

MOWBRAY TIMES

December 2019

He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants for ever; his kingdom will never end.' 'How will this be,' Mary asked the angel, 'since I am a virgin? The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God (Luke 1:32-35).



Friendship Group tea at Kirstenbosch on 8 October 2019.



Dear Mowbray family and friends,

Reneé and I would like to wish our readers a blessed Christmas and a year of growth and fruitfulness in 2020. Thank you for your love and support during the past year. The year has presented a healthy blend of blessings and challenges. We have been stretched and called to growth in character by the challenges, and we have been encouraged by the blessings. The presence of God in every circumstance has been unfailing and the promises and principles of Scripture have been our compass and guide. The message of

Romans 8:28 has been proved over and over to be true: "We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose . . ."

One of the challenges of this past year has been the departure of the Rev. Nigel Chikanya from our ministry team. In April Nigel came to the end of his three-year appointment as our Minister to the Under 30s. It is incredible how the good years seem to fly by. Looking back it's hard to believe that Nigel's three years with us came and went so quickly. At the end of his three-year term, Session decided, on the basis of financial constraints faced by the congregation, to extend Nigel's appointment on a year-by-year basis. Nigel felt he needed greater security than the one-year appointment on offer from Mowbray. When the Church of Scotland expressed an interest, Nigel decided to explore possibilities in Scotland, a decision that eventually led to him taking up an appointment to a congregation in Glasgow in June. We miss Nigel, Savior and Dee very much! They are a part of us and we are a part of them. Long may our friendship and partnership in the Gospel continue, even over such a great distance. We wish Nigel all the best in his ministry in the Church of Scotland.

A highlight of 2019 has been the decision made by Richard and Leearron Jumble to pursue the establishment of Pais South Africa as members of Mowbray Presbyterian Church. They have

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immersed themselves fully in the life and ministry of our congregation, taking on responsibility for training and supporting ministry teams serving our children, youth and young adults. Their focus on discipleship has led to the growth and development of our Children and Teen's Church team, a successful Holiday Club, the establishment of our Friday afternoon Kids' Club, continued ministry to youth on Friday nights, and the encouragement of our young adults and students. Praise God for these developments. We eagerly anticipate further progress in 2020 with the establishment of a local Pais team of interns based at our church.

A special word of thanks must go to our members for their faithful stewardship and generous giving in support of our mission and ministry as a congregation. We are trusting for significant growth in this area of our faith and life in 2020.

As we take on responsibility for the support of our Pais interns, may God help us to rise to the challenge. As I've often said over the years, the cheapest church to run is a dead church. Mowbray is very much alive. Many years ago, before I came to Mowbray in 2000, our Session made a decision to invest in people and ministry rather than in buildings. This is still evident in the fact that our expenses in the area of pastoral care, youth and children's ministry, administration and management is mostly reflected in and through the payment of salaries and stipends. Let's remind ourselves that our pastoral leaders are not just there to do mission and ministry on our behalf but to lead by example as catalysts for the ministry and mission of all our members. May 2020 be a year of growth in effective pastoral care and discipleship of our members and mission and ministry to our community.

I trust that you will enjoy reading this Christmas edition of our Mowbray Times. Thank you very much to the Rev. Eleanor Gaunt and to Fiona McCutcheon for their invaluable assistance with its preparation and editing.

May God bless you and your loved ones.
Much love,
Dave

UPDATE ON NIGEL

Dave and Nigel are in regular contact. Nigel, Savior and Dee are doing really well in their congregation of Eastwood Parish church in Glasgow, Scotland. Nigel is working with the Rev. James Teasdale, whom he describes as humble, hard-working, and a good preacher. James is currently away on leave and Nigel is overseeing the work and ministry of the congregation during his absence. Savior is trusting soon to be fully registered with HCPC to enable her to practise in the field of medical research in the UK. Dee is settling into first grade at school and looks very smart in his school uniform. We pray for God to continue blessing them as they serve the Lord in their new community.



NEWS FROM THE PEWS

The year of 2019 has been a full year in the life of our congregation. Here are just some of the activities and events of which we have been aware:

Celebrating new births

Several of our members and friends have been blessed by the birth of babies. We heartily congratulate them and pray for health and strength for these growing families.

