of Christ through the mission imperatives: Spirituality; Justice, Service and Reconciliation, Evangelism and Church Growth; Development and Economic Transformation; Education and Christian Formation.

"I call upon all Methodists to: Revive the resources of the MCSA; I call upon us to revive our ears to the cries for freedom and I call upon for the revival of order and discipline"

FAREWELL MESSAGES TO REV PURITY MALINGA

“ Dear Bishop Malinga,

It is with a great sense of gratitude and peace in my heart that I bring salutations to you as you sit back on the armchair in your lounge and reflect on a journey of servanthood.

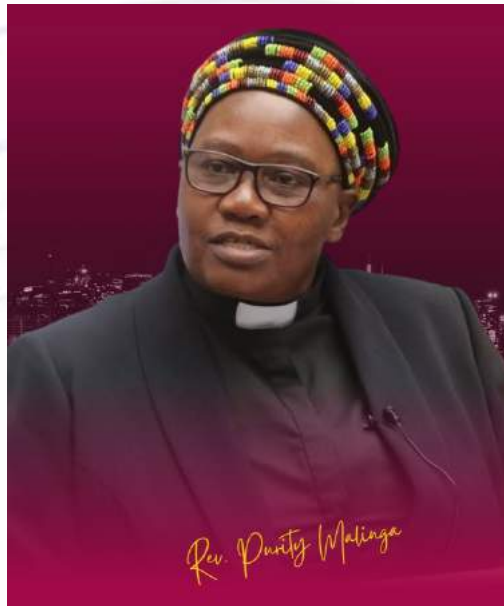
Not many can account for all they have done in this life, neither can they stand by the words and actions they have been tasked to administer in the covenantal contract that servants like your calibre, uphold. I believe as a leader you have withstood many storms coming to you as a person, you dodged many bullets (metaphorically) from angry people, you overcame humiliation for the sake of the call upon your life. You became an oracle for God when the people of God needed a prophet outside of those from Baal; this made you a role model for so many young women in ministry. Many will hear of you, and the strides made to advance the kingdom of God when it mattered most, and the Church of Christ will miss you.

I believe that your life has a legacy, one that your servanthood heart would not want to acknowledge, yet we are who we are because someone took a step towards the light so that many of us can follow in that path. A path that so many find, but not all adventures end well, because along the way, some have been visited by the gods of money, power, and lust. All these make or break a person as a minister of Word and Sacrament and yet your journey in this church has not been marred by any of these. Could that be because your eyes were always on the prize, to preach Jesus Christ crucified and how the risen power became your power to light up the church and bring taste to a corrupt world? It is a legacy no one can talk about because such legacies are embedded deep within and become a hidden treasure for many.

I am saddened that I didn't accept the call earlier to have an opportunity to work with you and under your guidance, it's because of this light that I am convinced is the magic beneath your wings, for a lack of a better word. May your retirement become a blessing to your family as you have been to the church all these years. I salute you, MaPurity.

Grace, love and well wishes.

”



“ Good day Presiding Bishop,

At the time you became Presiding Bishop God was in control of everything I mean everything. The aim was to save souls.

I am emotional asking myself "If the Grace of God did not use people and did not bring confusion to others" besizoyimela inqgubho kaThixo?

The scars that you have are physical and spiritual - Paul had them and David had them – for them all it was all about God and God's people. If you need counseling please go for it, if you want to cry please cry. I am saying all of this because during your retirement time God is going to talk to you more than before.

I love you woman of God. During your retirement time May God continue to bless our church and bless South Africa.

- C.Tyolani

”

“ Thank you for leading us as a church, your leadership and bravery at a tender age in a male dominated field - we are super proud of you MAMA.

- Sibusisiwe
(Clerpine Circuit, Pinetown Society)

”

“ Truly her labour wasn't in vain, may she retire well. I will offer her a drive to the next Nkanyamba so that she can appreciate this milestone for YMG.

- Xolani Monakali

”

“ Leadership is a contested space. We contest in ideas, philosophy and culture must be dressed. In various ways, those who offer themselves to lead are taking a risk of being scrutinised at every word spoken and unspoken. They offer, in the context of Church, as means of grace and being sacramental as Jesus would. Rev Purity Nomthandazo Malinga took the yoke and carried the cross of the PB office with much grace and rebuke. As she exits, we will remember her story not as the final narrative but as part of the bigger story of God. Her chapters are summer and winter, as they should be. These chapters leave us with a story of complex legacy, because she led in a complex season and space. I am sure that we can all agree that hers is a testimony of what it means to “walk humbly with God”. She embodied the office of a Priest. For the gift umama has been to the Church and for her ministry, we give thanks to God. Now as she superannuates, we say “well done, good and faithful servant!”

...Mah now you will have time on your hands to do the things the office of the PB didn't afford you. See you at our next Nkanyamba.

- Rev Senzo Ndlovu

”

“ She was a humble servant of God. Despite all that she went through on a daily basis, she continued trusting in Him who called her. Anyway, one cannot please all. Rea leboga. May God give you good health and peace.

- Mamzola Moremi

”

“ Well done, good and faithful servant.

- Lebohang Moeng

”

“ I love you Rev P Malinga, our loving Presiding Bishop, you will remain faithful in the hands of God.

- Philile Masisa

”

“ Proudly Methodist, go well Presiding Bishop. God bless you and your family.

