

AFRICA EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Annual General Church Conference 2022

(1962 - 2022)

Called
to be
HOLY

YEAR 2023 - VERSE:

**But as He who called you is holy,
you also be holy in all your conduct,
because it is written,
“Be holy, for I am holy.” NKJV**

(1 Peter 1:15-16)

OUR VISION STATEMENT:

"By faith we see the church working in unity in diversity of language, race, culture and gender, with an agreed evangelical doctrine of salvation whose body life is experienced by all members so that it disciples and reproduces itself in holiness of living."

OBJECTIVES:

- 1. To plan specific activities and projects where we are working together, in mission and outreach programmes both locally and abroad. This would also include regular sharing of specific prayer requests among our different churches.*
- 2. To conduct periodic reviews (written or verbal) of the membership in order to find their understanding of the evangelical doctrine of salvation. Where there is lack of knowledge or understanding, the leadership in the church will address it.*
- 3. To conduct seminars for our church leaders on the biblical teaching of body life and how it should be operating in our churches.*
- 4. To conduct a course on evangelism and discipleship (verbal or written for all our members) and that each one be given or should find a disciple to minister to (2 Timothy 2:2).*
- 5. To hold seminars on holiness of life and that a system in our churches be adopted to help the membership to be accountable to each other with relevant programmes, i.e. brother/brother, sister/sister programme.*

UMBONO MGOMO WEBANDLA LE-AEC:

"Ngokukholwa sibona ibandla lisebenzisana ebunyeni phezu kokuba lehlukene ngezilimi, ngobuzwe, ngendlela yokuphila nangobulili; labo abavumelene ngesifundiso mayelana nensindiso, futhi-ke abaveza ukuba mzimba munye ngempilo ephilwa yiwo onke amalungu alo ukuze liphumelele ukwenza abafundi nokuzandisa ngokuya liqhubekela ekuphileni impilo engcwele."

IMIGOMO:

- 1. Ukuhlela izinto ezithile eziphawulekayo esinokuzenza ndawonye emsebenzini wokuqhuba ivangeli nokufinyelela ezindaweni ezintsha khona lapha kwelakithi nakwamanye amazwe. Lokhu-ke kuyabandakanya ukwazisana ngezinto eziphathekayo eziyizicelo zomkhuleko emabandleni ethu ahlukeneyo, lokho kwenziwe njalo ngezikhathi ezimisiweyo.*
- 2. Ukuhlela izivivinyo eziyakwenziwa ngezikhathi ezithile ngamalungu amabandla (zibhalwe phansi noma kuxoxwe ngomlomo) ukuze kubonakale ukuthi basiqonda kangakanani isifundiso sokusindiswa esiphilayo ngokwevangeli. Lapho kutholakala khona ukuthi kukhona ukungazi noma ukungaqondi ngokufaneleyo abaholi bayakuyimela ngezinyawo leyondaba.*
- 3. Ukuhlela izikhungo zokufundisa abaholi bamabandla ethu mayelana nokufundiswa yiBhayibheli mayelana nempilo yoMzimba (oyiBandla) nokuthi imelwe iphilwe kanjani emabandleni ethu.*
- 4. Ukufundisa izifundo ngokuhambisa ivangeli ngokwenza abafundi (kubhalwe phansi noma kukhulunywe ngomlomo kunikezwa amalungu amabandla ethu) nokuthi lowo nalowo athole umfundi othile azakumelekelele (2 Thim. 2:2).*
- 5. Ukuhlela izifundo mayelana nempilo yobungcwele; kube khona indlela eyenziwa ngamabandla ethu ukulekelela amalungu ukuba azi ukuthi awaziphileli-nje, kumelwe azidalule, eziveza ethembekile yilowo nalowo komunye ngezinhlelo ezithile ezifaneleyo ezenziwayo, okusho ukuthi owesilisa komunye wesilisa, nowesifazane komunye wesifazane.*

UMBONO NEENJONGO ZEBANDLA LE-AEC

"Ngokholo sibona ibandla lisebenza ngobunye nangona kukho ukwahlukana ngeelwimi, ubuhlanga, inkubeko, nesini. Kukho nesivumelwano mayelana nemfundiso yosindiso, ebonakalisa umzimba omnye ngempilo yawo onke amalungu alo, khonukuze ibandla libenako ukwenza abafundi nokwanda ekuphileni impilo engcwele."

