

Preamble

We, the people of this our Cape of Good Hope District, from the beautiful daisies of Namaqualand, the fertile farms of the Breede river, the lush vineyards of the Boland, the spray of the ocean along the West Coast, Strand and Overberg, the majestic mountains of the Helderberg, the business hubs of the wider peninsula, the densely populated Cape Flats, the pulsating suburbs of the False Bay, Bongani, Blue Downs, and to the hustle and bustle of the inner city meeting at the 193rd Synod, gathering physically for the first time after 3 years at the Claremont Methodist Church in Wynberg Circuit proclaiming that *eyona nto luthando! Die liefde van Jesus is wonderbaar* and so we note the call to “*Remain in the Love of Christ*”.

In love we celebrate:

Noting that *ndingenaluthando lokuthand' uThixo kunye nabo bonke abantu andincedi lutho* we came to the realisation that we are all one and undivided body of Christ, as a district, our diversity is our strength. The beautiful melodies of the Shona, Afrikaans, English, Setswana and isiXhosa hymns all under one roof, all in one service showing an absolute unity of differences, all jointly committed to the grapple of what it means to be one and to be one in Christ. *Inene, eyona nto luthando!*

We remain in the love of Christ as we wrestle with being inclusive even to a God unknown to us, as we make efforts to understand the different walks of life which have brought us to this intersection. The ongoing dialogue of *Ukuthwasa* is an opportunity to share, discover and explore our rich diversity as a unified parish.

We celebrate the success of the ongoing Mesodonian Call that was made to the Namaqualand circuit, the progression of candidates¹, ordinands² and probationers and long service awards to a number of ministers³. We give thanks for those who have come to an end of their active service⁴ whose journeys are portfolios of evidence that *die liefde van Jesus is wonderbaar*.

We further rejoice the outcome of the elections that were conducted in a prayerful and meaningful way.⁵

With love we note:

Despite the grapple with socio-economic struggles which have plunged us into a survival mode syndrome and the state of our nation appearing to be in a death spiral yet we can say *die liefde van Jesus is wonderbaar!*

As we re-imagine new models of hosting our district events, embracing the concept of co-hosting and shared responsibilities there is a call for the youth to help us to re-imagine a

¹ Ms Reza Fourie

² Rev Gillian Fox and Rev Harry James

³ Rev Makhananda – 25 yrs; Rev Prof Deon Vorster – 25 years; Rev Mike Crockett – 50 years; Rev James Massey – 50 years; Rev Cecil Begbie – 50 years

⁴ Rev Alan Storey; Rev Andre Buttner; Rev Vincent Harry

⁵ Rev Yvette Moses (Bishop); Logan Frenchman (District Statistical Secretary)

church that caters for the needs of the evolving parish to combat the extinction of the church. As the parish moves into the 4th industrial revolution, we are called to compassionately build parishes where the world can fit in. Parishes that bear witness that *eyona nto luthando!*

A challenge yet to be unearthed exists in relation to stationing. In this synod we noted this challenge and concerns of reduction of active agency since the pandemic. Whilst we note the great strides made, we note that we still grapple with finances as we pursue revival over survival: a revival that says *die liefde van Jesus is wonderbaar!*

So what is God saying to us?

Die liefde van Jesus is wonderbaar even though we must not be romanticising love for it is a site of struggle. We are reminded that an extravagant love will rip through our lives in a continuous present and future parish.

Eyona nto luthando and the onus to love is now shifted to us and so we must

- plead our case against the violence with mercy;
- nag the compassionate judge with constant prayer;
- discharge the onus to love!

Not only must justice be done, but we must show that justice has been done! Justice is a picture that attempts to portray who God is as we continue the journey of trying to understand who God is and what love is beyond societal limits.

As we remain in the love of Christ we are called *ukuba simthande uThixo kunye nabo bonke abantu, ngomphefumlo nange ngqondo nangamandla ethu onke!*⁶

⁶ 1 Cor 13:13; Xhosa Hymn 218