

ANOTHER DIMENSION

SEPTEMBER 2025



The Methodist Church
of Southern Africa

MESSAGE TO THE METHODIST PEOPLE CONFERENCE 2025



RELOCATED
and
REPOSITIONED
for
MISSION & MINISTRY
The other side awaits

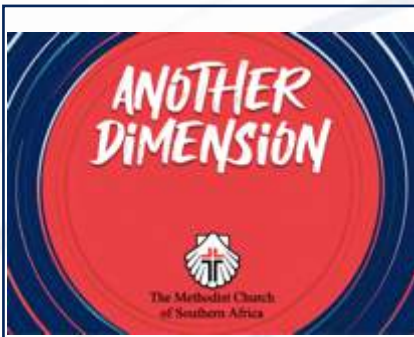


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The 135th Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, held in the Highveld and eSwatini District, was not merely an administrative gathering but a sacred moment of discernment, a time of holy listening, courageous decision-making, and collective seeking of God's will. The Conference aligns itself with the Discernment Statement from the Mission Congress 2025 which urged the Methodist Church of Southern Africa to move from talk to action, embrace its Christian, Methodist, and African identity, deepen spirituality, practice inclusivity, and courageously step into God's new future with faith and repentance.

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The theme, “Relocated and Repositioned for Mission & Ministry – The Other Side Awaits,” reminds us that transition is not about geography but about purpose. To be relocated is to be shifted by God into new spaces of challenge and opportunity; to be repositioned is to be strategically placed for greater impact. The “other side” calls us to courage, anticipation, and readiness for what God has prepared.

In discernment, the Conference recognised both the urgency of renewal and the hope of transformation. The Conference named its challenges as inward-focused budgets, power struggles, lack of accountability, and misuse of social media, while affirming the call to integrity, justice, and prophetic witness. The Conference discerned that silence in the face of injustice is no longer an option; the Church must move from reactive “ambulance ministry” to proactive mission that addresses the root causes of suffering.

Through prayerful reflection, five imperatives emerged:

1. **Financial and Administrative Transformation** – Shifting resources from maintenance to mission. This to be achieved by fostering transparent stewardship, sustainable income, accountable governance, and mission-driven systems that align resources with ministry. The church must prioritise ministers’ wellbeing through holistic support systems while safeguarding probationer ministers with mentorship, accountability, and nurturing environments that enable them to flourish in their calling.
2. **Intentional Leadership Training of Laity and Clergy** at Society, Circuit, and District levels. This is to be reported on at Circuit meetings, District Synods, and to Conference 2026. This will include the work of training for leaders of small groups, which will include classes, Bible Study groups, and fellowship groups.
3. **Ethical and Spiritual Renewal** – There is a concern around ethical conduct of clergy and laity across the Connexion. In response to this, efforts should be made in restoring integrity and accountability in leadership, deepening discipleship through prayer, Word, and sacrament, confronting sin and injustice with courage, and cultivating a Spirit-led community that reflects Christ’s values in both personal conduct and collective witness.

4. **Social Engagement** – Revitalisation of our prophetic voice by standing with the oppressed and confronting injustice with courage.
5. **Unity and Mission** – Embodying love, inclusivity, and radical hospitality in the spirit of Missio Dei. This is to be achieved by fostering reconciliation and inclusivity within the body, building a shared vision rooted in Christ, and mobilising all members to serve together in advancing the Church’s witness and impact in the world.

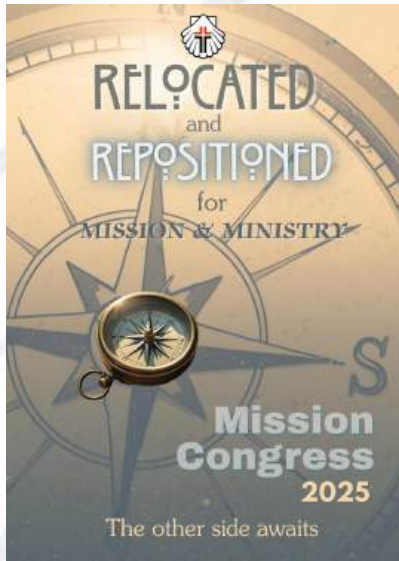
Discernment also led us to honour those who laboured before us, drawing strength from their witness and comfort from Revelation 7:9-17. Their journey reminds us that even in seasons of exile or “spiritual Patmos,” God is at work repositioning us for renewal. The process of relocation and repositioning was witnessed as we heard God affirming the call of ordinands as they were received into full Connexion and committing to the rules and regulations of the Church. As they have journeyed for many years, this act became a moment of starting a voyage to go on the other side because indeed the “other side awaits”.

The Conference concluded with a clear conviction: the world waits for a Church that embodies hope, courage, and joy in Christ. To discern God’s call is to embrace discomfort, cross new frontiers, and live as a community of faith that is one and undivided.

The other side awaits. Let us move together, guided by the Spirit, with ears attuned to God’s voice and hearts ready for faithful obedience.



MISSION CONGRESS 2025 DISCERNMENT STATEMENT



From 15-17 September 2025, we gathered at Northfield Methodist Church. We gathered from north and south, from east and west, as the people of God called Methodist. We gathered from Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, and South Africa. We gathered speaking different languages, called together by one God, empowered by one Spirit, worshipping one Saviour. We gathered as a pilgrim people, on a journey of renewal. We gathered as

a vibrant, vocal, and sometimes chaotic people. In our gathering, we sang, laughed, cried, listened, and wrestled together. God's Spirit disrupted our plans, confronted us with ourselves and the world, and invited us into a new journey of faithful discipleship.

