

# United Congregational Church of Southern Africa Newsletter

Pre-Assembly edition (September 2011)

150 Caroline Street, Brixton, Johannesburg, 2092 / P.O. Box 96014, Brixton, 2019  
[www.uccsa.co.za](http://www.uccsa.co.za) Tel: (011) 837 9997 Fax: (011) 837 2570

## Nominees for UCCSA President Elect

Two nominations have been received for the Office of UCCSA President – Elect. The nominees are Rev. Phillip Strydom residing in the Namibia Synod and Rev. Sikhalo Cele residing in the Zimbabwe Synod



### Rev. Philip Ancoat Strydom

Rev. Strydom was born on the 8<sup>th</sup> September 1952 in Oudtshoorn, Western Cape, where he grew up and completed his schooling at Mörester High School in 1971.

He is married to Nola Strydom (born Kyster) and they have 5 sons.

Phillip did his ministerial training at the Federal Theological Seminary where he obtained a Dipl.Th in 1976. During 1977-1978 he obtained a Clinical Pastoral Education Certificate (CPE). He also did a programme in 1984 at Northern College, Manchester, United Kingdom. This consisted of non-certified courses on Christian Education, Worship, Evangelism, Church History, International Affairs with special reference to conflict in Ireland.

Phillip taught as a Primary School Teacher during 1972. He was ordained as minister of religion in 1979.

Phillip started his ministry as pastor of Woodlands Congregational Church, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa 1979 – 1986. He then accepted a call to Rehoboth Congregational Church, Namibia 1986 – 2005. He was appointed as General Secretary, Council of Churches in Namibia 2005 – 2008. Currently he serves Swakopmund Congregational Church, Namibia

Phillip has served the UCCSA and the Namibia Synod in different capacities. He is the current Chairperson of the Namibia Synod.



### Rev Sikhalo Cele.

Rev. Cele was born on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 1970 in the Kezi area in Matopo District of Zimbabwe, where he grew up and later attended Cyrene High School.

He was a teacher and a policeman before he answered the call to the Ministry.

He is married to Thandekile Ndebele and they have two daughters.

Rev Cele did his theological education at United Theological College, near Harare and graduated with a Diploma in Theology and Diploma in Religious Studies in 2002.

He did his internship at the Zinyangeni Local Church in 2003 and 2004. He was ordained at the Eastlea Congregational Church in Harare in 2005, where he is serving as a fulltime minister.

He holds a BA Honours (2007) and an MA degree in Religious Studies from the University of Zimbabwe in 2009.

Rev Cele has served as Chairman of the Zimbabwe Synod and is a member of the Social Justice Team.

He is involved in several ecumenical and national initiatives for the cause of justice, peace building and conflict resolution.

### Contact persons in Mozambique are:

Lotes Mazive +258 820 040 480 [lotes14@yahoo.com](mailto:lotes14@yahoo.com)  
Martins Rafael +258 825 214 876 [ningoyango@yahoo.com](mailto:ningoyango@yahoo.com)  
Calisto Suaze +258 826 980 460



## 36<sup>th</sup> Assembly Notices for Delegates

We are left with just days before we gather at the Escola do Partido, Matola –Mozambique for the 36<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa. Here are some more points to take note of as you prepare for this wonderful gathering in the life of our Church:

Address to be given at Border Post: **Escola do Partido, Matola –Mozambique or Rua IAMP, Bairro Hanham, Matola**

### Assembly Banners

Regions and Synods are encouraged to bring along their banners which we can display in the Assembly Hall, and also at the march that is scheduled for the Sunday, prior to the Rally.

### Assembly Entertainment

There will be a concert hosted by the Mozambique Synod on Saturday evening. Delegates are encouraged to consider making a presentation at the concert. It could be a song, poem, a short drama piece, dance, story or anything else.

### Assembly Offertory

The Offertory at the Assembly services is used for the Widows' Pension Fund and for assisting with Theological education. Please remember to bring money in order to contribute to these acts of worship.

### Assembly Worship

There will be four formal services to attend during the Assembly. These will be the opening service, worship in the local churches, Assembly Rally, and the Closing service. Ministers are encouraged to bring along their clerical attire as they would be expected to provide *diakonal* service at the various acts of worship.

### UCCSA Items on Sale

The UCCSA publications department will offer for sale to delegates, Hymn books, UCCSA Constitution, Tee Shirts, Clerical shirts, communion trays, and lots of Memorabilia at the Assembly. Order forms will also be on hand for delegates to place orders on behalf of their local churches.

### Participate as a Musician

Do you own and play any portable music instrument. If so, you are encouraged to bring along your instruments in order to enhance the worship life of the Assembly. These could include tambourines, cushions, guitars and flutes.

If you play the piano or organ please inform us on arrival.

### Do You have A Story that you can tell and share with others?

There will be an opportunity, outside the mainstream programme, for people to share remarkable mission experiences. If you have a story to tell, either about yourself, church, region, or synod, an opportunity will be given to you for the story to be captured on camera for wider circulation. If you have photos and other artifacts to share these would be greatly appreciated.

