

**Annual Vestry Report**  
**Dean of Christ Church Cathedral**  
**2015**

I welcome you all to the Annual Vestry Meeting of Christ Church Cathedral for 2015. Thank you for your attendance at this important event in the life of the church.

The Vestry Meeting is in effect the annual general meeting as held by any company or organisation. The word *Vestry* refers to the room where clergy vestments are stored and where the clergy robe in preparation for a service. In ancient times this room was also used by the members of a church for their meetings. These meetings then became known as Vestry Meetings. In more modern times the Vestry Meeting referred to the special and annual meeting of the congregation where issues are addressed and the next council is elected.

Hence we meet today as the congregation of Christ Church Cathedral to address issues before us and elect our council for the New Year. This Vestry Meeting is in effect our Annual General Meeting.

**The Year That Was**

2014 was a busy and full year. It was the first year in which we operated without the wise leadership of Revd Philemon Mudzvovera. We missed him and we worked hard to build on all he had taught us.

**Achievements in 2014**

I list for you some of the accomplishments of 2014.

1. We have continued to grow our membership base. Currently the Cathedral has a little over 900 people registered on its data base. This number includes children and youth, and equates to approximately 300 to 400 families.
2. We have increased our collections and finished last year with a deficit on pledge income of less than R20k. This implies we collected on average a little under R100k per month on pledges alone. This is a wonderful achievement, and I thank all those who participate in our pledge system. Plate collections were on budget and I thank you for that too. The budget for 2015 asks that we collect over R100k per month on pledges and I challenge us all to interrogate our individual pledge offering to the Cathedral and to raise it in order that we achieve our budget. I will speak on this issue again later in my report.
3. Our attendance figures at both services have grown. This is especially apparent at the 07h30 service where we now average a little less than 150 at each service.
4. The Sunday School is also growing in numbers. There is a need for more teachers and I encourage us to volunteer to take at least one Sunday school class a month.
5. We welcomed a new curate, Revd Philip Moseki, onto staff. I have known Philip since I first arrived in the Diocese and I know we have a superb and gifted leader amongst us. Philip is accompanied by his beautiful daughter, Kopo. We welcome you both to the Cathedral Family.

6. Revd Kwena and Mrs Sibongile Makgoka left us at the end of last year and Kwena is currently assisting at St. Mathew's, Seshego in preparation for his first parish as Rector. We thank Kwena and Sibongile for their ministry amongst us over the past three years.
7. We appointed a Youth Worker, Pastor Rendani Mudau, from January this year. It is a wonderful achievement to have Rendani and I am excited about what this means for us and for our young people. I am aware that the Youth Group have planned many exciting activities for this year. Rendani is assisted by a team of youth leaders and by Sheena Pereira. Revd Philip Moseki provides overall mentorship and leadership.

There is much that can be done with our young people; from home-work clubs to after-hours sports clubs, to ongoing leadership and skills development. This is a long-term and exciting goal with many possibilities. I encourage us all to support our young people and to facilitate their growth and leadership involvement in the life of the Cathedral.

8. Our weekly Wednesday Evening Teaching Service continues; although our attendance numbers have remained static. We also continue to offer training for lay ministers and other lay ministries once a quarter.
9. Our Men's' Guild is established and flourishing. I am sure though they would love to have more men join them. Our Mothers' Union and Anglican Women's Fellowship continue to play their invaluable role in the life of the Cathedral. I thank these three organisations for their support and leadership in our church.
10. We made progress with the repair of our church fence when Mr Roy Kirkpatrick generously supplied technical expertise and workmen to repair the existing fence rather than replace it. This has been a wonderful improvement; for once the gates work smoothly and without mishap. Also, Mr John Wright regularly supplies staff to clean our gutters and manure to top-dress the grass. Thank you Roy and John.
11. A growing number of volunteers, many anonymous, supply the church with needed material and work assistance. I do not know who all of you are but wish nevertheless to thank you all most sincerely for all you do. From those who quietly fix things or donate things or offer to assist with work in the office, we are blessed through your involvement.
12. Our Wednesday morning service has dwindled for various reasons to nobody. We have temporarily suspended these services whilst we explore re-starting this service with new people. In its place we have instituted a program of visiting of those who cannot ordinarily make it to church on a Sunday.

### **Tasks Currently Before Us**

We continue to explore the feasibility of re-establishing the ALPHA Course, as well as other courses, such as a marriage enrichment course. We are also exploring the possibility of establishing a fresh expression of church at the evening soup kitchen.