Who we are:

We are a people who, in our discerning together:

- Must face the complexity of identity. We are Christian, we are Methodist, we are African – even as we struggle with what this means. We are called to revive our evangelical identity, personal conversion, and social holiness. We must wrestle with accountable discipleship. Who we are should be easy to define: we know the words, yet we continue to wrestle with the intricacies of holding various layers and nuances of identity in a world (and a Church) that is more comfortable with absolutes. We are diverse people from across the Connexion, and yet: we default to certain languages in our worship. We are diverse people, yet the expression of that diversity in racial terms is extremely limited.
- Must confront the truth that we are a people of theory, not practice. We talk, but do not implement. We are a church blessed with systems, constitutions, policies, and resolutions. On paper, much of what we need for governance already exists. However, we lack the moral courage to implement and enforce our own policies, especially when it is costly or uncomfortable.
- Must discover again and again the challenges of working together, of offering listening as an act of hospitality. We are not always patient with one another. Yet, we experience together the powerful movement of God's Spirit in our singing together, in our praying together, in our talking together, in our wrestling together. We explore what it means to trust God, who works in chaos and out of whose work comes a miracle. We are invited to become part of the miracle of God.

What we do:

We are a people who, in our discerning together:

- Must receive the challenge: How do we hold the work of discernment in a meaningful way? A statement which is produced simply for the sake of having one is an affront to Jesus, and to the Church.
- Must wrestle with whether or not we can trust the disruptive

interventions of God's Spirit? Can we trust one another when things do not go our way – when we get frustrated by our own struggles/chaos? Can we trust God to hold us?

- Must hear the gospel call to resurrection. This call requires us to recognise and acknowledge that 'we have followed too much the devices and desires of our hearts,...and there is no health in us.' We are dead, we are dying. We live comfortably in our whitewashed tombs and comfortable opulence.
- Must hear the gospel call to intentional humility – the shaping of relationships of radical equality. We are called to accompany God, and to allow God to transform us into our full humanity. Clarity, capability, and care are crucial to this work.
- Must seek the courage to change and be transformed, to be a prophetic voice in the world today. Our worship in song continues to bless and renew, to energise and enthuse, to heal and hold. Our worship in service is still often lip service, form without power, words without deeds. We have resolutions but no follow-through.

Where we go:

We are a people who, in our discerning together:

- Are on a journey, at a Kairos time, a season of new beginnings and intentional preparation for God's future. We are poised on a threshold of possibilities – will we step into the new, out of what we know and what is familiar, or will we remain where we are, risking complete irrelevance while continuing to talk about '...the other side'?
- Are challenged to continue exploring what it means to be both African and Christian. This would include the ongoing deconstruction and reconstruction of liturgy and expressions of worship which are inclusive, the application of Ubuntu as foundational to our theological reflection, pastoral care, and mission.
- Are called into deepening our spirituality through an intentional focus on class meetings / small group meetings over the next few years, with training of class/group leaders, producing and sharing relevant Wesleyan material.
- Are invited into more intentional accountability around the use of the resources at our disposal, particularly relating to financial, property, and social media resources.
- Are called to move from recognition of our diversity to full inclusion, noting that the legislation on gender and age representation in our gatherings and structures is still, for many, a matter of external compliance only.
- Are challenged to greater consistency and purposefulness in the application of our discipline, both in terms of the Book of Order and in terms of our well-being.

Conclusion: The Other Side Awaits

We stand at the threshold. Will we choose death, or will we choose life? Will we cross over, or will we keep God and the other side waiting?

Moving to the other side must take us through the wilderness. Moving to the other side requires honest reflection, confession of our sins, and continuous considered choosing of Jesus and his gospel.

Moving to the other side must be characterised by tenderness of conscience.

We are called to be relocated and repositioned for mission and ministry. The other side awaits.

DO NOT BETRAY THE SACRED TRUST: PB NZIMANDE CHARGES ORDINANDS

At the 135th Conference of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA), the highlight was the ordination service, where men and women who had been called, nurtured, and trained for ministry were set apart for service. Preaching from Exodus 30:17-21 and Acts 20:25-31, the Presiding Bishop, Rev. Pumla Nzimande issued a powerful charge under the theme: "Do Not Betray the Sacred Trust."

A Sacred Moment in Holy Conferencing

Reflecting on the journey to Conference 2025, which began with the Connexional Executive, continued into the Mission Congress, and culminated in the week of Holy Conferencing, Rev. Nzimande declared: "Ebenezer, thus far the Lord has helped us."

"Ordination," the preacher reminded the church, "is always the high point of Conference. It is the moment when those who have been in the 'seedbed' of seminary and probation are declared 'worthy' and transplanted into wider ministry across the Connexion."

The Times We Live In

The newly ordained were reminded that they enter ministry at a difficult time when economies are struggling, fuelling poverty, unemployment, gender-based violence, substance abuse, and crime. Institutions once strong – the home, the school, the church – are battling to hold society together. Postmodern individualism encourages self-absorption, while the Church contends with "nominal Christians" and "consumer Christians."

Against this backdrop, she warned: "Do not betray the ministry by becoming a self-absorbed minister, a nominal minister, or a consumer of the Church's resources. You have asked to serve, not to be served."

Ministry as a Sacred Trust

Drawing from trust law, the preacher explained ministry as a sacred trust:

- The Founder of the trust is Christ, who entrusts valuable assets.
- The Trustee is the minister, who must faithfully administer these gifts.
- The Beneficiaries are God's people, who must never be exploited or misused.

"Do not betray the ministry," Rev. Nzimande emphasised, "because it is a sacred trust. Ours is a delegated

responsibility from Christ, the true owner of the Church."

Four Charges to the Ordained

1. Keep Your Hands Clean

Like the Old Testament watchman who sounded the alarm, ministers must warn, protect, and guide God's people. Paul could declare his hands clean because he had spoken the truth and kept watch over the flock.

