

# MOWBRAY

December  
2017

# TIMES

*And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and  
we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's  
only son, full of grace and truth. John 1:14*





From top-left: Evelyn Tah and baby Delish on the occasion of the baptism of Dyron and Delish on 5 November. Session on the day of the ordination/induction of Wiza Hara, Fundi Moyo and Sylvia Godzana. The Rev. Nigel Chikanya with the Children's Church ministering in song at the Children's Service on 22 October. The Rev. Dave Smit, Di Wares, Jean Silkstone, Percy and Joy Anderson and Robbie de Jongh at the Friendship Group tea at Kirstenbosch on 10 October. Some of our young adults joined Nigel at a Young Adults' Retreat at Simonsberg, 8-10 September. Beautiful orchids lovingly nurtured by Hazel adorned one of our recent services. Ruth and baby Ninathi, Di Wares, Elsabe Burger, Tony Gordon and Aileen Rendall at the Kirstenbosch tea on 10 October. Baby Delish at her baptism service. Thabani with his son Gamelihle, celebrating his birthday.



# MOWBRAY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## CHURCH SERVICES

**Morning Worship:** 9.45 am  
(followed by tea in the hall)

**Holy Communion:** 9.45 am  
(first Sunday of every month)

\*For baptisms, weddings, counselling  
and membership, please contact the  
church office.

## CHURCH OFFICE

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

3 Dec.	8.45 am 9.45 am	Prayer meeting – Crawford House prayer room Children's surprise-giving family service
10 Dec.	7.00 pm	Carol Service in the Church
12–31 Dec.		Nigel on annual leave
17 Dec.	8.45 am	Prayer meeting – Crawford House prayer room
22–24 Dec.		Dave's weekend off
24 Dec.	9.45 am	Christmas Eve service – Douglas Bax preaching
25 Dec.	9.45 am	Christmas Day Service – Dave Smit preaching
26 Dec.		Family Day – public holiday
27–29 Dec.		Church office closed – Mowbray staff on leave
31 Dec.	9.45 am 11.15 pm	Final Sunday morning worship service of 2017 Ben's New Year's Eve worship service
2–4 Jan.		Nigel's three days off in lieu of off weekend

# PASTORAL LETTER



Dear Mowbray Family,

May God bless you this Christmas! It is already our second year here at Mowbray as a family. I trust that this magazine will once again be a source of encouragement and inspiration to you as you read the articles from different people. I would like to express a word of thanks for the love Savior and Deuel and I have received from our Mowbray family over these two years, expressed primarily in prayer but also in so many practical ways, especially as it has not been smooth for us these two years. Thank you!

As Christians, we are constantly reflecting on our personal relationship with God, through Christ. Each year we have a good reminder when we remember the birth of Christ. As we look forward to Christmas, let us not grow weary in anticipation of the second coming of Christ. This year as we approach Advent, I invite you to think about the reality of our Christian faith. Advent is what we call the season leading up to Christmas. It begins four Sundays before Christmas Day. This year Advent begins on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December. The season of Advent for me reminds us of our ongoing hope in Christ. It entails cultivating an awareness of God's actions in the past, present and future.

It is therefore our own loving relationship with Christ that helps draw others into seeking personal relationships with God, because through God's grace and the work of the Holy Spirit, God constantly reveals himself in our relationships and experiences with others. One of the key areas that came out strongly in our planning morning this year was our strong desire to develop and build our intergenerational church life. As an individual, I invite you to ask yourselves what practices we have as a church which are militating against the formation of such an intergenerational life style. As a minister who recently joined the ministry of Mowbray, I believe we still hold Christian faith as a personal relationship of love, entered and pursued through Christ and expressed in relationships with one another. It is interesting to note that as a congregation some of us have already pledged to engage in self-examination and personal transformation to be an example in embracing diversity. In order to impact our children and the future generations, we need to revisit the essence of our faith and our practices.

I have no doubt that one of the ways we influence our future generation is when we make sure they see, hear and experience Christ. As we imagine ourselves in this kind of expectation, we see glimpses of how Jesus expected his disciples to see predictions for his ministry in the entire collection of Scriptures (Luke 24:27, 44). It is not simply a few isolated prophecies, but there are plenty of unfolding truths revealed from the Old Testament. The big question is how we then foster such values in our future generation. Yes, we are all waiting and in the waiting room. Since this Mowbray Times issue comes out during Advent, we're re-enacting and remembering the thousands of years God's people were anticipating and longing for the coming of God's salvation, for Jesus. That's what Advent means – coming. According to Ryan Shelton, Advent gives us an opportunity to imagine the long-awaited coming of the Messiah, who was promised thousands of years before his arrival in Bethlehem (John 8:56; Hebrews 11:13).

**We have a challenge.** A mere observation of our demographic structure clearly shows that we are experiencing a steady reduction in numbers attending our Children's Church and Youth, and furthermore numbers remaining in the church after confirmation keep dropping. This reduction in

numbers is problematic as fewer children and youth are entering and remaining in the Christian faith. **Have we lost role models?** We need to reconsider our goals. The most important part of our calling to intergenerational church is to reconsider our response to the call as Paul suggests in Ephesians 4:1-2, to "... walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called ...". This could mean making our lives available to God in bringing children into a loving relationship with God through Christ, by being role models and messengers of the Word for them to follow. I therefore invite you to join the team of leaders in prayer and to respond to the need to form the team for our intergenerational church. **What we do, how we do it** and the strength of our commitment to this call and ministry depends almost entirely on our understanding and beliefs concerning the Christian faith.

**The spiritual needs of our children:** those who have dealt with children and young people would understand that most of our children are essentially social in nature. This nature is the result of being made in the spiritual image of God, whose nature is relational, corporate and loving. I would want to encourage all of us to ponder our very nature – the need for love and for belonging to a family. It is easy to understand why Jesus said that the two most important commandments are:

You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. The second is equally important: Love your neighbour as yourself. (Matthew 22:37–39)

Our love relationships with God and with one another are inseparable; in other words, they are equally important. This deep sense of belonging to a loving God and our need of relationships with others create within us a deep desire to live in community or fellowship with each other. There is no doubt the lives of our children and ourselves are shaped in the process. This *koinonia* (community) is essential for life, and it is essential for the survival of our heritage as we pass on to our children the Christian values. Let us therefore love each other, keep hearing the word of God and shaping each other through sharing.

God bless you all. Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous new year.

*Nigel Chikanya*

## PASTORAL PRAYER NEEDS

We pray for **Brandon Norris's** little daughter, **Hannah Jayde**. **Brandon and Kirsty** need wisdom as they wait for the right time for her to undergo surgery.

**Trevor Gracie** – Trevor has not been well and may have to undergo surgery.

**Trevor and Eleanor Gaunt** and their children, **Ruth and Jono Centurier-Harris** – We praise God for Ruth's good progress and continue to look to God as our Healer.

**Wendy Rosenthal**, daughter of **Bob and Denny Butchart** – we pray for the successful outcome of the intensive series of treatments she has recently undergone.

We pray for healing and strength for **Tony and Pat Gordon, Mel and Milly Petersen, Peter and Shirley Hyslop, and Elinor and Peter Le Riche**.

**Themba and Mildred Nyati** – Mildred is recovering from a nasty fall a few weeks ago.

**Elsje Cummock** – for healing and strength after recently undergoing surgery

**Edith Beretti, Betty Bax, Colin and Wenda Weber** – for healing and strength. Edith has been unable to get to church due to a very painful foot.

We continue to pray for grace for our matriculants as they await the results of their exams. We are aware of **Noni Nobatana, Yonela Gwadiso, Thulisa Base and Likhona Dyan**.

# MOWBRAY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## PLANNING SERVICE 2017

On 12 November we held our first ever Planning Service. This year we placed our planning morning in the context of worship. We ought to be worshipping and glorifying God in all we do, not only when we sing songs at church. On 18 November, the elders spent time at the home of Dave and Reneé, retreating from their hectic daily lives to spend the day together. They went through the feedback from the 2016 Planning Morning, taking cognisance of the goals achieved and the plans put into practice. They recognised that some of the hopes expressed in 2016 include some things that we would want to keep working at. (These items are indicated in green in the points that follow). In the light of the outcome of the 2016 Planning Morning along with the responses offered at the 2017 Planning Service, the elders identified seven key ministry focus areas for 2018:

### Key Growth Areas

#### 1. Our foundation is PRAYER

*"All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers." Acts 1:14*

- ♥ **Praying in the service – times of CORPORATE PRAYER and of SILENT prayer.**
- ♥ **Prayer WORKSHOPS**
- ♥ **Encourage the development of regular intercessory prayer meetings**
- ♥ **Prayer with those in need (after church services)**

#### 2. Honouring the Lord through WORSHIP

*"Ascribe to the LORD, you heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendour of his holiness." Psalm 29:1-2*

*"The Lord says: 'These people come near to me with their mouth and honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on merely human rules they have been taught.'" Isaiah 29:13*

- ♥ **Worship team members receive TRAINING when they join.**
- ♥ **Ongoing DEVELOPMENT of reading, praying, music participants.**
- ♥ **Worship workshops**
- ♥ **Develop the worship teams as focus groups to serve as forums for FEEDBACK.**
- ♥ **Create a good SYSTEM to facilitate an organised process of preparation and planning so we can honour God with our best.**
- ♥ **Praise and worship evenings**
- ♥ **Work at making our worship services a time of engaging and connecting with God.**

### 2013-2016: DONE BUT KEEP DOING!

- ★ Welcome packs
- ★ Words of benediction, etc.
- ★ Follow up on visitors
- ★ Use of social media and website and flyers
- ★ Rolling slides before & after services to keep people up to date
- ★ Update members' photos in hall
- ★ Better use of the Suggestion Box

THANKS BE TO GOD FOR THE SACRIFICIAL AND LOVING SERVICE OF OUR COMMITTED MEMBERS.