IINJONGO:

1. Ukucwangcisa iinkqubo ezithile, namaphulo abalaseleyo apho sisebenzisana sonke, ekuhambiseni ivangeli, sivuselela kwiindawo ezintsha, ezikufutshane nezikude; kwilizwe lakuthi kanti nakwamanye amazwe. Oku ke kuquka ukwabelana nokwazisana ngezinto ezithile emasizithandazele kumabandla ethu, ngamaxesha afanelekileyo.
2. Ukuqhuba nokuvavanya ngamaxesha athile amalungu (kubhalwe phantsi okanye kuthethwe ngomlomo); ukufumanisa ukuba ayiqonda kangakanani na le mfundiso yevangeli engokusindiswa. Apho ke kuye kwafumaniseka ukuba kukho ukungaqondi kakuhle, abakhokeli bebandla bazakuwuchophela umbandela lowo kude kubekho ulungelelwano.
3. Ukuqhuba izifundo zokufundisa nokuhlaziya abakhokeli bamabandla ethu mayela nemfundiso yeBhayibhile ngempilo yomzimba kaKristu (iBandla) nokuba imelwe kukuthi isebenze iphilwe kanjani na emabandleni ethu.
4. Ukuqhuba izifundo ezimalunga nokuvangela nokufundisa (ezibhalwe phantsi nezo zithethwa ngomlomo, zawo onke amalungu ebandla lethu), khonukuze elowo nalowo afumane umfundi othile aza kumncedisa (2 Tim. 2:2).
5. Ukuqhuba izifundo ezimalunga nokuphila impilo eNgcwele; nokuba emabandleni ethu kubekho uncedo oluthile lokunceda amalungu ukuba azi ukuba ilungu aliziphileli nje; amalungu ayaphilelana, yaye athembekile ingulowo nalowo eveza izakhono anazo; umzalwane ancedisane nomnye umzalwane, nodade ancedisane nomnye udade, kusetyenziswane ke ngokwanelisayo.

UMBONO NGEMGOMO WELIBANDLA LE-AEC

"Ngekukholwa sibona libandla lisebenta ngebunye ngetilimi letehlukene, nebuve, ngemihambo kanye nebulili, sibe sivumelene ngemfundziso yeLiVangeli lensindziso lokufakazelwa yimphilo lephilwa ngiwo onkhe emalunga ukuze lifundzise litibonakalise liphila ebungcweleni."

TINHLOSO:

1. Kuhlala imisebenti netikhankhanyo lapho sisebenta ndzawonye, etimishane kanye netinhlelo tekuphumela ngaphandle emagatjeni nasemaveni. Loku kungafaka ticelo temthandazo letibalulekile tiyofika emabandleni etfu lehlukene; loko kwentiwe ngetikhatsi letimisiwe.
2. Kutsi njalo ngesikhatsi kubekhona kuciniseka ngemalunga etfu elibandla kutsi bayiva kanjani imfundziso yelivangeli lensindziso (kubhalwe noma kukhulunywe). Lapho kungekho khona lwati; umholi welibandla akunakekele loko.
3. Kwenta tindlela tekufundzisa baholi belibandla ngemfundziso yeliBhayibheli kulemphilo nekutsi kufanele tisebente kanjani emabandleni etfu.
4. Kufundzisana ngesifundvo sekuvangela kanye nekwenta baholi kuwo onkhe emalunga etfu nekutsi lilunga ngalinye linikwe litfuba lekwenza lomunye abe ngumlandzeli noma umfundzi. (2 Thimothewu 2:2).
5. Kubamba timfundziso ngemphilo yebungcwele nekutsi emabandleni etfu kutfolakale indlela yekusita emalunga kutsi anakekelane ngetinhlelo letifanele; umfowetfu anakekele umfowetfu, dzadzewetfu anakekele dzadzewetfu.

AEC CORE VALUES:

1. **BIBLE** is our ultimate source of authority and its truth is essential for transformation of lives. 2 Timothy 3:16-17.
 2. **PEOPLE** matter. Genesis 4:9-12; 9:5-6.
 3. We value **HOLINESS** and that full devotion to Christ and relational health are to be norms of every believer." 2 Peter 3:18; Romans 12:1-2.
 4. **UNITY** We value that the church should operate as a loving unified community of servants that celebrates diversity in gifts, function and preference. 1 Corinthians 12:1-31 (4-7); Ephesians 4:3-7; 11-13.
 5. **LEADERSHIP** is the critical value of Godly character, personal integrity, ministry skill and relational health in leadership at all levels of ministry. Philippians 2:19-23.
 6. **EXCELLENCE** honours God and inspires people. Genesis 39:4-15.
 7. **RELEVANCE** We value that the Church should be culturally relevant while holding to God's eternal truth. 1 Corinthians 9:20.
 8. **INNOVATION** We value that gifts of innovation should be encouraged in all that we do. Galatians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 15:58.
 9. **MISSION** We value the encouragement, development and exercise of each believer's ministry gifts and skills in fulfilling mission work." 1 Corinthians 14:29-33.
 10. **STEWARDSHIP** We value that every believer has God-given resources that should be used for eternal purposes. Ephesians 2:10.
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We say what a year – It's OUR 60TH ANNIVERSARY THANKSGIVING

"The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy." Psalm 126:3 (ESV).

The 2020/21/22 pain, suffering, wars, price hikes etc, became part of our existence as we celebrate 60 years of autonomy given by South Africa General Mission on the 8 July 1962 at Ntabamhlophe, KwaZulu-Natal.

We had many diverse experiences of lock downs; masking, sanitizing, social distancing, travel restrictions, different levels of adjustments and the virus has continued to plague the globe. We lost our loved ones, jobs and opportunities. The restrictions in our meetings which created a havoc in other communities. We had the landmarks and symbols of this painful history. Now we are living with load shedding and ever changing stages. We gather in 2022 with visible scars of levels of Covid-19 and different stages of power supply.

