

Shepherds of the Flock

Quaterly C of C
Launcher

1 Peter 5 vs 1-4

13/4/97

Text: 1 Peter 5 vs. 1-4: I appeal to you to be shepherds of the flock that God gave you and take care of it willingly.

The Quaterly Council of Churches is being launched during a crucial and critical period of the life of the church of Christ in S.A. to-day. All of us are aware of the tremendous changes taking place in practically every sphere of life in S.A. to-day - politics, education, health care, ~~&~~ employment, Commerce & industry, and the church. Many South Africans (including many Christians) experience these changes as a time of confusion, lack of clarity and direction, especially where increasing criminal violence, serious abuse of women, conflicts in many educational institutions, chaos in some state hospitals, shocking revelations about fraud and corruption all tend to strengthen the impression that our country is slowly moving towards a state of anarchy. Our newspapers, our radios, our TV's are full of reports about bank robberies.

(2)

Police killings, car hi-jackings, mugging of people amidst rising unemployment and the homelessness of thousands of people.

Many of these ^{crisis} disturbing developments are taking place within the boundaries of our Gauteng Council of Churches - and these events cannot but dominate the agenda of the difficult task facing provincial Councils of churches. Because of its geographical position and of the fact that such a large section of our population lives within Gauteng and, equally, that such a large number of denominations exist and operate within the boundaries of Gauteng, an added responsibility rests upon the Gauteng C. of Churches to face these problems and to assist in finding answers to these problems.

In addition to his many church representatives and visitors from Africa, Europe, USA, Canada, Latin America, India, the Phillipines, the East, Australia and New Zealand will wish to meet staff from the SACC ~~Home Office~~ as well as Gauteng C.C.

The G.C.C. will also have to deal with all the major problems of the country and of the church - a very large agenda of duties!

What should be your priorities at the present moment? Allow me to share my opinion with you:

1) To strengthen the econ. witness

2) To further, wherever you can, the goal of Christian unity

3) To confront the serious economic needs
of the majority of our people:

Poverty, unemployment, homelessness
and the evils which flow from such
poverty, unemployment & homelessness
Many of these problems we find in
a concentrated way in Gauteng

4) To challenge the increasing practices
of fraud, corruption and self-
enrichment in our community.

5) Growth ethics

Introduction: This is a service not only of ^{afford} the inauguration of the Gauteng Council of Churches but more than that: of celebration due to the merger of the previous regional Councils : 1) Pretoria C. of Churches

2) Greater Tshikona Alliance of Churches

3) East Rand C. of Churches

4) Vaal Council of Churches

And please let us not forget that the whole West Rand area, where there has not yet been a regional C. of Churches, should also be added

Gauteng Provincial Council of Churches

THE LAUNCHING SERVICE

The Central Methodist Church
13th of April 1997

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

Come let us worship and bow before the Lord our Maker.
For our God is a great God, Creator of heaven and earth.

Praise be to God
Praise the name of the Lord

You who minister in the house of the Lord,
in the courts of the house of our God.
**Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good;
sing praise to his name, for that is pleasant.**

OPENING HYMN Lizalisa Idinga Lami

CONFESSION

Let us call to mind our failures

**God, our Parent, Jesus our brother, Holy Spirit our Counsellor
we are made in your image
with minds to know you, hearts to love you and the will to serve you.**

**Our humanity prevents us from truly knowing you,
sincerely loving you and humbly obeying your command,
That we must love one another as you have loved us.**

**For the sake of Christ our Lord,
do not hold our sins against us,
But in your tender love, forgive us.**

The Almighty and Merciful Lord grant us pardon, and remission of all our sins,
time for amendment of life, and grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

COLLECT FOR UNITY

In the name of the Most High,
God of all creation, visible and invisible, the living and the dead,
Accept and bless our Assembly,
Hear our prayer and grant us unity, peace, true concord and love
so that in our oneness, we may proclaim your Holy Word to the nations
and establish your Kingdom among all people
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

1 st Lesson	1 Corinthians 1: 10 - 17
Hymn	Thuma Mina
2 nd Reading	Matthew 12: 28 - 34
Sermon	The Rev Dr Beyers Naude
Chorus	Mayenziwe intando yakho

PRAYERS

All praise and honour to you, Almighty God
for this ministry of service to your people;
for the faith of your people;
for the generosity of our partners;
for the tireless efforts of your Church;

Give thanks to the Lord for he is gracious, his mercy endures forever

We pray for the Ecumenical Movement in our land and especially in this Province,
for our member Churches and Organisations;
for the Church Leadership in this Province;
for the Executive Committee of this Council;
for the staff and all who so generously volunteer their services;
for all who hear your word and live by your commands;

Continually inspire them with your Spirit in wisdom, love and service

We pray for the Communities in which we serve,
For the hungry, starving and malnourished;
the oppressed and discriminated against;
the aged, unemployed, homeless and orphaned;
the exploited and abused;
the refugees and migrants;

Through our service may they experience your grace and love

We pray for healing, reconciliation and peace,
an end to the ongoing conflict;
in the hostels and their environments;
the youth and their organisations;
for the injustices of the past;

Ease the pain and tend the wounds that we may live together in unity

Heavenly father, you have promised to hear what we ask in the Name of your Son; accept and fulfill our petitions, not as we ask in our ignorance, nor as we deserve in our sinfulness, but as you know and love us through your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Amen

HYMN

COMMISSIONING

There are different gifts,
but it is the same Spirit who gives them.

There are different ways of serving God,
but it is the same Lord who is being served.

God works through different people in different ways,
but it is the same God who achieves his purpose through them all.

Each one is given a gift by the Spirit,
to use it for the common good.

God of all power,
Equip with your Spirit, these your servants,
whom you have called to do your will in this Province.
Bless them with the wisdom and courage for the task at hand,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING

God the Holy Trinity, make you strong on faith and love, defend you on every side, keep you in truth and peace and the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be upon you and your loved ones, this day and always.

Amen

HYMN

Nkosi Sikelel'i Afrika