The Presiding Bishop urged the ordinands to guard against worldliness and conflict; to lead with integrity in conduct, character, and speech. She advised them not to inflict pain but tend to the wounded and for them to keep both hands and hearts pure before God.

2. Keep Watch Over Yourself

Before guarding the flock, ministers must guard themselves. Pride, riches, and pleasure were identified as temptations that can derail ministry.

"All great revivals begin with self," Rev. Nzimande reminded. "If you want peace, make peace. If you want accountability, account. If you want respect, give respect. Guard yourself."

3. Be Shepherds of the Church of God

The ordained were charged to shepherd God's people with humility and love. The Church, described as the body of Christ, the bride of Christ, and the people purchased by the blood of Christ, must never be exploited or abused.

"Lead not as though you are leading fools," she warned. "When you serve the poor, the elderly, the sick, or the young, you look into the eyes of God."

4. Beware the Wolves

Finally, the preacher noted Paul's warning in Acts: "Fierce wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock." The wolves of corruption, prejudice, poverty, ignorance, hatred, and abuse are already present.

"Do not betray the sacred trust by becoming a wolf yourself," the preacher said. "Do not exploit, manipulate, or discard people. Be the shepherd who smells like the sheep, present in boardrooms, in communities, and in the public square, guarding the flock against destruction."

A Call to Faithful Endurance

The sermon concluded with the image of nomadic shepherds who, when the valleys grew too hot, led their flocks to graze on the mountains. Likewise, ministers were urged to retreat to God's presence in prayer, drawing strength for the heavy load of ministry.

"Do not betray the sacred trust because of heat," the Presiding Bishop exhorted. "When ministry feels overwhelming, ascend the mountain of the Lord. There you will find renewal. There you will find the strength to serve faithfully."

The Ordination Sermon of 2025 was both a charge and a warning: ministry is not employment but vocation; not ownership but trusteeship. With humility, vigilance, and faithfulness, ministers were sent forth as trustees of God's Church, with the lasting reminder ringing in their ears:

"Do not betray the sacred trust!"



Rev. Angela Sapelo Mabeo



Rev. Puseletso Mokoena



Rev. Effah Atuahene

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Rev. Akhona Masiza



Rev. Ntombohlenga Naam



Rev. Derrick Maphumulo



Rev. Nomveliso Kaba



Rev. Mpho Masera



Rev. Itumeleng Masina



Rev. Sixolile Sokujika



Rev. Nomvula Phungula



Rev. Jantjie Polo



Rev. Nonhlanhla Mnisi-Nxumalo



Rev. Xolile Ntshotsho



Rev. Monde Mchunu



Rev. Walter van Wyk



Rev. Lydia Majela



Rev. Ntobikhoyo Mtendeni



Rev. Lebohang Thelejane-Louw



Rev. Thabo Losaba



Rev. Darell Denere



Rev. Linda Magengenene-Moyake



Deacon Thabo Sejanamane



TRUTH-TELLING AND RESURRECTION: REFLECTIONS ON REV. ALAN STOREY'S MISSION CONGRESS BIBLE STUDIES

A Reflection by Rev Ralph Afghan

At the heart of Mission Congress, Rev. Alan Storey invited us into a journey of truth-telling and resurrection, leading us through two days of Bible Study and devotion that confronted both our personal lives and our corporate witness as the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA). His words unsettled, challenged, and encouraged us to reimagine what it means to be the Church in a world fractured by injustice, violence, and silence.

Day One pressed us into the prophetic imagination of Isaiah and the call to dismantle the tombs of hypocrisy, fear, and institutional idolatry in order to embody resurrection. Day Two carried us into the wilderness of Hebrews 11 and 12, where faith and honesty meet, where the faithful bear witness to truth at great cost, and where resurrection is possible only through grace.

Together, these two days offered not merely theological reflection but a summons: to walk humbly with God, to love mercy, and to act justly – allowing even our wilderness to be transformed into a classroom of grace.

Day One: The Call to Truth-Telling and Resurrection

Rev. Alan Storey reminded us that the prophet is not a rare, elevated figure but one who dares to tell the truth. Yet, what does truth sound like in a world where lament is drowned out, silenced, or ignored?

We were confronted by the lamentation from Gaza, where war has torn apart communities, families, and human dignity. Rev. Storey drew a piercing parallel: those cries are not only “out there” but also among us, echoing the fractures within the MCSA. Each of us, he warned, carries the potential to become what we most despise.

Turning to Isaiah 1, he showed how Scripture names injustice: leaders who accept bribes, systems that neglect the vulnerable, and a people who mistake outward religion for true faithfulness. Justice, he reminded us, is not optional – it is a divine command inseparable from repentance and right relationship with God.

He cautioned us against reducing Mission Congress to yet another gathering of reports and resolutions. We already know our house is on fire – the flames of poverty, exclusion, mistrust, and spiritual emptiness burn brightly. What is needed is not another mandate but resurrection.

Resurrection, he stressed, is not an abstract doctrine but the reviving of what is dead and powerless. Unless the MCSA embraces resurrection, we cannot truly reposition ourselves as God's alternative community.

Drawing on Matthew 23:27, he warned against becoming whitewashed tombs – appearing righteous outwardly while inwardly lifeless. The tombs of hypocrisy, fear, greed, envy, indifference, and institutional idolatry must be dismantled if new life is to take root. Echoing Deuteronomy 8, he reminded us not to forget the Lord in times of prosperity, lest pride destroy us.

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

- To walk humbly with God
- To love mercy
- To act justly

This reversal pressed us to the heart of discipleship: walking with God makes us truly human; loving mercy reflects Christ's radical, impartial love; acting justly resists exclusion, exploitation, and inequality.

Resurrection, then, requires pruning – cutting away power that clings to privilege and dismantling the tombs that suffocate life. To ignore Isaiah's call is to persecute Christ himself, and persecution, as Rev. Storey reminded us, Jesus takes personally.