- Dumisani Beyi

”

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“ PB, as you step away from leading, it's not goodbye but 'see you later.' *Khwaza soon. We will still count on your support through prayer, advice, teaching and mentoring rooted in your faith. Remember, as a priest, it's not a retirement from a job but a continuation of a calling. Thank you very much, blessings to you and your family. Amen and Amen.

- Alisa Whirsley ”

“ Simfisela ukuphumula okuhle as she supetanuates after a long journey of ministry of almost 40 years or just more. She's displayed academic excellence, excellence in character and integrity, gifts for leadership, ministry, wisdom, pastoral gifts and a pastoral heart, and many more. For these we appreciate her. May God continue to bless her for the lives she has touched in various ways and in various places. But may God also minister and heal her from the many hurts she might have experienced, insults she might have had to endure, both in the ministry and in leadership of the Methodist church.

- Bishop Dlamini ”

“ God bless you, lovely lady. Thanks for your leadership. I will always remember your visit to our ladies' tea last year here in Welkom. Enjoy your rest. You deserve it. Well done, good and faithful servant.

- Christine van Zyl ”

“ May the Good Lord strengthen you and your family and be blessed always in your retirement, my respected Bishop.

- Molebatsi Tsuke ”

“ You have done well, faithful servant. You have led the Church and your mark is visible. I was privileged to be your interpreter at the Connexional Music Association's Triennial Convention hosted by the Highveld and Eswatini District in November 2022, as you addressed us, the worship leaders of God's Church. Thank you, Mama.

- Steven Phasha ”

“ Fare thee well to the MCSA Giant.

- Sara Nauman ”

“ God bless you and your family. Enjoy your retirement in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you for everything you have done for our church. Go well Presiding Bishop Nomthandazo Purity Malinga, I am so proud of you leading the MCSA. #SingingBlessedAssurance.

- Dumisani Beyi ”

“ Proud of this giant - humble and intelligent, full of wisdom with a strong character. She was my New Testament Lecturer and my Bishop in the Natal Coastal District from 2000 to 2003.

- Rev Mbongeni VC Ngwenya ”

“ May God preserve her.

- Ayanda Daniel ”

“ You'll remain one of a kind mama.

- Enkosi ngesikhokelo Aviwe Mvoko ”

“ Farewell Presiding Bishop Rev Purity Malinga. We thank God for giving PB strength and wisdom to serve. It was a privilege to meet PB in December 2019. Memories.

- Bangy Leluma ”

“ As the staff at the MCO we are grateful for Rev Malinga's unwavering commitment and impactful leadership. The personalised attention she gave to acknowledging every one of us on special days such as birthdays and times of challenge and sorrow. She saw us, not as a collective but as individuals.

- MCO Staff ”

“ Fare thee well Mama, in our dark days of unrest in Eswatini you were with us and provided a prophetic leadership and voice.

- Hynd Shongwe ”

“ Farewell mama we all love you may the good Lord continue to bless you.

- Thandi Mamndlane Tyali ”

“ Bless you PB you not only showed the Way but you lived the Way.

- Stephen Hendricks ”

“ Farewell Noxulu, Mpfana, Kheswa, Mpangazitha, God will always be with you.

- Stuki Kamase ”

“ The giant of the Gospel is not retiring but changing the platform to continue building the Kingdom of God. The call of God does not retire but renewed every season. Thank you for giving dedicating and sacrificing material life for the sake of the Gospel. I remember at PCM when a question was asked if you had considered and chosen another kind of life, your answer was 'the Gospel would have suffered'. It's not yourself, for doing all this work but the grace of God and you were merely obedient to the directive of God's grace. Those who are given a taste I mean a fore-taste of things of eternity are different even though are in this world, the heavenly taste makes them different. As a leader, you had a gift of listening and slow to give your opinion. This was the case when you were a Superintendent at PCC. You embraced all and judged no one. You constantly reminded everyone that this is a church whose head is Christ Jesus. You have ministered to a church in transition, transformation is not a walk in the park. God in different generations over many millenia would raise men and women for a particular message. It seems like you were born to bring a particular message as a lady Minister of our Church. You candidated when it was not fashionable to have a lady ministering to general populace of our Church. The patriarchal pillars of the Christian faith were taken by surprise not ready to embrace the Dotrine that God's call is for all believers. This became even harder to swallow to have a lady as head of the Church. Thank you for your resilience and focused determination for the sake of the gospel. A leader is remembered not by how many buildings were built (though these are important) but is remembered by how people's quality of life was changed and transformed for eternity. One service, a sermon that is still engraved in my mind and heart was 'Inkonzo yamathunzi'. The service of the Shadows, the dark shadows that Jesus Christ went through before His arrest. May I never forget that service as long as I live. Thank, thank you and thank you. Enjoy your new workstation.

- Simphiwe E Mini ”

REV PURITY MALINGA CELEBRATED: IN PICTURES



PRESIDING BISHOP NZIMANDE DEDICATES CHURCH BUILDING



In her first official capacity as Presiding Bishop, Rev Pumla Nzimande dedicated the Tunxe Neck Society church building in the Clarkebury District on 3 December 2023.



LIMPOPO DISTRICT CELEBRATES MOGObA AT 90

The 2023 Annual Rev Dr Stanley Mogoba Golf Day and Prize Giving Dinner were held at Silverlakes on 14 November 2023. The day also served as a celebration of Rev Dr Mogoba's 90th birthday.