The years 2020 and 2021 have gone to the archives of history as the years where all our songs and hymns were transposed from bright major key to minor key of sorrow, confusion and desperation. Our virtual Conference in 2021 took place with many connectivity issues but we soldiered through.

We were grateful to God for those who physically participated others in praise team, technically, and other logistics which were upgraded immensely. We had almost 7000 viewers and listeners. We reached out live streaming through Facebook, YouTube and Radio platforms. Some enjoyed

interacting while the programme was on. Some made us aware of technical issues like sound, visuals, appreciation and other comments. We have grown. No wonder we are 60 years with our Lord who has been the Captain of this spiritual liner - His Church.

✠ **HEAVEN REJOICED IN RECEIVING MANY OF OUR MEMBERS –**

Though death invades and destroys us, the climax of it all is that **DEATH WILL DIE** and resurrection will bring the freedom of perpetual life. Aches and pains, sorrow and tears, fear and wants, depression and loneliness will all cease.

“And if one member suffers, all the parts [share] the suffering; if one member is honoured, all the members [share in] the enjoyment of it.” 1 Cor 12:26.

Days that we will never forget in KZN started on 11 April 2022, when we had torrential floods. The cause of flooding in KwaZulu-Natal as explained by South African Weather Service senior forecaster Dipuo Tawana explained that a cut-off low system linked to the surface low-pressure southeast of the country resulted in flooding over KwaZulu-Natal and the wild coast in the Eastern Cape. Thank you for the support we received for blankets received as well as SIMSA and the Durban Circuit which got involved in distribution.

Hams, Mrs Thembi Bessie the wife of Revd Dr DM Hams went to be with the Lord on the 19 April 2022 after long frail health. Her funeral was held on the 23 April 2022. Pray for Revd Hams, the family and friends as they try to accommodate the void that is left. We will all miss that lovely Thusi lady who was always present in most of our church's meetings.

Ngcobo, Mrs Benzani J, the wife of Revd MA Ngcobo of Nkwambase, Durban circuit in KZN went to be with the Lord on April 30 2022, and her funeral took place on the 7th June 2022. Many people who spoke remembered her love and generosity for humanity. May we adopt that character during our brief stay too. What we have is not ours. Pray for the family and the church as they deal with the loss.

Simelane, Revd PM of Deda, Mankayane circuit, Eswatini went to his eternal home after frail health on the 10 May 2022 and his remains were buried on 22 May 2022. We lost a gentle, passionate, and fiery herald of the good news whose focus was to be faithful to His Lord to the end. I personally lost a friend. Pray for the family and the church as they continue proclaiming the good news in that area.

Simelane, Mrs Sijabulile the wife of Revd SV Simelane went to be with the Lord on 20 July and was buried on Sunday 24 July 2022. May the good Lord comfort the Simelanes as they lost their loved ones in succession. Revd SV Simelane said “It is still painful to live this experience and responsibility, but I am grateful to God for the church and their love to us as a family.”

✠ **ARRIVALS:**

We welcome all boys and girls, who were born this year, 2022. We will continually welcome the new generation that God gives us in His church. We welcome the 2022 weddings and landmark Wedding Anniversaries. We congratulate those new brides and grooms who will never forget how their plans were smashed by restrictions. Some could not have open traditional weddings because of the protocol which was in force due to Covid-19. Let us do our best to guide the younger generation. Remembering the calling we have to be holy. *We say hearty welcome!*

✠ SOARING HIGHER:

Though studying or learning was really difficult in the recent past years but we congratulate all those who made it from different fields of learning, and we welcome the 2022 achievers in a variety of stages in life. It may be that awarded certificate, diploma, degree, licence, title, new home, that job, new car, other local church. The good and bad will always happen. Let us learn that something good comes from the bad that comes our way. Cheers!

HERE AND THERE

FEBRUARY 11 – 13 2022 THE BOARD MET AT IHAWU IN KZN

This was our evaluation meeting as usual and focusing on what transpired during our better improved Virtual Conference in December 2021 and looking forward to the 2022 opportunities. It was a refreshing experience to see all board members in person. These meetings are usually long because we had to look back, present and the future and pray for the church.

FEBRUARY 19, 2022, MBABANE, ESWATINI

I had to be there for discussions with the leaders on Saturday and then on Sunday the 20th I briefly visited Ezulwini local church where Revd Hlatshwako is stationed. Thereafter, we stopped at Mlindazwe local church which was planted by eZulwini local church now Past S Magongo taking care of those Saints. My entourage was a blessing, being with Revd T Mthethwa the Regional chair, Revd N Hlatshwako the Ezulwini pastor, Revd RS Maseko the vice President, Past B Zwane Revd AS Matsenjwa, Hon. Senator N Mdluli, ever ready Elder MTE Mtetwa. We even sang a song of faith as visitors.