What this means for the MCSA today:

For us, resurrection must move beyond words and reports into lived reality – where lifeless structures and practices are revived by Christ's Spirit. It demands that we dismantle hypocrisy, fear, and idolatry so that justice, mercy, and humility are embodied in our communities. Above all, it summons us to discipleship rooted in radical love and prophetic witness, becoming an alternative community of hope in a broken world.

Day Two: Wilderness, Honesty, and Grace

On the second day, Rev. Storey led us deeper into the theme of resurrection through Hebrews 11 and 12.

Hebrews 11 – the “roll call of faith” – is more than a list of heroes. It is the story of the courageous and conflicted, those who endured persecution, longed for resurrection, and bore witness to truth at great personal cost. “Whose names do you know who lost their lives for truth?” he asked. While the Church has often chosen silence, countless witnesses have paid the ultimate price for speaking truth. His question lingered: “Does the Lord have other sheep that do not belong to this fold?” reminding us that God's mission always stretches beyond our boundaries and comfort zones.

Hebrews 12 continues with that crucial “therefore,” linking their witness with our discipleship. If chapter 11 recalls the faithful, chapter 12 challenges us to face our own entanglements and run the race before us. Rev. Storey named the “gap” between the chapters as symbolic of our own disconnect: the separation of personal devotion from public witness. Yet true courage bridges both – confronting personal sin and systemic injustice together.

Here, Rev Storey turned us to the sacrament of the wilderness. Biblically, “forty” means “as long as it takes.”



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The wilderness strips away distractions, exposes our demons, and forces us into surrender. Yet, just as angels ministered to Jesus in the wilderness, so too we are not abandoned. Their whisper remains: "Fear not, your sins are forgiven."

He named shame as one of our greatest struggles – its lie that we are no longer beloved. Shame drives us into falsehood. Only when we risk truth-telling, naming our demons honestly, can we hear God's response: "You are more than enough."

But he also warned against our obsession with innocence. Innocence without truth becomes hypocrisy. When we cling to appearances rather than honesty, we become whitewashed tombs. How can the Church call a nation to repentance if it cannot confess its own sin? Hebrews 12 insists we drop the exhausting performance of worthiness and instead embrace humility, truth, and grace.

Resurrection, Rev. Storey concluded, begins when we acknowledge death – when we admit our brokenness, corruption, and lifelessness. As John Wesley observed, religion without power is only a "form of godliness." If we deny our need, we remain tombs. But when grace touches our wilderness, resurrection life takes root.

He left us with a striking image: "As for me, I can exist on cornflakes and community, as long as my soul is intact." This, he suggested, is the Eucharistic vision of the Church: we too can live on a small wafer – broken and shared – so long as our soul in Christ remains intact. This is resurrection hope: life sustained not by abundance, but by grace and by truth-filled community.

Closing Reflection

As we cross to the other side of Mission Congress, the challenge before us is resurrection itself. Day One exposed the fires of our hypocrisy, fear, and institutional idolatry. Day Two unveiled the wilderness of our sins, silences, and illusions. Together they remind us that the journey ahead is not about preserving the Church we know, but becoming the Church God desires.

The alternative community we are called to will not be built on reports or resolutions but on daily surrender to God's will. To be the people called Methodist today is to choose a daily pilgrimage – not the safe path of comfort and compromise, but the risky road across to the other side, where resurrection is lived, and where the Spirit births a new community of hope.

WE BURIED OUR LEGENDS BUT NOT THEIR LEGACIES

The Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) gathered in solemn remembrance under the theme "We Buried Our Legends But Not Their Legacies" for the Memorial Service led by Rev. Ivan Abrahams, former Presiding Bishop of the MCSA, and former General Secretary of the World Methodist Council.

The sermon was based on a reading from Revelation 7:9-17.

The service opened with the greeting that Christ gave to His disciples: "Peace be with you."



Rev. Abrahams reminded the congregation about the inscription on John Wesley's tomb at City Road Chapel in London: "If thou art constrained to bless the instrument, give glory to God." In this spirit, he offered tributes for the "noble souls" who had laboured in the MCSA and who have now entered eternal communion with God.

Rev. Abrahams reflected that for the departed, the promise of the New Jerusalem had become a reality – where every tear was wiped away, and suffering was no more. What the living still saw in part, the saints now saw in full.

The service honoured legends who had nourished the soul of the Church, lifted the eyes of the faithful to higher hope, and left footprints that had become beacons for future generations. "Though we laid our legends to rest," Rev. Abrahams said, "their legacy lives on in us."

Families of the departed were saluted and thanked for sharing their loved ones with the Church. On behalf of the MCSA, Rev. Abrahams expressed gratitude and asked for forgiveness for moments when the Church has failed to show enough appreciation or care.

He drew parallels with John's exile on Patmos, describing it as both a place and an experience of pain, wounds, and

opposition. Yet, like John, the legends of the Church held fast to the truth that "Jesus is Lord, not Caesar." The Book of Revelation, the congregation was reminded, proclaimed that salvation comes from God, and that around the throne of heaven stands a multitude from every nation and language, clothed in white and singing praises.

Hymns such as *Amazing Grace*, *My Chains Fell Off*, and *When the Saints Go Marching In* were recalled as songs that the legends had sung with conviction. The assurance was given that they are now counted among the saints in glory.

Rev. Abrahams emphasised that death was not the end. "Death is not a cul-de-sac, not a full stop, but a comma in God's scheme of things," he said. "One did return, and His name is Jesus Christ, the Lord of Life."

The best way to honour the departed, the congregation heard, was to renew a commitment to Christ, the Prince of Peace, and to work for justice and dignity for all people. Their legacy lived on in those who remained, calling them to perseverance and faith.

The service closed with Christ's farewell words: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you... Let not your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid."