"We are gathered here to celebrate three things that are inspired by the life, ministry and leadership of Rev Dr Stanley Mmutlanyane Mogoba; his birthday, the launch of Tingungu – a Methodist Business Company and to participate in the award ceremony of the Mogoba Golf Day." Said Rev Dr Sidwell Mokgothu, Bishop of the Limpopo District.

Rev Dr Mogoba turned 90 in 2023 and several celebrations were held in his honour throughout the year including in the Coalfields Circuit where a church building was named after him and celebrations in Sekhukhune, his home community.

"The District Mogoba Legacy Committee, under the leadership of Mr Paseka Njobe, remains committed to initiatives to honour and sustain the legacy of Ntate Mogoba."

These will include a book with contributions from different people on the different aspects of the life of Dr Mogoba. The legacy team will also lobby his Excellency Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa to recognise Ntate Mogoba with a national appreciation award. The third aspect of preserving the legacy of Rev Dr Mogoba will be the archiving of all his writings and documents.

"Conversation has been held with the head of Library services at the Seth Mokitimi Methodist Seminary [SMMS] to assist in this programme. All these efforts are meant to curate the life, ministry and leadership of Rev Dr Mogoba and draw lessons from this legacy," Rev Dr Mokgothu said.

In launching the Tingugu App, Rev Dr Mokgothu referenced the work of Presidents Julius Nyerere and Canaan Banana, leaders who believed the possibility of and advocated for self-reliance.

"Dr Nyerere, the first President of the liberated Tanzania introduced and advocated for the Ujamaa Philosophy. Ujamaa, which meant "Familyhood" in KiSwahili was socio-economic philosophy was aimed at building an egalitarian society based on African communalism. He believed that Tanzania's poverty could be eradicated through collective welfare based on equitable sharing.

"Rev Canaan Banana, a Zimbabwean Methodist minister, theologian, and politician who served as the first President of Zimbabwe from 1980 to 1987 wrote a book titled "The Theology of Promise: The dynamics of self-reliance" in 1982. In the book, Banana writes about the concept of the proletarian church which challenged the Church to identify itself with the cause of social justice, equality, and development in Zimbabwe. He argued that the Church should not rely on foreign aid or paternalism, but rather on the promises of God and the resources of the people."

"Rev Dr Stanley Mogoba, addressing the Methodist Conference in the then Port Elizabeth in 1991, advanced the concept he called: Just Sharing. In the world of "maldistribution", Ntate Mogoba called us to a spirituality of sharing. He advanced the point that poverty is not only about shortage of money. "It is about rights and relationships, about how people are treated and how they regard themselves; about powerlessness, exclusion and loss of dignity." He quoted Russian Theologian, Berdyaev who argued that "bread for myself is a material matter, but bread for my neighbour is a spiritual matter". Dr Mogoba went on to make a bold statement; "Sharing for us is not an option. It is of the very essence of our faith as Christians. And faith means risk."

"Tingugu is a Siswati word for silo that farmers use to store grain for the future. We hope to mobilise Methodists and our ecumenical and other friends to employ the APP in the buying of airtime, internet data, electricity and other services," Rev Mokgothu said.

In his response and words of appreciation, Rev Dr Mogoba reflected on his life journey and the proximity of Mamelodi and Kilnerton to Silverlakes and how many years ago the police had driven with him in the back of their van thinking they were transporting a dangerous man. He expressed his appreciation and great thanks to the district for their commitment to celebrating his life work and encouraged the church to be united in order to attain sustainable transformation.





Faith ACTION
to end Gender-Based Violence

SUMMARY

Executive Summary of the Draft Interfaith Statement of Commitment



Faith ACTION
to end Gender-Based Violence

Executive Summary of the
Draft Interfaith Statement of Commitment

We faith inspired servant leaders, scholars, activists, survivors, faith leaders and concerned citizens of South Africa invite you to join us in a faith-rooted individual and shared Commitment to Action Campaign to end gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) in our beloved Country.

We note that President Ramaphosa acknowledged that GBVF has reached pandemic proportions and the National Strategic Plan on GBVF started in April 2020 refers to the critical role of the faith sector as part of the solution to “mobilise through faith, dignity, humanity, ubuntu, social justice and gender justice, harness their capacity as agents of social norm change”. In 2022 the faith community was called on “to establish shared ethical values founded on standards of mutual accountability within the faith-based sector and build its capacity to (i) support survivors of GBV against perpetrators; (ii) dismantle patriarchy from religious teachings and practices, whilst integrating more women into senior leadership roles; and (iii) strengthen spiritual healing and restorative justice, whilst eradicating all forms of spiritual abuse.”

**We join together inspired by our faith to pray, to speak out
and mobilise people to action.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SHORTCOMINGS

We witness the horrifying realities. According to crime statistics from April 2022- March 2023 there was an average of 118 rapes reported daily and 11 women murdered daily. Abuse against children and the vulnerable are also at pandemic levels. All the statistics do not reflect the true reality as so many crimes go unreported and the cost to human life, survivors, families, communities and the economy are immeasurable. Over 85% of South Africans profess a faith. This means that GBVF is a lived reality in our faith communities. **We agree** that this is not excusable and is contrary to all of our diverse sacred texts. We were created with equal dignity. **We admit** faith communities have not done enough to end this destruction and have sometimes, by our inaction (passivism), silence, misuse of religion consciously or unconsciously been complicit in contributing to the scourge of GBVF.

