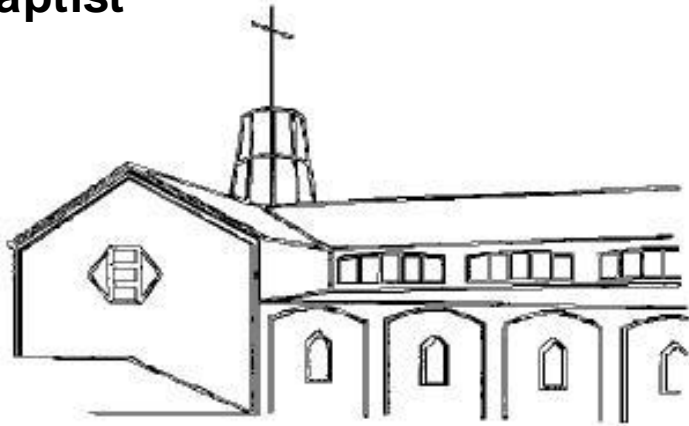


**Parish of St John the Baptist
STEWARDSHIP 2011**



The
LANTERN

A FRANCISCAN BLESSING

May you be blessed with discomfort
at easy answers, half-truths and superficial relationships
so that you may live deep within your heart.

May you be blessed with anger
at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people
so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May you be blessed with tears
to shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger and war
so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them
and turn their pain into joy.

And may God bless you with enough foolishness
to believe that you can make a difference in the world
so that you can do what others claim cannot be done
to bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor.



From the Rector

Dear People of God

Election of new Suffragan Bishop

At the Elective Assembly on Tuesday 30 August the Venerable Tsietsi Seleokane, presently rector of Holy Trinity, Newcastle, and archdeacon of Ingagane, was elected as the new Suffragan Bishop for the North Western Episcopal Area. Let us pray for him, his wife, Rachel, and their children. He will be consecrated a bishop on 12 November, during the visit of the archbishop.

Stewardship

We are approaching our annual Stewardship Month in October, with Stewardship/Dedication Sunday being on 30 October. The material for stewardship is now available and we encourage your prayerful response. We have talented and generous parishioners. Under God, this is our church. Let us again commit ourselves to God as well as to one another in this church community. Please note that your responses are to be returned to the church no later than at the services on 30 October. If you are not able to be at church on that day then we ask that you return them prior to this time. We are also using the opportunity through mailing the entire parish to update our parish roll. You will notice on the Time and Talents form we ask if you wish to remain on the parish roll.

Clergy News

The Revds Alfred Nala and Sean Semple will be ordained as priests and Jabulani Ngidi will be ordained a deacon on 26 November this year. Let us continue to pray for them.

The Revd Eliza Getman will be attending her brother's wedding in Washington DC this month and soon after returning will return to her ministry as Chaplain at Durban Girls' College.

The Revd Sue Brittion's ex-husband, Francois, died this month. Let us remember, in prayer, Sue, her daughters, Colleen, Mandy and Fiona and grandchildren Jethro and Layla at this time.

Regional News

At the end of October this year, the Revd Johann Vilakazi, the rector of Umhlathuzana Parish, will be succeeded by the Revd Siphon Luthuli. We welcome to our region Siphon together with his wife, Lindiwe, son, Mdu (26) and daughter, Nonto (15). Johann will continue as priest-in-charge of the Valley, a ministry that he has retained since relinquishing the position of archdeacon at the end of February this year. Pam Solomon, the wife of Desmond Solomon, the rector of Christ the King, Mariannridge, has continued to struggle with cancer. I encourage you to pray for her and Des.

Change of Minister at Pinetown Methodist Church

The Revd Ian France, together with his wife, Holly, and their three children - Alex (8), Adam (5) and Emma (18 months) will be leaving the Methodist Church at the end of the year, having been called to Westview Methodist Church in Centurion.

Ian will be replaced in December by Rev Brenda Timmer - she is currently the Senior Minister at Calvary Methodist in Midrand. Brenda is married to Nelisjan (Nelis), and they have four children - Kayleigh (11), Paul (9), Romy (7) and Morgan (4).

We thank Ian for the contribution he has made to the witness of the church in Pinetown over the last nine years. We wish him and his family well in their new ministry.

Synod 7-8 October 2011

This important diocesan meeting is just around the corner. As usual it is an opportunity to consider reports from various aspects of our diocesan life as well as to consider motions presented to the Synod. Synod also serves as an opportunity to confirm the future direction of the diocese. Please pray for it.

The representatives you elected at Vestry in February are Dr Christopher Cockburn and Makhosi Cain. In addition to myself, the Revd Sue Brittion will also be attending as a representative of the self-supporting clergy in our archdeaconry.

Visit of the Archbishop

The Archbishop of Cape Town, Thabo Makgoba will be visiting our Diocese from about 10 -14 November. On 10 November he speaks at a clergy forum at the Cathedral, on 11 he delivers the Third Rubin Phillip Peace Lecture, and on 12 he consecrates the new Suffragan Bishop, Tsietsi Seleokane. We look forward to welcoming him.

Invitations and tickets to the Rubin Phillip Peace Lecture are now available from the parish office. We encourage you to invite friends beyond the parish to this special event. We would also value your help in preparing the venue for the event (we will be erecting a marquee for example) as well as on the evening itself. A list is at the back of the church for you to indicate your offers of help.

Confirmation Preparation Courses for the 2012 Confirmation Service

Preparation classes for Confirmation will start in October. Those who wish to be considered for confirmation are asked to fill in an application form from the parish office.

The classes will take place on a Sunday morning after the 9.00am service. Usually children and adults are

prepared in different classes. It is important to note that the diocesan policy requires that children be at least in Grade 10 when they are confirmed.

Admission to Communion

At St John's we have a long tradition of admitting children to communion before confirmation. We will soon be offering preparation classes for children for this purpose. Look out for details.

Planning for 2012

Groups within the parish are encouraged to plan their particular activities and events for next year, particularly if they impact on the parish as a whole, so that they can be included in the parish diary, and clashes

avoided. Please pass these on to the parish office by 15 November.

In consideration of Stewardship:

Do not love the world of the things in the world. The love of God is not in those who love the world; for all that is in the world - the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, the pride in riches - comes not from God but from the world. And the world and its desire are passing away, but those who do the will of God live forever.
1 John 2: 15-16

Yours in Christ

Andrew Warmback

STEWARDSHIP

Edward Pines, Churchwarden

An important element of our stewardship as a parish is contributing to the wider ministry in our Pinetown Region and the Diocese of Natal plus a contribution towards the Province of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa.

This year the Pinetown Region contributed a total of R3, 615, 204 to the Central Fund Budget of R22, 717, 864 and in 2012 we are being asked to contribute towards an average increase of 7.5%. This increase will provide a 6.4% increase towards a stipend package for Rectors plus 1% towards theological education and formation.

What happens to each Rand of our assessment?

A request for an additional 1% towards theological education and formation, if achieved, will provide funding enabling excellence in training of clergy, lay ministers, ordinands, youth and children and facilitate growth in the church.

In 2011 our parish will have contributed a total of R381,000 of our income to the Diocesan Central Fund. In order to provide for the request of a 7.5% increase we ask for ±400 families to contribute an increase of R6 per month. When we consider what God has provided, is that too much to ask?

The Diocesan Central Fund Budget 2012

	Budget	Our Rand
Bishops (3)	2, 118,387	8.71 cents
Regional expenses (15)	426,930	1.75 cents
Stipends/Pensions (89/28)	16, 089,925	66.14 cents
Women's Ministry	168,114	0.69 cents
Youth	155,528	0.64 cents
Services and Communication	252,285	1.04 cents
Specialist ministries	302,575	1.24 cents
Ordination Candidates Training	650,000	2.67 cents
Diocesan overheads	677,761	2.79 cents
Diocesan Administration – Finance/Legal and General, Property and Personnel	1, 579,726	6.49 cents
Theological, Education and Training	282,076	1.16 cents
Diocesan Grants	144,600	0.60 cents
Common Provincial Fund	1, 232,876	5.07 cents
Bad Debts	246,132	1.02 cents
	24, 326,915	R 1.00

PARISH FINANCES AS AT 31 AUGUST 2011:

Dedicated Giving:

Amount pledged	R518 645
Amount received	R503 315
Shortfall	(R15 333)

Income vs Expenses

Total income received	R614 028
Total expenses	R626 729
Deficit	(R12 701)

STEWARDSHIP is not only about money. Our gifts of time and talents are equally valuable, and sometimes more difficult to make. There are many aspects of church life where the active involvement of the congregation is vital, and many ministries really need help. A few of these are listed below, and details of all the activities at St John's may be found in the information booklet, *A Guide to the Parish*, which is available on request from the parish office. Please think very carefully about what **YOU** can do when you complete your Stewardship forms. All these groups are open to **ALL** parishioners, men and women, young and old.