### 3. Caring for one another in HOME/ CELL/ SPECIAL FOCUS GROUPS

*"Let us not neglect meeting together, as some have made a habit, but let us encourage one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Hebrews 10:25*

- ♥ Use Home/Cell Groups and combined cell meetings as forums for **TEACHING**.
- ♥ Empower cell group members to **REACH OUT**.
- ♥ Participate in **PASTORAL CARE**.
- ♥ Serve as confidential forums for **FEEDBACK**.
- ♥ **JOIN** together more frequently for combined events.
- ♥ Consider special focus groups for parents/ mothers/ fathers.
- ♥ Grow our Home/Cell Groups and Bible Studies.

### 4. Reaching out to others through EVANGELISM

*"However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me – the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace." Acts 20:24*

- ♥ Be aware of places to **SERVE** in our community, e.g. Police Forum, attend prayer meeting at police station, prison/hospital/retirement home visitation and church services.
- ♥ Fundraising mornings and jumble sales to make ourselves known to the community and to boost church funds
- ♥ Partner with other churches in reaching out to the community.
- ♥ Hold prayer walks and use them as opportunities to engage with people.
- ♥ Preaching, receiving, sharing and spreading the Good News
- ♥ Find ways to witness to biblical principles of unity, justice, fairness.
- ♥ Encourage and develop outreach efforts (e.g. Aileen's support of groups in Langa).
- ♥ Property maintenance as a way of witnessing to God's holiness and our commitment to Christ in our community
- ♥ Hold counselling workshops to equip our members to care for others.
- ♥ Distribute flyers to our neighbours.
- ♥ Hold an Alpha Course.
- ♥ Follow up on people who seem to have lost interest in church.
- ♥ Form outreach teams (e.g. teams to reach out to students at UCT and CPUT).

Jesus said: "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."  
(Matthew 5:13-16)

### 5. Develop and build our INTERGENERATIONAL CHURCH LIFE

*"Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.'" Matthew 19:14*

- ♥ **Provide opportunities for intergenerational sharing (e.g. Retreat Days, Family Camps, etc.)**
- ♥ **Talent shows/music events**
- ♥ **Involve young people in active service roles like leading worship.**
- ♥ **Make YOUTH our focus.**
- ♥ **Guiding our teens, developing life skills**
- ♥ **Support students at UCT and CPUT (e.g. explore the possibility of running a coffee shop at the church).**
- ♥ **Continue with Holiday Club ministry.**
- ♥ **Ministers to be actively involved in CPUT and UCT student orientations.**
- ♥ **Make a special effort to reach out to students at the beginning of each academic year.**
- ♥ **Interview students in our midst to determine interests.**
- ♥ **Organise informal meetings with teens, using social media to advertise and promote events, etc.**
- ♥ **Make a concerted effort to recruit youth members and do more to attract them.**
- ♥ **Encourage a greater openness to change in the hearts of our members, especially in order to attract young people.**
- ♥ **Invite other church youth groups to visit our events, and our youth visit other churches.**

## **6. Growing in our faith through TEACHING & TRAINING**

*"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God." Colossians 3:16*

- ♥ **Establish a CHRISTIAN ACADEMY of some kind.**
- ♥ **Encourage our Ministers in their PREACHING & TEACHING by giving meaningful feedback.**
- ♥ **Ministers using teaching hand-outs**

## **7. Enrich our FELLOWSHIP AS A CHURCH FAMILY**

*"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." Acts 2:42*

- ♥ **Continue to work at ensuring EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION.**
- ♥ **Help members to develop their gifts, e.g. with the help of the skills register.**
- ♥ **Games evenings**
- ♥ **Being a place that cares for people (e.g. taking Holy Communion to the housebound)**
- ♥ **Make every effort to welcome strangers, e.g. through the use of Welcome Packs.**
- ♥ **Find ways to emphasise and develop our sense of being a Church family, e.g. gathering the congregation for teaching and social encounter events like *Mowbray Together*.**
- ♥ **Develop our multiculturalism and our exciting diversity of race, income, culture, e.g. through courses such as Crossing Bridges.**

- ♥ Use our teaching and fellowship forums to encourage a positive attitude among our members, encouraging them to attempt to relate to all and to avoid gossip and unhealthy criticism of others.
- ♥ Start a Moms & Kiddies Group.
- ♥ Improve our Toddlers' Room – explore the possibility of installing closed-circuit TV.
- ♥ Encourage and model open communication.

### CONGREGATION COMMITMENT

The following list includes some of the responses received in response to the invitation to reflect on what we can do as individuals in order to contribute to the core ministry of our congregation:

- ♥ To be more embracing of diversity
- ♥ To assist people with writing CVs, prep for job interviews
- ♥ To be more open to change, especially in order to attract young people
- ♥ To be more personally committed, to engage in self-examination and personal transformation, to be an example
- ♥ To revisit what was learnt on the Alpha course
- ♥ To encourage fellow moms and dads in the Toddlers' Room to listen to the Word

May God fill us with the Holy Spirit and empower us to achieve these hopes and aspirations in 2018 and in the years to come!

*Dave Smit*

## SPRING CAMP (GRADES 4–7)



Two years ago there was a dream to see the children of the Presbyterian denomination get together to forge relationships. This idea came about since the teenagers had been getting together annually for about eight years, and the leadership of Summer Camp thought it was time to launch Spring Camp for the Grade 4 to 7s. There were lots of unknowns about whether the idea would fly with such young children, but the response was fantastic! Our first camp had about thirty kids from three congregations and this year we had four congregations represented. We foresee more congregations joining.

The vision for Spring Camp is for the kids in the denomination to meet each other much earlier in life and to build relationships as they grow up together. Proverbs 22:6 says, 'Train a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.' We believe and trust that God will create something special through Spring Camp that will have lifelong influence. The three camps, **Spring Camp**, **Summer camp** and **Young Adults' Retreat** all are aimed at building relationships. Let us therefore join hands in the process as a congregation and participate. Please prepare and send your children to the camp in 2018.

*Nigel Chikanya and Gabrielle Vassard*

# NEWS FROM THE PEWS

It has been a busy time in the lives of our Mowbray members. News along the grapevine has it that there has been quite a bit of international travel, and other exciting activities have also abounded.

**Merle Muller** has recently returned from a ten-day trip to the UK with her daughter **Chantal O'Brien**. She had a wonderful time. **Serge Lajona** has been travelling to Europe fairly frequently for business.



**Evelyn Lumngwena** travelled to Paris to present results from her research in the field of the treatment of HIV/AIDS, after completing her PhD at UCT in Microbiology. **Isaac Singini** travelled to the UK on a research fellowship awarded by the Royal Society through the Newton Advanced Fellowships. We are very proud of these two Mowbray scholars! **Graeme and Di Wares** returned recently from a trip to undertake a river cruise in Europe. They made wonderful new friends with fellow travellers



and testify to having had a marvellous holiday. **Dumo Masuku** recently visited Brazil on a soccer tour, travelling with his mother **Ayanda**. **Eleanor Gaunt** recently returned from an extended visit to her children Ruth and Jono and their children in Salt Lake

City in the USA. Eleanor spent eight months in Salt Lake City supporting and assisting Ruth during a series of intense medical treatment procedures. We continue to join Eleanor and Trevor and their family and friends, as we trust God for gracious healing and strength for Ruth at this time.

**Gareth Smit** has returned home from New York for a few weeks and will soon be joined by his sister **Nikki Smit** from Singapore. **Dave and Reneé** are excited about the chance to catch up with their children. **Reneé** will also be in the UK in December for work purposes. **Fundiswa Moyo's** employers sent her to the USA for training and exposure to new management and operation procedures. **Charles Broohm** has flown home to Cameroon to support his mother and siblings following the death of his father.

**Samuel Amoah** recently returned to Cape Town from his home in Ghana where he spent a few months running a pilot study towards his PhD at UCT. **Dick and Charlie Barnes** had the opportunity to travel to the UK to visit their two sons and their families. It was lovely having **Richard Makina** visit us in Cape Town from Malawi for a few weeks.

**Zizi Funani** had to travel back to the Eastern Cape at short notice following the sudden death of an uncle who was like a father to her.



**Susan and Janette Goosen** will be travel- ling home to Kenya for Christmas to visit family for the first time in many years. We pray for safe travels for all.