We recognise that we have contributed to the current crisis through our own woundedness as a result of our personal and communal traumas linked to the history of apartheid, colonial and patriarchal oppression and violence that robbed us all of dignity and self-respect. We cannot minimise the impact of these causes of trauma. They will continue to be pervasive until we recognize them and begin to actively confront structural violence and then begin to build new social structures that nurture peace.

We understand these ills are linked to our past, but we also take responsibility for the present. South Africa is characterised by a complex and multi-dimensional set of historic and current intersectional inequalities that result in it being one of the most unequal societies in the world. The legacy of apartheid has created a South African context where gender inequality intersects and compounds other forms of inequality in terms of socio-economic disadvantage, race, class, ability, sexual orientation, ethnicity and religion. To fulfill our mandate we call on truth, love and God's mercy to restore our self-respect and dignity in order to offer the hope and healing needed. We are blessed to live in a democracy where we are now free to confront GBVF and interrogate the root causes of biases, toxic norms, stereotypes and structural inequalities.



Faith ACTION
to end Gender-Based Violence

SHARED IDEALS

We are a human family that is diverse and unique, composed of many faith traditions that all share some core common values and truths. Some of these essential truths include:

LOVE: Showing empathy, understanding and care for all is the shared foundation of all faiths.

ONENESS: We are one species and we need each other to survive and thrive.

EQUAL DIGNITY: We are all God's creation and have a shared right to fairness and **EQUITY**.

PEACE: **JUSTICE** and **MERCY** are the pillars to peace. These three enable restorative healing.

These shared hopes can be summed up by the South African philosophy of **UBUNTU** - a way of being that celebrates that all humans are deeply interconnected and that encourages **GENEROSITY** of spirit, enables **BELONGING** and **INCLUSIVITY**.

We strive to nurture mutual **RESPECT**, to act justly with **COMPASSION** and **HUMILITY**, and to speak **TRUTH** even when costly. **FAITH** is crucial and central in the way we understand the basic building blocks of our society. All forms of violence have no support or justification in our shared faith values. We understand that religious ideals and prayer are inadequate alone. We now commit to translating our faith into action.

COMMITMENT TO ACTION

We jointly and personally commit to the following plan of action:

1. **We will now be vocal** without fear of causing division or offending the powerful because we understand this **silence enables violence** to continue.
2. **We commit to amplifying** religious texts that promote ideals of dignity, gender equality and justice and engage with interpretations of texts that have been used to support patriarchy, violence and dehumanisation based on race, gender or ability.
3. **We will nurture men and dismantle** toxic masculinity by normalising the expression of healthy emotion, supporting everyone's feelings and vulnerabilities. We know that validation is essential to avoiding explosions of anger that cause irreparable violence to self and society.
4. **We will promote care-giving** environments in schools and in diverse family settings.
5. **We will prioritise the protection** of vulnerable groups including women, children, people with disabilities, LGBTIQ+, and men. We will stop protecting perpetrators and stigmatising those who report. This is secondary abuse.
6. **We will act decisively** and systematically against perpetrators including religious leaders and stop asking survivors to be patient and forcing forgiveness. We demand accountability.
7. **We commit to overcoming** our prejudices and inaction. Ignoring poverty, racism, substance abuse and mental health problems has hindered prevention and contributed to GBVF for too long. It is enough.
8. **We will support and increase** efforts to offer healing service and ministries to the traumatised, dispossessed and bereaved who have suffered from GBVF.
9. **We will create** an enabling environment for people to speak and act for themselves. We will listen to survivors, to women and the marginalised, involve men and boys as part of the solution while also calling out behaviours and attitudes that demean women's dignity, condone violence or stigmatise. We will stay open to participatory programme planning and research processes ensuring accountability to those vulnerable to abuse.



10. We will support faith leaders who are speaking out and acting and will work alongside one another by speaking out when we encounter violence in private and public spaces. We will contribute to public forums and media spaces on equality and justice based on sacred text so that religion is increasingly associated with justice, gender equality, inclusion and non-violence.

11. We will ensure adequate resources are allocated to reflect that we prioritise transformative action and are able to equip ourselves and our faith communities to make a decisive difference.

12. We will collaborate with each other. We will communicate, consult and share prevention programmes, leadership training, counseling services and resources across faith communities, Government, NGOs, the private sector and groups in a spirit of unity. We are ready to learn from one another, improve our practices and support diverse initiatives as part of a whole-society approach to healing and building a healthy and safe community. It is only by working together that we can establish sustainable peace and economic stability at every level of society.

Finally, we remain steadfast in the promise of a true democracy and in the spirit of unity and the need for contextually-appropriate action, we commit to continuing to build a **united and active interfaith collective for mutual support and to hold one another accountable**. To translate our hopes and ideals into decisive action through proactive policy development **we will**:

- a. **Set up accountability mechanisms.** We will develop and review gender and safeguarding policies in our faith groups and establish a joint policy to guide our collective work.
- b. **Establish justice desks** led by combined teams of women, men, youth and children in faith sectors to engage survivors and perpetrators, shape responses, provide meaningful support structures for healing and accompaniment as well as structures that have a mandate to put in place effective sanctions as needed. This will help us break the intergenerational trauma that has led to the ongoing cycles of violence.
- c. **Actively encourage women's participation in leadership and decision-making processes.** As equals we can better consult, find solutions and form policies beneficial to all.
- d. **Address any reported incidents** of GBVF in our faith communities in accordance with the relevant policies with respect and without any attempt to silence those reporting.
- e. **Create joint learning platforms** to re-examine our use of our sacred texts and our religious practices, and developing more appropriate theological approaches in the current context;
- f. **Document our work and report on progress** using storytelling and building a shared evidence base.
- g. **Open safe and courageous spaces** to reflect on our work together, learn from mistakes and improve our impact.