Dusting

The dusting team meet on a Tuesday morning from 8:30 to about 9:30 to dust the pews and tidy the books. This is not a hard job, and the more helpers there are, the quicker it is done; and we repair to Knowles for coffee! Our numbers are dwindling for various reasons. The fellowship within the group is one of the many rewards for this small service of keeping our church looking cared for. *Contact Val Blore (031 7023719)*

Sacristans

We really need people to join the Sacristans, as with people leaving the team due to illness or relocation our numbers are down by half. Thank you to Yvonne Tweedie for taking over responsibility as "chief" sacristan and for those that assist her.

The duty of the Sacristan is to look after the vestments used for the Eucharist, that means coming in to the church once a month, usually on a Tuesday or a Friday, for an hour or so.

Every Tuesday we set a tray with the chalices, wine and wafers needed for the Eucharist on Wednesday, and a similar tray is set on Friday, for the two services on Sunday. We keep the silver clean and replace candles when necessary, and also take the linen home to wash.

Being a Sacristan is not a hard job and is very rewarding. If you would like to join us, we work in pairs, so there will be someone to 'show you the ropes'. So please think about adding your name to the Sacristan list on stewardship Sunday. *Contact: Yvonne Tweedie (031 7093705)*

Martha's Friends

Martha's Friends provide teas after funerals. This is an important outreach to the bereaved, but unfortunately the membership is dwindling due to ill health or relocation, and there seem to be no 'new' people to take their place. One needs to be available at short notice, but if there are, say, 20 names on the list, it is likely that at least 4 or 5 can provide eats and pour tea on a particular day. *Contact the parish office.*

Sidespeople

We need more sidespeople, particularly for the 7.00am service. If you are willing to be part of this ministry of welcome and service please speak to *Roy Brough (082 4542520)*

Brass Cleaners

This important part of the "background worshippers" of our Church is in dire need of additional members! We are a very small team at the moment, who come in once a fortnight to keep the brass in our church gleaming. If working in pairs, the job takes about 1 hour – most of us find a Friday morning most convenient, but anyone wishing to join us can make a time suitable to them, in conjunction with a keyholder who could open the church and sacristy. At present our turn comes around approx. every 6 weeks – if there were more of us, obviously it would be less often. We do urge all members to give us your serious consideration and offers of help! *Contact Rhea Gwynn (031 7019777)*

Newcomers – a success story

Denise Marescia

The Newcomers team is coming together in spite of 'one blot on the landscape after another' (stolen from the book by Tom Sharpe).

Thanks to the stalwarts like Ingrid, Lydia, Doreen and Sylvia, all of the "newies" are receiving lots of guidance and support. An additional 15 women have agreed to help at the table and we are accepting more and more so that in time we will always have someone at the table regardless of who is "meant" to be on duty. Already people are spotting the gap and helping out anyway.

Next on the newcomers' agenda is to get men involved. Watch this space!

Everyone shares a common passion....We love our parish and we love the buzz after the service. We wish to "grow" that buzz and to enjoy the fellowship started inside the service just a little bit longer each Sunday.

Kudos to Rose who is so efficient and helpful in keeping the Newcomers tray updated and in passing on the information.

Thanks everyone for giving us space to grow.

Men's Group

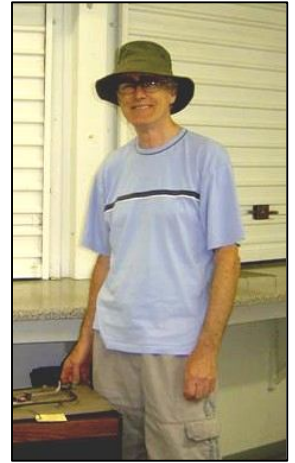
For the first part of the year we have been studying the book *From Wild Man to Wise Man: Reflections on Male Spirituality* by Richard Rohr. In the next few months we will be going through a course called "Wild at Heart". The Group meets on the third Thursday of the month, starting with a bring-and-share meal at 18.30. For further information please contact *Austin Savage on 073 3193269.*

Church Maintenance

Maintenance of our church buildings and grounds is an on-going process. While we are working on longer term planned maintenance we need to deal with the day to day matters that arise. We are most grateful to John Williams for his on-going assistance in this area. If you are aware of maintenance that needs to be done around the church then please write the problem down and pass it on to the parish secretary to be dealt with. From time to time the Men's Group organises maintenance work parties, which anyone is welcome to join.

Our thanks to Max Gibbons for recently organising the painting of the lines in our car park. Thanks too to Matthews Buthelezi for completing the painting of these lines.

John Williams (right) is a familiar sight around the church buildings during the week, where he is always busy with maintenance tasks.



Diocesan Environment Group

This group meets a few times a year moving to different parts of the diocese. Its purpose is to support parishes in their environment work and to encourage joint action across the diocese to address pressing environmental issues. The next meeting of this group will take place at St Alphege, Scottsville from 10.00, ending with a bring-and-share lunch at 13.00. If you would like to attend please contact *Dot Saunders* on 031 7027616.

Regional Environment Group

This group, consisting of all interested people from the parishes within our archdeaconry meets about four times a year. All are welcome. The next meeting will take place on Saturday 5 November from 9.00. It will conclude with tea at 11.00. Please contact *Janet Williams* on 0781049764 if you would like to attend the next meeting.

PARISH COUNCIL

An area in which parishioners may consider serving God is as a member of parish council. When we put up the lists before the vestry meeting each year, we find that parishioners can be slow to respond. This could be because people are not clear about the expectations and responsibilities of parish councillors. Together with the church wardens, their primary role is to assist in the discernment of God's will for the parish and to make decisions on important matters facing the parish as a whole. The following requirements have been set by the diocese, as contained in the Parish Manual:

1. Regular participation in Sunday worship.
2. Attendance at all Parish Council meetings.
3. Attendance at all Parish Council Executive meetings, if you are a Churchwarden.
4. Pledging to the Parish with tithing as a goal.
5. Participation in special meetings, special events and gatherings of the Parish.
6. Support and encouragement of the ministry of the Rector and the Parish staff.
7. Seek to discover and use your own gifts for ministry in the Parish.
8. Communicate responsibly with the congregation, the Parish Council, the Rector, the staff and the community.
9. Promote and maintain at all times unity, peace and reconciliation within the life of the Parish, the region and the diocese.
10. Work as a team with the rector and other Parish leaders to further the mission and ministry of the Church.
11. Leading a lifestyle consistent with the teachings of the Bible- refer to Section 82, Page 434 of An Anglican Prayer Book.
12. Fulfilling of the relevant duties and responsibilities as set out in the Canons (especially 28 and 29) and in the Acts of the Diocese.

In order to show people the opportunities available to get involved in the church, the Parish Council decided at their last meeting to ask groups within the parish to prepare a poster showing their work (no size was specified). These posters will then be displayed during the month of stewardship (October) and again for the Rubin Phillip Peace Lecture on 11 November so that the visitors to our church can get a better idea of the work that they are supporting. Please hand the completed posters into the parish office by Friday 7 October.

Thank you.

ANNUAL RUBIN PHILLIP PEACE LECTURE 6:30 pm on Friday 11 November at St John's

This is almost upon us! Some background information to this lecture series is provided below.



The Rt Revd Rubin Phillip, Bishop of Natal, is internationally known for his solidarity work on behalf of those marginalised by society. His prophetic voice in the name of justice, peace and the integrity of creation continues to be influential and effective.

In 2009 Bishop Rubin was invited to Germany to receive the Bremen International Peace Award from the city of Bremen, which has a partnership with the city of Durban. In Bremen he was greeted with acclaim, as a worthy recipient of this prestigious award.