SOME FACES AT CONFERENCE 2025



SOME FACES AT MISSION CONGRESS 2025



FROM IDENTITY TO TRANSFORMATION: PROPHETIC VOICES AT MISSION CONGRESS

The layering at Mission Congress continued the second and third day. While Day 1 focused on remembering our identity in Christ, Day 2 moved further to focus on being transformed by the renewing of our minds and Day 3 pointed forward, because the other side awaits.

A thought-provoking panel discussion was held at Day 2 of Mission Congress. Rev. John Wessels reflected on the topic “Spirituality, Discipleship, and Evangelism”; Rev. Juliet Windvogel on “Prophetic Witness and Social Justice”; Mr Hlonelikhaya Klaas on “Leadership, Governance, and Ministerial Wellbeing”; Rev. Dr Martin Mujinga on “Sustainable Resources and Innovative Communication”; and Dr Tebo Chirunga on “African Identity and Contextual Theology”.

The Church was urged to confront the crisis of African identity. Dr Chirunga warned that the Church cannot define its mission without first answering the question, “Who is an African?” His reflection criticised conformity to capitalism, materialism, and individualism, calling instead for renewal rooted in Ubuntu, justice, and dignity. “What use is growth if it leaves us strangers to ourselves?” delegates were asked.

Quoting theologians and leaders such as Gabriel Setiloane, Desmond Tutu, and Allan Boesak, the preacher argued that African culture is not a barrier to faith but a place where God’s presence dwells. Delegates were urged to embark on a threefold journey of deconstruction, reconstruction, and transformation, to move from being merely a Church in Africa to becoming an authentically African Church.

Hlonelikhaya linked leadership, governance, and wellbeing to transformation, stressing that transformation requires more than vision – it demands renewed systems. Using the metaphor “Leadership is the voice, governance the microphone, and wellbeing the breath,” he warned that if one element is missing, the church’s message will not carry. He also noted that while decisions are often made, they die in implementation, leaving clergy overstretched and their wellbeing neglected.

Citing global statistics, he highlighted that workplace disengagement and burnout threaten both mission and ministry. He proposed a “3Cs” framework: Clarity in governance – ensuring decisions, accountability, and monitoring are well defined; Capability in leadership – creating growth pathways, mentorship, and essential skills training; and Care for wellbeing – through structured systems like sabbaticals, counselling, financial literacy, and regular check-ins. “Healthy governance leads to healthy people, and healthy people sustain a healthy mission,” he concluded. Transformation, he insisted, must be built on renewed systems, not just renewed slogans.

Rev. Juliet Windvogel, speaking on Prophetic Witness and Social Justice, challenged the MCSA to rediscover its prophetic voice for today’s world. She reflected on the church’s historic role in opposing apartheid but warned that its witness has since been “dented” by conformity and silence in the face of ongoing injustice. “Has the MCSA lost her prophetic voice?” she asked,

urging the Church to reclaim authenticity in calling out sin and standing with those on the margins.

Her reflection highlighted the need for inclusivity, diversity, and intergenerational engagement, particularly addressing the exclusion of women, children, youth, and the LGBTIQ+ community from full participation in church life. Prophets, she argued, must be “aligned with the times,” confronting poverty, gender-based violence, sexual abuse, and economic inequality with courage and conviction. “Our task is to renew not only our minds but the very soul of the institution,” she concluded, calling on the MCSA to become a prophetic Church once again – one that embodies mercy, justice, and radical inclusivity in the 21st century.

Using the success stories of the Methodist Church in Ghana, Rev. Dr Martin Mujinga shared what is possible when a church is “of one mind” and united in action. The Methodist Church in Ghana managed to pool resources internally and built a world-class 16-storey building during Covid-19. As we discussed assessment remodelling, we were challenged to recognise that resource mobilisation is possible in new and sustainable ways.

Rev. John Wessels urged the MCSA not to go the way of Kodak, which refused to innovate and change with the times and lost significance. Referencing Mark 8:34-35, Wessels called on the MCSA to take up the cross, which he defined as: taking upon ourselves the pain of society...to be in solidarity with the hurting and hungry, the oppressed, abandoned, and impoverished. It is to be one with and for them, so that they feel that the Good News has come to them; that they are not alone, but that they are accompanied and real help is at hand.

The Other Side Awaits

Day 3 of Mission Congress 2025 convened under the stirring theme: “The Other Side Awaits.” This theme, drawn from Mark 4:35, is not a passive suggestion but a prophetic call to action: *“Let us go across to the other side.”*

Reclaiming African Sovereignty and Prophetic Authenticity

Dr. Learnmore Godfrey Chirunga delivered a powerful reflection, challenging the church to confront its theological dependency on foreign frameworks and to embrace an authentically African theology. For too long, he argued, African faith had been moored on foreign shores – received as a packaged product that often forced believers to choose between being Christian and embracing African identity. This, he warned, had created a deep theological dissonance.

“The time has come for this era to end,” Dr. Chirunga declared. “The command of Jesus to cross over is a mandate to leave behind theological dependency and step onto the shore of prophetic authenticity.”

The “Other Side,” he explained, is the shore of reclaimed sovereignty – where Africans decisively reject the falsehood

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that God arrived with colonial powers. The God of Scripture was already present in African histories, communities, and sacred traditions. Far from being obstacles, African concepts of justice, community, and sacredness are vessels uniquely prepared to carry the truth of the Gospel.

Here, the African Church must stop being a perpetual student and instead become an architect of theology – speaking with authority from its own context.

Prophetic Confrontation

But the Other Side is not a place of comfort or conformity. Drawing on Christ's encounter in Gerasa, Dr Chirunga reminded the Congress that crossing over leads to confrontation. The demons of corruption, tribalism, and economic injustice must be named and confronted directly.

