



THE UNITING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

PRESBYTERIAN EDUCATIONAL FUND CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF EDUCATION

As the church prepares to celebrate the first 40 years of the PEF and the "R40 for 40 years" campaign gets into full swing, this newsletter is designed to bring you some stories which we hope will inspire you to support the special fund raising in 2012, but also continue to support the work of the PEF in years to come. Each and every article you read today will tell of lives changed as a result of the intervention of the church to assist a child or a young person to gain an education. The PCSA was helping to educate young people before the PEF was formed in 1972 and the RPCSA was doing the same before the union of the two denominations in 1999. With your help the UPCSAs, through the PEF, will continue this proud tradition, intervening in people's lives, empowering them through education, for the betterment of their own lives, their families' lives, their communities, and the entire nation. Celebrate with us the blessings recorded here.

THE PEF COMES INTO BEING

In September 1971, the General Assembly of the PCSA (Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa) took the decision to create the Presbyterian Educational Fund in thanksgiving for the 75th anniversary of the denomination which was to be celebrated in 1972.

The Board of Trustees of this new Fund met for the first time in November 1971 under the convenership of the Rev Edwin S. Pons. The Assembly of 1971 had further resolved that the Board of Trustees should assume responsibility for the administration of the Fund in September 1972.

In the meantime funds to create the PEF were brought in through the "One Great Hour of Sharing" appeal which encouraged each member in every congregation to donate an amount equal to his or her hourly income to the Fund. The Fund also received a large injection of funds from the Robert Niven Trust and the R B Hagart Trust and a bequest from Margaret Adam. Other bequests and bursary trusts have been amalgamated with the PEF since then.

The goal of the "One Great Hour of Sharing" was R 100,000.

Although the target was only reached in December, 1975, the fund had reached close to R 90,000 by September, 1972. This was a large amount of money in the early 70's, and therefore no mean feat!

In the intervening years the capital has grown and the assets invested now have a market value of approximately R4 million, thanks in part to a large bequest to the Fund from the KMC Duncan Legacy Trust within the last 10 years.

The first months of 1972 were spent hard at work setting up a Constitution for the Fund, deciding on rules, appointing a part-time administrator and communicating with Corresponding Trustees and Presbytery Clerks, as well as making allocations on

behalf of the Robert Niven Trust and the Dr Alexander Kerr Fund.

The first bona fide PEF bursaries were granted in 1973 and by the end of the year 119 students and scholars had been assisted. The total amount paid out was approximately R 6,565.00.

A wonder to any modern bank account holder is that the Std Bank agreed to make all transfers within SA free of charge, raising neither transfer costs nor commission on the transactions by which the schools and universities were paid!! Can you imagine this happening in 2012!

THE FIRST 40 YEARS

For the past 40 years young people within the Presbyterian family have enjoyed the privilege of receiving financial help toward their secondary education through the Presbyterian Educational Fund.

Having learnt to read and write and do arithmetic in primary school, on entering high school new doors have opened for greater learning. Literature, science, mathematics, geography and history have brought new opportunities of broadening the horizons into the future. Tertiary study brings more scope.

There have been many success stories of our young people having taken this generous gift and used it to their, and the families, benefit.

We give thanks to the adult membership of the Church for their foresight forty years ago in establishing such a Fund and to the people through the years who have put their hands in their pockets and made meaningful donations, enabling the Fund to assist those in need.

To God our Father we give thanks and praise for believers who have relentlessly sought to do Your

work in this corner of Your vineyard.

Mission is uppermost on the minds of Church folk and the Presbyterian Educational Fund is certainly such an avenue. People young and old take the furtherance of education to heart and get involved in the future of young people within the family.

God Bless you as leaders, take the initiative to protect the wealth of the Fund and use its growth for the benefit of the most needy and deserving.

Daphne Greig.

(Administrator for nearly half of these 40 years! Thank you, Daphne, for your dedication and service! Ed.)

A WITNESS TO RPCSA ASSISTANCE

I am Wonder Cyril Mlitwa, 7603035600083, who studied at Pholela High School between 1992 and 1994; I came to do Standard 8 and completed matric in 1994.

My mother was working for Fedics, the catering company at Pholela and wanted me to study there because of the quality of education at that time. Pholela fees were high though, and therefore in 1993 we had a problem paying the fees. She received a salary of R500 a month and school fees were about R3200. Even though she was supporting my other two sisters as well, my mother managed to pay the registration fees, but after that we had a problem.

As far as I know, the bursary was administered by the church, which had been running the school since its inception. It was a very popular boarding high school, which had had a history of producing a 100% matric pass rate for many years.

The bursary paid the balance of my fees in 1993 and after paying registration fees in 1994, the bursary again paid off the remaining school fees. I benefited a lot as I successfully completed by matric in 1994 with exemption and was admitted at Mangosuthu Technikon to study towards a Diploma in Human Resources Management. I would not have got good results at matric level if I had not studied at Pholela and I would not then have gone on to study further.