### **Sikelelwa Mabhanga**

continues with her internship in Colorado Springs, Colorado in the USA. Not too much longer and she will be home again after her year-long internship. We can't wait to see her and to hear all her stories first-hand.

**Rob and Fleur Key** still live and work in the UK although they have asked to remain members at Mowbray. **Bill and Mary Webster** have just returned home to Cape Town after being away in Johannesburg and Benoni for two months, visiting family. **Divine Nghah** enjoyed being sent to the Mediterranean recently on duty.



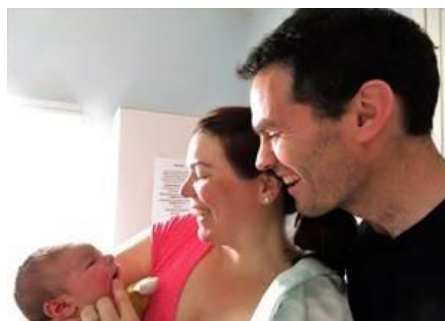
**Owen and Di Jones** have sold their house in Pinelands and will be moving to Pringle Bay in February. We pray that this next phase in their lives will be blessed. The Eleanor Murray home where they have served for many years will really miss their faithful and sacrificial service.

We are very proud of **Evelyn Lumngwena**, **Josiah Chavula** and **Mary Maina** who heard recently that they have successfully met the requirements for the award of their doctoral degrees. They will graduate in December. **Dave Smit** has submitted his PhD thesis for examination and is patiently awaiting the outcome. **Precious Katundu** continues with her research towards her PhD in Pharmacy. Her husband **Kondwani** plans to join her in Cape Town for Christmas. It will be wonderful to see him again. **Robert Spencer** is pursuing his studies towards an MSc degree in Mathematics at the University of Cambridge in the UK. His family must be very proud of him.

**Toutou Muka** visited us recently from Venda in the Limpopo province. We were thrilled to hear from him that he has graduated with his Masters Degree from the University of Venda. We were so proud of **Ben Kabengele** at the end of year Prize Giving Ceremony at the School of Hope. He walked away with a clutch of awards.



We congratulate **Ashley and Julie Robbins** on the birth of a baby boy. **Joshua Derrick Michael Robbins** arrived safely on Friday, 10 November, at 6.50 am. He weighed a whopping 11 pounds! According to Ashley, it was a tricky labour that ended up being an emergency Caesarean. Mom and baby are both doing well. Ashley was our Director of Family Ministry at Mowbray until he and Julie relocated to Oxford in the UK about five years ago.



Talking of babies, it was great for Nigel to have had the opportunity recently to baptise **Divine and Evelyn's two children, Dyron and Delish**. Congratulations to them.

We also congratulate **Yanga Mabhanga** and his wife, **Pretty**, who were blessed recently with the birth of a baby daughter, **Mihle Katherine**. We pray for God's richest blessing on them. May you know God's grace and mercy as a family!



**Bazil Viljoen** is still living in Port Elizabeth to be close to his sister. He manages to visit us in Cape Town from time to time. **Moyra Makina** recently moved to Sydney, Australia, to pursue an employment opportunity. We pray for God's richest blessings on her.



Having been elected to serve on Session by the congregation, on 6 August **Wiza Hara** and **Fundiswa Moyo** were ordained as elders and then, together with **Sylvia Godzana** who had previously been ordained as an elder, they were inducted for a term of four years. We pray for God's richest blessing on their ministry in our congregation. We appreciate their willingness to serve the Lord in this important role.

## JOAN MITCHELL

On 4 October 2017 Joan Mitchell passed away at the age of 88. She was one of our long-standing Mowbray members. Here are some thoughts adapted from Dave's sermon at her funeral on 14 October at Mowbray. His sermon was based on Revelation 2:1–6, especially verses 3–4: "God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more." Christian hope is not a vague kind of hope. Rather, it is a certainty that gives us direction in life, like a compass pointing to our true north. Hope is what keeps us going when everything around us is dragging us down into despair. John's vision recorded in Revelation has caught the imagination of believers through the ages. It is a catalyst for spiritual power and inner strength. We grieve the loss of Joan. But even as we reel from the shock of her departure at the beautiful age of 88, we are confident in the hope that she has gone home to the nearer presence of our Lord. We know that Joan loved Mowbray Presbyterian Church, her home congregation. Her active involvement and Christian service dates all the way back to the Ayres Street Mission. The words of Revelation 2 give us the sure hope and assurance that, in the midst of our painful loss, we are able to celebrate and give thanks for Joan's life.

## CELL GROUP MEETS AT THE CHURCH

*(Led by Sylvia Godzana and Alice Kyobe)*

We meet once every two weeks on Saturday at 2.00 pm on the church premises, usually in the Conference Room. The number of people that meet varies due to unavoidable circumstances and responsibilities. But all in all, we are currently a group of fifteen people.

The purpose of our meeting is to study the Word of God and learn how to apply God's Word to our lives. We also share testimonies, pray for our needs and intercede for the needs of others. We also have fun activities.

The highlights for this year were the graduation of Mr Bekwa and Macceline as well as the farewell to Garth and Dawn Selley, who relocated to Gauteng.

*Alice Kyobe*

*(See the photo of their Christmas party at the home of Gavin Norris on the front cover.)*

# THE YOUNG ADULTS' RETREAT

The Young Adults' Retreat was a great weekend of Sabbath (rest) that came at just the right time. It took place at the Bush Campsite in Simonsberg. Approximately twenty individuals attended the camp from Goodwood, Mowbray, Durbanville, Khayelitsha and a few other areas. Activities included worship, Bible readings, teaching and prayer sessions, meditation and team building activities. The Rev. Chikanya and Langerman opened our eyes to the true meaning of Sabbath and Resting in God. This is a camp that I would highly recommend to a young individual looking to expand their faith and take it to that next level. A continuation of the Retreat is very probable for 2018.

*Daniel Kyobe*



The young adults' retreat was very peaceful. When I went to the retreat I was in such a great need of peace in my life and that's exactly what I got. Firstly my cell phone had no signal so I did not have any distractions. It was my first time being at the Bush Campsite.

The place is surrounded by God's nature. It was relaxing and I got time to spend with the Lord and in prayer. The programme we had was amazing; it gave us a lot of time to be in God's presence through worship, fellowship, the Word and our own personal quiet time. I grew a lot stronger spiritually after the retreat and I managed to make new close friends. Emma Langerman and I grew closer than we were before. I cannot wait for the next one.

Thank you, Pastor Nigel and the team.

*Zizipo Funani*



# A HYMN BY JOHN CALVIN

In October this year we celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the Protestant Reformation. One aspect of the Reformation on which to reflect is its revival of congregational hymn singing.

During the Middle Ages all singing in worship was confined to a choir. It was the Reformation that restored the ancient practice of the whole congregation singing. Martin Luther and John Calvin both strongly believed that the whole congregation should sing and praise God together.

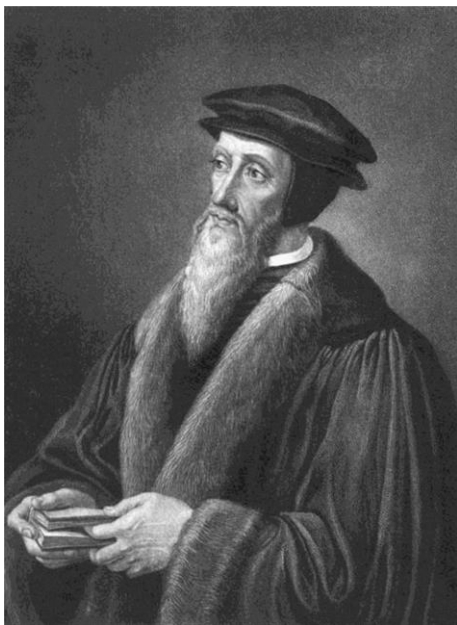


Image of Calvin by unknown artist, falsely attributed to Hans Holbein the Younger[2] ([www.rvc.cc.il.us](http://www.rvc.cc.il.us))  
[Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

Already in the 1536 edition of his famous *Institutes of the Christian Religion* Calvin wrote about the importance of the congregation's singing. In a document the following year on the organization of the church and its worship in Geneva he wrote on how God's praises should be sung 'so that the hearts of all may be roused and stimulated to make similar prayers and to render similar praises and thanks to God with a common love'. Ideally he thought that they should sing biblical songs, like the Psalms and the *Nunc dimittis* (Luke 2:29–32). To this end he worked to create a songbook of hymns based on the psalms.