MAY 06, 2022, VIRTUAL WORKERS' WEBINAR – We were able to hold our workers' webinar which was well attended by workers from all regions. It was encouraging to see most of the workers after not meeting in person for two years. We are getting used to virtual communication. It is an ideal way of communication and let us continue to upgrade our gadgets. More than 80 workers logged in for the whole day with 15 minutes break.

We covered other subjects in brief of upgrading in our leadership, health issues, PayFast platform for fast giving through our website..

Bishop Mazelo from Botswana, passionately addressed the delegates on the topic "Iron Sharpens Iron" He emphasized that we are expected to have willing hearts; deny or empty ourselves and take off our cross and follow Jesus Christ every day. He explained the meaning of following Christ, which stands for coming after Christ. Workers should not come with their plans. If we are workers of the Kingdom, we need to follow Him, and He becomes our role model. We must reduce the "I" but emphasize 'Christ'. When we follow Jesus, we become like Him. We need to study how He walks and how He approaches the gospel.

We were deeply encouraged through that presentation. The next Workers' Seminar hopefully will be on 11 - 14 May 2023. We thank all those local churches who have assisted their pastors over the years.

MAY 21, 2022, DUMISA CIRCUIT - KWAZULU-NATAL – Due to Covid – 19 restrictions the Board resolved to let the ordinations be conducted at the two Regions with ordinands. The KwaZulu-Natal decided to have their candidate be ordained at his Dumisa circuit. This was Pastor Simphiwe Buthelezi's ordination day. It was a rainy and chilly day, but the Dumisa circuit made

the day to be very memorable in their preparations. We salute the leader of the Circuit Revd PM Dladla and the Regional leadership as a whole.

JULY 10, 2022, LUTUBENI CIRCUIT - EASTERN CAPE – Due to Covid – 19 restrictions the Board resolved to let the ordinations be conducted on the last day of their RCC conference. Pastor Mboneleli Thukani from Mt Packard local church was duly ordained. It was a beautiful sunny day and also we were privileged to meet with many joyful and generous people. Many people appreciated seeing the Board representatives in their local church.

JULY 22 - 24 2022, BOARD MET TOGETHER WITH DENOMINATION'S COMMITTEES OF ALL STRUCTURES – CONCORD GUESTS HOUSE - DURBAN KWAZULU-NATAL. This was an important meeting where we planned for this conference as well as discussed other agenda items. We were grateful to God who made it possible for all structures to be there and with all excitement. This came after two years of Covid-19 non meetings restrictions. The main reason was to plan for this conference but in the future such a meeting might not be a yearly thing because of the technology that we have which enables us to meet virtually. May we say thank you to all the locals who allowed these needed leaders to be away for that weekend of planning and praying. May the good Lord bless and strengthen you as you draw closer to Him who is holy.

AUGUST 06, 2022, BONAMANZI GAME RESERVE - KWAZULU-NATAL – KZN YOUNG ADULTS RETREAT - had planned a two nights retreat which was cut to one day at the end which became very fruitful to more than 50 of the trusted ones. I briefly visited them just before supper in a lovely setting. It was encouraging to witness their dedication and commitment to the church. They committed themselves to be available, resourceful, and ready to share their expertise in many areas on Christian life and growth. I nearly called somebody to tell us about budget and spending your money. Hmm many have tarnished their Christian character because they have failed dismally in handling money. They really focused on their existence in the AEC at this time. They are becoming a “No Nonsense Group” but a working group, the watchmen / women army. Above all they are a happy loving group.

OCTOBER 21, 2022, ROAD LODGE, RICHARDS BAY - KWAZULU-NATAL – It was my joy to fellowship with the KZN workers for few hours after being hindered by Covid for few years. The Chairperson of this forum was Revd R Gumede who did a good job in accomodating the entire leaders through his love for the church.

I discovered that when you meet with leaders you do not always quote reference of Scripture you are referring to, you simple say what the Word says and shun the numbers. It was a great time for me to reflect and see how far we have grown or how far we are regressing in other areas. We are called to lead wise people of our time we need wisdom from God to do what we are required to do as His stewards. We thank God for all those individuals who pray for the leadership of the church. The need is greater that we think. If God calls you don't delay but if He doesn't call you don't feel that He has called you as you will ruin your life. This is His work, we are just mere servants or stewards of His possessions.

OCTOBER 29 - 30, 2022, LIMPOPO - GAUTENG – This was a long overdue visit after the passing away of Revd KS Riba. Though the day's plans were almost ruined by a delayed flight but Dr S Gumedze who offered to pick me up at the airport and together we drove to Limpopo where we found our faithful friends waiting for us. We then drove to Driekop with Mokgotho, Chuene and Mogashwa where we were welcomed by Shingage and his brethren though it was late in the day. We then

went back to Lebowakgomo at Riba's residence where the family welcomed us with delicious supper.

Sunday 30 October at AEC Lebowakgomo was indeed a beautiful day with every one showing the joy of the Lord. The Gauteng chairperson came with his entourage of circuit chair and other members. Though most of the language spoken there was Sepedi which we were all baptized into and we found ourselves saying Thobela, Modimo a o hlohonolofatse and never tekateke. Our Mam' Riba was dancing like a sweet sixteen. The Lord blessed with reflections from the Psalmist as shared by Past D Mbatha. Pray for that far off place. Do visit that beautiful Limpopo in 2023. The AEC vision is growing with great potential for greater things.