We give thanks for the births of the following baby girls:

- ♥ **Kate**, born to **Wiza and Melani-Ann Hara** on 25 January.
- ♥ **Ester**, born to **Kyle and Mauricia Williams** on 8 March. (It was so lovely to have the four of them in attendance at our family service on 24 November.)
- ♥ **Joanna**, born to **Serge and Patricia Lajona** on 21 June.

We give thanks for the birth of the following baby boy:

- ♥ **Tahir**, born to **Kauthar and Kasim Solarie** on 26 September.

Baptisms



Nigel had a busy final month with Mowbray as our Minister to the Under 30s. On 7 April he conducted the baptism of **Jabulani Ebenhazer**, son of **Josiah and Catherine Chavula**. On 28 April he conducted the baptism of **Ansel Dennis**, son of **Dennis and Irene Kayaka**, as well as **Kate Thandi**, daughter of **Wiza and Melani-Ann Hara**. On 20 October Dave conducted the baptism of **Kondwani and Precious Katundu's** baby daughter, **Splendour**. The timing worked out perfectly because Kondwani was able to spend about two months with Precious and Splendour after completing his studies (see more details below).

More congratulations

In early April we celebrated with **Nomava Nobatana, Savior Chikanya** and **Melvis Mando** who were among those who graduated at the Autumn graduation ceremonies of various Western Cape institutions of higher learning. Congratulations to **Kondwani Katundu** who successfully completed his PhD at the University of St Andrews in Scotland. He will graduate on 3 December and Precious is booked to attend the ceremony. We bid them safe travels and a blessed celebration. **Dave Smit** also heard recently that he will graduate with his PhD from UCT on 13 December.



A number of our senior members have celebrated special birthdays this year: **Eleanor Gaunt** and **Fiona McCutcheon** both celebrated their 70th birthdays, and **Hazel Campbell, Maureen Grimbeek, Margaret Dinan, Bill Low** and **Joy Anderson** all celebrated their 80th birthdays. **Sue Henderson** celebrated her 90th birthday in September. In December both **Gavin Norris** and **Reneé Smit** will turn 60, and **Murray Silkstone** will turn 80. We are proud of them all for their youthful spirits and love for Jesus.

Congratulations to **Dave and Reneé Smit** on the news of **Gareth's** marriage, and on **Nikki's** engagement. Dave and Mary Loock attended the recent wedding of **Cheryl Kyle and Michael Freemantle** at the Baptist Church. Pastor Willem Agenbach conducted a simple, meaningful service, where two people, after seven years of friendship, became man and wife. They are examples of faithfulness coping with challenges. Lack of transport does not prevent them keeping in touch with friends and family. Cheryl's sharing of meals is part of her ministry. We warmly congratulate them.

Moves, trips and visits



On 28 April 2019 we bid farewell to **the Rev. Nigel, Savior and Deuel Chikanya** who left to take up an appointment at a church in Glasgow, Scotland. We wish them every blessing.

In May, **Richard and Learron Jembe** travelled to the USA to attend the Pais International directors' training conference.

In June, **Eleanor Gaunt** set off for the USA where she spent two months with her daughter Ruth and family, for whom we've been praying much.

Trevor also made periodic trips for the purpose of research meetings and conferences.

In January 2019, **Warwick Goosen** moved to Tanzania to take up a position as procurement officer at a private school in Arusha.

Wally and Elrine Greig now live far from Mowbray, in Eagle Park (close to Grassy Park). They have kept in regular contact with Dave and have been able to visit worship services once or twice this year, but only as finances have allowed. Dave has paid them the occasional visit to encourage them and to pray for them. They still see themselves as very much a part of Mowbray. They find it hard not being able to attend Mowbray regularly since having had to leave Arcadia Retirement Home due to major building changes at the complex.

In June **Dave and Reneé Smit** travelled to Australia. Dave had the opportunity of accompanying Reneé who attended an Engineering Education conference in Melbourne. The trip gave them opportunities to catch up with Dave's brother and family in Melbourne, and with Nikki in Singapore.

Jean Vink moved temporarily to Pringle Bay after selling her home in Claremont. She has now moved back to take up residency at Quadrant Gardens, still in Claremont. She is very happy in her new apartment.

In October, **Blessings Chilala** set out for Malawi to complete his schooling in his home country. Dickson and Anna and his brothers Joel and Noel miss him very much, but we pray for God's blessing and protection during this important phase of his life. Mowbray also misses his contagious smile and friendly personality!