After being driven out of Geneva in 1538, Calvin settled in Strasbourg, where he joined the Huguenot congregation and led numerous worship services. There he became familiar with the German psalms versified by Martin Luther and others for singing. Calvin shared these songs with his French congregation and himself wrote some metrical versions in French for them to sing. But he felt that his own versions of the psalms were not good enough and so turned to the work of the French court poet Clément Marot, who had already versified most of the psalms in French during the first part of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The 1545 and 1553 editions of the Strasbourg Psalter and the 1551 edition of the Geneva Psalter included a hymn *Je Te Salue Mon Certain Redempteur*. Some historians have attributed this hymn to Calvin himself. Others think that more likely Jean Garnier, a French pastor in Strasbourg who edited the Strasbourg Psalter, wrote it. It was later translated by the American Elizabeth Lee Smith and published in Schaff's *Christ in Song* (1869). It appears in slightly different versions of the English translation. One is as follows:

I greet Thee, who my sure Redeemer art,  
my only trust and Saviour of my heart,  
who pain didst undergo for my poor sake;  
I pray Thee from our hearts all cares to take.

Thou art the King of mercy and of grace,  
reigning omnipotent in every place;  
so come, O King, and our whole being sway;  
shine on us with the light of Thy pure day.

Thou art the life, by which alone we live  
and all our substance and our strength  
receive;  
O comfort us in death's approaching hour;  
sustain us in our faith and by Thy power.

Thou hast the true and perfect gentleness,  
no harshness hast Thou and no bitterness;  
O grant to us the grace we find in Thee,  
that we may dwell in perfect unity.

Our hope is in no other save in Thee;  
 our faith is built upon Thy promise free;  
 Lord, give us peace, and make us calm and  
 sure,  
 that in Thy strength we may ever endure.

The hymn is not a versified version of any psalm, but it does reflect biblical ideas. And whether or not Calvin himself wrote it, it closely reflects his theology. Notice particularly in this regard the emphasis on grace, mercy, unity, the universal Lordship of Christ, our only hope in Jesus, the free promise of God as the basis for faith and the perseverance of the saints by the grace of God.

What is also interesting is that apparently it was based on an earlier medieval hymn about Mary. (Note the words, 'Thou hast the true and perfect gentleness / No harshness hast Thou'). In medieval Christianity Christ was often pictured as the harsh Judge and

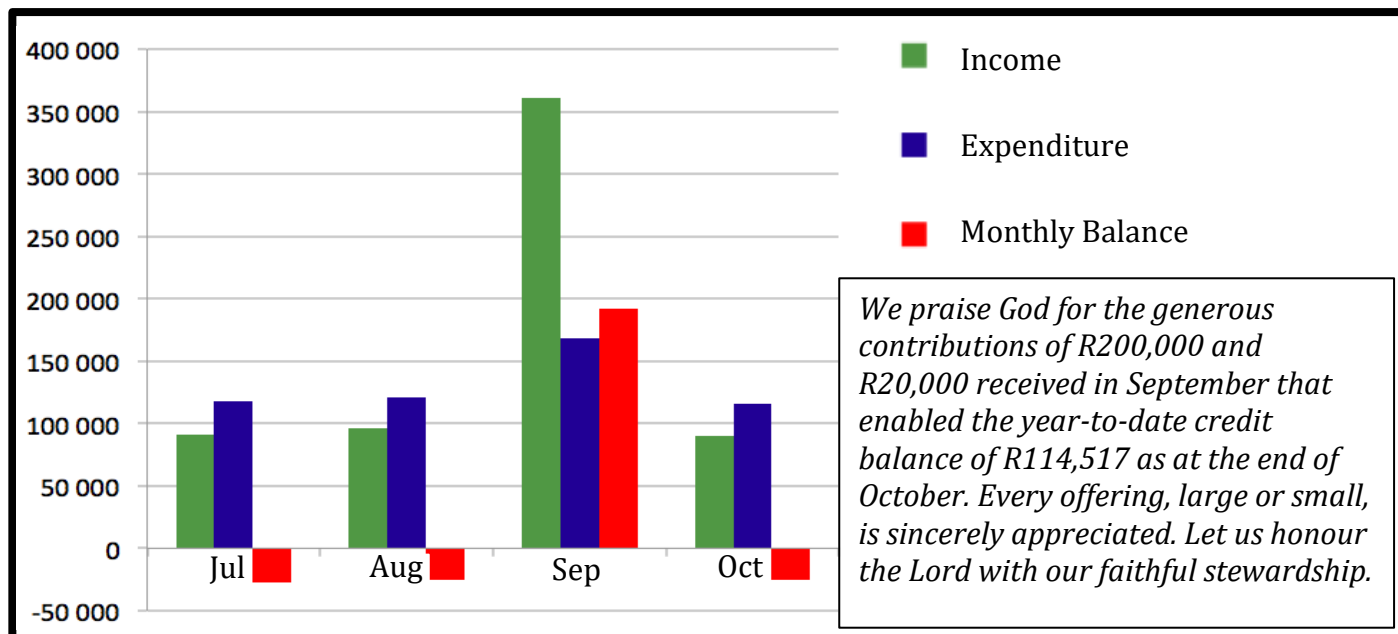
Mary as the compassionate intercessor. But in its Reformed version the hymn is completely rewritten, so that Christ is made the centre and the only object of the believer's faith and hope.

The original tune to which the hymn was sung is Toulon (the Old 124<sup>th</sup>), but it has also been sung to other tunes. Perhaps we can sing it in our church one day to the organ or piano and the saxophone!

*Douglas Bax*

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God.  
 (Romans 5:1-2)

## OUR YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIAL SITUATION



Month	Income (R)	Expenditure (R)	Monthly Balance (R)	Year-to-Date Balance (R)
Jul 17	90 969	117 882	(26 913)	(26 913)
Aug 17	96 209	121 088	(24 879)	(51 792)
Sep 17	360 621	168 609	192 011	140 220
Oct 17	89 938	115 641	(25 703)	114 517
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>637 736</b>	<b>523 220</b>	<b>114 517</b>	

# GETTING TO KNOW OUR MEMBERS

## ZIZI FUNANI



Zizipo Bridget Funani was born in Engcobo, Eastern Cape, 23 years ago. In a family of six children she is the last born. There are four girls and two boys; one of the boys passed away in 2015. She is the daughter of Nobom Maqula (her mother) and Mzoxolo Funani (her father). Unfortunately her dad passed away when she was a month old and her mother passed away when she was six. Zizipo stands out from the rest of her siblings because of her view of family: she loves and values family and she is the most outgoing in the family. No wonder why the rest of the family are separated. She has a way of bringing everyone together, because of being an open person. One of her particular attributes is that she cannot hide anything from anyone, hence she is a catalyst who always unites the family.

Some of things that stand out for Zizi from her primary school days were her interest in sports, and her unending interest in singing from a very young age. She was always the youngest in class until Grade 9. Everyone used to bully her because of her age and her height. She does not forget Mr Sigcel her Principal, who was very strict and organized. He is still at her primary school and now getting old. He used to call her 'Smalls' because of her being so short. From her high school she misses her head teacher Mr Cosara, who stood out for her. He was an Art and Culture teacher and loved music so much. He was very playful and full of jokes. The best part of her Grade 8 year was being involved in choir and specifically her farewell. The sad moment of her high school time was when her best friend Akhona drowned just before they crossed over to high school (may her soul rest in peace).

May the Lord bless all the Mbekeni Junior Secondary School staff in Eastern Cape for the foundation they laid for this precious girl. She came to Cape Town in December 2009 to start high school at Rosemeade College in Observatory. She stayed in Kenilworth with her siblings when she arrived in Cape Town. It was not much fun because she did not know how to speak English. The year 2010 was the worst year of her life because she did not know anyone; her sister stayed with people who were only English speaking and she could hardly converse with them, which made life horrible for her. Everything in the Eastern Cape was taught in isiXhosa, and English was not easy for her to learn. Her new high school had a diverse range of people, from all possible African Countries – white, black, Asian and all other different races – and being run by a Moslem principal. There were a number of exchange students and English was the medium of communication, so it was very hard to understand each other. The majority of the local black people were from all other provinces and not the Eastern Cape. This for her was a major shift, equivalent to taking a village girl and placing her in France and saying, 'start a life!'

Zizi was privileged as a child to take part in serving Communion in church, which she recalls as being so special. She was baptised as a child and grew up in the church. Her favourite song is *Thixo akhuna nqlekho* which means 'Lord eternal without an end'. This became her favourite song and prayer every evening before she went to bed. The song was introduced to her by her grandmother, who took care of her after her mother died (Gogo Selina Nosebenzile Maqula). In Cape Town, Zizi joined His People (Baxter) because that was where everyone was worshipping. Sikelelwa Mabhanga and Zizi have been best friends since 2014.

She joined Mowbray Presbyterian Church in 2014 when she was referred by a friend. This church has been home for her since then. In 2015 she started college at College of Cape Town. This has been an exciting journey so far and she is doing a Diploma in Travel and Tourism, hoping to finish next year June. Zizi

was confirmed in 2015 and it was the best thing that ever happened to her. The confirmation class brought her closer to Uncle Dave. The day of confirmation stood out for her. She was scared and terrified to speak and share her testimony in front of everyone. Looking back she praises God for this encounter with God. When her brother died in 2015, Uncle Dave was there for her and the family throughout.