The Parish of Pinetown decided that it wanted to honour the Bishop in some appropriate way, as a mark of the respect in which he is held. It was decided to inaugurate an annual Peace Lecture in Bishop Rubin's honour.

Bishop Rubin graciously accepted this honour, and agreed to be the guest speaker at the inaugural Rubin Phillip Peace Lecture, delivered at a fundraising dinner on Friday 11th December 2009. The respondent to the inaugural Lecture was Graham Philpott of the Church Land Programme, which has been strongly supported and encouraged by Bishop

Rubin as it works on issues of justice for a deeply marginalised sector of the population.

A year later, on Friday 5th November 2010, the second Annual Rubin Phillip Peace Lecture was delivered by Ela Gandhi, Chancellor of the Durban University of Technology (DUT), granddaughter of the Mahatma Gandhi, and a lifelong worker for peace with justice. The respondent was Crispin Hemson of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), where he pioneered progressive, participatory adult education and skill training in conflict resolution and peacemaking, and who then moved to the International Centre for Non-Violence.

Now, in 2011, the Parish is keenly anticipating the gracious presence of Archbishop Thabo Makgoba, Metropolitan of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, to deliver the third Annual Rubin Phillip Peace Lecture on Friday 11th November 2011. The Respondent will be His Eminence, Wilfred Cardinal Napier OFM. The evening will begin with Sung Evensong in the church at 6.30 pm. The music will be directed by Lance Phillip, son of Bishop Rubin and Rose Phillip, and a lecturer in the Department of Music at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein.

Tickets at R120 per person are available from the parish secretary, and will also be on sale after services. A finger supper will be served and there will be a cash bar.

ARCHBISHOP THABO CECIL MAKGOBA - A SHORT BIOGRAPHY

The Most Revd Dr Thabo Cecil Makgoba has served as the Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town and Metropolitan of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa since January 2008.

Born in Limpopo Province in 1960, he grew up in Alexandra Township of Johannesburg. He matriculated at Orlando High, Soweto, and in 1989 obtained a BSc from the University of the Witwatersrand, completing his studies for the Anglican ministry in the same year. He was ordained in 1990 and returned to Wits University for his Honours and Masters of Education in Applied Psychology and Educational Psychology, respectively. His secular professional career has included part-time lecturing at Wits between 1993 and 1996, and he served as Dean of Knockando at Wits College of Education (formerly Johannesburg College of Education – JCE). In 2009 he was awarded a doctorate on Spirituality in the South African Mining Workplace by the University of Cape Town.

Central to his career life has been his ordained ministry. After curacy at St. Mary's Cathedral, Johannesburg, chaplaincy at Wits, and parish ministry that included serving as Priest in Charge of St Alban's, and then Rector and Archdeacon at Christ the King in Sophiatown, he became the Bishop Suffragan of Grahamstown in 2002 and



was elected Bishop of Grahamstown in 2004. In 2007 he became the youngest person ever elected to head the Anglican Church in Southern Africa, and, taking up this position in January 2008, succeeded Archbishops Njongonkulu Ndungane (who served from 1997 to 2007) and Desmond Tutu (1986 to 1996).

He served as a member of the Design Group for the 2008 Lambeth Conference, for which he was awarded the Cross of St Augustine by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd Dr Rowan Williams. In 2009 he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa*, from the General Theological Seminary of The Episcopal Church in New York, describing this as being on behalf of 'all South Africans who were denied access to education'.

His interests include reading theology, walking, writing, and promoting leadership development. He has set up, and serves on the boards of, a number of NGOs. His publications include 'Connectedness', a book of autobiographical reflections (2005), and a variety of pieces available through the website of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (www.anglicanchurchsa.org) and his blog (<http://archbishop.anglicanchurchsa.org>). He is married to Lungi, with whom he has two children, a son, Nyakallo (15), and a daughter, Paballo (10).



ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

"COP 17"

From 28 November to 9 December 2011 Durban will host the 17th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, commonly referred to as COP17. Its purpose is for negotiators and government leaders to tackle climate change by coming to firm commitments on the decrease of carbon emissions, especially as the first period of the Kyoto Protocol (the previous firm agreement) comes to an end in 2012. The event will be held at the International Convention Centre (ICC) which will become part of the United Nations for these two weeks.

The Anglican Church is helping to mobilise church and other faith communities to join in the work of influencing governments to make these firm commitments. Within our Diocese, Bishop Rubin Philip has given his support for our participation in ecumenical as well as interfaith actions at both a local and wider level in preparation for COP17. The Revd Sue Britton has been playing a lead role in the process of encouraging churches.

The Southern African Faith Communities' Environment Institute (SAFCEI), of which the Anglican Church is a member, is calling for a moral and ethical approach that will bring justice to the world and enable sustainable and ecologically sound development for all, especially for those who are most poor.

The Durban activities will be open to everyone, and it is hoped that many from our congregation, and from many other churches will take part. These are some of the activities:

+ A rally for people of faith on Sunday afternoon 27 November at Mr Price King's Park Stadium, to be addressed by Bishop Rubin Phillip, Archbishop Thabo Makgoba, Cardinal Wilfrid Napier and other South African and international leaders. The rally will be marked by the arrival of a large contingent of young people who will have travelled from Nairobi through seven countries – giving concerts at each country – and who will sing and dance for us. A large group of hundreds of young people from the Roman Catholic Justice & Peace movement will have arrived in Durban the day before, cycling in relay from Pretoria. Young people from all over KwaZulu-Natal will also be present, including a massed choir and presentations by groups from several schools belonging to the KZN Youth Peace Forum. A petition will be handed over by faith leaders to representatives of the COP17 talks from people of faith around the world, calling for climate justice, reduction of carbon emissions and signed-up decisions on the part of world governments which will make a real difference to halt climate change.

+ From Monday 28 November to Friday 9 December, activities will be held every day at the Diakonia Centre, Diakonia Avenue, Durban, coordinated by the faith communities. In this lovely building, with its open, green courtyard and coffee shop with delicious food available all day, exhibitions will be held – such as an environmental poster competition. Talks and seminars will be led by local

and international leaders in the field of the environment and there will be special events, music and poetry. Each day activities at the Centre will start with an hour's prayer, worship, meditation led by different groups. And from 5.00pm to 6.00 pm each day there will be an interactive session with one of our negotiators or observers from the talks taking place at the ICC. A programme of daily events will be available on a website nearer the time, as well as being posted up around the Centre.

We of St John's will be putting together a display at the venue for faith communities, the Diakonia Centre, and hope to take a large group down to Durban on Monday evening 28 November to hear a report-back from the Anglican Communion Environmental Network (ACEN) meeting held recently in Peru, at which the Revd Tim Gray of the Parish of St Francis in Johannesburg was our representative. Other prominent Anglicans will be present to join Tim in discussion about what the Anglican Church worldwide is doing.

It is hoped that many local groups will also want to take a two-hour slot during the fortnight to lead a discussion, show an environmental movie, play their music, put up an exhibition – or whatever you feel like doing towards saving the world, in what will be a vibrant international atmosphere.

+ During the fortnight there are plans to offer daily prayers in a church close to the venue of the talks, as well as provide a chaplaincy service in the International Convention Centre where official delegates can come and share their problems, be listened to, and pray or meditate. If you would like to take part in leading these prayers or offering yourself for few hours for the chaplaincy, please contact Sue – sueb@stjohnbaptist.co.za – 0829307474.

+ On the Global Day of Action, Saturday 3 December, faith communities will join civil society in marching through the streets of Durban to prophetically remind world governments that the eyes of the world are on them as they negotiate. People from all parts of the world will join in this Global Day of Action, with their banners and placards. People of faith will march together from the Diakonia Centre, joining civil society to proceed past the ICC and towards the beachfront. There are already indications that the United Nations will join the march, as well as many international faith organisations. If you would like to be a faith marshal for this march, please contact Sue – sueb@stjohnbaptist.co.za

+ A prayer service will be held on Sunday afternoon 4th December at a central city church, to focus prayers on the final, crucial days of negotiation.

Pray that the initiatives of faith communities and civil society will show governments that the world is eagerly awaiting a positive outcome from COP 17.

