

UCCSA 34th Assembly



Daily Assembly Digest – Monday 24th

40th
ANNIVERSARY
OF
SERVICE
AND
WITNESS

The weekend in pictures....and some words

On Saturday morning, meetings were held for the Youth, the Men, the Women's organizations and the members of the UCCSA South African Pension Fund.

After they had ended, led by the band of the Boys Brigade, delegates marched from Bridgton School, through the centre of the town to the Sports Centre.

The purpose of the march was to remind the church of our solidarity with our people who are suffering great hardship and persecution during the current situation in Zimbabwe.

On arrival at the sportsfield, members of Assembly and visitors from local congregations were treated to a full programme of events and addresses.

Among the fraternal delegates who were received and invited to address the gathering were: Rev Sandra Gourdet, Africa Secretary of the Board of Global Ministries of our sister churches in the United States; and Rev Alasdair Rodger General Secretary of the South African Church Unity Commission.

There were several displays of gymnastics and dancing by young people. After lunch, served African, South African, Indian and Chinese style, plaques were presented to the past Chairpersons and Presidents who were present.



On Saturday, delegates went on a "Solidarity for our Zimbabwe People" march.

Words of wisdom on Saturday

"Christianity is not a hobby—it involves a lot of hard work."

Rev Grant Peers, during Saturday morning devotions.

"I've never heard of anyone who gets to retirement who says: 'I've got too much money. 'You are never too young to start saving for your retirement.'"

Mr Paul Spencer, consulting Actuary to the Pension Fund.

"I have always counted it as a privilege to serve the church. My prayer is that we may all continue to serve with humility as our ancestors, living and dead as God allows."

Mr Allan Wentzel, former Chairman of the UCCSA, and Chairman of the Christian Development Trust.



Some of the ministers ordained since the last Assembly

President delivered powerful message

During the Opening Act of Worship, Rev Simon Zazaza challenged delegates to "hear the voice of the Lord."

Preaching from Genesis chapter 3, he said: "The power of the Lord is amazing, it has no limits, and does not have a timetable.

"There are many voices today — in taxis, on trains and on television. There are also churches which preach the gospel of prosperity. But we have to hear the voice of the God of the Bible who is calling us to servant ministry today.

"We need to change our mindset to see opportunities."

God wants to do a new thing

On Sunday, Assembly delegates worshipped in various local churches, some near, others a distance away. **DAD** does not have the space to report on all the services, but speaking to delegates, we can report that the preaching was of the highest standard, and most seemed to focus on the Assembly theme: ***“In Christ there is a future”***

Delegates who travelled to the Great Brak Church arrived half way through the service, due to the fact that their bus had to detour to take worshippers to Pacaltsdorp Church.

In her address, Rev Anneli Brandt of Namibia said:



“God wil ‘n nuwe ding doen. Nie later, nie more, maar nou. Vir dit om te gebeur, moet ons alles van die verlede wat seermaak los.”

In his sermon at the Bongalethu Church in Oudtshoorn, Rev Peter Briggs used the story of Jacob’s vision. “The God who is with us is the Christ in whom there is a future,” he said.

Pension Fund is healthy, but payment problems persist

The Principal Officer of the South African UCCSA Pension Fund, Mr Brian Mullin, addressed the Business Session of the Assembly on Monday morning.

He was able to report that the Pension Fund is in a sound financial state. Following the latest actuarial valuation, it now has assets of over R35 million.

As a result of the good performance on the fund’s investments during the last year, it has been possible to increase the amount paid to pensioners by 15% - more than twice the rate of inflation in South Africa. Distribution of the surplus to those still contributing to the fund was fixed at 26%, a record.

Mr Mullin stressed the important need for churches to pay their ministers’ pension contribution **in full, on time, and with relevant information.**

Failure of churches to do this meant that they would be robbing their ministers in their old age.

With his own retirement as Principal Officer due to take place at the end of 2008, and the need to comply fully with statutory requirements, Mr Mullin proposed, and the Assembly agreed the following resolution:

That the UCCSA passes the administration of its Pension Fund to an Umbrella Fund with effect from 1 January 2009;

That a training programme for employers be implemented in 2008; and

That the task of selection of the new fund be delegated to the Trustees, the Actuary and the Executive.

It was stressed that, whether or not these changes were made, local churches would still need to take payment of pension contributions seriously in order to honour their covenants with ministers.



Mar Allan Wentzel and other past Chairmen

Two nominated for the office of President

At the closing service of this Assembly, the outgoing President, Rev Simon Zazaza, will induct Mr Andre September as the new President. He will serve for two years, until the next Assembly in 2009.

Two long-serving ministers of the UCCSA have been nominated to succeed him at the end of that Assembly.

They are Rev Malebogo Mothibi of the Botswana Synod and Rev Hendrik Pillay of the South African Synod.

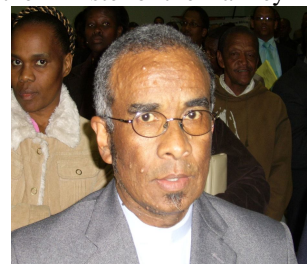


Rev Mothibi has served several local churches in Botswana. She has also represented the denomination on ecumenical committees in Botswana, and within CWM structures in Africa. She is an Aids activists, and is currently a lecturer and the Registrar

of the Kgologano Theological education by Extension College of Botswana.

Rev Hendrik Pillay has been the minister of the Hankey Congregational Church in the Algoa Region of the South African Synod. He has been an active member of the denominational Mission Council.

He has also served a term as the Chairperson of the South African Synod.



Biblical reflection led by former Moderator of the DRC

Immediately after morning worship each day this week, Ds Coenie Burger of the Dutch Reformed Church will be leading the Assembly in biblical reflection on the current theme.

He is on the faculty of the University of Stellenbosch in the Peninsula Region of South Africa, where he directs the Bureau for Continuing Theological Educational and Research. Dr Prince Dibeela introduced him as a committed ecumenist. In his opening addresses, Dr Burger noted the need to enter closer dialogue with Pentecostal churches.

In Christ, there is a future