She was a leader of Holiday Club in 2015 and this was an amazing year, sharing with William D. Carter the 3<sup>rd</sup>. It was after the leadership training and Holiday Club that she realised God had a plan for her life, especially with Children's Church. Although she has not participated in the actual Children's Church, she hopes to devote time to the little children again going forward. More talents and gifts were identified and nurtured in areas of leadership, children's ministry and the youth, and for that she is grateful to the Mowbray Presbyterian Church. Joining the worship team exposed her to some of our members. Some have since adopted her as their own child, paying her fees and helping her with so many aspects of life. Sikelelwa, as her best friend, introduced her to her family, and mum Sylvia became the source of her strength initially. What started as a home closer to school became her permanent home and to this day Observatory is her home, thanks to the Mabhanga family!

The end of 2016 stands out with some good memories when she met Siyasanga on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December on their official first date. Siyasanga, her boyfriend, has been an amazing guy in her life and to date an inspiration to her life and studies. She is always grateful to God for this man. Zizi and Siyasanga have been dating now for almost a year.

One of her life lessons has been the importance of family. She says, 'As family we only have each other, and as a member of the family one thing is this: I rely on God and survive only on prayer.' If she were to ask God a question it would be, 'Why does God allow suffering and pain in our lives, and why do we sometimes learn through pain?' What everyone else doesn't know about her is that you have to know her well before you are aware that something is bothering her.

If she had all the money in the world, she would buy property; shelter for the children, a shelter for the elderly people. I must say we share a lot in this regard. This is her message to the church: she felt that when there was change in church, many people disappeared, and she would like to remind us all that change is part of growth, so let us embrace it. For the fellow young people, please speak out, for wisdom is shared when you have very close relationships with the older folks.

*Nigel Chikanya*

## **SAMUEL AMOAH INTRODUCES HIMSELF**



I had no hesitancy and so gladly accepted an offer to pursue doctoral studies in the Department of Environmental and Geographical Sciences at the University of Cape Town (UCT) in 2017. Given such a great opportunity, I spent the last six months developing my research proposal on the topic '*Traders, Goods and City-Dreams*' – *The micro-governance of street trade in Wa, Ghana*, as a prerequisite for the doctoral studies. By God's grace, I successfully presented my research proposal to the department in May 2017 and it was accepted and ethical clearance given for me to move to the next phase of my studies, which is the pilot study. To this end, I conducted the pilot study from August to October

2017. The pilot study aimed to achieve the following: (i) to provide preliminary information to guide the study, (ii) to pre-test and develop my research instruments and (iii) as a precursor to the main fieldwork. To the glory of God, the pilot study was successfully conducted, paving the way for me to commence my main fieldwork in December 2017. I look forward to successful fieldwork in Ghana. I will once again miss my new family at Mowbray Presbyterian Church. Thank you all for the support. To the ministers at Mowbray: keep up the good work.

*Samuel Amoah*

## MARY LOOCK: A MEMOIR



*W. H. Davies once wrote a poem with the title 'Leisure'. It begins with the words:*

*'What is life if full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare.'*

and continues with thoughts of this kind:

*'No time to see, in broad daylight,  
Streams full of stars like skies at night.'*

Mary loves God, loves God's creation and everything beautiful in it – flowers and trees, birds and mountains – so it is little wonder that gardens are one of her most favourite places, where she can draw aside to 'stand and stare'. Speaking of favourites, she also loves music and theatre and fascinating talks, with a special interest in the Judaic roots of our faith. Imbedded in all these interests one finds her love of Jesus and so she shares (and passes on) the many books that have helped her over the years to grow in faith. Her eagerness to share these many interests with others has meant that many people at Mowbray and beyond have been the grateful beneficiaries. Shy and hesitant to be interviewed, she shared instead some memories, particularly of special times and Christmases past, which captured for her its true meaning and the wonder of the Incarnation.

Mary and her sister grew up in Pietermaritzburg, spending their Junior School years living in a prefab bungalow of the hospital where their parents worked. She says

she and her sister had a special relationship and communication with the Sisters, some of whom also lived on the premises. This meant that Christmas was a very special time as they helped the staff decorate the wards, making them look festive and celebratory. She has a significant memory from that time when she was upset and tearful during the singing of Christmas carols by candlelight, because the hospital was treating many victims of road accidents. In retrospect Mary realises that was when she had a first stirring and awareness that perhaps through nursing one could make a difference in people's lives. Her High School years were spent at boarding school and then in Pietermaritzburg during her Nursing training. When she finally came to Cape Town she found that Christmas carols were still being sung in the wards. The nurses reversed their capes with the red lining on the outside, as a sign of joy, and, as she says, she still used to cry! Times had sadly changed however – the decorations were stolen from the wards.

But in theatre, where Mary worked often on Christmas Day, they would celebrate with a meal, good fellowship and of course carols, supported by a CD. She remains very grateful that worshipping God is still central in her celebration of the birth of Jesus. Uppermost always in her heart is giving thanks for all those who provide essential services, like hospital care during holiday times. And while she fondly remembers those Christmases of her childhood and their celebration of the nativity story, she is always keen to remember and reach out to those who are lonely at this time.



Mary Loock with Graeme and Di Wares  
and Elsabe Burger

# NEWS FROM OUR MISSIONARIES IN JAPAN

**"Thank You For Facilitating Jesus' Incarnate Ministry in Hokkaido, Japan!"**

*"So the Word became human and made his home among us." John 1:14 (NLT)*

Recently, while reflecting on how wonderful it is that the risen Jesus continues to reveal His incarnate love to Japanese through the few Christians in Japan, I was once again amazed and grateful for Mowbray Presbyterian Church's partnership (you!) over so many years.

After trusting Jesus, I joined Mowbray Presby in 1974 and taught the youth before leaving for Japan with OMF International in 1979. Mowbray Presby has supported us (including Maude until 2007, and now Karen since 2008) all the time we have ministered in Japan.

**We are so grateful for your partnership with us!**



We, and 136 other pastors from various denominations and churches in Hokkaido, were blessed by the fellowship and messages at the 6th All Hokkaido Pastors' Conference the last week of October. I was asked to take photos and want to share some comments about a few of these photos.

Ms Manami Satoh graduated from Bible College in March and is ministering in a small church in Asahikawa (I was in Asahikawa 36 years ago). She is quite lonely. Karen and I are drawn to her and will probably take a trip to see her (looking to Jesus to use us for her encouragement) some time soon.



Her father is a pastor of a rural church (in an area well known for breeding race horses) and I usually preach in his church once a year. Pastor Satoh befriended me early on in my time in Japan and we serve together on the Keswick Convention Steering Committee in Sapporo each month.



Pastor Murata is using unique ways to reach out to people in Niseko, the fastest growing resort area in Japan. Niseko has a special place in our hearts and prayers: the church was started over 50 years ago and finally is beginning to grow; son #2 works there and has bought an old house in the neighbouring town; we sense God working in this area in a special way.

We have a great relationship with Pastor Kataoka who is ministering at Grace Chapel in Abashiri – in their own home which he and his wife gave to the Lord some years ago. We have followed this couple from the time that Mr Kataoka retired, studied for 3 years at the Hokkaido Bible Institute (HBI), and then joined his wife (who had been serving in the church during his studies) as an ordained minister. Each year for the past three years, Prayer Teams led by Karen and myself have visited this church. (I preached there this summer). His son is now studying at HBI to become a pastor!





I have known Pastor Ohno for 38 years – first as a young Christian, then when he was involved in literature evangelism, now as a pastor of two churches. Occasionally I officiate at weddings in his Rose Garden Christ Church which is situated half-way up a mountain overlooking Sapporo.

Pastor Mitsuhashi's father was a well-known evangelist whom we invited to a series of evangelistic meetings in Hakodate 32 years ago. His son (this photo) is a great encouragement and help to me. Together with Pastor Ohno, we serve on the steering committee of HOCMIN (Hokkaido Christian Network Ministry), which seeks to network / help churches and Christians across denominational barriers.

Please remember that fewer than 0.5% of people living in Japan attend a worship service. We continue to pray expectantly for the Living God to reveal His Glory in new and great ways! Thank you again for joining us in prayer! We also intercede for you in Cape Town, and are praying for South Africa with its many challenges and opportunities.

With love, gratitude and joy in Jesus,  
*Dale (and Karen) Viljoen*

## OUR MOWBRAY FAMILY MEMBERS HAVE BEEN SPREADING THEIR INFLUENCE FAR AND WIDE

### EVELYN LUMNGWENA'S TRIP TO PARIS

**JULY–AUGUST 2017**



The main purpose of my trip to Europe was to take part in the International AIDS Society (IAS) conference on HIV/AIDS, where I had to present part of the work I did for my PhD. This conference took place at the Paris Congress Hall. I was funded to do an oral presentation by an NIH award from the American Government as a way of bringing together the emerging new leaders in HIV research. The selection process to join the program was most exciting – more

than visiting Europe itself.

I praise God for such an opportunity. The conference went so well and I made some new work networks which I am hoping will help in furthering my career in research. After the conference, I took off ten days to visit Italy. It was a wonderful time to meet one of my friends whom I have not seen since 1999. It was a great 'reunion' for us after a very long time.