This year **Siki Mabhanga** returned from her internship in New York. She is currently working as a chef at the President Hotel.

The 14th July marked **Ben Lee's** final service at Mowbray before he and **Rebecca** returned to the USA, via Korea for a brief visit to Rebecca's parents. Ben has taken up an employment position in the funding department of Columbia University in New York and Rebecca is currently on the lookout for a suitable employment position. They are partnering with others in planting a new church in Reunion, New York City. Ben and Rebecca spent a fruitful ten Months ministering at Mowbray on a Pulpit Fellowship from Princeton Theological Seminary. What a blessing!



Health and hospitalisation

In December 2018, **Warwick Goosen** was involved in a vehicle accident in Johannesburg. He sustained head injuries and five broken ribs. After some time in hospital, he eventually recovered sufficiently to proceed with his move to Tanzania for work purposes.

Melvin and Milly Petersen have both struggled with their health. He underwent a surgical procedure following a nasty fall and has again recently been hospitalised after taking a bad turn.

Tony Gordon has also been unwell. He and **Pat** remain in our prayers.

Themba and Mildred Nyati have each had rounds of serious ill health during this past year. Mildred took a nasty fall and suffered severe discomfort. Then Themba was hospitalised for surgery after breaking his femur, also as the result of a nasty fall. This was followed by a number of weeks of convalescing prior to his discharge from hospital.

We continued to pray for our other seniors, all of whom have faced challenges from time to time but keep their faith and spirits high despite the challenges. We think particularly of **Edith Beretti, Peter and Shirley Hyslop, Peter Bieber, and Susan Henderson. Elinor le Riche** underwent surgery in August, and **Jean Silkstone** underwent surgery in November.

Carl Larsen, our security guard, has undergone an extensive period of rehabilitation following a stroke in the early part of the year. His family moved him to a home in Durban but he hopes eventually to move back to Cape Town. He is in regular contact with Dave. We are extremely grateful to **André Mukadi** who has stepped in to fill the massive gap left after Carl's illness.

Children, Youth and Young Adults' events

Our Mowbray young people have been very active this year. Their activities have included the annual Holiday Club (24–28 June), a Young Adults' Retreat at Simonsberg (30 August – 1 September), a Spring Camp for children at Simonsberg Bush Campsite (23–26 September) and from 5–8 December our Youth will be attending Summer Camp at Simonsberg. We have recently been blessed with worship



services led by our young people: a Young Adult's Service (22 September), a Youth Service (27 October), and a Children's Surprise Giving Service (24 November). **Richard and Learron** have introduced a powerful biblical emphasis on discipleship into our Intergenerational Church Life ministry which is refreshing to witness. Our teens have been equipped to lead our children, our young adults have been equipped to lead our teens, and our adults are being encouraged to build meaningful mentorship relationships with our young people. What an encouragement this development has been to the life and witness of Mowbray!

Our young people have also enjoyed a series of three united worship events hosted at Mowbray, led by a Cape Town worship ministry named Pursuit. These events are held on the first Friday of every second month at various venues around Cape Town.



Other events

We began the year with a week of LCAG prayer meetings hosted at Mowbray from 28 January to 1 February, and this was followed up with a combined worship service with Ebenezer Uniting Reformed Church, Woodstock, under the pastoral care of **Ds Dr Ben Kotzé**.

In February we held several meaningful meetings with student leaders from the CPUT campus across the road as we explored together possible ways for Mowbray to build supportive relationships with the student body. We were invited to assist them with their "One Meal Per Day" project, which was aimed at assisting students who come to class hungry (some of them having not even been able to afford breakfast). In the end, the congregation donated ingredients and also used church funds to provide sandwiches for hundreds of hungry students as an expression of our care and support. We also participated in a project to provide sanitary towels for female students in need.



Organ restoration

We are extremely grateful for financial grants received from both the Hill Trust and the Rupert Music Foundation that have made it possible to undertake a major restoration of our pipe organ. The project involves the re-leathering of all the bellows, and the repositioning of the swell auxiliary bellows. With the help of our organ curator Garth Hammer, a past organist at Mowbray, we have secured the services of Mr Charles Hart of Cooper, Gill and Tomkins Organ Builders to undertake the restoration work. They are doing their utmost best to complete the work in time for our Advent and Christmas services but this may not be possible.