*We believe that through our shared hopes and ideals, by acknowledging our shortcomings and committing to this decisive course of action, we can establish **UBUNTU in our Rainbow Nation** and transform into a **CULTURE OF PEACE**. You are invited to join this Campaign and add your name and commitment to this individual and joint Statement to Action to End GBVF in South Africa.*

<https://www.wwsosa.org.za/interfaith-action-to-end-gbv-statement-and-campaign/>
coordinator@wwsosa.org.za

¹As a key stakeholder in the national strategic plan on GBV and femicide, we are guided by a key set of faith sector resolutions agreed at the November 2022 National Summit: "to establish shared ethical values founded on standards for mutual accountability within the faith-based sector and build its capacity to (i) support survivors of GBV against perpetrators; (ii) dismantle patriarchy from religious teachings and practices, whilst integrating more women into senior leadership roles; and (iii) strengthen spiritual healing and restorative justice, whilst eradicating all forms of spiritual abuse." (NSP Summit Resolutions, pages 5 and 7)

THE UPPER SOUTH COAST CIRCUIT 718, NATAL COASTAL DISTRICT REACHES OUT

By Rev Andre du Plooy

The Upper South Coast Circuit 718, Natal Coastal District, have this year (2023) focused on these areas of Mission Outreach.

A brief overview of the mission outreach in our Circuit and some of the partnerships we run re: TB Testing and Support, GBV Outreach and Support and Literacy Outreach and Food Security.

1. **TB & DIABETES TESTING AND SUPPORT -**

We have a team who work alongside FOSA (Friends of the Sock Association) and NATBA (Natal Anti-Tuberculosis Association) to do weekly testing and provide Food Support to TB sufferers while in the recovery process. We make and supply soup and food parcels (600 recipients per week).

2. **GENDER BASED VIOLENCE SUPPORT -**

We have a partnership with SPARROW Trust who reach out to schools and community projects addressing GBV issues and human trafficking awareness. We have UTHINGO Trust who operate from the Amanzimtoti Methodist Church who run GBV and Children Support and Counselling to victims of GBV and victims of rape and sexual abuse. UTHINGO Trust also have a home for children recovering from sexual abuse and neglect in the Adams Mission area.

3. **LITERACY OUTREACH -**

Amanzimtoti Methodist Church provides literacy support to ECD's in the Circuit by providing reading materials and training to educators, and have partnered with Book Dash to supply 100 books to a child by the age of 5. Books are in the language of the child and EVD's and Primary Schools in the Circuit receive books for their use.

4. **FOOD SECURITY -**

one of our key Mission areas is food security for 2023. To date we have supplied 1.2 million meals to 33 ECD's in the USC area, old age homes, and needy children and families. We supply food for 5 meals a week that includes breakfast (instant porridge) and a stew and veg and mielie rice for supper. We also supply the Richards Bay Methodist Church and a number of ECD's that they support, we supply the Pine Town Methodist Church and the ECD's and schools they support, the Addington Methodist Church feeding programme and creches, and as well as Toti Cares who support needy families on an ongoing basis. We have just purchased a container for additional storage, as well as converted un-used hall space into storage. We have an eThekweni Health Certificates and Compliance Certificates.



The Fear Factory

By Rev Michael Vorster

WARNING: If you suffer from a severe form of ophidiophobia, snake-phobia, skip the section related to fear of snakes.

*“That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, **but the angel reassured them. “Don't be afraid!”** he said. (Luke 2:8-14 New Living Translation (NLT)*

Who were the shepherds back in the day? What was their standing in society at the time?

One school of thought suggested that the shepherds were regarded as bottom-feeders; vagabonds; no one trusted them. Another school of thought says that the Shepherds were an integral part of the economy of the day, yet some sources suggested that because they were always out in the fields outside the cities, they were often not trusted and met with suspicion. They often worked in groups. Because they were part of the economy they could not be regarded entirely as outcasts; but theirs was not a glamorous job. My guess is that the shepherds would have been cautious of those who were non-shepherds and possibly superstitious. Hence when the angels appear they are terrified. And the angel needs to reassure them not to be afraid.

Why were they afraid? This moment when the angels appeared confirmed what the fear-merchants, the religious sector, had sold to them: They would die in the face of God. But then they do not die. They are told “Don't be afraid”

These religious fear-merchants are still among us. Promoting unchecked ‘teachings’. They have very loud voices cutting through the airwaves of radio, social media, TV, and the sacred pulpits; they are very wealthy, wealth made through peddling fear; scaring, and traumatising many trusting, vulnerable people. This could be you or me.

“They were terrified, but the angel reassured them”

Of what are you afraid? What are your phobias?

A phobia is a **persistent, excessive, unrealistic fear of an object, person, animal, activity or** situation. It is a type of anxiety disorder (Harvard Health)

A QUICK QUIZ: what are the following phobias? Chrometophobia; Katsaridaphobia; xenophobia; Thalassophobia; Equinophobia. Ecclesiophobia ; Ovinophobia

There seems to be a phobia for everything under the sun including a fear of the sun itself: Heliophobia.