While in Europe, I took the opportunity to visit the Vatican City and the St Peter's cathedral to pray for some of the saints who departed from my family some years ago. These included my Dad and my uncles, one of whom was a bishop of the Roman Catholic church. It was great walking on that holy ground at the St Peter's Square and Basilica.

*Evelyn Ngwa Lumngwena*



## ISAAC SINGINI'S TRIP TO THE UK IN AUGUST



I undertook a planned research visit to the United Kingdom between July and August 2017. This visit was supported by a grant through the Department of Statistical Sciences, UCT. This opportunity was awarded through Dr Freedom in collaboration with Professor Jane Hutton, of Warwick University. This grant was awarded by the Royal Society through the Newton Advanced Fellowships. This fellowship provides established international researchers with an opportunity to develop research strengths and capabilities of their research group through training, collaboration and reciprocal visits with a partner in the UK.

The visit had two main objectives. The first was to attend the Academy for PhD Training in Statistics (APTS) hosted by the University of Durham and the University of Glasgow. The APTS is a collaboration between major UK statistics research groups to organize courses for PhD students in statistics and applied probability. The intention of APTS is to provide courses that will be attractive and relevant to the research preparation and background education in statistics and probability. The second objective was to be mentored by a visiting supervisor (UCT) together with the resident Professor at the University of Warwick on my PhD project.



It was such a fulfilling and worthwhile visit, not only because of the academic benefits, but also the social and networking that came along. I made several friends from diverse areas of the world. I also had a chance to visit Edinburgh in Scotland as a tourist besides the other sightseeing visit I participated in in England. I had a chance to visit one of the heritage buildings of the Church of England in addition to praying and fellowshiping at the Holy Trinity Church in Coventry.

*Isaac Luwanga Singini*

## CONDOLENCES

We express our loving condolences to our members and friends who have lost loved ones:

**Erin and Lisa**, and for their mother Amy – the death of their grandmother on their mother's side.

**The Norris family**. The husband of Merle, Gavin's sister, sadly passed away in September.

**Mel and Milly Petersen** – the death of Milly's sister

**The family of Joan Mitchell** – We think particularly of her children, Pam, Anwar, Peter and Michael, and her one surviving younger sister, Edith Harrison. Joan was a long-standing member of Mowbray.

**Susan Goosen** – the death of her close friend in Kenya

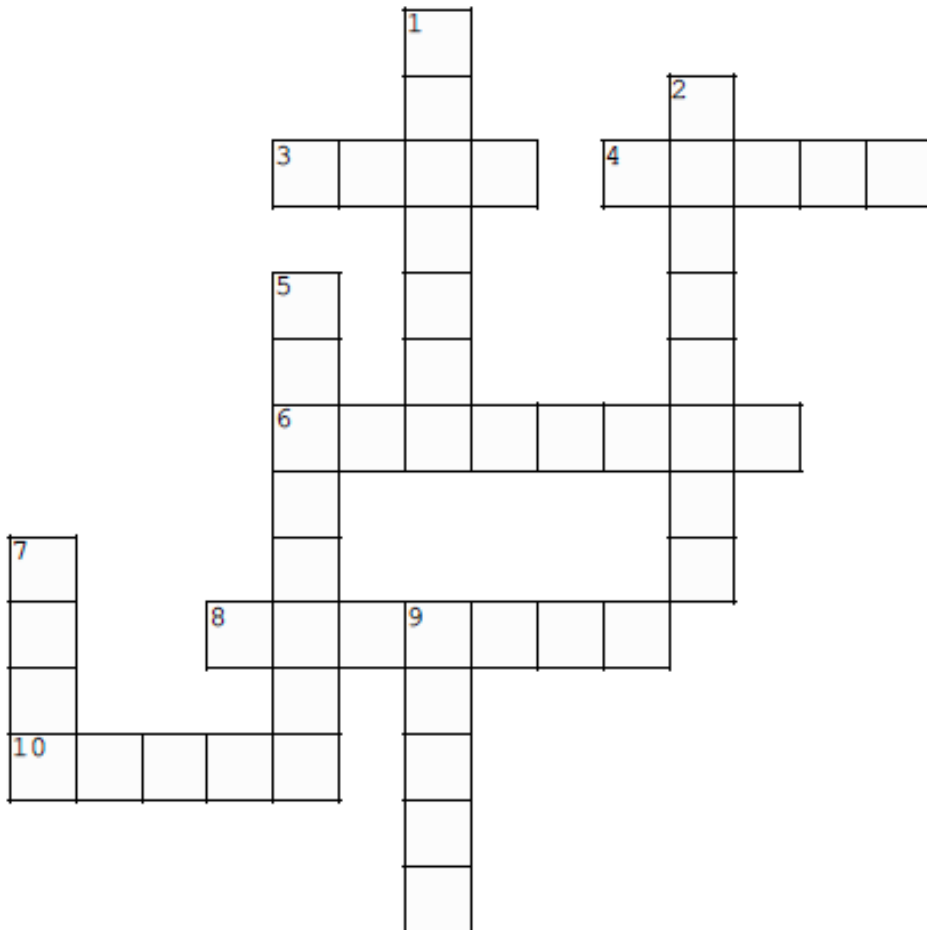
**Nomava and Noni Nobatana** – the death of Noni's grandmother on her father's side

**Pam Miller** – the loss of her son

"Even though I walk through the darkest valley,  
I fear no evil; for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff – they comfort me." (Psalm 23:4)

# KIDDIES' CORNER

Complete the crossword below



Created with [TheTeachersCorner.net](http://TheTeachersCorner.net) [Crossword Puzzle Generator](http://TheTeachersCorner.net)