NOVEMBER 06, 2022, AEC JEPPE - MPUMALANGA – This was another great day which became special for me to visit the group where our resilient worker, J Makam, labours and God doing things that we cannot explain. When we see people from Malelane or Limpopo or Cape Town or Botswana in our conferences it is humbling because those places are far, and to travel to the conference you have to sacrifice many things. This is where Makam is located.

The honour was mine as I had to drive through eSwatini for a shorter route and was accompanied by Swazi Gospel Singers as well as the Hon Senator NM Mdluli who offered to be our chauffeur. I thought we were suffocating those brethren but it turned out that we had the greatest blessing to fellowship with those brethren. I trust that something new will emerge to support those brethren in the near future.

THE REGIONAL CONFERENCES

1. KWAZULU-NATAL: 02 JULY 2022 - Esikhaleni

This Regional Conference was not held as usual, but the Regional Executive organized the Pastors and delegates one day meeting which was very successful and much appreciated. They started with brief devotions, then the chairperson presented his annual report after the report was the formal business agenda after which they had a late lunch. We are grateful for the upgrade in time management and communication.

2. EASTERN CAPE: 07 - 10 JULY 2022 - LUTHUBENI

This Regional Conference was held at Luthubeni Mission in full blast as the restrictions due to Covid-19 were better relaxed. The excitement of meeting one another was magnetic. The joy was tangible all over. Though we (some Board members) joined the on the last day because we had to ordain Pastor Mboneleli Thukani from Mt Packard on the day, we were captured by the tangible joy of salvation that we saw. To us it was the prelude for this AGCC. We were thankful to God for the successful conference this region held under the leadership of Revd PM Mgevu and the Regional Executive. They are being stretched further as they are hosting this year's AGCC. We were accommodated at Matebese's residence and were served like really guests from out of this world. Thank you! Sithi enkosi!

3. GAUTENG: 18 SEPTEMBER 2022 - RCC CELEBRATION

This Regional Celebration was held at AEC Temba in Pretoria on the 18th Brethren were also happy to see one another. I was grateful to see our senior members of the church like Mrs P Bhengu, Ntate Ledwaba, Revd Dr D Hams and others. They were celebrating the 60 years of God's faithfulness to the church. Some of the accomplishments were mentioned by the guest speaker of the day Pastor T Mabitsela.

4. ESWATINI: MBULUZI 31 AUGUST - 04 SEPTEMBER 2022

Eswatini Regional Conference came to pass after the two year's break and the brethren were happy to meet and once again to be reminded to deny yourself and daily follow Jesus.

The Conference days were filled with good Bible teachings and pray for them to be doers of what they heard from the different segments of the conference. Though I shared few personal family things with them but the colours of the church were amiss. Our colours could be a mixture of **White, Gold, Blue and Red**. These colours may be used in any order of two, three or four. There are two light colours (White and Gold) and two heavy (Blue and Red).

The Region officially upgraded and welcomed the Nkoyoyo preaching point to a local church. The joy was written on many people's faces. Though it had been a preaching point for few years, but its vibrancy and growth is a challenge to other local churches. The passion for souls and the love for one another was tangible to the young and the matured.

OUR STRUCTURES:

May I encourage all structures to be creative in encouraging the Saints to be active in whatever way. Let us not depend on group meetings which we are used to, but one win one. Since we lost some of our key people in past years, let us rise and build. Let each and every one of us carry the banner and share Christ. Let the elders in the church lead and do the work of the ministry. The pastor can not do everything and they cannot be everywhere. You and your faith in God is enough to face the giant of unbelief and lethargy that has invaded the Church. This is the time to emphasize the promises of God to them. Deny yourself, take up your cross and daily follow the Master.

CHILDREN STRUCTURE

We thank God for the presence of more than 6500 children and the dedication of 366 children workers in different categories in our churches. Some of us attended Sunday School and as we grew we lost everything but through God's grace we came back to the fold. This ministry suffered also during the Covid which made the children ask many questions like: Why are we not going to Sunday School? Are we going to die also? Why the pastor died though he was praying for many to be healed? How are we going to sing with these masks?

I hope we answered our children properly. Our regions reported continuing teaching the Bible lessons, some had workshops on line, some had rallies and others reported a good number of young people who were saved. Some also graduated to youth which might be different and scary but life is like that we progress and mature to the next stage. The T4T workshop was a great success in Eswatini with outsiders who joined in.

We praise God for our Children Ministry leadership team, pray for more workers, more financial support more human resources, the church's theme and the year verse to be filtered down to the children through out the year.

And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a little child and set him by Him, and said to them, " Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all will be great." Luke 9:47-48.