"A theology that does not confront is a theology that condones," he warned. "How long will the church remain silent while politicians loot the nations? How long will pulpits bless tribal divisions instead of dismantling them? How long will we preach prosperity while our people are chained in poverty?"

Contextual Theology, he insisted, is not an academic luxury but a tool of liberation.

Leadership, Governance, and Wellbeing

Picking up on this theme of transformation, Hlonelikhaya Klaas reminded delegates that crossing over requires not only prophetic courage but also renewed systems. Using a vivid metaphor, he said: "Leadership is the voice, governance the microphone, and wellbeing the breath. If one element is missing, the church's message will not carry."

He lamented that while decisions are often taken within the church, many "die in implementation," leaving clergy overstretched and their wellbeing neglected. Citing global statistics, Klaas warned that workplace disengagement and burnout threaten both mission and ministry.

He proposed a practical framework, the "3Cs":

- Clarity in governance – ensuring decisions, accountability, and monitoring are well-defined.
- Capability in leadership – creating growth pathways, mentorship, and essential skills training.
- Care for wellbeing – through structured support such as sabbaticals, counselling, financial literacy, and regular check-ins.

"Healthy governance leads to healthy people," he concluded, "and healthy people sustain a healthy mission."

Transformation, he insisted, cannot be reduced to slogans – it must be built on renewed systems that give life to prophetic witness.

Platform for the Marginalised

Returning to the theme, Dr Chirunga reminded the Congress that the Other Side is also the platform for marginalised voices. The first witness Christ left in Gerasa was not a trained disciple, but the man he had liberated from chains.

"This is the model of an authentic African theology," he explained. "It must not be theology done on behalf of the poor,

but theology that emerges from their lived realities and is articulated through their own voices."

He cautioned that too often the Church prefers polished conference halls to the cries of the streets, and English theological debates to the lived struggles of people asking for bread in Setswana, Zulu, or Shona. True African theology, he stressed, must be rooted in the voices of the marginalised, not silencing them.

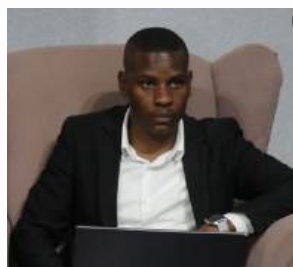
The Choice Before Us

Dr Chirunga concluded with a challenge. The journey to the Other Side will not be easy; it will face storms of tradition and winds of fear. Yet the Christ who calms the storm is still in the boat.

"The choice before us is clear," he said. "We can remain anchored to the familiar shore of borrowed faith and complicit silence, or we can set sail into the turbulence, knowing that the Other Side awaits – an African church shaped by identity, contextual theology, and prophetic courage."

He closed with a question that left the Congress in sober reflection:

"When history looks back on us, will it say we were the generation that crossed over...or the one that kept the Other Side waiting?"



QUOTABLE QUOTES FROM THE PRESIDING BISHOP'S CONFERENCE 2025 ADDRESS

On the State of the World

"The world is a global village, yet it has become a brutal world stripped of ethics, morals, and integrity."

"The victims of every conflict are unmistakable: the weak, the vulnerable, women, children, people living with disabilities, and minorities."

On Poverty and Inequality

"Poverty in Africa continues to wear most clearly the faces of women and children."

"Hope has withered, and many have begun to live eschatologically – surviving only with their eyes fixed on the life to come."

On the Church's Identity and Calling

"The Church remains the hope of the hopeless – we are, indeed, dealers of hope."

"It is incongruent to call ourselves the Church while being self-serving, deaf to the cries of the poor, and too busy with our own politics to hear their agony."

"Methodists, we have demoted mission and promoted maintenance – and this has cost us dearly."

On Transformation and Risk

"Relocation means moving from a culture of blame to a culture of responsibility."

"Yes, it is risky to disturb the status quo. But if we are to relocate and reposition, we must take the risk – and declare with conviction: Not in our name."

"It is the storm, the wrestling, and the confrontation of issues that will propel the MCSA forward – not the comfort of the shore."

On Mission and Ministry

"The mission has an Owner. The Church is not the dispenser of God – rather, God is the Owner of the Church."

"It is not the collar that makes a minister – it is the calling that makes a minister."

"Congresses, Conferences, and resolutions are not actions; they are intentions. We are not our best intentions; we are what we do."

On Crossing to the Other Side

"Whilst we play church and politicking, the other side awaits. The world is bleeding."

"Maybe it is time we ran away from the Methodist multitudes that love big gatherings and preaching to the choir – and go to the other side, where Legion needs us more than our gatherings."



"Relocation for Jesus meant the beginning of a new mission – from the ministry of excitement to the ministry of need, from the groups to the individual."

"The other side is waiting hopelessly, and we are their hope. The other side is waiting helplessly, and we are their strength. The other side is waiting miserably, and we are their joy."

"May we care more than some think is wise. Risk more than some think is safe. Dream more than some think is practical. Expect more than some think is possible."

"We are called not to comfort or success but to obedience. The other side awaits!"

WA DIARIES FOR 2026 AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

The Women's Auxiliary in the Central District of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa presents this diary, in aid of Methodist Funded Ministries and the Benevolent Fund (for the Aged).

Women's Auxiliary motto:

"To know Christ and to make him known."

Prayer for South Africa.

Heavenly Father, we gather in your presence with hearts full of gratitude for Your grace and mercy. We lift up our country and its leaders to You, asking for wisdom, integrity and compassion as they guide us through these challenging times. We remember the poor, the oppressed, and the sick. Surround them with people of compassion and love so that their load may be lightened. Please guide us in all that we do as we walk in your truth.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Further copies of this diary are available from:

Beth Kok: 083 449 6333 / Tel: 011 693 4247
Email: bethkok@mweb.co.za / helena@comprint.co.za



SANIBONANI: BE KIND TO ONE ANOTHER AND IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH

By Rev. Michael Vorster

I opened my WhatsApp and there was this message:

"Dear Mike, Sudan is facing the deadliest humanitarian crisis on Earth. Over 150,000 killed. Millions fleeing. Children dying of hunger. Hospitals collapsing. And governments are doing almost nothing."

