



MISSION CONGRESS 2025

A Pilgrimage of Renewal

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Members of the Connexional Executive (CE) on the second day of the Mission Congress at Northfield Methodist Church, Benoni.

BIBLE STUDY WITH REV ALAN STOREY – PART 1

Written by Rev Ralph Afghan,



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Rev Alan Storey led us into a space where the role of the prophet was reimagined. The prophet, he reminded us, is not a special person elevated above others, but simply one called to tell the truth. And yet, what does truth sound like in an over-polluted space where lamentations are drowned out, silenced, or ignored?

We were confronted with an unfamiliar lamentation from Gaza, where the cries of war echo devastation: disintegrated communities, fractured family life, the erosion of human value, and the denial of the right to life itself. But as those words were read, we were also reminded that lament does not only exist out there, it is also among us. The murmuring pains in Gaza mirror the conflicts and fractures within our own family, the MCSA. Rev Storey cautioned us soberly: each of us has the potential to become what we hate.

BIBLE STUDY WITH REV ALAN STOREY – PART 1

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Turning to Isaiah 1, he laid bare how Scripture names injustice: a corrupted system where leaders accept bribes and ignore the cries of the vulnerable. Justice, we were reminded, is not an optional extra, nor a theological suggestion. Justice is a divine command, inseparable from repentance and from being in right relationship with God.

Rev Storey did not allow us to reduce this Mission Congress to another conference of reports and resolutions. We do not gather here simply to learn that our house, the MCSA, is on fire. We already know that the fires of poverty, exclusion, mistrust, and spiritual emptiness rage around us. What our communities need is not another mandate, nor another document, they need the resurrection.

Resurrection, as he reminded us, is not an abstract doctrine but the reviving of what is dead, the bringing to life of what has been left powerless. Unless the MCSA embraces resurrection, we cannot achieve our objective to relocate and reposition ourselves as the alternative community of God.

Drawing on the words of Jesus in Matthew 23:27, Rev Storey warned against becoming whitewashed tombs, appearing righteous outwardly but inwardly corrupt and spiritually lifeless. The tombs of hypocrisy, fear, greed, envy, indifference, and institutional idolatry must be dismantled if new life is to take root. And echoing the warning of Deuteronomy 8, he urged us not to forget the Lord our God, especially in moments of prosperity, lest we grow proud and perish.

We were called back to the essentials of Micah 6:8 — but read in reverse:

- **To walk humbly with our God.**
- **To love mercy.**
- **To act justly.**

Such a reversal draws us into the heart of discipleship: to walk with God is to become fully human, not more than human; to love mercy is to reflect the radical love of Christ which has no favourites; to act justly is to be vigilant against exclusion, exploitation, and inequality.

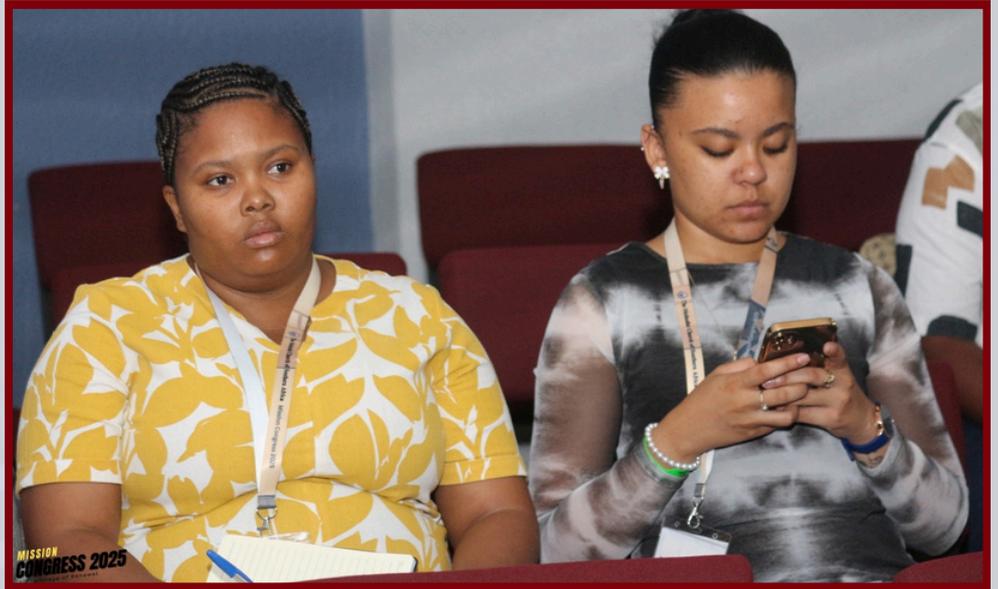
Again and again, we were pressed to hear that resurrection requires pruning, cutting away the power that clings to positions and embodying true discipleship in our actions. To ignore Isaiah's call to right relationship with God is to persecute Christ himself. And persecution, we were reminded, Jesus takes personally.

What does this mean for us today as a church in the MCSA

For us in the MCSA today, this means we must move beyond words and reports into the lived reality of resurrection, where dead structures and lifeless practices are revived by the Spirit of Christ. It calls us to dismantle the tombs of hypocrisy, fear, and institutional idolatry, so that justice, mercy, and humility can be embodied in our communities. Above all, it summons us to a discipleship that walks with God in radical love and prophetic witness, becoming an alternative community of hope in a broken world.



DAY TWO AT MISSION CONGRESS 2025 IN NORTHFIELD WAS FILLED WITH WORSHIP, REFLECTION, AND DIALOGUE AS DELEGATES DISCERNED GOD'S CALL FOR MISSION TODAY.



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