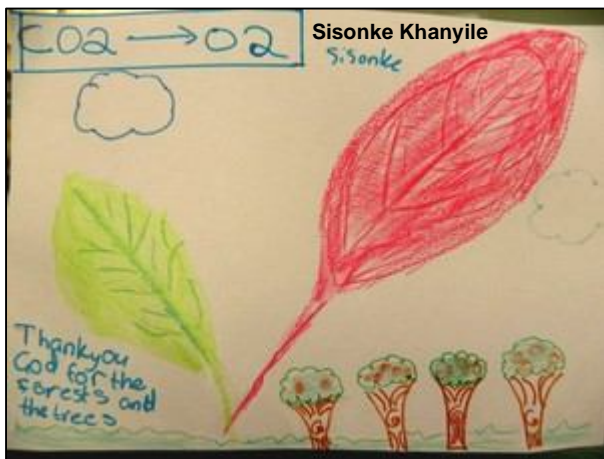
Season of Creation

We are in the middle of this annual six week Season. We have been following these themes:

Week 1: 28 August – God and Creation; Week 2: 4 September – Forests; Week 3: 11 September – Oceans; Week 4: 18 September – Peace with Creation; Week 5: 25 September – Heritage; Week 6: 2 October – Stewardship of the Earth.

Eco-congregation

Over the past few month Parish Council has been considering the application forms from the Southern African Faith Communities' Environment Institute (SAFCEI) to be recognised as an eco-congregation. We have had to commit ourselves as a parish over the next year to work at two areas in each of three categories: Worship, Management and Mission. This has now been finalised and we look forward to being acknowledged as an eco-congregation soon. Then we need to live up to this label! Read more about SAFCEI on their website, <http://safcei.org>.



Indigenizing the Church Grounds

Over the past number of years we have been working at indigenizing the church grounds. This has helped us to reduce the costs of watering the grounds and has helped to enrich the biodiversity of the "green lung" our church grounds provide in Pinetown. We thank Edward and Eve van Zyl for their recent donations of aloes and other indigenous plants, and we welcome other suitable donations of indigenous vegetation. Max Gibbons worked very hard in the church grounds in recent years, and is responsible for the layout and planting of much of the gardens. We are really grateful for his efforts, but unfortunately Max is less available to continue with this work. Anyone who is willing and able to assist with the development and maintenance of our gardens should speak to the rector.



The children of Kidzown celebrated the role of trees and forests in maintaining the environment with colourful leaf rubbings and drawings.

"For the Church of the 21st century, good ecology is not an optional extra but a matter of justice. It is central to what it means to be a Christian."
The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams.

If the earth were only a few feet in diameter, floating a few feet above a field somewhere, people would come from everywhere to marvel at it, people would walk around it marveling at its big pools of water, its little pools and the water flowing between the pools. People would marvel at the bumps on it, and the holes in it, and they would marvel at the very thin layer of gas surrounding it and the water suspended in the gas. The people would marvel at all the creatures walking around the surface of the ball, and in the water. The people would declare it precious because it was the only one, and they would protect it, so that it would not be hurt. The ball would be the greatest wonder known, and people would come to behold it, to be healed, to gain knowledge, and to know beauty and to wonder how it could be. People would love it and defend it with their lives, because they would somehow know that their lives, their roundness, could be nothing without it. If the earth were only a few feet in diameter.

"We who recognise that all good things come from the Divine Creator have taken too long to acknowledge that the living-out of our beliefs concerns most deeply the care and nurture of all living things and the environment on which they depend."
Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu

"Earth Ball" by Olaf Skarsholt

WOMEN'S BREAKFAST 2011: OUR EXPERIENCES

Thelma Rosenberg & Thuli Mthembu

Thelma: I came along to the "Women's Breakfast" on Saturday, 20 August, with various expectations – I knew we would be served a lovely breakfast by the men's group - and it was a very gracious service given! But I admit that I also had a perception that these breakfasts might also have other 'feel-good stuff' to wash our 'women's souls' – sounds very vague? Ask a woman – she will know what 'stuff' I'm alluding to. Well, that was not what I got - exactly! Our guest speaker, the Revd Phumzile Zondi-Mabizela is a passionate champion of women's rights and she soon blew me out of the 'pamper zone' with her passionate and very (to use June Prentice's word) 'erudite' speech. She is not championing 'women's rights' in a potentially polarising way of dividing us along lines of men and women in the church. Her message that morning was more hard-hitting: she challenged us women to recognise our responsibilities to do what is right by studying Scripture more deeply so that we are better able to discern when Scripture is being used selectively to create perceptions of the role of women in the church. Tying up very well with the Theological Education sessions being led by Christopher Cockburn at St. John's where we are being encouraged to read the Bible more widely and deeply to get a fuller understanding, Phumzile explained how the perception of a 'complaining, resentful' Martha is the one we know best because this description in Luke 10: 38 - 42 is most often quoted. The other time, when Martha is graciously serving in order to 'honour' Jesus (John 12: 2 – 3) is lesser well-known when we think of ourselves as "Marthas". Phumzile's consistent message in her speech, and in her answers to the questions that were raised, was that women could help shape the perceptions of women's roles in the church community and in particular, the leadership of the church community, if we accept the responsibility to become more knowledgeable about Scripture and more secure in understanding that our own perceptions as women have the potential to help reshape the dominant patriarchal forms of leadership that have made many women struggle to find their voice and place in church communities and leadership. A challenging and thought-provoking morning which left an important residue, as Thuli explains below.



After the breakfast had been served and the women (left) listened to the speaker, the cooks took off their aprons and mounted the scaffolding in the church (right) to do some much-needed maintenance!



The speaker, Revd Phumzile Zondi-Mabizela (left) with Denise Marescia, Mandisa Sishi, Nomathemba Tsekiso and Mandisa Songqishe.

Thuli: I felt inspired and invigorated by Phumzile's address and the way she explained the text she shared with us. As for myself, I used to sympathise with Martha, feeling that she was taken for granted. I say this because Martha, I feel, did all the domestic toil while Mary merely sat and busied herself with the anointing of Jesus' feet and at the end she (Mary) received the blessing!

A lot of us cultural women can relate to Martha, as when there is a traditional function or cultural ritual, like a funeral or wedding, we are usually the ones left slogging in the background while the 'swankers' stride out to experience the ceremonies. This vexed me as I felt browbeaten and oppressed, as, let's face it, no one *really* cares about the person lighting the fire in the background.

In comparing Luke's (the traditional church version) with that of John's, Phumzile has boosted my feminine sense of pride as she explained the dual role played by women in society and the importance of this 'duet'. I can now appreciate the spiritual and domestic substance that we provide with our service. I can now comprehend and value the role played by Martha, realising that there is no shame in it. So now, when the "ones who are left to toil at functions" are referred to as "Marthas", and the swankers as "Marys", I shall no longer be intimidated or humiliated due to my better understanding of the twin roles as explained by our guest speaker. I would like to thank Phumzile for her enriching effort in educating us women on the important role we play in society.



THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION – A NEW VENTURE AT ST JOHN'S

Dr Christopher Cockburn

Theological education is a new portfolio this year on Parish Council. It was launched in June with information tables at the Sunday services and opportunities for people to sign up. The first meeting was held on the afternoon of Sunday 26 June. This was an introductory session where we considered what theological education might mean for us at St John's, why it might be important, how we might go about it, who might find it helpful, and when would be best to meet.

At this first session we spent some time thinking about the word 'theology'. Like many words, this one has developed several different meanings. People often think of theology simply as a subject studied in colleges and universities by clergy or academics, and consisting of a set of doctrines or beliefs set out in the writings of professionals called 'theologians'. But 'theology' literally means 'a word' (*logos*) about 'God' (*theos*). Any time we say or hear anything about God, we are in this sense engaging with theology. Over time the word has expanded to include anything that relates to God and our relationship with God. In its broadest sense, then, theology presents an understanding of the meaning of Christian faith. Since we all have some understanding of the meaning of our faith, we all have some kind of theology, even if we may not be able to state it formally in the way professional theologians do.

We learn about our faith in many ways, but theological education creates a space in which that learning can become more deliberate, more conscious, more intentional. I do think it is important to find ways of communicating to congregations, in non-specialist language, the kinds of things that are taught in colleges and universities. This can be done through formal talks or lectures, workshops, or audio and video materials. But just as important are our discussions amongst ourselves, because only we can think about theology (or, as some say, 'do theology') from our own context, in ways that are relevant to us as individuals and as a community. As a result of all this we may want to follow up certain things on our own. So it will also be important for us to think about how to make available books and other resources for learning, and what specific areas or approaches to theology should be our focus when we set out to acquire such materials for the parish.