YOUTH STRUCTURE

We all know the joys of youth. The now becomes the main thing and short term outlook. Personally I am proud of young people who have shown maturity spiritually, socially, intellectually and in decision making. I like the voices of the next generation when they say, *we don't need more camps and programmes but we need you to guide and mentor us Teach us how to love Jesus. Show us the way through prayer and love.*

The report shows both successes and failures. In life it is always scary to move to other stage in life. Either by age, status, promotion or education. Each step we take we encounter challenges and hurdles. Christian youth should be aware that our walk and thought pattern are not of this world. Their Christian life is tested in many ways. Those who pass the test will emerge as great leaders in their work space.

My personal appeal to us all is that let us invest in youth. Before we become angry or disassociate ourselves from them let us invest time, love and prayer for our youth. It is true that they belong to other generation, but we all belong to a certain generation. Christ invites us all to the one family of the saints to be holy. I have noted the slogans "I love my AEC" by a number of young people but please prefix that by saying: "I love my Jesus and His church." Let AEC trend with your life.

Let us help them mature properly. The drugs, spirit of witchcraft, be rich and famous quick, materialistic trends, these and any more are all targeted to these young lives who are daily in transition. Let us teach them coping skills. The Bible is full of good habits that they can cultivate while they are still young. Things like obedience, honesty, faithfulness, cleanliness, patience, generosity, good manners, wholesome decorum, acknowledging the Lord in all the decisions we take, others first me last, appreciate God's creation, help others etc.

The Wisdom of old said: *My son, if sinners entice you, Do not consent. Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.* Proverbs 1:10; 3:4-5.

YOUNG ADULTS STRUCTURE

The Young Adults reported growth in other regions and failed meetings in other regions and areas. It is a fact that growing takes time. The uniqueness of this structure is that it will vary with areas or communities. But what I have observed is that when they are together there is vibrancy, new direction, deeper love for the church, and sharp eye to the needs of the church in different areas.

I have noted that other leaders have not seen the potential of this structure. These are young professionals who are anxious to settle their minds and action their beliefs. These are people who can be readily used in their skills and gifts in the ministry. They stretch all of us to see and understand God's plans for our lives. They are resourceful if we know how to tap God's design in their lives.

May I say to the Young adults in your trials remain faithful to God, to others, and to the tasks you are given. This requires loving accountability, guidance, and realistic and challenging expectations and goals. Let us know how to push our Young Adults to be their best, even when the process feels strenuous.

We are all called by the Holy one to be holy as: *God stretches out heaven over empty space and hangs the earth upon nothing. "These are some of the minor things he does, merely a whisper of his power. Who then can withstand his thunder?"* Job 26:7,14.

WOMEN STRUCTURE

We lost a number of Godly women during our two year lock down and our hearts go to those family members who suffered that void. We also suffered in many ways. May we pray that the Lord multiplies what we lost and heal our wounds.

We are grateful for a variety of initiatives that our women have taken for the growth and stability of the church family. Their dedication in all our regions is appreciated. It is true that in the desert they discover water and food. In suffering and pain they offer a tender comforting hand. In distress they cling to hope and bright future regardless of the present situation. They know the plight of a widow, an orphan, the homeless and the needy, that pastor, the suffering and the unfortunate.

In the midst of killings, rejections, dishonest society and struggle to survive may our women don't leave or forsake their places. It is sad that in the void of the Holy Spirit guiding them some resolve to violating their character traits and some end up in violence, abuse and faithless aspirations.

MEN STRUCTURE

The Men's report shows that there were fewer meetings in all four regions due to the Covid-19 break which deflated attendance and participation. They also raised a concern that some pastors don't attend where I could encourage the Men to focus on the stability of their structure and not to be discouraged by less numbers. May men be men who love God, serve the Lord, and provide spiritual leadership to their families and churches.

The programmes should be creative and designed to meet the needs of the people. When a man goes to church it means there is something that is happening in his life. Therefore that seed must be nurtured with love and encouragement.

Work teams should be encouraged where a group of men gather the skills together and have a weekend doing manual work it could be plumbing, painting, grass cutting, rough cleaning

Again, I say, **"Upgrade! Upgrade! Upgrade!"** Let us not be the victims of group meeting syndrome.

When I was visiting Mhlungulu in Northern KZN I saw a committed group of people working hard building their worship place. They needed windows, doors, electricity tubing, plastering and painting, tiling floor and finishing touches of their building.

When I went to Temba in Pretoria, I saw the need for more cement, sand, glaziers, bare roof building with window frames now rusting, ceiling carpentry, tree planting. I looked around and saw many needs of man power that could be offered to God as a way of worship.

When I went to Limpopo I saw happy people, working hard, needing more members as they have a vision of other site in Ivory Park a very beautiful place with no churches around. Their sites are huge you can build any thing as well as at Driekop and Lebogakomo.

When I visited Jeppes Reef in Mpumalanga I discovered other handful of committed people, who talk less and do more. They have two miracle unfinished buildings needing plastering, fencing, doors, windows and glaziers, tilers, electrical tubing, chairs, sound system, landscaping, planting of trees, personal evangelism teams, visionaries. They also have other three vacant sites with the hope of reaching growing communities.