On Palm Sunday, 14 April, our congregation took to the streets again to witness in song to the arrival of Jesus in Jerusalem, just a few days before his crucifixion.

Our coffee ministry, in partnership with **Beatrice Chitowe** and **Rose Omollo** with their competent barista skills and equipment, continued to serve coffee to hundreds of students over the course of the year. This has created a great opportunity for neighbouring students to visit our church grounds and to experience our congregation as a friendly and hospitable community. We express our sincere thanks to Beatrice and Rose. The coffee ministry is currently in recess as Beatrice and Rose think through the way forward.



On 31 August, **Fundiswa Moyo**, assisted by **Alice Kyobe**, **Susan Goosen** and others, coordinated a High Tea in honour of Women's Month.

Some of us attended an encouraging Swap Conference, hosted by Pais at Mowbray on 15 June for local church and organisation leaders. Our elders and others attended the Discipleship Masterclass hosted by Pais at Bellville Presbyterian Church on 9 November. This was preceded the previous week by a powerful "discipleship" sermon preached by Paul Gibbs, global director of Pais, at our Mowbray Communion Service on 3 November.



Mowbray participated in an encouraging week of 24/7 prayer from 29 September – 5 October Hosted at St. Peter's Anglican Church on behalf of the Mowbray Churches and organisations. Dr Tim Tucker and his wife Christina can be seen in this picture, taken during morning devotions during the week of 24/7 prayer.



Our congregation held its annual Planning Day on 25 October. We were blessed this year to be joined by a healthy contingent of youth. Their contributions, evaluations and suggestions made a valuable contribution to the success of the day. (Please see the report on our goals included with this edition of the Mowbray Times.) Our AGM was held on Sunday 17 November and we thank the Lord for all the hard work of our Treasurer, Finance Committee, Property Committee and other ministries reflected in our Financial Statements and other reports.

MOWBRAY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH – PLANNING FOR 2020

Those present at the Planning Day spent valuable time sharing and imagining potential opportunities for growth in mission and ministry. The points arrived at have been summarised using five key growth areas in our church's life: (1) worship, (2) fellowship, (3) evangelism, (4) intergenerational church life, and (5) administration and leadership. Various suggestions were proffered as to how these aims might be achieved. A selection is recorded here. The full list has been circulated via email and is displayed in the hall.

Key Growth Areas

1. Honouring the Lord through WORSHIP

Goal: To exercise greater creativity in the ways we do things in our worship.

- ♥ Experiment with different ways of doing things, e.g. using silence, punchy intimations, new songs, more frequent Communion services.
- ♥ Use cell groups to lead.
- ♥ Use the seasons of the Church calendar.

Goal: To facilitate greater congregational participation in public worship.

- ♥ Use more liturgical responses.
- ♥ Use the traditional Lord's Prayer.
- ♥ Recruit additional worship team participants.
- ♥ Training opportunities for readers and prayers.
- ♥ More frequent and meaningful music rehearsals.

Goal: To facilitate greater intergenerational participation in worship.

- ♥ Use children, teens and young adults to read, pray, sing and play instruments.
- ♥ Keep all-age talks shorter, using more illustrations.
- ♥ Use young people to present all-age talks.

2. Caring for one another through PASTORAL CARE and FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

GOAL: To provide more effective pastoral care for our members.

- ♥ Re-establish the Pastoral Care Team.
- ♥ Elders to focus on caring for their care groups.
- ♥ All of us exercise hospitality to others at church on Sundays.

Goal: To strengthen and multiply the number of small fellowship groups in the life of our congregation.

- ♥ Make cell groups a focus in teaching and planning.
- ♥ Relaunch cell groups for teens and young adults.
- ♥ Investigate ways to overcome transport challenges.

GOAL: To hold social events as opportunities for fellowship and deepening interpersonal relationships.

- ♥ Mowbray Together events, using a committee to plan and run these events.
- ♥ Sporting events.
- ♥ Social events such as a braai after church.
- ♥ Invite a fellow Mowbray member for a meal or a weekend stay in our homes.

3. Reaching out to others through EVANGELISM

Goal: To develop an outreach mindset among our members, encouraging outreach to our community.