The main aim of theological education in the parish context, then, is to help us to grow – specifically, to grow in understanding. One well-known definition of theology is 'faith seeking understanding'. 'Understanding' doesn't have to be narrowly intellectual: it can come from feeling and doing as

well as thinking. There are certainly dangers in a faith that lives only in the mind, but there are also dangers in a faith that bypasses the mind altogether. Perhaps you've heard the joke about the church which put up a notice at the door saying: 'Please leave your umbrellas and your minds in the porch.' I'm assuming that's not a notice we would want to see at St John's. Embracing theological education is one way of showing that we are not that kind of church.

So theology involves reflecting carefully on aspects of our faith. Such reflection often begins with a question, and the really important questions are often prompted by events in our lives or in the wider world. We become ill, or a disaster strikes: 'Where is God in this?' We become friends with a work colleague who is Hindu: 'Will he get to heaven?' A woman is appointed as bishop: 'Doesn't St Paul say it's wrong for a woman to have authority over a man?' These are theological questions, and concern all of us, not just the specialists. If the questions are deep and real, it's unlikely that there will be a simple answer to them. An important aspect of theological education is therefore to discover the range of answers that different people have come up with, not just to be told the 'one right answer'. We may not be able to settle such questions once and for all, but through our process of reflecting together, we can certainly move closer to answers that are satisfying to each of us, in this place and for the present time. It is therefore important to me that theological education should create a space where people feel safe and indeed supported in asking questions, and in which everyone is free to express their own ideas knowing that they will be listened to, perhaps not always with agreement, but always with respect and understanding.

In our second session we considered the various resources we can use for theological reflection (scripture, tradition, reason, experience and our own contemporary cultural context) and in subsequent sessions we have started to explore each of these in more detail, through specific examples. The group decided they would like to continue to meet on Sunday afternoons at 4pm, usually every second week. While there are advantages to following the various threads from one session to the next, it is certainly possible for people who cannot make a regular commitment to join us when they are able to, or to attend a session that may be of particular interest to them.

The next Theological Education session will be on Sunday 25 September at 4 pm.



NEW BISHOP SUFFRAGAN FOR THE NORTH WESTERN EPISCOPAL AREA OF THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF NATAL

Press release from the office of Bishop Ruben Phillip, 30 August 2011



Archdeacon Tsietsi Seleoane was today elected as the new Bishop Suffragan of the North Western Episcopal area of the Anglican Diocese of Natal. He will replace Bishop Funginkosi Mbhele, who retired in March after ten years as Bishop.

Archdeacon Tsietsi Seleoane, aged 53, is married to Rachel. He was ordained a priest in 1997 and has a Diploma in Missiology; an LTh (Evangelical Bible Seminary of South Africa) and a BTh (Hons) (University of Natal). He has experience in both rural and urban ministry, beginning at Michaelhouse/Zenzane Village. As a Priest, he has served the parish of Drakensberg and, as Rector, parishes in Dundee and Newcastle. He has been Archdeacon of Ingagane since 2009. He has been active on a wide variety of boards and committees, including as Trustee of the Midlands Education Trust, member of the Board of the Midlands Community Centre; as Advisor to

Asithuthuke School and as member of the Balgowan Clinic Committee (assisting with HIV Aids/Health issues).

The North Western Episcopal Area covers the Archdeaconries of Ingagane and Uthukela, which comprise the communities of Dundee, Newcastle, Madadeni, Ozizweni, Ekubonakalisweni, Estcourt, Klip River; Ladysmith, Steadville and Tugela Rivers.

The challenge facing the new Bishop Suffragan elect is not only to grow the Church in this Episcopal Area of the Diocese, but also to facilitate development at parish level in this area.

The Elective Assembly is composed of both licensed clergy and elected laity of the Diocese of Natal. A nominee is elected by two thirds of the total number of the joint votes of the Bishops and clergy present and two thirds of the votes of the House of Laity, voting at the same time.

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY AT ST JOHN'S

Dr Teboho A. Rapulungoane

A few words written after the last Celebrating Diversity workshop held on 10 September

I am very grateful to be part of the St John's Parish and feel I am growing spiritually, ascending to higher levels in embracing my relationship with God. I have these conversations with my lovely wife and I know I am speaking for her also. The parish and the clergy, as well as the congregants, make this task manageable through all the activities at the church that allow us to learn things about God and Christ and Spirituality as well as ourselves and how we relate to the Holy trinity and to our fellow human beings. The Bible Study Group and the Diversity Celebration Courses have allowed me to do an introspection of these relationships and assess my standing with God and how I relate to fellow parishioners and people outside the church. I have found I am relating better to my family and kids as well as my relatives.

I have learned the essence of respect and respectability; tolerance and acceptance; patience and understanding. I have learned and am still learning to accept and respect people for who they are and what they stand for. Whether or not I agree with them, I understand I have to protect their right to be who they choose to be and to do what job they choose to do and what grouping or political party they choose to belong to. I have learned to speak against it if I feel offended by it, to speak properly with respect, without vilifying, without discriminating and without insult or sarcasm. These are some of the things I have allowed myself to learn and I am in the process of dealing with the finer details of other aspects and attributes such as thinking and praying about things before I say anything to a person, especially in matters that are sensitive in terms of gender,

sexual orientation and so forth. I am also learning the words to use to apologise in the event I offend.

I thank all the participants for allowing me and my family to benefit from and contribute to these workshops and learning groups. I pray for strength and a deeper understanding of the meaning of God's commandments and how those should be practically applied in our lives; the lives of those we love and who love us and the lives of other people.

Importantly, I am learning to accept that I cannot change people, I cannot judge people and I cannot make a ruling in these matters. As such I am learning to accept people for who they are and learn to prosper with them in diversity; to grow with them in knowledge and spirituality. I rely on the guidance of the prescripts and teachings of the church (the Anglican Church of Southern Africa) and leave the rest to God The Almighty.

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

A series of 3 "Managing Diversity" workshops have so far been held at St John's. A task group, charged with furthering this initiative, was formed, and are planning more activities with the intention of bringing the parish together and celebrating our diversity. Details of the next event will be published in the pew leaflet and in The Bell, so keep a watch for these and make an effort to join in, especially if you haven't been part of the previous workshops. All those who have been part of the workshops have found them immensely interesting and beneficial.

TEN YEARS with UKUKHUTHAZA

Luise Joubert

At the monthly Ukukhuthaza meeting on 14 June my letter of resignation from Ukukhuthaza was accepted. At this time I wish to express my sincere thanks to not only all parishioners of St John who have over the years trusted me as they handed me money to go to the food parcels that we send out, but also to all those who attend our meetings. They are the care givers working out in the area that surrounds Pinetown and over the years have become friends!

When I moved to Pinetown ten years ago I was a stranger to the area and to St John's. It probably was at the first time I came to a service (which happened to be a first Sunday of the month), that I became aware of a table where packing food parcels for AIDS affected families was happening. I knew about food parcels and about the contents as I had started a Support Group in the Himeville/Underberg area a few years previously when I was President of the Drakensberg AWF branch. It was soon after that I realised that there was an active AIDS support group at this church so I knew that God had led me here to help if I could!

I began to attend meetings of the St John's Aids Support Group. Fr John Green was the Rector at that time and was very actively involved. The person who at that time was the chairperson of the group left the parish soon after my joining the group and Wendy Jones was nominated to represent the group on the church council. As a social scientist and social worker she was eminently suitable to lead this group. Once she was in charge she was asked to elect a committee and I was nominated as secretary. Fr Green encouraged me: by that time I was helping the parish secretary in the office so it seemed quite suitable that I could use the office facilities if necessary.

It is a little difficult to recall who attended those first meetings. (I've handed all my files to the present secretary of Ukukhuthaza so I cannot check on those early meetings.) There were a number of parishioners who were keen to help but more important were the community health workers who came from St Andrew's in Clermont, St Stephen's in Thselimnaya and others. I remember a very intelligent young woman from Nazareth. She was very involved with the community there and once she got to know me, she brought Mavis Giyose to the parish office to speak about the food parcels. Mavis wanted to ensure that food parcels should go only to AIDS infected or affected families.