But amid the horror, Sudanese citizens are running Emergency Response Rooms – community kitchens and clinics that feed the hungry and help families in their darkest hour. They have even been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. But now these lifelines are running out of supplies.

Together, we can help to keep them open for those who have nothing left. Experts call it the worst humanitarian catastrophe in modern history."

This is one of many genocidal scenarios in our world today. These Sudanese citizens are saving lives through acts of kindness in the darkest hour of their fellow citizens.

What for me is of concern is that we seem to decide to respond to gigantic humanitarian crises only when it is constantly in the media. Once it is out of the headlines, it disappears from our sight and interest.

I was listening to a podcast by Dr Michael Mosley on kindness. What was significant is that to be kind is very good for your health and is perhaps central to promoting Peace on Earth, however glib this may sound.

An act of kindness, according to scientists, can improve your mood, immune system, relieve pain and stress. Neuroscientist Dr Tristan Inagaki explains that in her research: "We know that deciding to be generous or cooperating with others activates an area of the brain called the striatum. Interestingly, this area responds to things we find rewarding, such as nice food and even addictive drugs."

Scripture has long since encouraged and exhorted those who are in the family of God and beyond to be kind to one another.

Proverbs 11:17 – A person who is kind self-benefits, but a cruel person contracts self-inflicted hurt.

Proverbs 31:26 – She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.

Ephesians 4:32 – Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Colossians 3:12 – Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.



1 Corinthians 13:4-7 – Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Today consider doing at least three acts of kindness, no matter how small or insignificant it may be.

- Make a cup of tea/coffee for someone (perhaps someone you do not like)
- Make time to chat with a homeless person and find out their story. Acknowledgement with a smile or interest is sure to make the person feel like a human again.
- Promote kindness on social media.

Be kind; become healthy.

Love others as you love yourself.

POSITION AVAILABLE

Bryanston Methodist Church

JUSTICE AND SERVICE ADMINISTRATOR

BMC, a large suburban church situated in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg, exists to be an instrument of Christ's Hope to our broken and fast-changing world. We are looking for a suitable candidate to fill the position of Justice & Service Administrator.

The main purpose of this full-day position is to develop, manage and grow the Justice & Service initiatives at BMC, ensuring alignment with its vision and mission through effective implementation, smooth operation, and administrative support.

SPECIFIC KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT & COMMUNICATION

Collaborate on strategy and communications to ensure Justice & Service activities align with BMC's mission and strategic goals. To identify, grow, and develop NEW outreach ministries that embody BMC's calling to serve vulnerable communities.

POLICY, COMPLIANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Ensure departmental operations adhere to church policies and procedures. Manage meetings, minutes, and administrative systems to support accountability and effective communication.

PROGRAM & INITIATIVE COORDINATION

Oversee planning, implementation, and monitoring of outreach initiatives (e.g., Mobile Meals, food drives, student programs), including food collection, sorting, distribution, and daily log maintenance, in line with hygiene and safety standards.

VOLUNTEER & MINISTRY OVERSIGHT

Coordinate and support volunteers and associated ministries. Facilitate training and create opportunities for member involvement in acts of service.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Build and maintain strong relationships with beneficiaries, church staff, ministries, and external partners to ensure effective collaboration and impact.

REPORTING & FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Prepare and submit monthly reports, including data and visual insights (e.g., food stats), to leadership. Manage petty cash, purchases, and budget tracking.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Source donations, recruit volunteers, and secure other resources needed to support outreach programs.

OPERATIONAL & VEHICLE COMPLIANCE

Monitor and ensure timely renewal of the J&S vehicle license disk in coordination with the Property Manager.

MEETING PARTICIPATION

Attend relevant staff, departmental, and leadership meetings to stay informed and provide input on Justice & Service activities.

REQUIREMENTS:

REQUIRED:

3 - 5yrs Administrative experience needed
Relevant qualifications an added advantage
Proficient in Microsoft Office applications
Excellent organisational and coordination skills
Logistical knowledge and analytical skills
Strong verbal and written communication skills
Budgeting, financial management, and reporting skills
Understanding of Methodist Ethos and values
Ability to plan, organize and manage multiple projects

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

Sociable and approachable
Demonstrates strong Christian values and beliefs
Acts with Integrity
Committed and dedicated
Flexible and adaptable
Empathetic and compassionate
Collaborative Team player

NB: Valid driver's license & good driving skills essential

Application Closing Date: Mon 20 October 2025

Starting Date: Mon 3 November 2025 (or asap)

Please submit your CV to: info@bmc.org.za



WWW.BMC.ORG.ZA / 011 463-2333 / INFO@BMC.ORG.ZA

CELEBRATING FAITH, SERVICE, AND EXCELLENCE: 2025 CONFERENCE AWARDS



The Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) continued its proud tradition of honouring individuals who embody the spirit of servant leadership, commitment to the Gospel, and dedication to community transformation at the 2025 Conference. Four exceptional leaders were recognised, each reflecting the diverse ways in which Methodists live out their calling to serve God and society.

Evangelist WG Ndzundzu: A Shepherd of Youth and Founder of Song

Evangelist WG Ndzundzu was honoured for his ministry rooted in teaching and music. As a teacher in Mlakalaka Village, King William's Town, he not only educated young minds but also guided them into deeper faith. His practice of requiring learners to recite the Sunday scripture nurtured a culture of worship among youth.