- ♥ Be hospitable to visitors and invite friends.
- ♥ Develop a dedicated outreach team.
- ♥ Run Alpha courses.
- ♥ Organize an outreach event.
- ♥ Partner with other churches.

GOAL: To reach out to students at UCT, CPUT and other local campuses with the Gospel.

- ♥ Reach out to students at orientation weeks.
- ♥ Advertise on campuses.
- ♥ Use social media.
- ♥ Liaise with UPCSA Students' Fellowship.

Goal: To clarify our congregational identity and to promote awareness of our existence in the community.

- ♥ Establish why people come to Mowbray.
- ♥ Establish a clear identity and presence in our neighbourhood.
- ♥ Redo our parking area notice board.
- ♥ Advertise more visibly on Main Road.

4. Developing a healthy INTERGENERATIONAL CHURCH LIFE

GOAL: Increase the number of youth and children reached through various ministries.

- ♥ Recruit more children and youth.
- ♥ Recruit more teachers and leaders.
- ♥ Hold a second Holiday Club each year.

Goal: Strengthen interpersonal relationships between young and old.

- ♥ Develop relationships with Children's Church and Kids' Club parents.
- ♥ Strengthen relationships between young and older people.
- ♥ Hold intergeneration social events.

GOAL: Develop and strengthen leadership teams in ministries for young people.

- ♥ Greater financial investment.
- ♥ Increase the size of our Youth petty cash.
- ♥ Learn from Pais how to grow in the effective discipling and training of our young people.

5. Growth in effective ADMINISTRATION AND LEADERSHIP

Goal: Identify and equip responsible and gifted leaders for our church.

- ♥ Pray for our elders.
- ♥ Encourage and equip elders to lead by example.
- ♥ Involve our members in ministries.
- ♥ Recruit members for the Finance and Property Committees.

GOAL: Develop a clearer insight into biblical stewardship of talents and resources among our Mowbray members.

- ♥ Encourage responsible stewardship and generous giving.
- ♥ Educate the congregation about our church's financial situation.
- ♥ Grow in our giving and invest some of our rental income in maintaining our buildings.

Join the Conversation – SWAP conference held at Mowbray

I can only highlight various aspects of a most informative, enjoyable, excellently presented discipleship gathering. Initially we had music, praise and worship in our church. Curtis (Rose's ten-year-old son) gave an impressive opening prayer. The speakers each had their own relevant presentation skills and we were able to share with our round-table group – listen, discuss, allow responses and eye-contact with folk we had not met before.

A delicious lunch had been prepared by an unseen team and our young folk served and did all the cleaning-up duties, which was noted with appreciation. Later we were grouped in threes for prayer needs with different folk. Our group was aware when we shared that God connects strangers in an amazing way: one was in a healing ministry, the other an occupational therapist at Red Cross Hospital, and I was a theatre sister. It was hardly surprising that our young folk were responsible for an impressive and meaningful service the following day.

Mary Loock



PAIS TEAM 2020

JANUARY 2020 THERE WILL BE A PAIS TEAM JOINING MOWBRAY. THIS TEAM WILL COME ALONGSIDE THE CHURCH TO REACH OUT INTO THE COMMUNITY AND BRING PEOPLE IN. FOCUSING ON THE LOCAL SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES. GOING OUT, DOING MINISTRY THERE AND BRINGING THEM INTO THE EXISTING MINISTRIES DISCUSSED ABOVE. WE BELIEVE THIS WILL REALLY HELP US SEE GROWTH IN 2020. MANDLA DUBE WILL BE LEADING THIS TEAM. PLEASE PREPARE TO MAKE THEM WELCOME NEXT YEAR.

My PhD journey: A long obedience -Dave Smit

By now, most of you will have heard that my doctoral studies are behind me at last and I will, God willing, graduate on 13 December. What a sense of relief and gratitude I feel! As a pastor, I have the privilege and responsibility of preaching from the Scriptures of the New Testament and Hebrew Bible on a regular basis. Early in my ministry, my reading in the field of New Testament studies, along with Greek and Hebrew language study, inspired in me an interest in the Jewishness of Jesus and in the socio-cultural world of Second Temple Judaism inhabited by Jesus. This led to a broader interest in ancient Mediterranean culture, the social context in which the New Testament was written. I found that knowing something of the relevant ancient languages and the socio-cultural context of the New Testament world stimulated my interest in the New Testament texts themselves.