Areas for current development include;

1. Growing our income base. Whilst the income has increased it is still below what we should achieve. The result of insufficient funds is that we cannot grow our staff base and appoint an assistant priest / sub-dean. An analysis of our pledge system indicates that only 160 people contribute to the pledge system and that of this only about 80 people contribute every month, the remainder give sporadically.

Remember that we have over 900 people on our data base; and which is approximately 300 to 400 families who could be giving.

The average annual pledge of the 160 who are on the system is R9 444 per year, which is R787 per month. Whilst this figure may at first appear to be high, in reality we have 50 people who give on average less than R100 per month, 94 who give on average between R100 and R1 000 per month and only 16 who give on average more than R1 000 per month.

The sad reality is that our pledge giving does not do us credit as a Cathedral. There are too many who give either nothing or very little, and we are over-reliant on a few who give very generously. In fact, if we were to lose just our top two givers we would be in serious financial crises with a loss of approximately 20% of our pledged income!

The balance of income is made up of plate collection, fund raising and special donations.

It is vitally imperative that we get everyone onto the pledge system, and that people give responsibly – aiming for the biblical imperative of 10% of income.

2. Improving our built environment infrastructure. This will be a slow process as we must also focus on ministry and not only infrastructure. However, we must be wise in our use of for example telephones and water and electricity. I would love to see us convert to more efficient electricity and water usage. We began to raise funds toward two heat pumps last year but currently we have not even half the amount required for one heat pump. I ask that we re-visit this appeal and set ourselves the goal of installing at least one heat-pump this year and the second by next year at the latest. I can report that Council approved the renovation of our kitchen. This will see it upgraded to not only new counter tops but also to a more modern and efficient design.
3. The development of wards or clusters within the Cathedral area is important and will assist us with improved communication and dissemination of letters and brochures.
4. We must increase the number of Home Groups operating in the Cathedral. Real Christian growth only occurs when we meet in small groups on a weekly basis for Bible Study.
5. We are exploring the possibility of beginning new services during the week in order to meet the needs of people working in town. A lunch-time service is one such possibility.

### **Long-Term Development Needs**

Areas for long term development include;

1. Church Planting. Polokwane and surrounds is growing, the numbers attending this church are growing, and the very essence of the mission of God is that we must look to reach those who are not yet part of the church and cater for their needs.
2. Development of our church plant for gardening and training. Africa is so very rich in resources but so many of our people are poor and malnourished. As the Church we must play a critical role in educating our people for development and in supplying their basic needs for food.

The Diocese is currently exploring how best to achieve this and the Bishop has asked Revd Pat Lennox and myself to make this happen. I believe that as the Cathedral and with our land we can play an important role in providing an example and training resource of what is possible. Further, we have identified a possible development plan to achieve the goal of establishing an adequate supply of food.

I would love to hear from those who would like to find out more and who could offer assistance. Our planning is at a very early stage and we have still a long road to walk.

3. Mission activity. I have always believed that Christianity is not a religion for only personal satisfaction but for public dissemination. I therefore continually look for possibilities to either bring a mission team to minister to us and for us to take a team to minister to others.
4. Leadership Development. I am passionate about developing leaders and I believe that people trained in leadership can begin to take control of their own lives and destiny. I also believe that true leadership must involve a witness for the lordship of Christ. I have been very fortunate and blessed to have been invited to attend a month long Haggai Leadership Training School in Hawaii. I depart Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February and return 29<sup>th</sup> March. It is my intention that the skills gained here must be shared with others. Upon my return I will therefore have the goal of training others using the Haggai model of leadership and evangelism.

I share these thoughts with you. Please do pray for them and seek the will of God for how you can add to these and assist in making them happen.

### **In Conclusion**

I wish to end by again thanking you all for your support of this church. Without you we would never achieve what God has planned for us. However, in similar vein, we will never achieve all that God has prepared for us unless we all do our best in supporting this church.

My prayer is for growth in your relationship with God and for God to richly bless and reward you for what you do for your church.

I conclude by again thanking Jenny for her constant support in my ministry. She completes me and encourages me to give of myself for the service of you and of God.

I remain excited and committed to the ministry potential that lies before us. I believe we have an incredible opportunity for ministry to our community. This potential can only be fully

realised if we all work together as a team, and if we hold ourselves and our elected leaders accountable, and support one another.

Thank you for allowing me to be your Dean and for your support.

May God bless and guide us all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Pretorius". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "L" and a long, sweeping underline.

Luke Pretorius

Dean, Christ Church Cathedral

Archdeacon, Kopanong Archdeaconry