Truly the needs are many and visible when we open our eyes and minds around us. **What can you offer in your time?**

OUR HORIZONTAL INVOLVEMENT

UNION BIBLE INSTITUTE – www.ubi.ac.za UBI is a registered, accredited, approved and credible institution offering *Higher Certificate in Theology; Diploma in Theology and Bachelor of Theology*.

AEC is a member of the Council and as such we will continue to be involved financially, through prayer and recommending the school to those that the Lord calls to study His Word from any neighbour countries. Revd MX Dladla is holding double position this time at UBI as he is the chairperson of the Alumni and will be chair of the council in 2023. Let us pray for him, it is a demanding assignment that he holds. Visit UBI web site and get all the answers.

We thank God for Revd George Mnisi's leadership of the school over the years, but the time has come for him to retire we have Revd Xolani Nkosi who was the vice principal who will be leading the school from 2023. It is that time that we need to have UBI at heart as we go to the Lord. More students are needed to meet the financial needs of the school. As we all know, only God calls His workers. Not by might or by 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty.

BIBLE SOCIETY – www.biblesociety.co.za Praise be to the Lord for another year in which the Bible could be produced and distributed in different formats. Bible Society strives to be custodians of the Word of God through your prayers and financial support. AEC is obvious always at the top alphabetically on the churches' list but at times we are nowhere in our giving. That is not like us. Our problem we forget to carry our cross daily not once in two years but daily.

Take note that every year the prices of Bibles are adjusted at the beginning of November. Also, when you transfer the AEC donation to the Bible Society of South Africa use this donor **reference number 700876** so that your gift will go under AEC. Let us serve heartily as we touch the lives of many people with God's word even in 2023!

GRANDPARENTS DAY – SEPTEMBER 11 2022

"When I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also." **2 Timothy 1:5.**

We praise God for those who took time and thanked the Lord for the Grandparents we have in the church and communities. That appreciation shows respect and honour. They may be frail and chronic in many ways but they are a gift to the church.

10 September 2023 will be the next date to do our best for our Grandparents. I have noticed that every year some graduate to the real Grand parenthood. We welcome the new grand parents that the Lord has added in families, communities and churches. Some become embarrassed because they think that they are extra ordinarily old forgetting that we all age daily.

✠ CLERGY APPRECIATION DAY – 09 OCTOBER 2022

We thank God for those local churches who appreciated their Pastors in 2022. This should be the expression of the generous and happy hearts. As I mentioned last year, other local churches have not started this good habitual habit of joy in their local churches. May our churches be centres of joy, peace, and goodwill. Not places of resentments, fights, show-offs, and sneezing anger. The Cross of Christ paid it all! It is true that some local churches are struggling. But a word of gratitude to God coming from a child or 'Gogo' or 'Mkhulu' is what matters. Gifts or money should be according to the willing hearts.

The Clergy Appreciation Day for 2023 will be on **08 October 2023**. You may start preparing your innovations and budget early in the year. Do the Word in love heartily as to the Lord! Daily carrying your Cross of Love as you follow Jesus! Who is holy and thus he expects us to be holy.

Conference Centre Project – Mankayane. Our Conference Centre walls are still standing waiting for more committed and visionary people. We don't give because we meet, but we give because it is our passion, obligation and vision. I thank God for the few individuals who just couldn't stop giving. They are few and they are there! On the other hand, there are many who are waiting to be pushed to give. Unfortunately, what God has given you to manage, you will be required to give a report about your management behaviour. Jesus said: ***Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.*** Paul said in 1 Cor 4:2 **Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.**

I was privileged to stand and touch those walls a number of times this year. I salute the Mankayane local for taking care of the yard at times. I discovered that in summer the grass grows faster and needs cutting. It would be a good ministry for those in Eswatini to organize fellowship teams to go and clear the site of weeds in turns and have time of prayer and bonding as they sweat. That is a good place for men and youth to take the initiative. The women will follow when the structure allows for safety, but now it is still rugged needing men!

Giving for the conference centre is made easy by providing different platforms. You may give through your local or circuit and use the banking details you know in Eswatini there are two and South Africa there is one account but if you accidentally give to the Board account it is easily transferred to centre account. Or all those who have online banking facility on their mobile or computer go to our www.africec.org and click donate, Payfast will make you securely pay fast in the comfort of your environment. It will register your name also. Try it and you will like it. I would advise that you use **instantEFT** as your first choice if possible as charges are less, but credit cards are accepted. Upgrade your giving and do it with intent.

May I encourage all of us to be faithful to do what we are expected to do as to the Lord, not to men. We don't only give when we are together in a meeting. But this is a personal commitment that test your growth in the Lord. Daily take up your cross and follow the Master.

Eastern Cape Conference Centre – The Region is still busy with active commitment as they also were affected by Covid 19. I had a privilege of visiting the site on Saturday October 30 2021 and Revd TG Ntongana was helpful in taking me there with Revd Ntoyaphi. The site is breath taking near the Ocean and the famous Hole in the Rock. The road to the place is being upgraded. I saw the cottage that the region has built for the old lady who will be moved from the site area to her new home. She will be on good view to look at the centre and the valley. We thank the Lord for Revd MS Kunju and his involvement in pursuing the proper registration of that property. May the good Lord show us His favour on us!