### Assembly Exhibition Stalls.

An important feature of the Assembly will be the exhibition area. This will provide space for you to share your ministry/mission programmes and activities. Please come prepared to exhibit books, magazines, pamphlets, photographs and artifacts. This is a opportunity to celebrate your achievements with the rest of the UCCSA family.

### Celebrate Your Gifts and Talents by sharingit with others.

Please remember the Assembly Theme; **Christ is Calling us; participating in suffering and struggle.** You are encouraged to compose songs, poetry, prayers and Bible Studies around the theme. These would be acknowledged and used widely as we engage with this theme.



## Youth reflecting on their Scotland Mission experience

### Reflections on the Scotland Mission trip



For me, the 3 weeks in Scotland has been a blessing as I was on yet another journey of discovery, a time to discover how I can be engaged in Gods Mission. I had the time to explore the exciting and enriching experiences that was planned for us in different placements like singing at a cross-road while it was raining ,street evangelism, testimony and sharing. The good thing was to begin the journey with an open mind, heart and spirit and in turn that made me give my best to the team and all the people that I met meeting, leaving behind a positive impact and getting the best in return. Our life in Christ can be the greatest story we can ever share -my experiences, faith and vision was an asset to the mission week as I became open to learn more in a wider setting.

I would gladly say that the God we serve doesn't want us to just barely get by in life. He wants us to thrive and experience the fullness of his blessing. The message on obedience was close to my heart the 3 weeks in Scotland and I chose to summarize my experience in points.

- ✚ Aligning myself with Gods will and surrendering to it.
- ✚ To be where God wants me to be-When you is where God is environmental condition doesn't matter.
- ✚ To be where God wants me to be at a particular time.
- ✚ To be where God wants me to be regardless of circumstances

I was not there to receive praises, but to just simply express love for God. If I'm not doing that in my work then I'm really not working for God, but rather for myself. So I was motivated to press on, not looking at what I'm doing as a sacrifice, but as a token of love to my Father in heaven. Besides, no sacrifice is too great that it could eclipse what Jesus accomplished when He gave His life for me. That I must remember always; to remember what He did for me. It has been both exciting and challenging but I am certain that I took the best of everything offered to equip myself and others for a successful mission wherever I maybe. I pray that God may continue to bless us as we surrender ourselves to be in Gods Mission. **(Wellington Mthobisi Sibanda)**



Wow what an EXPERIENCE!!! This has been one mission that I will never ever forget.

Starting off in Windhoek preparing myself, I realised that I was not sure what to expect. I had doubts about what we were going to do and how we were going to be received. Everything changed once I met the team that we were going to work with.

We started off the first weekend getting to know each other and we were taught a few dramas and we sang a few songs not knowing we will be singing them every single day for the next three weeks!

Going out into the different towns and meeting new people, everything thing was so exciting and I enjoyed it so much being in Scotland. Than reality struck! I could not believe all the restrictions and procedures that had to be followed and adhered to. Everything seemed so difficult, at times I was so frustrated and did not know how to handle it. As time went by and the weeks progressed I started to experience more and more of Scotland and I could appreciate why all of these things have happened and why we had to come here.

I praise the Lord for taking me out of my comfort zone and allowing me to experience all of these things and places. I know that He will make a way in all situations and circumstances.

I praise Him and thank Him for Laura and Gordon, may He bless them abundantly, Amen **(Greyling Koopman – Namibia)**



## Give us this day our daily bread



by Rev. Majaha Nthliziyo.

*Give us today our daily bread (Matthew 6:11)*

*Give us each day our daily bread (Luke 11:3 NIV)*

This part of the Lord's Prayer could be translated to read: Give us today, our bread for the morrow! This somewhat refers to the assurance that God's providence encompasses the present as well as the future. It is also significant that the first petition in the Lord's Prayer is the one about bread. "Bread" has various shades of meaning and refers essentially to a means of one's basic sustenance.

It talks of the essential and not the luxury which is usually at the expense of others. Bread or whatever appropriate means of sustenance, is the minimum that the people of God and all that lives needs.

WHAT ABOUT OUR DAILY BREAD TODAY?

Our daily bread concerns the very basic human right and that of any living creature. Life must be sustained otherwise it cannot last. People have to work in order to have food for their families. It starts with the farmer as he/she works on the land to produce food. The process of food production has always been covered with many pitfalls. And these include access to land for farming, water (or the availability of rainfall), farming inputs, harvesting, market forces, costing and sales, storage and grain reserves of both grain and seed, etc. These can be seen as the hazards that people have to negotiate in a very hostile socio-economic and political environment. The 'hazards' in the line of production of bread tend to affect the poorest of every nation. Bread has become a monopoly of the rich and powerful. They make laws so subtle that one cannot see the exclusion tendencies of the same laws.

We can play some part in answering somebody's prayer for bread today. We can team-up with friends or church/community groups to determine what can be done in our neighbourhood. But all the courses of action must be couched on the justice ethos. The God-given dignity of people must be maintained in all cases.

PRAYER-THOUGHT:

Lord, Give us this day our daily bread, Also give us the means of production that will lead to a sustainable future. Lord, let it be that, no one may be threatened by hunger, malnutrition or scarcity; Give bread to those who have none, and hunger for justice to those who have bread.

Teach us what is enough for today, and to share with those who have less than enough; We pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.