Possibly a year or two later Mavis appealed for more parcels as there was such a great demand for more support. After some discussion we could make that possible and I know that I felt very much that I was just a very small cog when she blessed me in thanking me. Sadly that young woman was to die of AIDS a year or two later, but until her death, Mavis's home was the centre in Nazareth where people could get some advice and collect a food parcel.

Perhaps I should explain that in those days I think the contents for the food parcels was purchased from Knowles. Parishioners were encouraged to donate one or two of the items that were then packed and stored in the shelves in the kitchen. This did not seem to be a very safe way of keeping them, so Fr Green

called in the help of Andre Zuidewind who supplied doors which could keep the parcels safe under lock and key. On the Sunday morning Tracy Cremer and I would pack the parcels and store them.

Malcolm Rosenberg offered to help with the food parcels and soon suggested that it would be far more economical to obtain the food from a wholesale firm. He decided to go to Makro once a month. He used to take the food to his home and persuaded his children to help him pack. He soon realised that his garage was not a suitable place for this so he appealed for suggestions at a meeting. It was decided that we would pack in the church hall on a Saturday morning. Some of the members, especially Christopher Buthelezi from St Stephen's, agreed to come to help. He brought with him a number of young people who soon came to know the routine and helped with cheerful enthusiasm. Thank you Christopher and Khulekani Cele for your wonderful help and support!

It was inevitable that this arrangement of using the hall for packing would at times clash with other activities happening at in the hall. My thanks to Jane Whitby who tried to help when her flower arranging courses clashed with our packing.

It also became inevitable that the whole system was proving a very heavy drain on parish funds. The parish was paying for the ever increasing number of food parcels we were sending out and something had to be done. That was the beginning of Ukukhuthaza. At an extraordinary meeting on Saturday 31 July 2004 it was decided that we would apply to the Director of Social Services for an NPO number so that we could raise funds on our accord. With that the St John's Aids Concern Group officially became Ukukhuthaza Aids Support Group.

The first Sunday morning routine changed as we no longer displayed items that had to be packed but we asked parishioners to donate cash towards the cost of the food parcels. Once we had drawn up a Constitution Malcolm agreed to be the Treasurer. He opened a bank account for Ukukhuthaza so that parishioners could deposit money directly into the account. Donors beyond the parish also make use of this bank account to support this organisation. We also give empty packets to parishioners who offer to fill them on their own and leave the completed parcel at the foot of the altar. We thank parishioners who do this on a regular basis.

At one meeting I mentioned that it would be good to meet those who receive the food parcels. We sent out slips with each parcel that went out asking if the recipients would like to be visited. We got many positive replies and set about a visiting program. Essentially it meant that the care giver of that area would meet the group from St John's and take them to the families.

Although I didn't have the courage to go by myself I was with those who drove the cars. On one occasion I went in my own car accompanied by Wendy Rochat and managed to land in a ditch (I've never been a very competent driver!) –in Clermont. Wendy was all for calling for help from a friend but four young men walked by and came to our rescue by lifting the car back

on to the road. Once or twice I'd be asked to wait in the car as it was parked by the side of the road and it was too difficult to walk down the steep path to the cottage that we were to visit. I just want to emphasise that I never felt any danger or threat as the by-passers greeted me with a friendly nod or remark.



Luise with Elsie Mbele (right) in her garden at Tshelimnyama

I have various memories of visiting families – perhaps the most vivid is the one to a shack down a steep path where a woman was desperately ill and I suspect not far from death. We could only pray and I remember that we could give the three little children who were in the care of the Gogo knitted jerseys recently donated by a caring friend. Since then I've sometimes been in big, well-built houses as well as back yard dwellings and shacks put together with corrugated iron sheets. Where ever we managed to get to: be it Nazareth, Kwadengezi, Thselimnyama, Klaarwater, or Hammarsdale - always the families were happy to see us and showed how very grateful they were for the food parcels. We would pray for the members – and as ARVs gradually became available we could give thanks when the treatment had resulted in some improvement in the patient's condition. My thanks to Fr John Green who would take me to visit and Revd Caroline Beech who accompanied me several times to some of the families – I recall a visit to a family with a sick child whom she anointed.

Sadly the visiting scheme came to an end as there were not enough people who offered to join the visiting team. One of the last ones to go on her own was Heather Wilson who went to Clermont where she met and was then escorted by Vusi Sibiyi. He has since left Ukukhuthaza as he found employment and could no longer deliver food parcels in the Kwadabeka area.

EVERYONE CAN HELP!

On the first Sunday of every month we remember those affected and infected by HIV & AIDS. At St John's, our major outreach to these people is through the Ukukhuthaza AIDS Concern Group. This group packs 100 food parcels every month and distributes them to affected families in several districts around Pinetown. They depend on donations to pay for the food, and our congregation has always been most generous. Collections are made after all the services on the relevant weekend, and empty packets are also available, which list the required food so that individuals can fill them

One of the advantages of visiting was that we could see the gardens that our care givers were trying to establish in the areas and we heard about the endless problems the carers and their helpers encounters with marauding animals, lack of fencing and lack of adequate watering facilities

In 2006 we were very blessed when Charlotte Hornsby arrived to help us with our work. She came from England and was very willing to help where it was necessary. She was brave enough to drive John Green's big 4x4 bakkie and made her way especially to Tshlimnyama where Elsie Mbele met her and led her to her house. Charlotte soon found work for herself: not only could she give advice (she is a trained nurse), but also showed the women how to make use of materials donated to sew and knit. Most important she helped to establish a crèche for orphans in that area. After a year she returned to her home parish and continues to raise funds for us. Every year she sends some money particularly for the orphans Christmas party in Clermont.

As I am now no longer connected to Ukukhuthaza I am trying to think what I will miss most: not the monthly meetings as I became too tired to even try to understand what was said; but I'm sorry not to staff the table on the first Sunday of the month and welcome those who have their money ready for me and greet the parishioners as they arrive; I'll miss the cheerful atmosphere at packing; and I'll miss having contact with Winnie, Sr Dorah at Hammarsdale and the occasional visits at the parish office from Elsie Mbele – and even taking her to her bus stop in Pinetown.

A brief word about Ingrid Pines who as fund-raiser did so much for Ukukhuthaza and among other things organised a third cupboard in the kitchen which is a great help for storing of food parcels. With the help of Ingrid's late neighbour we were introduced to a firm in Pinetown who now deliver the food we order to St John's. Thanks Ingrid for all you have done for Ukukhuthaza!

In conclusion I need to say so many thank you's: to Fr Andrew for all his advice and help; to the Revd Sue Britton for her support at all times, to our wonderful Parish Secretary Rose Bernhard and her ever-willing support and help, a very special one to Sam Shezi and his family and lastly to my very close friends who over the years have offered to collect me for the Tuesday meetings and with whom I've worked so closely over the last few years : Ruth Joubert, Malcolm Rosenberg, and Barbara McAlpin.

and return them the following month. Pamphlets detailing the work of this group and their banking details are also available, and contributions may be deposited directly into the bank account (Account Name: Ukukhuthaza AIDS Concern Group; Bank: FNB, Pinetown; Account No.: 621 9932 6341).

Visiting the families who receive the food parcels is also an important aspect of this ministry, as Luise explained. Anyone who is interested is very welcome to join the visiting teams. On Saturday 10 September 2011, the chairperson of

Ukukhuthaza, Revd Alfred Nala, visited families in Klaarwater and Kwandengezi, accompanied by Ruth Joubert, Norma Anderson and Boni Sibisi. The group's members from each area, Khulekani Cele from Klaarwater and Christopher Buthelezi from Kwandengezi, guided them to some of the families they care for. They were shocked and saddened by what they saw:

A woman and her husband living in a one-roomed shack with their 4 children; a bedridden woman living in one room with her children; an old lady taking care of four AIDS orphans; a granny caring for her grandchildren and their

father, who is mentally unstable; a man living in a shack with nothing of value, but who was robbed the night before. (one member of this family was hurt and was in hospital at the time of the visit); a man whose leg had been amputated as a result of gangrene. He and his wife are taking care of their two grandchildren whose mother has passed away.