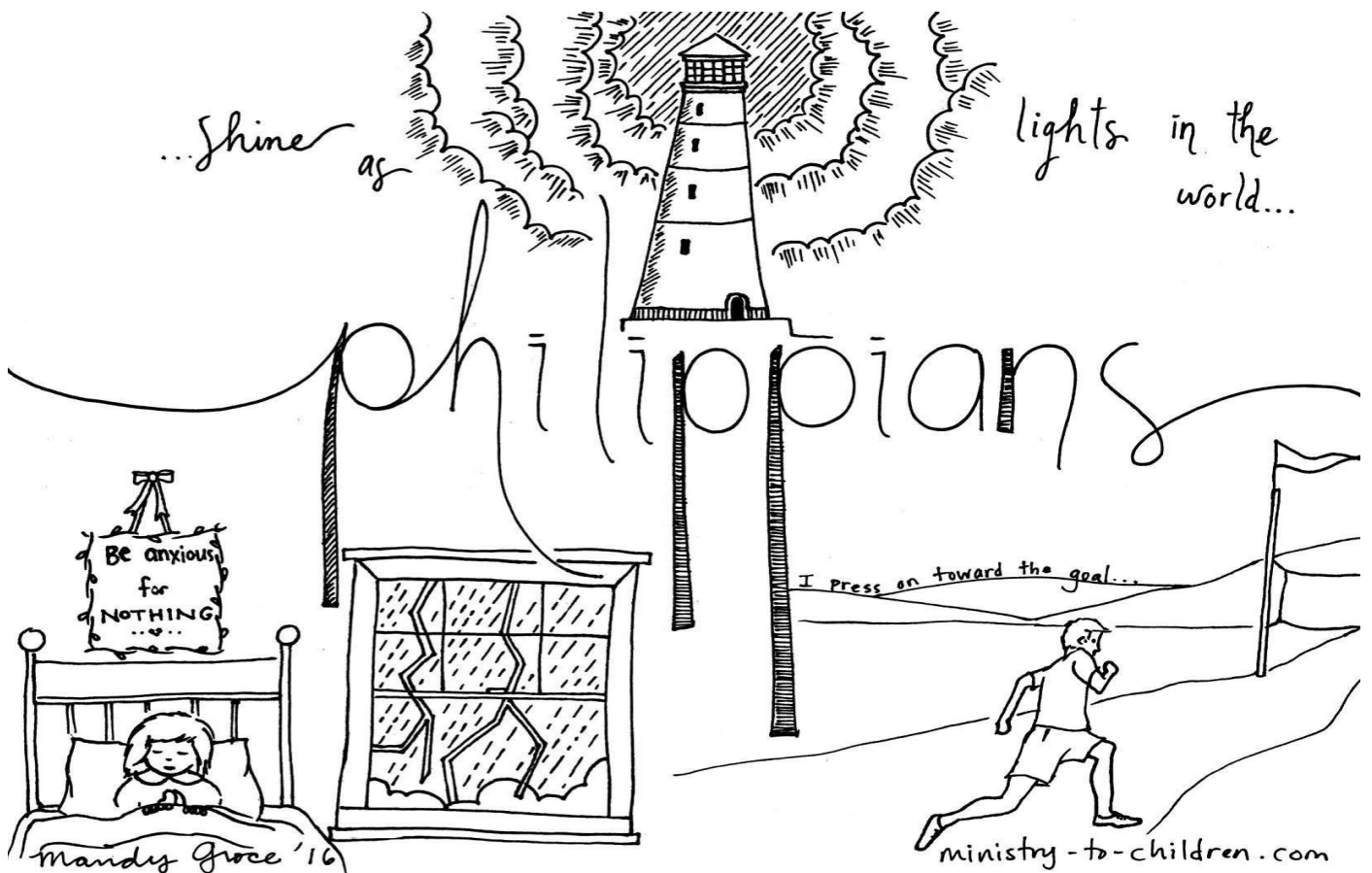
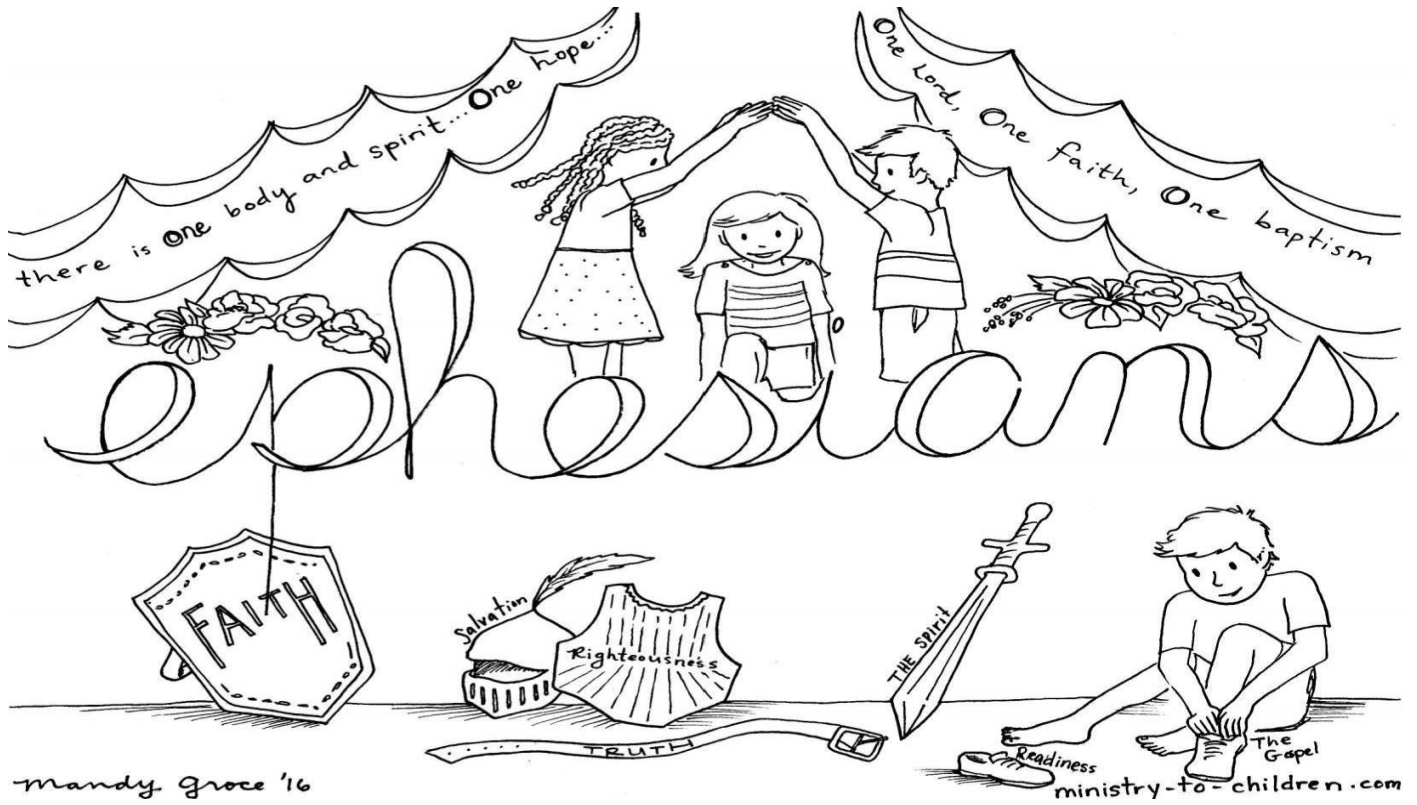
## Across

3. 'As the Father has sent me, so I \_\_\_\_ you.' (4) (John 20:21)  
 4. The Holy Spirit gives us this. (5) (Acts 1:8)  
 6. God is with us (8) (Matthew 1:23)  
 8. Jesus gave this to the sick. (7) (Luke 4:40)  
 10. Jesus said 'I am the \_\_\_\_ of life.' (5) (John 6:35)

## Down

1. Jesus proclaimed the \_\_\_\_ of God. (7) (Luke 4:43)  
 2. The Spirit of the Lord anointed Jesus to bring this to the poor. (4,4) (Luke 4:18)  
 5. Jesus said 'I am the good \_\_\_\_.' (8) (John 10:11)  
 7. The \_\_\_\_ of God who takes away the sin of the world (4) (John 1:29)  
 9. Jesus said 'I am the \_\_\_\_ of the world.' (5) (John 8:12)

## Colouring in



# A YOUNG PATRIOT SOLDIER

Anyone attending a service in the Mowbray Presbyterian Church may look up and notice a cast bronze tablet, slightly recessed into the wall of the church in a setting of Steenpan Stone, and depicting a mounted figure with a flag and trumpet, and wonder just what is the story behind it, and more poignantly, the stories of the ten men whose names are listed on the plaque.

The memorial was dedicated by the Rev. R.B. Douglas, MA, of East London, the former Minister, in a special service on Sunday 11 April 1920, with these words: 'In memory of the men of the congregation who laid down their lives in this great war, a Tablet has been placed on the wall of the Church. It is an honour which I shall cherish to my dying day to be permitted to join with you in the erection of this tribute to those dear lads connected with the Church during my ministry, and some of them bound to me in undying fellowship of faith and love. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, I dedicate this Memorial to the Glory of God, and as a tribute to the sacrifice and devotion of those to whose memory it is set up.' A sister of each of the fallen men sat in the front of the church and at one stage during the service each took a wreath and hung it in front of the church near the organ.

One of these 'dear lads' was John Alexander McPherson, known to his family and friends as Jack, or Jock. Born on 14 July 1892, he attended Rondebosch Boys High School, and was a keen sportsman, playing both soccer and cricket for local clubs. He was the eldest of three sons and also had ten sisters. When World War 1 broke out, he signed up with the SA Scottish and after training in Potchefstroom, departed Cape Town for England on 26 September 1915 on the Balmoral Castle. Along with his regiment, he was first quartered at Bordon in Hampshire where they underwent training for two months before being shipped over to Egypt. The brigade was then transferred to France.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment, South African Infantry, of which J. A. McPherson was a member, was quarantined for two weeks at Marseilles due to a case of spinal meningitis, while the rest of the South African Brigade went on to Flanders. The 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment then followed and formed part of the 9<sup>th</sup> (Scottish Division), which had suffered heavy losses. They marched to the Somme area and gradually moved closer to the front, where they were used to move various supplies and equipment.

According to the Rondebosch Boys High School magazine:

JA McPherson took part in the various battles that have won fame for the South African Infantry. He took all the troubles and dangers bravely and cheerfully, and noted that he had been twice buried in one day, and his helmet struck by shrapnel, but declared himself 'used to it'.

Rondebosch Boys sent Jack a Christmas card in 1917, and he wrote back to the school in response:

I have just received your most welcome Christmas card, which I thank you for from the bottom of my heart . . . I can safely say that the boys are sticking it well up to the present. We have had a lot of snow for the first time and it is very cold. I only wish I could have a look at the dear old school again, if only for a few minutes.

In December 1917 he was in London and Scotland on leave, where he had 'the time of his life'. On Boxing Day – 26 December 1917 – he received gunshot wounds in his left knee and his abdomen.

## **Names on Memorial:**

W. Nimmo Brown  
Edward J. Hare  
James John Simpson  
Andrew MacLachlan  
Jack McPherson  
John D. Henry  
Percy Crewe  
Tom R. Chalmers  
Charles L. Cameron  
Arnold N. Brown

**Their names live for  
evermore.**

## **Inscription around the memorial:**

'To the Glory of God  
and in undying  
memory of the men of  
this Church who gave  
their lives in the Great  
War 1914–1918 to  
uphold the cause of  
Freedom and Honour'

He died in hospital of his wounds in January 1918 at age 25. In May 2012, I visited his grave, in the St Sever Cemetery in Normandy, France, where the simple white headstone, among over 8500 others arranged in neat rows, is maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. On his headstone, along with the Springbok emblem, his number and rank, and the symbol of the Cross, is an inscription selected by his family: 'To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die.' He is also listed on the Roll of Honour in Edinburgh Castle, Scotland.

One can only imagine the effect of his death that of her eldest son, on his widowed mother, left with eleven other children. Eleven, because his younger brother, Douglas Norwood McPherson, being too young to join the war effort at age thirteen, had been permitted to go to sea on a merchant ship, which was sunk off the coast of Beira in 1918. The sole remaining son, George McPherson, named *his* only son Jack Norwood McPherson, my father, in honour of his two brothers who perished in the war. Every year, on Remembrance Sunday, I remember my Great Uncle Jack, and I am glad his name is memorialized in his Church, the Mowbray Presbyterian. The Church newsletter of February 1918 honours Jack McPherson with the words 'Reserved, loving, loyal to the last, true to his King, his country and his God, this youthful soldier patriot has passed to his reward.'