Today I have a degree in Human Resources Management and have worked for various companies as a Human Resources professional. I am currently working as Human Resources Consultant, a middle management position, at McCord Hospital. I am thankful and really appreciate from my heart what the church has done for me.

Thank you
Wonder Cyril Mlitwa

THE PEF IS REAL

When I first enrolled as a self-supporting agriculture student at the University of Fort Hare (UFH) in the early 80's, I had never heard of the PEF. The reason was that I came from the then Reformed Presbyterian Church. It was during my time at UFH that I took up membership at Alice Congregation (former PCSA) and that's when I heard about the PEF for the first time.

I applied and received financial support from the PEF for three consecutive years until I completed my studies. This intervention by the PEF not only enabled me to achieve my short term academic goals, but opened for me many other doors in life which otherwise seemed impassable.

As a PEF correspondent and member of the Church Growth Division in the Presbytery of Amatola, I take delight in promoting awareness about the PEF, and encouraging Congregations to contribute generously towards the PEF because I KNOW FIRSTHAND that the PEF IS REAL and makes a big difference in people's lives, especially those who are academically endowed but financially challenged.

I encourage everyone to pledge their love for the PEF beneficiaries by making generous contributions to this noble cause.

Zola Gebeda
St Andrew's, King Williams Town

FROM CHECK-OUT CLERK TO CAREER WOMAN

My name is Mmakobo Mosotho and I am a member of the GaRankuwa congregation of the UPCSA.

Currently I am an elder and a member of Session. I am also serving as a commissioner to the Tshwane Presbytery.

I belong to the UPWF where I serve as a coordinator for Social Justice at Presbytery level.

I am the convenor of the Early Childhood Development Committee of the General Assembly and a trustee on the board of Sedibeng House, our home for students for the ministry, in Menlo Park.

Presently I am employed as an Inclusive Education Coordinator and Early Childhood Development Facilitator with the Gauteng Department of Education.

My life was changed when I received a PEF bursary to do a University Diploma in Education with UNIBO which I completed in 1990.

My highest qualification now is Hons BEd.

I express my sincere gratitude to the church for affording me this life time opportunity. Reflecting back on my life, I see God's Grace and kindness in the gateway.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Mmakobo Mosotho

(Wow, Mmakoba, how do you fit everything in? In conversation with Mmakoba, we learnt that she was working as a check-out clerk because there was

no money available for study after finishing school. She then decided that she was not going to be a check-out clerk for the rest of her life and applied to both the university and to the PEF for a bursary. She had decided that somehow she was going to continue her education, and had saved as much as she could for her first year. She was so unsure of the outcome though, that she did not even tell her parents she was going for an interview at the university. She just took the day off work thinking that she would tell them only if she was successful! She was, of course, and we salute her and all she has achieved, thanking God for this amazing woman who serves Him so well. As she says though, she would not have been able to complete her course without the assistance of the PEF at the start of her journey. and without that she would not be where she is today! Ed.)

GIYANI MATAMPI'S STORY:

I applied for a PEF bursary to complete my high school education in a rural village in Limpopo. At the time I was a member at St Patrick's Presbyterian Church in Diepkloof and the Rev Mbuyisa, who was the minister of the congregation, was very helpful in securing the bursary for me. During that period my father was employed as an in-store security guard at a clothes shop that was known as B.Kruger in downtown Johannesburg. My mother was working three days a week as a domestic worker in the Northern suburbs of Johannesburg. This was at the height of the political unrest in the country and attending school in Soweto was an adventure as we had the SADF personnel with their machine guns present in the school yard for the better part of the school day.

I had a wish to experience and enjoy high school life without the violence and the possibility of not making it to matric. I had to repeat my standard 6 in 1986 because that year some schools in the black townships did not write end of year examinations. I had friends who would leave home for school in the morning and not return home after school hours as a result of being arrested by the security police or being victims of the rampaging violence. My yearning for a good education was dampened by the financial situation at home as I could not see the possibility of going to a boarding school like children who came from financially sound families.

However, being at Church on that particular Sunday, when the Session clerk in our congregation made the announcement that bursary forms were available and those who wanted to apply must see the minister after the service, was the realization of a dream to go to a boarding school. Subsequent to consulting with the minister and my parents, I was ready to apply for a place as a learner at various boarding schools but this was subject to the PEF granting the bursary. A few weeks later, I received a letter from Phiri-Kolobe High school, renowned for producing good matric results year after year, that my application was successful and only my end of year examination results must be good enough to cement my place at the school. The letter was accompanied by a schedule of fees payable to the school per annum and some other important information. I was excited at the news but eagerly

awaited the outcome of the bursary application.