For almost every phobia professional help is available.

However, this is not always available for everyone. As we know inequity is very prevalent in our health care systems.

I believe that both faith and trained healers can offer ways of overcoming even your darkest fears. In this article, I offer some personal experience, I am no expert, I merely wish to offer pointers to overcoming fear from a faith perspective.

No one counselling approach or session is like another, each has a style of its own. *‘We believe we are instruments of God's healing.’* Through our trauma we have the potential to move from victims to survivors to wounded healers...*And by His wounds we are healed.* (Is 53:3) (from the Manual on Stress & Trauma: Evelyn and Karl Bartsch). I believe that more than ever we need healing from deep-seated trauma; phobias and all things that inhibit our well-being. Not every-one has access to professional help; this is why church networks are a huge resource, when properly trained, to offer compassionate spaces for trauma de-briefing,

A PERSONAL JOURNEY:

Fear of the sea. When I was about 13years old, on holiday in Hermanus (Onrus to be exact) with a friend, his parents and his Australian cousin. We went swimming in the sea. I got trapped in a rip current; at the time I had never heard of this. It was really frightening. It was like pushing against the entire All Blacks rugby team on my own. No progress. I was only about 10 metres from shore. I used every bit of strength that my small frame could muster and then I felt sand under my feet. Stood up and got out as fast as I could. Finding a spot on the shore, exhausted; I rested. Ego would not allow me to tell my friends what had happened. We carried on as normal. Little did I know that the first step in dealing with trauma and fear is to talk incessantly about it. Even if each version is different.

The fear of the sea sank deep into my psyche. Until it was forgotten, and the fear resurfaced years later, here in Durban. I could not fathom why every time I entered the sea, tentatively, foreboding feeling began to envelop me. I was experiencing fear.

No, I had to overcome this. I bought a second-hand body-board and fins. Watched others doing it, those a quarter of my age. And gave it a go. The wave ride was addictive, it felt good to stride out of the sea, carrying by board under my arm and fins with the other. Have I just joined the surfing scene? There was no way I was going to jump off the pier, inshore body-board-surfing was my limitation. Again, the fear of the sea came back. I had to keep going. All this stopped after my hip-operation in 2017 and another in 2019. I got back on a board on Strand beach in August 2023.

This year I volunteered with the National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI). I am now in training to be a Beach-safety Camera Operator, assisting the NSRI Emergency Operational Centre



(EOC). These are high tech cameras that can zoom in and check if people are in distress in the sea. I have so far been involved in one rescue. This has helped me understand how to read the ebb, flow and warning signs in the sea.' Do not fear'. Take courage



Fear of horses. When I was a small boy, I witnessed a person being thrown off a horse in front of my Gran's house. The person lay motionless. The ambulance arrived. Ever since I have not liked horses. I had an inbuilt imagining of being kicked, bitten or thrown by a horse.

Fast forward, some years ago the family took a mid-week break in the KZN Midlands. As a family we enrolled for a session of Horse-Play (no nothing like Godly-play). What an amazing experience. We never rode the horses at all. We only learnt how to lead the horse; how to approach the horse; the horse is constantly seeking leadership from one-self; my irrational fear of a horse is overcome; every time when I see a horse now – an affinity is evoked.

Fear of snakes (not phobic). I am scared of snakes, like many millions around the world, who are captured by myths and ignorance of these much-maligned creatures of God. Movies play on these fears. Always a rattle-snake appears in an American desert. Anacondas are exaggerated in terms of size and ferocity. All this is akin to the way the movie Jaws 1,2 and 3 maligned the Great White Shark. Exacerbating the fear of sharks. Today the filmmaker regrets having made the movie, because of the huge fear impact against sharks it had on Westerners.

I like, many living in KZN, will encounter snakes at some time. We have regular visitations by the harmless green variegated snake in our garden. I sometimes stood between the snake and my dog to save the snake.

My wife has ophidiophobia, and will not read this article. For this reason, I had to know more. I needed to discover respect for and not fear snakes.

Well, being a supernumerary means I have time to try new things. On Saturday 16 September 2023, I completed level one of *THE SNAKE AWARENESS, FIRST AID FOR SNAKEBITE AND VENOMOUS SNAKE HANDLING COURSE*. (I have a reputable ASI certificate to prove it) This is the first of three levels. What a wonderful experience. I wish I could share the photos. Yes, one felt nervous, our trainer said this is good, because we need to have a healthy respect for snakes. Myths were debunked. No, a snake will

not chase or seek to bite you purposefully; it is more scared of humans and will only strike in defence or if you stand between the snake and where it wishes to go; or if you try and kill it.

We learnt about the three venom types. We learnt that snakes are not poisonous but venomous. We learnt how to treat snake-bite.

We learnt that a snake does not always release all its venom should it bite a human. They often give a dry-bite which does not release any venom. It made me think, perhaps this is what happened to Paul when he was bitten by an adder (Acts 28: 1 to 6) *"and everyone thought he was a god because Paul did not die or become sick."* Was it merely a dry-bite from the adder?

It is essential that we as Africans learn more about snakes and how to handle them.