When afforded the opportunity for further study at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1998–99, I used the opportunity to take classes in the theology and literature of Qumran, the literature and theology of the Gospel of Luke, Judaism in the Graeco-Roman period, and Rabbinic literature. My eyes were opened to the possibility of a more focussed investigation into aspects of the Gospel of Luke in the context of its socio-cultural and ideological world. I began to apply myself to rhetorical and narrative analysis and to explore the important role of social reality in the meaning and message of Luke's writing. As I explored possible approaches, I was referred to the work of Prof. Vernon Robbins of Emory University in the USA. In Robbins's work I discovered an interpretive strategy that recognises the texts of our Holy Bible as dynamic and multi-layered communications that intersect with the socio-cultural and historical context of their author. This realisation makes reading and studying the Bible an exciting and enlightening enterprise that promises to be fruitful for faith and life.

As a New Testament student and as a pastor here at Mowbray, these aspects are important for me, especially in view of fresh insights into the meaning and message of the Scriptures. My personal faith has been enriched. I have learned to approach the Bible with greater humility and deeper respect as I read the Bible devotionally and prepare my sermons. After many months of reading and careful consideration, I eventually narrowed down the focus of my studies to Luke's accounts of the birth of John the Baptist and Jesus of Nazareth in Luke 1–2. These texts are foundational for what follows in the rest of Luke's Gospel. My thesis closes with an affirmation that, in his infancy narratives of the births of John the Baptist and Jesus, Luke increasingly ascribes honour to

Jesus, climaxing with the unequivocal declaration that Jesus is the "Saviour who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). A UCT citation from the forthcoming graduation brochure describes my work as follows:

David Smit's thesis undertakes a sociorhetorical analysis of the birth and infancy narratives of John the Baptist and Jesus the Messiah in the Gospel of Luke. Sociorhetorical interpretation provides a dialogical approach to the analysis, enabling the identification of a range of rhetorical strategies used by Luke to ascribe surpassing honour to Jesus over and against John. This brings to the fore a juxtaposition of the two birth accounts, enhanced by a range of rhetorical textures and modes of discourse. The thesis makes a contribution to Lukan research by finding that ideological texture is progressively developed in the rhetoric of the narrative, aimed at the legitimation of Jesus' position of dominance in relation to John. In the process, an asymmetrical power relationship between John and Jesus emerges, and the universal relevance of Jesus as royal Saviour and Messiah is implied.

I have dedicated my PhD thesis to Reneé, my wife. She is my best friend and soul mate, someone with whom I can laugh and cry without fear or embarrassment. We share a thirst for knowledge, and we celebrate together the beauty of God's creation. She completes me as a person. For more years than the two of us would care to admit, we travelled together as we undertook our respective doctoral studies. Her dedication and commitment to excellence in everything she does has inspired me to "carry on regardless", even when a saner person would long since have thrown in the towel. I am grateful for her willingness to serve as a sounding board as I tested the articulation of the many layers of my research arguments. I also thank my children, Nicola and Gareth. They have stood by Reneé and me every step of the way. They have never stopped believing that we would finish our PhDs. They manifest an uncanny sixth sense. They seem to know exactly when to call and when I need their encouragement, and I am extremely grateful to them.

To you, the members of our Mowbray family, I say a big thank you. You have cheered me on and willed me to keep going over the years. You have longed for me to complete this leg of my life-journey. Thank you for your patient support by way of leave, prayers and encouragement. Thank you for your regular questions as to my progress. I cannot begin to tell you how glad I am that it's finally done. I am grateful to my PhD supervisor, Prof. Chuck Wanamaker, and to my family and friends for their support. Thank you especially to Eleanor, Fiona and Graham for your proof-reading. I close with an expression of deep gratitude to my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. It's all about you, Lord! It's all about you!

Condolences

Since the last edition of the Mowbray Times, several of our members have sadly lost loved ones. We reiterate our condolences, trusting that the God of all comfort will continue to be their source of healing and strength in their loss.

In December 2018 Ayanda Masuku sadly lost her aunt in Johannesburg and she travelled up to Johannesburg for her funeral. We think of **Ayanda, Thabani and their family**. We continue to pray for **Ian Gracie** following the death of our beloved Mowbray member **Trevor Gracie**, who died on 7 February 2019 at the age of 95. In March we held a memorial service for baby **Nghah Saidoule Deuel Muma**, son of **Divine and Solange Nghah**, who died in childbirth. He was called home to his Creator before he had a chance to know the joys and pains of life in this world. We reaffirm our condolences to Divine and Solange.