I took the letter to the Rev Mbuyisa who promised to follow up with the PEF. After a while, I was called to the manse because the minister wanted to see me. You see, at our congregation, especially the youth, we spent a whole lot of time at church even during the week because it is where we had friends and considered it a safe place from the volatile political situation around us. So, I knew it must be about the bursary application outcome because you would only be summoned to the minister's office if the minister had something important to say to you. When I met the minister, he told me that I had been granted the bursary and explained a whole lot of things which I heard only half because I could not wait to get home to share the news with my family.

The granting of the bursary motivated me to work harder and my final year examination results were better than the new school required. I started at the new school in 1990 in standard 9 and I passed! The matric year was also an experience I will never forget in my life and I passed my matric with a university exemption. During my two year stay at the boarding school never once was there a query with my fees not being paid on time. I am grateful to PEF for my education and for partially funding the registration fees for my enrolment at a tertiary institution.

Today I hold a degree completed through UNISA and a post graduate diploma. I am employed at a leading finance house in the country and God blessed me with a wonderful wife and children. I thank the Presbyterian church for this gift which has influenced my life in a positive and rewarding way. I also find it interesting that after 20 years of the contribution PEF made in my life, it is still helping others like me who dream of receiving a good education. I would then urge anyone who reads this article to contribute as much as possible towards this fund as it will change some child's destiny in the same way as it has changed mine.

God Bless You

Giyani Matampi

(Elder at St Mark's Presbyterian Church, Yeoville)

(Giyani is a commissioner to the Presbytery of eGoli, leads the Men for the Master group at St Mark's, and also the Stewardship committee. Ed.)

RETURN ON A PCSA PRE-PEF INVESTMENT

Some time back in the depression years of the 1930s, one Gerald Reginald Jooste and his brother were welcomed into the Presbyterian orphanage in Queenstown. Being from a poor DRC background was no issue and in spite of his language challenges, he was soon involved in the life of the Presbyterian church and the orphanage. The then PCSA educated Gerald who after returning from active service in the Second World War was married to Joyce Kate Bennetto (Anglican) in St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Germiston.

Together they served the community of Germiston in establishing homes for disadvantaged children, boy scouts, first brownies and girl guide companies in the "black" townships and served on all the PTAs and governing bodies of the local schools. Joyce

worked as a school secretary for 20 years with no pension etc., but did it for the love of children. Both served St Andrew's in various capacities and ensured that their three children attended church regularly and were involved in the life of the church.

Today I am proud as one of those offspring to say that three generations now serve the wider work of the UPCSA from Sunday school teachers to eldership and Presbytery commissioners and myself as CFO of the Central Office.

The investment in the life of my dad has born fantastic dividends if measured in financial terms but the investment in God's church was even greater. We all love the Lord as a result of our earthly father's example, ably assisted but his lifelong partner our mother, and hopefully our grandchildren who follow us will progress from Sunday school to being valued servants in God's vineyard and in particular the UPCSA too. The whole Jooste family says A VERY BIG THANK YOU to the church for investing in our father and grandfather, not knowing that it would be the foundation of a wonderful loving family brought up in the guidance and care of this denomination. The return on your investment has been wonderful indeed!

Geoff Jooste
(Elder at St Andrew's, Germiston, Chief Financial Officer of the UPCSA)

A PRAYER IN CELEBRATION OF THE 40 YEARS OF THE PEF

Eternal God,
we thank you for inspiring your people 40 years ago to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa by establishing a fund to help provide schooling for the children of poor people.
We rejoice in the creation of the Presbyterian Educational Fund then and remember with gratitude the men and women who contributed to its founding.

We thank you
for those who throughout the years have given of their resources to maintain it;
for those who have served it as Trustees and as administrators;
for those who have benefited from it by gaining an education they would otherwise not have had,
and for those who have used their education to good effect
for their own benefit and for the blessing of others.

Grant that in these days
your Church may continue to be concerned for the needs of the poor.
Put it into the hearts of your people who have enough of this world's good to be generous in every way with what they have and ever to seek ways and means to bring blessing into the lives of others.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN.

(Contributed by the Rev Bob Samson,
Minister Emeritus in the UPCSA)

Banking Details of the PEF:

Name of account: UPCSA - Presbyterian Educational Fund

Bank: Standard Bank

Branch Code: 000355 (Parktown)

Account Number: 20 085 175 6

Reference: Name of Presbytery **or** Congregation & suburb / town / city

e.g. Amatola **or** St Andrew's, Cape Town

OR Name of Church Association / business / individual donor

e.g. St Peter's, Duduza, Women's Fellowship / Peter's Printers / Paul Smith

-----**PLEASE DO NOT MAIL** cheques to the PEF.

There is too much cheque fraud and cheques are intercepted in the post.

For more information about the workings of the PEF see the separate PEF brochure

Empowerment Through Education