More than 20 000 people in Sub-Saharan Africa are reported to die each year from snakebite, but a study of households in rural Mozambique, published in *Toxicon*, indicates that this may be a "severe underestimation"

The World Health Organisation says *"snakebite is the most Neglected Tropical Disease an estimated about 2.7 million cases of envenoming and 81 000–138 000 deaths a year. The economic cost of snakebite envenoming is unmanageable in most countries, as it affects not only the victims but often their entire families, particularly in poor communities in low- and middle-income countries that do not have social security."*

Yet again it is the poor that suffer the most. Hence let us advocate for each village in Africa to have a trained and informed snake-catcher, to work alongside traditional persons offering indigenous knowledge systems on this matter.

Much like so many other preventable deaths by diseases, so are snakebites.

The main cause of death by snakebite, in my opinion is, is lack of training; and knowledge. Every village should have a trained snake-catcher to work along practitioners of indigenous knowledge systems.

There are already a growing number of Snake-catchers in the cities. On the course with me were two road construction managers, who said they needed to be trained, because when the machinery begins to remove the ground, snakes, seek refuge in the building material. Killing them is dangerous. Many people get bitten when they try to kill snakes.

Like with horses; I have a healthy respect for these much-maligned creatures of God who are a necessary part of the biodiversity of life. Without our snake comrades, rodents, geckoes and frogs will rule the night.

So, I guess you're thinking that by telling these personal experiences of managing fear, that I am trying to coax you into thinking that I am promoting the old cliché, to overcome fear you must confront the fear. No, **your journey will be different to mine.**

Continues on page 14

But I guess I am saying **very simply get another perspective on what you fear. And when you experience trauma, talk and talk to another human; talk honestly aloud to God; not whispers; about the experience even if each version gets embellished.**

A psychologist who trained me in elementary trauma counselling emphasised that **talking about one's traumatic experience within the first seventy-two hours will alleviate any future severe symptoms.**

Exaggerated fear makes us speak untruths as a defence mechanism; Some years back a colleague said he is leaving for Australia. "Is God calling you there?" "Oh yes." "No tell me really why are going through all this hassle of moving?" It turns out via other sources, this colleague, this man of God, was leaving because there is too much violence in South Africa. Fear can make us speak untruths as a defence mechanism. Just say, "I am leaving because I am scared." That's okay. This honesty could be the start of the healing journey.

Be this as it may, I hear Wesley saying: 'Don't go to those who need you, but those who need you most.' You get my point, (or maybe the Aussies are more in need than us living in Southern African.) God bless you, my brother. If we see the demographics of who of our ministers are leaving the MCSA, for other first world countries, it tells its own story. **Is fear the main factor?**

"Fear not!" is the most repeated command in the Bible. In fact, it's been said that there are 365 "Fear nots" in the Bible — one "Fear not" for every day of the year! Lloyd Ogilvie in Facing the Future without Fear even said there are 366 "Fear nots" in the Bible, one for every day of the year, including Leap Year!

Yes, we all need to hear these words over and over again — especially every time we experience real violence or are told about a violent incident that happened to someone you know. Sometimes the latter over activates our imagined violence, increasing our fear and perhaps even causing secondary trauma.

The story of humanity is a story of trauma: There is a strong body of research that is showing that the entire scripture, especially the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) was written by and for a traumatised nation. Hence the extensive use of hyperbolic language.

Irish rock band U2's front man Bono, in conversation with a prominent Christian Leader, once said that **the Psalms are the blues of the Bible.**

One need only read Psalm 22, which Jesus quoted on the cross. "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Read on. Imagine singing the following from Psalm 22 to a Blues tune.

Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?

² *O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night but find no rest.*

³ *Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.*

⁴ *In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them.*

⁵ *To you they cried and were saved; in you they trusted and were not put to shame.*

In her book *Ezekiel as Trauma Literature* [Ruth Poser](#) shows us how the book of Ezekiel as a theological involvement with the besiegement, conquest, and destruction of Jerusalem at the beginning of the sixth century BCE, and with the related mass deportations in 597 and 587 BCE. Poser identifies and examines "some of the book's traumatic discourses, with a special focus on the tropes of eating and drinking. It explains how the depicted scenes function to articulate the concrete bodily dimensions of the horrors of war, embedding the experience of famine as a core element in the siege's cultural memory."

Sarah Emmanuel book *A narrative of Biblical Studies and world of Trauma* (2019), is worth a read.

Reading Ezekiel in particular, all of scripture in general Old Testament and New Testament, through the filters of nations; communities who are traumatised and scared most of the time, it shows for me how critical the role of the prophets and priests were and are to bring an assured word from God that; 'hey it's okay, you'll get through this: *Fear not* لا تخافوا, *אל פחד*;

Are not wars fought between two or more traumatised nations? Each hiding their fear behind ideological platitudes?

So, if this is our experience in the twenty first century; that our nation and all nations are in essence traumatised and playing out their anger against each other, then we are in good company with the ancients. Perhaps the only difference is that we as twenty first century humans have extremely advanced dangerous weaponry alongside our hugely unevolved morality and ethics.

This is why we need to listen out for the modern-day prophets and priests who bring us a word of uncomfortable and inconvenient challenge together with hope. Healing, justice and the greatest of these is Love. These voices will come from unexpected and surprising sources, not necessarily the church.

Let's face it we in Southern Africa are a traumatised people. We are angry; we are fearful; we want to rage violence on each other, often using the most vulnerable as our punching bags; we want the good life of luxury to escape the raging tsunami of fear; anger.