In every case the food parcels are clearly much needed and the people are very grateful. The people were open to sharing with the group unhesitatingly.

If any members of the congregation would like to visit the people we are helping, please speak to Revd Alfred Nala.

UPDATE ON ZIMBABWE

As you are probably aware Bishop Rubin has taken a strong interest in the role of the churches in Zimbabwe and encourages on-going prayer for the country. He recently circulated a letter from the Bishop of Harare who writes about the problems in the Harare diocese (dated 5 August):

Dear Friends,

Just as the Psalmist wrote, "Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice!" I am writing to you this short up-date "out of the depths". Our diocesan registrar called me on Thursday night to give me the sad news that the Chief Justice had at long last given a judgment on an appeal we had made against Justice Hlatshwayo's judgment of 24th July 2009 in which he intended to stop my consecration and also gave the custodianship of the diocesan properties to Dr. Kunonga. The Chief Justice should have given his judgement over a year ago. To our surprise and that of everyone else, thirteen months after his promise to give judgment, the Chief Justice has now reinstated our appeal but upheld Hlatshwayo's judgment on the custodianship of the properties. You can well imagine the distress and chaos this is likely to cause especially for our priests who are living in rectories. I am very concerned about the likely disturbances to my priests and their families. In his judgment the Chief Justice seems to have completely disregarded the fact that Dr. Kunonga left the Province and started his own Province of Zimbabwe of which he is its archbishop. Our question remains "How can he be the custodian of provincial properties when he left the province?"

Is it a coincidence that this judgment is given only about a week after Dr. Kunonga had stated very clearly on national television that he was going to take all church properties? We are seeing this happening right before our eyes. All along he has been abusing church members and misusing church properties with the support of some in the Zimbabwe Republic Police and nobody stopped him. We thought that the laws of the land would stop him but now we see the law legitimising his impunity. We have tried to engage various responsible authorities but to no avail. We believe that this is setting a very dangerous precedent in the country. Dr Kunonga is claiming ownership of properties that do not belong to him. This is day light robbery now with the support of the law. We continue to hope for the time when reason will prevail to the glory of God.

Please do continue to uphold us in your prayers.

Thank you.

Shalom,

+Chad, Harare.

***The Rt. Rev'd. Chad N. Gandiya
Bishop of the Diocese of Harare CPCA.***

The Anglican Communion News service reported the following subsequent developments:

"Highlands Police today (Tuesday 6 September 2011) arrested Reverend Julius Zimbudzana, the priest in charge at St Mary's Anglican Church for allegedly taking over Anglican church property worth over US\$1.5 million as police intensified their persecution of the Anglican Church, hiding behind unjust court rulings.

"Dr Nicholas Chad Gandiya, the Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Harare in the Church of the Province of Central Africa (CPCA) immediately dismissed the charge as persecution of the Anglicans under the CPCA by the police, acting on the instructions of the ex-communicated Dr Nolbert Kunonga.

"That [accusation against Revd Julius] is unfounded, baseless and without foundation," Bishop Gandiya said.

'This is very strange indeed as no parish in our diocese (perhaps the exception of the Cathedral Parish) has properties worth that much. He has been refused bail. The police claim they have clear instructions not to release him.'

"The Bishop says the intense persecution of the Anglican clergy under the CPCA has clearly gotten out of hand and most clergymen are traumatised by these sad developments. What has become apparent in these attacks is that rogue elements within the police are listening to instructions coming from Kunonga to use the law to abuse innocent people, denying them of their right to worship. "

SERMON PREACHED BY REVD SEAN SEMPLE*Exodus 3:1 -12; Psalm 103:1-13; Romans 8:18-25; Mt 13:24-30, 36-43*

Our readings today suggest at least 4 situations in which the people of God will live with a tension that results from constantly having to straddle two worlds.

In our Epistle, St Paul describes the tension between the *life of this world* and *the life of the world to come*. This life involves *suffering, waiting, longing, futility, and bondage to decay*. While this is a rather bleak and one sided depiction of life as we know it, there is the acknowledgment that there are many things in life that are difficult to live with. Like - petrol stations without petrol; like the new FNB radio adverts; like Floyd Shivambu; like no Grey's Anatomy on a Monday night.

More seriously, it is a fact that nothing in this life is perfect, nothing is permanent; pain and loss are inevitable. And consequently, the whole of creation "groans" at this state of affairs, *especially* those filled with God's spirit, for there is the frustration of being so close to God, and yet, because of our fallenness, being so far away; the frustration of *believing* in a new heaven and a new earth where there is no more "mourning or crying or pain", but nonetheless being forced to live with sin, imperfection and death. The Christian must live with the tension of having one foot in the present world and one foot in the world to come.

St Paul suggests that we cope with this tension by focusing on the glory that awaits us: "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us..." In other words, "Keep your eyes on the future and vasbyt."

This is another tension Christians must live with: the tension of the "kingdom of heaven". It is important to understand that the kingdom of heaven has nothing to do with the place our souls go to after death: the kingdom of heaven is the reign of God which is presently only partially realised on earth and will be fully realised at Christ's second coming. The tension is depicted in a parable where a crop of wheat is maliciously sabotaged. It is an analogy no doubt drawn from real life, for there is a weed called "darnel" which in its early stages of growth is impossible to distinguish from wheat. Only when they produce heads of grain can they be told apart, but by then, the roots of the darnel are intertwined with the wheat. Another problem with darnel is that it is a slightly poisonous narcotic – which, of course, means that it would contaminate any flour it was ground into.

In the parable, the servants are gung-ho and want to eradicate the weeds. But the Master is more concerned for the wheat and knows that if they pull out the darnel they are likely to pull out the intertwined wheat. So he

insists on patiently waiting for the harvest, when the problem would be resolved.

The first tension this parable depicts is that of living in a world where good and evil are intertwined. God's work is evident in the world and so is Satan's. But there is no segregation of good and evil into separate and obvious groups. Just as there are "children of the kingdom" in government, in business, in the church, in education, in sport and in our families, equally there will be "sons of the evil one" in all these situations. And frighteningly, for the longest time, the two types of people can be indistinguishable from one another. Evil people even imitate God's people by producing fruit in their lives, but it is fruit that intoxicates and poisons, rather than fruit of repentance and the Holy Spirit.

This spiritual ambiguity brings a further tension: what to do? Like the servants in the parable we may be consumed with zeal to act decisively against what we believe to be evil; to initiate a witch-hunt, to purge and reform the field. But with our imperfect perceptions and prejudices and warped agendas, we would do as much damage to genuine children of God as we would to those who oppose God. Think for a moment of Church reform: it has all too often hurt more Christians than non-Christians. Jesus is clear: there are some things that the believer should leave well alone – and one is judging and dealing with suspected darnel in life. God is the only being who sees all and knows all, and thus only he can make the perfect judgment. We must trust that he and his appointed reapers will sort our messy spiritual reality out perfectly at the end of time.

Tension is again evident in the story of Moses and the burning bush. Moses had something of a chequered past, but was nonetheless called by God. Consider that he was born to Hebrew slaves but was raised an Egyptian prince; he was a murderer and yet a shepherd of people; he could be cowardly yet he could lead a nation. In our reading today, God calls him to lead a nation to freedom but Moses' response is "Who am I that I should do this?" He experiences the paralysing tension between the call of God and his own insecurities.

The three readings today indicate that living in a state of tension is natural for humanity. We should not pray that God takes the discomfort of this tension away; nor that the tension resolves itself. A life without tension is one where both our "feet" will be found in "one world" – and we will either discover that we are of little heavenly use – or of little earthly use. It is only by living with the tension of both worlds that we can offer our lives as salt and light to our community. May God give us the grace to live with life's tensions! Amen.



CONFIRMATIONS and licensing of **LAY MINISTERS** took place on 14 August. Bishop Ndwandwe is seen here with (from left to right) confirmands Thembeke Ntshangase, Malayna Matthew, and Kay-Dee Jasmin (at the back); lay ministers Helen Brits, Elkanah Matthew and Ashton Naidoo. Confirmand Lisa Kinnear is at the far right.



Vernon Curtis and Arlette Stevenson were married on 13 August

YOUTH NEWS

On 29 July the Youth had a dinner and games evening (pictures right). The congregation made generous donations of money and food, and it was a time of fellowship and much fun.



