

United Congregational Church of Southern Africa NEWSLETTER: SEPTEMBER 2013

THE UCCSA LEADERSHIP ACADEMY



Rev Majaha Nhliziyo
Director of the Leadership Academy

In the July and August 2013 Newsletter we began a series of lead articles to emphasize the four objectives of the UCCSA's current Mission Programme: **1. Enabling Local Churches to be more faithful in their participation in the mission of God;** **2. Increasing Commitment to solidarity, prophetic witness and justice;** **3. Training, development and conscientization of the church for God's mission;** and **4. Deepening life affirming relationships, identity and accountability.** This is the third article in the series related to Objective 3.

Establishment of the Leadership Academy

The Leadership Academy is the training and leadership arm of the UCCSA. The Academy was set up in the terms of the UCCSA Vision Plan following the resolution of the 33rd Assembly in 2005. The UCCSA Vision Plan recognised the pivotal role of leadership for the successful transformation of the church. The main task of the Academy is to serve as an instrument through which the whole people of God will be equipped for leadership in mission, witness and service. Ministry takes place in the communities wherever people, young and old, women and men, live and work. People need to be equipped for such service as "ministers" in the work outside the church. This is the challenge and responsibility of the Leadership Academy.

Principles of the Leadership Academy

❖ **MISSION ORIENTATION** – Mission is arguably the *raison d'être* of the UCCSA and it would come naturally therefore as the primary principle of the Leadership Academy. A mission orientation is at the core of the Academy's programmes because the church exists for the *Missio-Dei* Mission of God: "But you must stay in Jerusalem until you have received power and be my witnesses in Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth". Acts 1:8 (NRSV).

❖ **RE-READING THE BIBLE IN THE LIGHT OF OUR CONTEXT AND EXPERIENCE** – The Bible as the word of God serves as our spiritual and mission compass in everything that we do. (2 Timothy 3:16). However, some texts have been understood in abstract and "over-spiritualised" in ways that fail to address the concrete needs of the people. The Academy encourages re-reading of the Scriptures to enable the church community to discern God's message for today.

❖ **LIFE-LONG LEARNING** – A learning church opens itself to growth, development and vibrant witness in its Missional engagement. Through life-long learning we are made aware of the dynamism of the word of God. Our capacity to understand God is ever so small in comparison with the greatness of the grace of God. As discipleship in the body of Christ is a life-long one, UCCSA through the Academy seeks to encourage life-long learning as an important part of discipleship in the church.

❖ **JUSTICE ETHOS** – We live in a world that is so-starved of justice that it would be scandalous for the church to be oblivious of this deficiency. An essential part of our Missional calling is to make the preaching and teaching of justice our primary concern. Therefore, the Leadership Academy has to inculcate the justice ethos as a cardinal concern that must be sensed throughout all of its programmes and actions.



Programmes & Courses

The Programmes offered at the Leadership Academy include:

- ∞ **Preacher's Course**
- ∞ **Leadership Course**
- ∞ **Conflict Resolution through Mediation**
- ∞ **Public Witness, Music & Sign Language Seminars**
- ∞ **Clergy continuing Learning**
- ∞ **Church Administration**

Administration of the Leadership Academy

Rev Majaha Nhliziyo is the Director of the UCCSA Leadership Academy. Rev Majaha studied theology and religious studies at the United Theological Seminary, University of Zimbabwe and Andover Newton Seminary in the USA. He has over twenty years' experience in the ministry mainly in the areas of training and teaching. The Leadership Academy reports to the UCCSA Executive Committee. The Academy's administrative base is at the UCCSA Central Office, Joseph Wing Centre, in Brixton, Johannesburg.

For further details about the Leadership Academy and any of the programmes and courses, contact:

The Director, UCCSA Leadership Academy, P. O. Box 96014, Brixton, 2019, South Africa. Tel. + 27 (0) 11 837 9997. Fax: +27(0) 11 837 2570. Email: Majaha@uccsa.co.za. Website: www.uccsa.org.za



WOMEN @ THE WELL

Women@theWell is a gathering of women in ordination of the UCCSA- including Students, Interns, Ordained and Retired Women Ministers as recognised by the Assembly Training for Ministry Committee. *Women@theWell* came together for the first time in 2006, in Botswana. Since then *Women at the Well* has gathered at biannual meetings of 30-35 women in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa.

The Women have collectively named themselves *Women at the Well* because the Well is very important in their lives. Whenever they gather at the well it is to replenish their spirits for ministry. The Well is a place where they are able to meet and share stories – the stories of the challenges and the stories of celebrations. The older women in the ministry are able to give advice to the younger ones. This meeting place helps to bridge the cultural and geographical gap as *Women in Ordination*. *Women@theWell* has also formed significant partnership connections with the United Church of Christ in the USA and the United Reform Church (*Women in Ministries Network*) in the UK, through exchange visits of Women Ministers.