We are often self-loathing of ourselves and each other. We often feel like the Psalmist "but I am a worm and not human, scorned by others and despised by the people. This is not a new experience, hear then the cry of the psalmist: "All who see me mock me; they sneer at me; they shake their heads;"

Then the still voice of God enters this space and these are the words we need to hear: "Commit your cause to the Lord; let him deliver— let him rescue the one in whom he delights!" I lead you beside still waters....

Continues on page 15

But can we hear this in such a way that it rewires our damaged neuro-pathways, whose default pulls us toward fear and self-loathing?

Just read the much-quoted valley of dry bones in Ezekiel 37. Only a traumatised people after years of war, exile, slavery, will see themselves as dry bones. Into the narrative steps the sense-maker prophet Ezekiel – he offers a pathway; God's pathway out of this fearful mindset. (Ezekiel 37)
This pathway has led to a healing and transformational moment in the journey of the ancient traumatised people called Hebrews. A moments respite, but soon they will be faced with the same reality of war, exile, internal strife. Traumatized yet again. In today's terms we refer to this as **multiplying trauma**.

In KZN in recent times, in the 80/90's we were ripped apart by Apartheid sponsored violence leaving thousands of dead; displaced and homeless people. This violence was exported to other parts of SA. No sooner had a compromised, brokered peace help decline the killings; when the spectre of HIV & AIDS became the frontrunner, AIDS denialism it is said caused the death of around 300 000 persons in SA. Then 2020 arrives; KZN was the epicentre, with the first recorded case of COVID-19. Many became severely ill. Many died. Trauma was compounded by not being next to a dying loved one, COVID denialism killed thousands. We began to surface from the trauma of hard lockdowns and then 2021; Mozambique erupted and the war escalated; in Cabo Delgado death and displacement were everywhere; eSwatini, protesters were killed; in SA, July unrest eight days of madness; it's not over yet; 2022 floods in Mozambique; KZN; Eastern Cape; 2023 Floods in the Western Cape; the pandemic of GBV persists; children are abused and killed.... **and the trauma multiplies.**

Yes, we need to say fear not we need to hear God tell us every day fear not 366 times every day 24/7.

Like the shepherds, who overcame their terror, after the angels calmed them; they found the vulnerable baby in a humble space with confused parents. Jesus: The light of the world had come; the light of the world still comes to those in dark traumatised spaces; the light of the world sends the healers, who listen as you debrief; as you feel your trauma beginning to lift.... for the moment.... How many times O Lord....??? I will act, says the Lord."

Yes, I doubt I have fully overcome my fears completely; but I am less neurotic and have a healthy respect and affinity with the sea, horses and snakes.

I have been skimming through the fantasy- horror author/Stephen King's semi-autobiographical book: *On Writing. A Memoir of the craft*. In a conversation with his son Joe. Joe tells his dad,

*"I sometimes think it's a basic misunderstanding of my dad's work that he sells fear. **Politicians sell fear. I've always thought my dad's stories sold bravery....**"*

To overcome fear is hugely brave; it takes immense courage.

My wife often says insurance companies, always sell us fear. What will happen to your family when you die? What happens if you are involved in a car accident?

Perhaps in the church we also sell fear? If you don't do x or y? God will punish you! How many times have we heard: "This is a punishment from God, "when adversity comes our way.

The early disciples were gathered in the upper room absolutely traumatised and terrified. Their leader; whom they loved was murdered at the hands of the authorities; religious and secular.

Were they next? The best thing was to lie low till all of this drama blew over ... **and then Jesus appears.**

What are his first words: **Peace be with you**; subtext don't be afraid. Fear is transformed to joy in the moment. (John 20:19ff) Was this peace permanent? I don't think so, later on the same disciples would face traumatic persecution and be accused of all sorts of despicable inhumane things, including cannibalism; this is the way the eucharist was misunderstood: **"During this part of the service, the 'body of Christ' is consumed and his 'blood' drunk."** If one did not understand what this meant in the context of Holy Communion then cannibalism is suspected (Read the article on this subject *Incest, Infanticide, and Cannibalism: Anti-Christian Imputations in the Roman Empire* by Bart Wagemakers (2010)

Yet the assurance of the presence of Jesus made them bolder to face their worst fears, even death.

Look at **Stephen** in Acts 6–7 stoned to death with rocks. This must have been awful. He knelt down and shouted, **"Lord, don't blame them for what they have done"**, in that critical moment when death stared him in the face: **'Fear not' got the upper hand.**

The resurrection became more real for the early people of the Way. Streams of teachings sprung up of life before and after death... the assurance above all things was the assurance of God's all-consuming love. Fear became easier to bear.

For me the following theological insight is extremely helpful in the face of stress, trauma and fear.

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8)

Tell of your traumatic experience constantly, especially within the first seventy-two hours. Say 'fear not' daily for 365 days. Read this passage aloud daily for 365 days until it rewires your neuro-pathways from fear to freedom. Peace be with you... If the fear persists – seek professional assistance.



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WHAT TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN DECEMBER

December	10	Namibia Human Rights Day
December	15	MCO Closes
December	16	South African Day of Reconciliation
December	25	Christmas Day
December	26	Day of Goodwill
December	28	Swaziland Incwala Day

IN MEMORIAM

*Loving, God, who brought us to birth
help us to live as those who are prepared for death.
Enable us to obey Your call to receive the baton
and run the race set before us.
Thank you Lord Jesus that You are the author
and finisher of our race.
Amen*

Rev Dalene Jordaan

