



THE UNITING
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
IN SOUTHERN
AFRICA

31st May 2018

Let's Journey Together (LJT) (2/2018)

TO ALL IN THE UPCSA

Dear Presbyterians,

“The Lord appeared to us in the past, saying: ‘I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness. I will build you up again, and you, Virgin Israel, will be rebuilt’.” (Jeremiah 31: 3-4 NIV)

It is today one (1) month and one (1) week before the General Assembly of the UPCSA meets on 7 to 13 July 2018. It is expected that, approximately, 200 people (commissioners from the 19 Presbyteries and ecumenical partners) will gather at the eMseni Centre, within the Highveld Presbytery to discern the will of God for the UPCSA for the period July 2018 to July 2020 and beyond.

The Local Organising Committee of the Presbytery of Highveld and the Assembly Business Committee have been hard at work to ensure that the logistics are in place. They have done their part well. The Clerk has been in constant communication with all the Presbyteries, while the LOC has been in touch with the commissioners. It is expected that the Commissioners will do their part effectively and efficiently, so that their convenience is guaranteed during the seven days in the Highveld.

The Presbyteries are, once again, encouraged to orientate the commissioners about the operations of the General Assembly, as no such orientation will be done at the General Assembly. The commissioners will, thus, hit the ground running, as the Assembly will immerse in business, with the consideration that all do follow the rules. Further to orientation, the Presbyteries are requested to for and with the commissioners, as a way of commissioning them as they attend the General Assembly.

The General Assembly will see the handing and taking over between the outgoing Moderator, the Rt Rev Dr Robert Munthali and the incoming Moderator, the Rev Dr Peter Langerman. This will take place during the Constitution Service that will be held at St Andrew's Presbyterian, Benoni on Saturday 7 July at 16:00. The General Assembly will also elect the Moderator Designate who will take over from the Rev Dr Langerman in July 2010.

The General Assembly will listen to, discuss and make decisions based on the reports from the eighteen (18) Committees of the General Assembly and from the commissions that were assigned certain tasks between the last Executive Commission and the coming General Assembly. New Committees will be nominated to take the work of the General Assembly forward until the 2020 General Assembly.

This communique serves as a call to all in the UPCSA to devote the month of June and the first two weeks in July (up to 13 July 2018) to pray for the General Assembly to be Spirit filled and guided. We should pray that the UPCSA emerges, during and after the Assembly, as a reconciled community of Christians.

In addition to that, it is requested that we should all pray for the following:

- a. Thanksgiving prayer to God for the services rendered by the outgoing Moderator and the sacrifices made by his family and the Gooldville Congregation.

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PBO 18/11/13/1612
Moderator: Rt Rev Dr R Munthali PhD
General Secretary: The Rev L Mpetsheni PGDSS MTh
Clerk of Assembly: The Rev WV Mkhungo DipTh
General Treasurer: Mr R Johnson MCom (UP) MIRMSA

- b. Intercessory prayer for the incoming Moderator, the ABC Convener and the Clerk of Assembly, as they will be guiding the business of the General Assembly.
- c. Prayer for the incoming Moderator's family and Durbanville Congregation.
- d. Prayer for guidance and wisdom as the Assembly will elect the Moderator Designate and the Convener of the Assembly Appeals Review Panel (AARP)/Court of Assembly, and for the new General Assembly Committees and Conveners.
- e. Prayer for all the commissioners to discern God's will and approach the issues with prudence.
- f. Prayer for the Presbytery of Highveld, the host.

The General Assembly will, among others, mark the four decades of women in the ordained ministry in our denomination. In the afternoon, the women in the ordained ministry and all the women commissioners at the General Assembly will have a consultation where they will be joined by the guest of the Moderator, the Rev Charity Majiza. This will take place on Wednesday 11 July between 14:00 and 17:00. A formal function will be held at 17:00 where the Rev Majiza will be the guest speaker. This will be done to give God glory, as what seemed to be impossible has worked. It will be time to encourage women to be strong as leaders in the UPCSA and to address the stubborn issue of patriarchy in the UPCSA and our societies, in general.

The Moderator will receive, as his guests, the representatives of the Uniting Presbyterian Students Society (UPRESS) who will be there for the duration of the General Assembly. The UPRESS is a formation and an initiative of the Presbyterian students at the universities. The Presbyteries and congregations are encouraged to support this ministry.

The UPCSA will receive ecumenical delegates from various partner churches and ecumenical bodies that we are members of. They will present their greetings and address the General Assembly on Wednesday 11 July between 11:00 and 13:00.

The General Assembly will hold a Valedictory Service on Thursday 12 July at 16:00 for our senior ministers who will be going on retirement between the 2018 General Assembly and the 2019 Executive Commission. This is always a touching service, when one considers the contributions and the sacrifices made by those servants in the work of the UPCSA and the reign of God. Let us please pray for the retiring ministers, their spouses and their families.

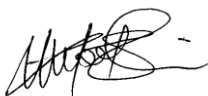
On the last day of the Assembly, on Friday the 13th July 2018, the closing service will be held at Gateway Presbyterian in Glen Marais, Kempton Park, at 10:00. As part of the service, the Moderator will dedicate the new Tiyo Soga House (the Central Office of the UPCSA). The Central Office will move to this new site around August/September 2018.

The UPCSA congregations in the Gauteng Presbyteries are encouraged to attend the Sunday Service that will be held at the main hall of Benoni High School on 8 July 2018 at 09:00 and to witness the dedication of the new Central Office on Friday the 13th July 2018. We always aspire to see the UPCSA coming, living and working together as a community. We acknowledge that, due to our weaknesses and imperfections, we have not pursued this ideal with zeal and diligence.

God has called the UPCSA to exercise a prophetic witness to Christ. We pray that God who has loved us with an everlasting love and has drawn us with unfailing kindness will build us up again, and that we will be rebuilt. We, therefore, declare June and the first week of July as a period of prayer for the UPCSA General Assembly that will be held at eMseni Centre on 7 to 13 July 2018.

Let's Journey Together "To be a reconciled community of Christians exercising a prophetic witness to Christ".

Yours in Christ.



Lungile Mpetsheni
GENERAL SECRETARY

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