In May this year, **Josephine Laingno**, close friend of **Yvonne and Audrey Hermans and Gavin Norris**, passed away after an extended illness and we pray for them in their loss. In July we expressed our condolences to *(continued above)*

Graham, Adele and Luke Geduldt following the death of Graham's mother. We continue to remember them in prayer. On 4 September 2019 **Betty Bax** passed away after a long period of ill health and we express our condolences to **the Rev. Douglas Bax**.

We also reaffirm our condolences to **Willy Maliwa** following the sad death of his wife **Mimi**, who had expressed a desire to become a member but then sadly became ill and died on 25 August 2019 before the process could be finalised.

In October we expressed our condolences to **Sinethemba Shoba** who had to go home to attend the funeral service of a family member. In early November, **Irene Atungsiri's** mother sadly passed away in Cameroon. We pray that the peace of the Lord that passes all understanding will be with her and her loved ones during this difficult time of loss.

Very recently, on 15 November 2019, **Gladson Nathava** died and his memorial service was conducted in our church on Sunday 24 November 2019. We pray for his wife **Eddah Wina Nathava** and for their children.

FRIENDSHIP GROUP TEA AT KIRSTENBOSCH

On 8 August, our Friendship Group spent a pleasant morning at Kirstenbosch Gardens for our Christmas Tea at the Moyo Restaurant. We enjoyed tea and coffee with large scones, strawberry jam and cream. Pictured here are Percy Anderson and Mary Loock, making the most of the opportunity to explore the gardens in the pleasant sunshine. The Friendship Group meets throughout the year on the second Tuesday of each month. We focus this ministry on seniors and others who are able to attend a fellowship meeting on a weekday. We serve delicious tea and eats and present a variety of interesting programmes. We meet again for our Christmas Party on the afternoon of 6 December. For more information, contact Dave or Susan in the church office.

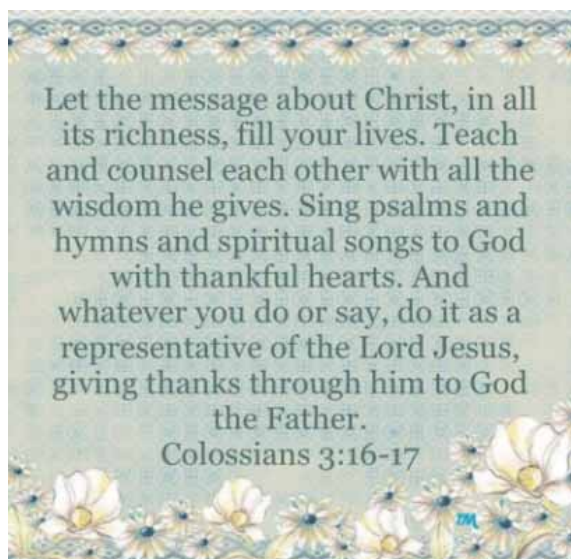


OBSERVATORY CELL GROUP REFLECTIONS

This group has continued with its fellowship since its inception in 2012 and has remained faithful to the Word of God. We have maintained our membership at six. Four of our group members feature in this photo:



Reflecting on the group, I would like to refer to Colossians 3:16-17:



The Bible says “rich and varied worship is a sign that the Word of God is dwelling richly in your heart.” And this verse also refers to our purpose as the cell group: **“Attend classes and small groups where you can dig into His Word.”** That is what the group has been doing and continues to do.

We are now sharing leading the group. This brings varied forms of worship. We read and interrogate the Old and New Testament readings. We opened this year with Psalm 19, followed by Romans 12, Revelations 21 and 22, etc. During the Women’s month we discussed Proverbs 31 in one of our sessions. Our Scripture

readings are sometimes purposefully chosen to reflect the theme of the Christian calendar, e.g. Lent or Good Friday. During this period, we read and discussed Matthew 26, 27 and 28 (13/04/2019 session) and also referred to Isaiah 53. Sometimes we link the Old Testament to the New Testament, e.g. reading Genesis 3 and Romans 5 together.