Rev'd Sean Semple (left, at back) was guest speaker at a Youth meeting on 26 August, when he spoke to the young people about *Knowing Your Love Language*.



CHURCH LIBRARY BOOKS

With the assistance of Claire Rodda (who previously worked at the Pinetown Library), a small group have been working at re-organising the books in our library, including removing those badly damaged and no longer suitable. We would welcome new donations of books. Please do not leave these at the back of the church, but rather hand them in at the parish office or pass them on to Claire Rodda or Barbara McAlpin. Everyone is encouraged to make use of the library, as, although the shelves are looking a bit empty at the moment, there are some very good books there, including reference books, children's books and biographies. Bishop Ndwandwe's recently published book, *Ukristu Uyinkosi* is a new addition (also available for R150 from the Bishop's secretary, Lisa Wade on 033 3941567). Just write your name and phone number on the card inside the book when you take it out and leave the card in the box provided. There is no limit on the amount of time you may keep a book, but please don't forget to return it when you have finished with it.

KJV 400

This year the Bible Society has been promoting the 400th anniversary of the publication of the King James Version of the Bible. What is being celebrated this year is the pioneering nature of this translation into the English Language, rather than its current value as a Bible translation. (Compared to more modern translations the methods used to translate the KJV are now considered quite outdated; and, in the intervening 400 years, scholarship has produced more reliable manuscripts from which to translate the original texts).

For a number of years now we at St John's have used the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) to read from during services. It uses contemporary English and is largely gender inclusive in its reference to human beings and stands in the tradition of the KJV and subsequent translations, such as the Revised Version (1881) and the Revised Standard Version (1952). It would be helpful if we could have copies of the NRSV for the pews too.

IMPORTANT DATES AT ST JOHN'S

RUBIN PHILLIP PEACE LECTURE - FRIDAY 11 NOVEMBER at 6:30 pm

See details on pg 5 for details of this important event

Sunday 18 September at 16.00: MEDITATION

Following the pattern of having these meditations consisting of readings, choral music, congregational singing and prayers during important seasons such as Lent and Pentecost and Advent, this time we focus on the current Season of Creation as well as the Social Justice Season we have recently celebrated. Please feel free to invite others who you think would be interested in attending.

DATES FOR THE REMAINDER OF 2011:

7 – 8 October:	Diocesan Synod 08:00, Cathedral	26 November:	Diocesan Ordination 09:30, Cathedral
15 October:	Diocesan Liturgy Workshop 09:00, Cathedral	27 November:	Thanksgiving/Ukubonga Advent Faith Communities Rally for COP17
16 October:	MU Clergy Family Day of Prayer Prisoners of Conscience	28 November – 9 December:	17th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP17)
23 October:	MU Enrolment Diakonia Sunday	4 December:	World AIDS Day Prayer Service for COP17
30 October:	Dedication/Stewardship Sunday Bible Sunday	11 December:	Advent Vespers 16:00 at Mariannahill Monastery
11 November:	Rubin Phillip Peace Lecture		
12 November:	Consecration of new Bishop Suffragan 09:30, Cathedral		

NAMES OF THOSE TO BE ORDAINED ON 26 NOV.:

Ordination to self-supporting diaconate:

Mr K Chisa (Cathedral of the holy Nativity)
Mr F Z Khomo (Enwabi, St Philip's)
Mrs SR Dumisa (Umlazi, St Augustine)
Mrs ST Makhathini (Imbali, St Mark),
Mrs N Mngenela (Woodlands with Montclair)
Mr E Mathonsi (Hillcrest Valley Congregation)
Mrs EN Hlatshwayo (Isipingo, St James)

Ordination to the stipendiary diaconate:

Mr ATB P'Onok (College of the Transfiguration in 2012)
Mr M Zondi (Wentworth, St Gabriel's)
Ms P Jwara (To be confirmed),
Mr J Ngidi (College of the Transfiguration in 2012)

Ordination to the self-supporting priesthood:

The Revd A Pearson (Northlands, St Margaret)
The Revd B Aldous (Durban North, St Martin)
The Revd SC Magubane (Estcourt, St Matthew)
The Revd MA Nala (Pinetown, St John the Baptist)
The Revd PD Russell (Kloof, St Agnes)
The Revd DN Timm (Queensburgh, St Augustine)
The Revd NP Dlamini (Stoffelton, St Augustine)
The Revd NO Motloug (Stoffelton, St Augustine)
The Revd S Semple (Pinetown, St John the Baptist)
The Revd N Reddy (Phoenix, Holy Trinity)

Ordination to the stipendiary priesthood:

The Revd VM Mqadi (Cathedral of the Holy Nativity)
The Revd AD Kruger (Cathedral of the Holy Nativity)

SOME IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2012

February

Tuesday 21: Shrove Tuesday
Wednesday 22: Ash Wednesday,
The vestry meeting will be held this month

April

Holy Week
Sunday 1 Palm Sunday
Friday 6 Good Friday
Sunday 8 Easter

May

Thursday 17 Ascension
Sunday 27 Pentecost

June

Sunday 24 Patronal Festival

October

Sunday 28 Dedication/Stewardship
Sunday/Bible Sunday

November

Rubin Phillip Peace Lecture this month

December

Saturday 1 World Aids Day
Sunday 2 Advent

FOR THE GARDEN OF YOUR DAILY LIVING:**Plant 3 rows of peas:**

1. Peace of mind
2. Peace of heart
3. Peace of soul

Plant 4 rows of squash:

1. Squash gossip
2. Squash indifference
3. Squash grumbling
4. Squash selfishness

**Plant 4 rows of lettuce:**

1. Lettuce be faithful
2. Lettuce be kind
3. Lettuce us be patient
4. Lettuce us really love one another

No garden is complete without turnips:

1. Turnip for meetings
2. Turnip for service
3. Turnip to help one another

To conclude our garden, we must have thyme:

1. Thyme for God
2. Thyme for family
3. Thyme for friends

**Water freely with patience and cultivate with love.
There will be fruit in your garden because you reap
what you sow.**

UNFOLDING A ROSE

It is only a tiny rosebud
A flower of God's design;
But I cannot unfold the petals
With these clumsy hands of mine.

The secret of unfolding flowers
Is not known to such as I.
God opens this flower so sweetly,
When in my hands they die.

If I cannot unfold a rosebud,
This flower of God's design,
Then how can I have the wisdom
To unfold this life of mine?

So I'll trust in Him for leading
Each moment of my day.
I will look to Him for His guidance
Each step of the pilgrim way.

The pathway that lies before me.
Only my Heavenly Father knows.
I'll trust Him to unfold the moments,
Just as He unfolds the rose.

*Contributed by the Environment
Group*

FINALLY SOMEONE SETS THE RECORD STRAIGHT!!

Charlotte Warren

This is what one Christian Brother thinks about those e-mails that suggest you make a wish before you forward them. He was writing this letter to a circle of Christian friends. I came across it and thought I would share it with you. I personally agree with him! What do you think?

"I feel in my heart that it is time to address this phenomenon. As a Christian I honestly do not take kindly to mail that obliges you to forward it, especially emails regarding our Lord Jesus.

"First of all, there is no such thing as a wish; there is only faith, that is, knowing beyond a shadow of a doubt that God will never forsake you in anything, and that He will always provide for his children. The whole "make a wish and then send to 7, etc ... people and a miracle will happen tomorrow," etc., is all nonsense, for the word says: 'Ask anything in my name and it will be given to you. Seek first the Kingdom of God and all things will be given. I am your God; I will strengthen you and help you.' If God gave his only son Jesus Christ to die for us, what makes you think he will not add good things to you and your life?

"Secondly, I think these mails mean to make us not believe in the promises of God, but encourages us to believe superstition, which is not from our Lord.

"Thirdly, it tries to put you on a guilt trip. Those of us who know Jesus Christ, would also know that He is a gentle person, he would not force anyone to follow Him, He simply knocks, and asks, the choice is still yours.

"Now please don't get me wrong, I don't mind prayer chains and mails that you earnestly feel would bless, encourage or inspire. Send a prayer because you want someone to be blessed through it, don't tell them that if they don't send it on, something bad will happen to them. Putting someone on a guilt trip will certainly not lead them any closer to Jesus Christ or God."