His gift for music became an evangelical tool. From persuading local choristers to join the church choir – sometimes arriving in less-than-sober states but gradually transformed by fellowship – to establishing the first Amadodana aseWesile in Mount Coke (Isigqeba), Ndzundzu demonstrated unwavering faith in God's limitless possibilities. His pioneering choir rivalled even the renowned Amadodana Oqobo of Johannesburg, eventually gaining respect across South Africa and sparking the birth of many other choirs in the Queenstown District.

Mrs. Suzan Kedisaletse Mnumzana: A Trailblazer for Women in Leadership
Affectionately known as "Suzzy" in the

Mokala-Montle District, Mrs. Suzan Mnumzana was celebrated for her distinguished service to the Church and society. At a time when women's leadership was undervalued, she held her own in spaces traditionally dominated by men. As secretary of Trust Properties, she fearlessly addressed land occupation issues, upholding justice and church integrity.

Her advocacy extended beyond administration – she was a human rights defender who risked her life in the liberation struggle. Known for her sharp understanding of church polity (MBO), she remained a trusted source of wisdom for her District. To Mokala-Montle, she was not only a leader but also a pillar of strength and inspiration.

Ms. Iris Canham: A Voice for Social Justice

Social justice activist Iris Canham was recognised for her powerful vision and commitment to advocacy. Her mission was to be a voice for the voiceless, a bridge between problems and solutions, and an advocate for community wellbeing. Her work focused on empowering communities through education, advocacy, and the development of sustainable projects that uplift quality of life.

Aligning her God-given mission with organisations and grassroots movements, Canham advanced health, purpose, and justice. Her award reflected the Church's recognition of the prophetic role of activism in today's society.

Mr. Thomas Mokhati: Musical Excellence and Evangelical Impact

Mr. Thomas Mokhati was honoured for his decades of faithful service through music ministry as a founding member of the renowned Amadodana Ase Wesile Choir. Under his guidance, the choir grew into a vital evangelical and cultural force within the Central District and beyond.

Their contributions went far beyond performance. The choir became a tool for evangelism, bringing many souls to Christ through worship. Inspired by the Wesleyan belief in the healing power of hymns, Mokhati led music that comforted, restored, and united communities.

With over 40 albums recorded since 1985, the choir shaped South Africa's cultural and spiritual life. His Award of Excellence recognised not only musical brilliance but also the resilience required to sustain such a ministry across generations.

Honouring Legacies, Inspiring Futures

The 2025 Conference Awards celebrated the breadth of faithful service within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa: from teaching and music to justice and leadership. Each recipient's story testified to the power of faith in action – ordinary men and women who, in extraordinary ways, advanced the mission of the Church and transformed communities.

By bestowing these honours, the Conference affirmed the enduring truth: that service to God and neighbour, carried out with courage and conviction, leaves a legacy that inspires generations to come.

WHAT TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN OCTOBER

October	03-05	Connexional Men's League Triennial Convocation	TBC
October	07	Medical Aid Committee	Virtual
October	08	Stipend Augmentation Meeting	Virtual
October	09	EMMU – Superintendents' Refresher Course	Virtual
October	13	Ecumenical Affairs Advisory Board Meeting	MCO
October	13-17	Order of Evangelism Training	eMseni
October	14	Connexional Audit Committee Meeting	
October	14	Mission Unit Advisory Board Meeting	MCO
October	16	Finance Unit Investment and Advisory Committee	Virtual
October	21	Connexional Unit Leaders Meeting	MCO/Virtual
October	21	Connexional Gender Justice Task Team	Virtual
October	22-23	Lay Training Advisory Panel Consultation	eMseni
October	22	Structures Standing Committee Meeting	Virtual
October	23	Revisions Standing Committee Meeting	Virtual
October	23	Supernumerary Pension Fund Meetings	Virtual
October	23	Lay Staff Pension and Provident Fund Meeting	Virtual
October	23-26	Women's Manyano Connexional CCS Workshop	Kumkani Hintsa District
October	25	Wesley Guild Connexional General Executive Council	TBC
October	25	Clarkebury District Division Committee	Mthatha
October	26	Ecumenical Reformation Sunday	
October	26	Connexional Men's League District's End of Year Function	Virtual
October	26-28	Young Women's Manyano Connexional Imbizo	
October	28	Connexional Committee on Chaplaincy Meeting	TBC
October	29	Methodist Publishing Committee	Virtual
October	29 Oct – 02 Nov	Local Preachers Association Triennial Convention	Limpopo District
October	30	Synergising the Orders Meeting	Virtual
October	30	SMMS Board Meeting	Virtual
October	30 Oct – 02 Nov	Women's Manyano Districts President's Retreat	Camdeboo District

REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY

Ordinary Time

Liturgical Colour: Green

Proper 22C – 05 October, 2025

Lamentations 1:1-6 OR Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4 – Lamentations 3:19-26 OR Psalm 37:1-9 – 2 Timothy 1:1-14 – Luke 17:5-10

Proper 23C – 12 October, 2025

Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7 OR 2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c – Psalm 66:1-12 OR Psalm 111 – 2 Timothy 2:8-15 – Luke 17:11-19

Proper 24C – 19 October, 2025

Jeremiah 31:27-34 OR Genesis 32:22-31 – Psalm 119:97-104 OR Psalm 121 – 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5 – Luke 18:1-8

Proper 25C – 26 October, 2025

Lamentations 1:1-6 OR Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4 – Lamentations 3:19-26 OR Psalm 37:1-9 – 2 Timothy 1:1-14 – Luke 17:5-10

Proper 26C – 02 November, 2025

Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4 OR Isaiah 1:10-18 – Psalm 119:137-144 OR Psalm 32:1-7 – 2 Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12 – Luke 19:1-10

Proper 27C – 09 November, 2025

Haggai 1:15b-2:9 OR Job 19:23-27a – Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21 OR Psalm 98 OR Psalm 17:1-9 – 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17 – Luke 20:27-38