Ilidia and Aileen are a resource for the group as they share information with us, with Ilidia sharing readings and material from the Diocese, as well as her creativity. Among the readings she shared with us was from the Divine Office on 24 June 2019 about “the kingdom of God being the peace and joy of the Spirit”. It asks of us to make room for Christ to dwell in our hearts, for he says; “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word and we shall come to him and make our dwelling within him.” There are more of these readings that Ilidia shares with us. One of them was on the Decalogue of Happiness from the Pope. This was very profound and was also featured in the Faith for Daily Living devotional.



We support Aileen in her projects, which include Ons Plek, whose girls we helped with sanitary towels. God wants us to build each other up and be full of grace. God wants to bring positive changes in our lives. To end, I would like to refer to this quote from Daily Bread: “We are not here to see through one another, but to see one another through.” As a group of women, we stand united as daughters of the Most High and sisters in Christ. In all things and at all times we give all the glory to God!

Tantaswa Gubevu

Getting to know you – Sinethemba Shoba

Sinethemba started coming to Mowbray in April this year and is already happily involved in ministry. She comes from Makhanda (or Grahamstown, as it was known until recently), where her parents still live, and with whom her seven-year-old daughter Simi lives. Simi goes to Victoria Primary School, following in the footsteps of her mother who went to both the primary and the Victoria Girls High School. Sinethemba has one brother, who is also working in Cape Town.



Sinethemba got to know Cape Town a bit from family holidays. After school she began studying for a BA at UWC, but soon realised that her passion lay in Public Relations and Events Management. She now has a Diploma in Events Management from Varsity College in Rondebosch, and a Public Relations Certificate from UNISA. And she is currently studying Social Media and Marketing with Vega School of advertising. After some time working in Cape Town, she moved back to Grahamstown in 2012, where she worked with the Grahamstown Foundation and was involved in the organisation of the National Arts Festival, the Science Festival, the School of Arts and Creativity, the English Olympiad, and the new Xhosa Olympiad.

April 2019 saw her back in Cape Town to take up a post with Sanlam Private Wealth as an administration specialist – a job which also calls on her events management skills. And it also saw her making her way to Mowbray Presby. Sinethemba says she felt immediately at home at Mowbray. She had been involved in Trinity Presbyterian in Grahamstown, so this was a natural choice. She was warmly welcomed here and has made good friends with a number of our members. It wasn't long before she was involved in our Children's Church, in particular with the Genesis group of three-to-seven-year-olds. She says the children are cute and are lots of fun – and remind her of her own daughter, whom she misses a lot.

Her faith began to deepen after the birth of her daughter in 2012, and her involvement in

ministry in Grahamstown and here has given her a new awareness of how God answers prayer. She understands more about how God does things, and that setbacks and delays are all part of the plan when God has something better in mind for us. She is finding new purpose beyond her first reason for being in Cape Town and has valued the opportunity ministry provides for getting to know people and finding compassion for other people. She feels really blessed and has lots to be grateful for. Sinethemba radiates a joyful spirit, and we are so glad that God has guided her to us.

Fiona McCutcheon

Book Review – Shona Allie's call to prison ministries, by Heather Tredoux

Having read an article about a prison ministry, I made contact with the author, Heather Tredoux.¹ She has written the stories Shona Allie used to tell her, as they attended the same church. After Shona's weekly visits to Pollsmoor, and her travels locally and nationally, they would meet for a cup of tea and a peanut butter sandwich. Heather is the former director of a correspondence Bible School. Shona's story is also told – marriage, conversion to Islam, abuse, coming back to Christianity and bringing up children. There is mutual pride between Shona and her children.

When she realised she was in the wrong place, she publicly testified in the mosque, and returned to God. Her husband allowed her and the children to attend church. Another miracle was that her husband eventually joined them and was later baptised. This is a remarkable, inspiring story. When asked about funding for overseas trips, usually in support of the families of drug-traffickers, she says she asks God to provide and he does. The book costs R100 and is available in Claremont. Those interested in buying a copy, can call Ms Tredoux at 021 712 3546, 083 783 3456 or Ms Allie at 079 467 9148. Proceeds from the book will be used to support Ms Allie's mission to continue reminding inmates of God's love.

Mary Loock

¹<https://www.plainsman.co.za/news/missionary-launches-biography-29344082>