When the Lord gives us something like this, it requires our **FULL** participation and involvement. It is not for leaders only, but it is an open invitation to enter and grab the land. Young and old. When we give, it should be continuous and intentional not abruptly done.

Another innovation that we may do there is to build chalets either per circuit or per local which can be rented out for people who would like to visit the place and stay for a weekend or a week. You can drive or hike to the beach or the Hole in the Rock. It was scary for me to behold.

We need pictures from a drone to capture the landscape of the place. I would propose that the Eastern Cape think of proper landscaping of the site, have proper corner pegs put by the surveyor, plant appropriate trees as boundary markers and as wind breakers, if the chalets idea is welcomed have plans and cost per unit which will be used even when the centre is built.

Remember the local Chief suggested that Home Affairs and SASSA offices could rent from us. It appears that its registration also will be properly registered as it might be making income even from the tourists who visit the Hole on the Rock. All these things need vision and action. It is another Cross that we must take and follow the holy Master!

Important Info

The stats from all regions did not come in, some churches still does not have road directional signs. Please continue to pursue the official papers for your church sites and send copies to the Regional archives so that it would be easier to help in times of need when there is an issue or query about the site.

A word about elections:

Perhaps it comes with a long 60 years journey that we have travelled. Elections are a gesture of worship not a chaos of power hungry in the church. Politics or favouritism or recruiting has no place in the Christian ministry. The elected people are expected to be servants of the Master. That is why we read the Biblical qualifications, then pray asking God to help us do His will through the exercise. The serving elected people are suppose to grow in wisdom and develop good character and be in favour with God and people. As the skills and commitment develop they learn more because they are suppose to walk with the holy One. We also respect our documents as to when do we elect people. We respect the financial year and the financial report. It is God's precious possession - His church. Indeed Paul wrote to 1 Cor 4:1,2 *Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.*

I have witnessed good leaders wrongly elected and destroyed by those who elected them. Such leaders never recover from the trauma of being rejected and disregarded for the rest of their ministry life. May we restore the spirit of worship and let the awe of God rule every domain of our existence. Let us be careful when we enter the holy ground of electing people for any responsibility in the church.

May I say "thank you" to all the committees who served the extra year, from locals to the Board. What we know is that the future will be rough as the sinful nature blooms every day. The challenge is that we are called to be holy by Him who is holy. Yes, the terrain has been cruel, rugged and deadly. But we are not alone.

I thank God for the opportunity He gave me to serve so many beautiful people in different ways this year. My travels were challenging but full of thanksgiving to God. God provided different people to accompany me in their cars and also in my car and some offered their cars to take me to the places where duty called me. In all our regions people accompanied me. What I saw and felt at times is beyond words.

I added more new people in my heart list in 2022 and saw faithful people in their areas. I know how I kept in touch with many through prayer, phone calls, emails etc. I had felt your prayers through the ministry that God gave me.

I thank God for the privilege of being a servant, seeing Him increase while I decrease. Let us together march in faith into 2023 and see Him do great things in the midst of all these plagues for His glory. As the rugby referee sounds his calls for scrum let us **CROUCH!** (*forwards to drop in a low position*) **BIND!** (*the props to grip their opponent's jersey*) **SET!** (*the players to engage and compete*). **May I wish all of us a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2023!**

Humbly presented by

Revd P Mntambo, PRESIDENT
AFRICA EVANGELICAL CHURCH SOUTHERN AFRICA
19 DECEMBER 2022

1. God to help us through these global disasters and needs.
2. Conference Centre Giving, Building, Skills, Wisdom to adjust with time.
3. Biblical and cheerful giving within our denomination as we travel less, and we should give more.
4. Regional, Circuit and Local Church leadership elections to be godly.
5. Upgrade, good health, safety, fulfillment and joy in our communities and families as we serve.
6. Tangible brotherly love that will draw many to Jesus.
7. Important dates to note:
 - ✓ 10 – 12 February 2023 [Board Meeting]
 - ✓ 15 – 17 April 2023 [Easter Celebration]
 - ✓ 11 – 14 May 2023 [Workers' Seminar]
 - ✓ 08 May 2023 [Mother's Day]
 - ✓ 18 June 2023 [Father's Day]
 - ✓ **28 June – 02 July 2023 [Eastern Cape RCC]**
 - ✓ **05 – 08 Jul 2023 [KZN RCC]**
 - ✓ **08 July 2023 – AEC 61st Anniversary (Autonomy given on 08 July 1962)**
 - ✓ **29 August - 03 September 2023 [ESwatini RCC]**
 - ✓ **29 June - 02 July 2023 [Gauteng RCC]**
 - ✓ 22 – 24 July Board & Denominational Committees Mtg.
 - ✓ 10 September 2023 [Grandparents' Day]
 - ✓ 08 October 2023 [Clergy Appreciation Day]
 - ✓ 16 - 20 December 2023 [AGCC] Gauteng

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