*Marion McPherson*

## BOOK REVIEW: THE SHACK – by William P. Young

*The Shack* was written for William Young's children. The novel deals with the trauma of Mackenzie (Mack) and his family when his child is abducted while they are on a camping trip. It was published in 2007, and became a best-seller. Five million copies in two years resulted in much acclaim and criticism. For those whose perception of God, based on certain selected texts, is of a fierce, judgmental figure, and who therefore find difficulty in relating to God, William Young's God – Papa – is a gracious, lovable black woman. Many people cannot accept this, but the book is a novel. Many people have to deal with dysfunctional families, no father figure, unforgiveness, and 'why does a loving God allow so much suffering and evil?' The movie was shown recently at a time when a Cape Town man was convicted of the murder and rape of a young girl in the Tokai Forest. He leaves a wife and two little girls. Parents and a sister have been deprived of a beloved daughter and sister.

The movie was amazing – the characters were so like I had imagined them and Jesus looked Jewish! The scenery was stunning – snow-capped mountains and a beautiful, significant waterfall, a place of healing. Meals were times of communication and enjoyment – no evidence of fast junk food! The fellowship was a reminder of stories and meals in the time of Jesus – serious issues and laughter! At one stage Mack was talking about his family to Papa, Jesus and Sarayu and then realised that they knew everything anyway, but they listened as if it was new to them. They wanted to hear it from Mack's perspective, like a child wanting to share an exciting revelation – 'Did you know, Dad?' Of course Dad knows this vital information! The child views it as a way to educate him and the father sees it as a chance to be close to the child he loves. Randal Rauser, an Associate Professor of Historical Theology at Taylor Seminary in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, wrote *Finding God in The Shack* in response and gives excellent information on each chapter from a theological perspective. May this book continue to challenge, inform and heal hurting people and remind us of our Father God, Jesus Christ our Saviour, and the Holy Spirit in a broken world.

*Mary Loock*



*Ed.: Thank you to Mary for this review of an unusual novel. This book has provoked varied responses, but many have been helped with their personal problems through its message. We are also reminded that our UPCSA confession of faith states that God is Spirit, and beyond gender.*

# COMMEMORATING 500 YEARS OF THE REFORMATION

This year 2017 marks the 500<sup>th</sup> year of the Protestant Reformation. The Protestant Reformation was a schism from the Roman Catholic Church initiated by Martin Luther and continued by John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli and other Protestant reformers during the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Europe.



Image of Martin Luther from the workshop of Lucas Cranach the Elder [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

It is usually considered to have started with the publication of the 95 Theses by Luther, which he nailed to the door of Wittenberg Church in Germany on 31 October 1517, and lasting until the end of the Thirty Years War which culminated in the Peace of Westphalia in 1648.

The term 'Protestant' initially applied only to the reformers, but later was used to describe all groups protesting Roman Catholic orthodoxy. Hence we have the Anabaptist movement, groups emerging out of the Pietistic movement, later Methodism, and even later Pentecostalism and so forth.

At the time of the Reformation as the hope of reforming the Roman Catholic Church faded, the 'Protestants' were forced to separate from Roman Catholicism, resulting in Lutheran churches in Germany, Scandinavia, and some eastern European countries; also the Reformed

churches in Switzerland and the Netherlands, Presbyterian churches in Scotland, founded by John Knox, and the Anglican church in England, Congregationalism and other diverse elements which evolved into the Protestant denominations of today.

Previous attempts at reforms prior to the 1500s had attacked the corruption in the life of the church, namely the efforts of Francis Assisi, John Wycliffe, and Johannes Huss. Martin Luther, during the 1500s, went to the root of the problem, i.e. the perversion of the Church's doctrine of redemption and grace.

He deplored the entanglement of God's free gift of grace in a complex system of indulgences and good works. Scripture alone (the Bible) is authoritative, and justification (salvation) is by faith, not by works. The resultant confrontation with the papacy was not long in coming: in 1521 Luther was excommunicated, and what had begun as an internal reformist movement had become a fracture in Western Christendom.

Luther's ideas spread throughout Europe. John Calvin, the French theologian, founded the second main branch of the Protestant Reformed tradition which became known as Calvinism in Geneva (Switzerland) from 1541. In an age of corruption and false teachings this heralded a return to the Scriptures. They found the way of salvation, instead of indulgences, the mass, relics and other superstitions; they rediscovered the ancient way of salvation, the gospel.

The five solas (five cardinal points which formed the foundational beliefs of the movement) were an attempt to summarize the Biblical teaching of salvation. That God makes us alive and is completely for us; by God's grace alone (sola gratia), on the basis of Christ alone (solus Christus), received through faith

alone (sola fide), to the glory of God alone (soli Deo gloria), with the Scripture alone (sola Scriptura) as the only, final, decisive authority on truth.

**GOD'S GRACE ALONE – SOLA GRATIA** *We are saved by the grace of God alone.*

**CHRIST ALONE – SOLUS CHRISTUS** *Jesus Christ alone is our Lord, Saviour and King.*

**FAITH ALONE – SOLA FIDE** *We are saved by and through faith in Jesus Christ.*

**GLORY OF GOD ALONE – SOLI DEO GLORIA** *We live for the glory of God alone.*

**SCRIPTURE ALONE – SOLA SCRIPTURA** *The Bible is our highest authority.*

### KEY VERSES

Ephesians 1:6–9, Ephesians 1:4–6, 11–12, Isaiah 2:12–17, Romans 11:33–36, Romans 5:1, Romans 4:4–5, Ephesians 2:8–10, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Galatians 2:21, Galatians 5:2–4, Galatians 2:16, Philippians 1:15–18, 1 Thessalonians 1:9–10, Romans 8:7–8, Ephesians 2:1–5, Ephesians 2:8–10, Galatians 1:6–9, Romans 1:17.

This year marks the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, a heritage which we at Mowbray Presbyterian share. Sharing the legacy of people (reformers, men and women) shaped by a book (the Bible), they looked at the book, studied the book, memorized the book and their (re)discoveries of essential Christian truths in the book changed the course of history.

*Russell Petersen*

## THE INCARNATION

Human nature seeks after the materialness of things, it speaks of the substantiality of our condition the physicality of creation us being flesh and blood.

Are we mere things, objects like a static presentation as in a still life; like sticks and stones and yet constantly moving, tossed by the ebb and flow of this playground called life, our sincerest efforts reduced to a weariness, our zeal abandoned to a plodding drudgery? It seems as if we have somehow missed the mark,

as if we are engulfed by a cloud of guilt. Who can save us from this body of death?

Only our Creator can, I suppose. God stooped, bent low, to wallow in the sordid business of life, in this faulty, fearful, foul world became the Son of Man, became one of us and yet not like us to finish his task assigned to him because of us for us.

*Russell Petersen*

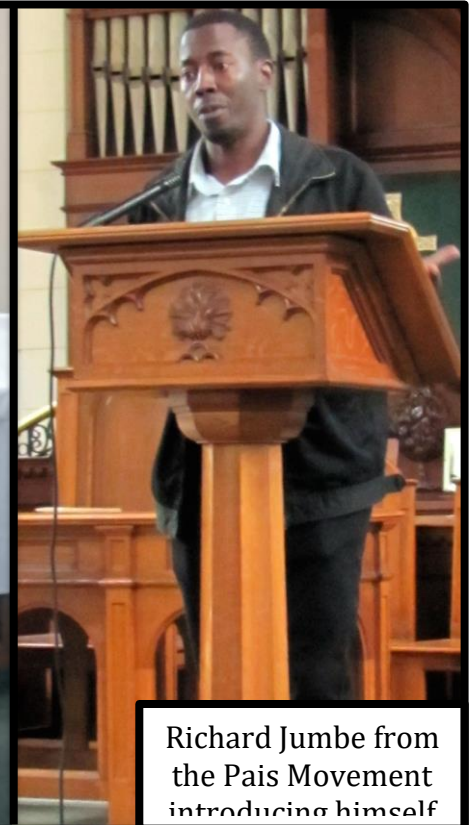
For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, 'The one who is righteous will live by faith.' (Romans 1:16–17)



From top-left: Pete Baker from the Pais Movement, UK, who preached at Mowbray on 8 October. Family members of Divine and Evelyn Tah who attended the baptism service of Dyron and Delish on 5 November. Prayer meeting at Mowbray on 30 September. Beryl Bungne and, below her, Buhle Masuku, Natasha Chavula and Elethu Mjuza, four young readers at our Children's Service on 22 October. Tom Dearduff, intern from Princeton Theological Seminary, with Dave.



Nigel baptising Dyron and Delish in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit



Richard Jumbe from the Pais Movement introducing himself



Celebrating the baptism of Divine and Evelyn Tah's children



The Children's Church choir leading worship on 22 October



Hazel, Leslie, Elsabe, Aileen and Edith enjoying tea at Kirstenbosch on 10 October