After several years of coming together, a new vision is emerging for *Women @the Well*. It is a vision that seeks to engage Women in Ministry beyond the bi-annual retreats. It is a vision that seeks to encourage Women in Ministry to be more effective in their roles and to make a visible contribution to the mission of the Church. *Women@theWell* desires to work towards the realisation of a UCCSA where Women Ministers serve in equitable and effective roles as other Ministers at all levels of the Church. *Women@theWell* is a unique opportunity for Women in Ministry to better understand their call to ministry and to create an environment where the Call of Women Ministers is not only recognised but also affirmed.

Women@theWell will share a presentation of their work and activities at the UCCSA 37th Assembly.

**W@TW identifying the leaders, teachers and mentors among us;
Encouraging new leaders**



UCCSA 37th ASSEMBLY – FINAL UPDATE

Get Ready! The UCCSA 37th Assembly will take place at St Joseph's Pastoral Centre, Mmabatho, Mahikeng in the North West Province, South Africa from **18th to 24th September, 2013**.

Purpose of Assembly

The biennial Assembly is a special occasion for the whole fellowship of the UCCSA family to come together in prayer, worship and celebration. The Assembly is the governing body of the Church and its highest court. The Assembly has the mandate to set the mission agenda of the denomination, elect Officers and committee leaders, and to speak with a public voice on issues of evangelism, mission and justice to and on behalf of the churches.

Assembly Theme

The Assembly theme '**Christ is Calling Us: Participating in Suffering and Struggle**' has been the focus for planning mission programme activities since the 2011 Assembly. During this Assembly the theme will also provide a focus for theological reflection, worship and meditation during this Assembly.

Host Region

The North West Region of the South Africa Synod is the host of this year's Assembly. The North West Region of the UCCSA includes eleven Local Churches. The host church for Assembly 2013 is the K. Petso Memorial Congregational Church, which is named after the late Moruti K Petso who contributed a lot in the translation of Setswana worship book called Kobamelo and other documents. The church is located in the capital city of the North West province called Mahikeng, which lies on the Botswana border. Mahikeng forms a single urban area with its neighbouring town, Mmabatho.

You will be sure to see the signs directing you to the Assembly venue as you enter Mahikeng. You can also contact the Assembly Transport Coordinator Mr. Nombewu on **082 964 6917** for directions.

If you are attending Assembly remember to bring along:

- **A Bible for Bible study and worship**
- **At least 1 or 2 non-perishable food (tin or can) for the Assembly Food Bank**
- **A Musical instrument to play and enrich worship**
- **A banner or display depicting your mission work**



Tickets for the General Secretary's Farwell for persons not attending the UCCSA Assembly (non-Assembly Delegates) are available for purchase at a cost of R350. Kindly contact the North West Region office or **call 079 956 7025** for tickets not later than **September 18** as seating is limited.



NOMINATIONS FOR UCCSA PRESIDENT-ELECT

The following persons have shown interest to stand for the position of UCCSA President-Elect at the UCCSA 37th General Assembly.



Rev Sikhalo Cele

Reverend Sikhalo Cele is a member in good standing and an ordained minister of the UCCSA. Rev Sikhalo Cele has served as Chairman of the Zimbabwe Synod. At the denominational level he has served as a member of the Social Justice Team and the Constitutional Committee. He has also chaired the UCCSA Ministerial Committee and has participated in many executive meetings within the Ecumenical family. Rev. Sikhalo Cele is the former Chairman of United Theological College, an Ecumenical college in Zimbabwe; and former Chairman of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches Personnel committee.

Rev. Sikhalo Cele is currently the Programs and Training Manager of the Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum (ECLF), a peace building initiative in Zimbabwe. He is one of the founding members of the ECLF and he has demonstrated his ability to initiate programs, execute them and strategically engage at all levels of society. Through ECLF he has made a contribution towards peace in the 2013 Zimbabwe elections. In his current work, he interacts closely with ECLF partners, among them, the United Nations Development Program which has broadened his world and world-view. Rev Cele's contribution to peace building and conflict resolution in Zimbabwe is a gift he can share with the wider UCCSA.

Rev. Sikhalo Cele holds several certificates in Peace building, Governance, Research, and Theology. He holds an Honours degree and a Master of Arts Degree from the University of Zimbabwe.

Rev Cele is an astute leader who has demonstrated his leadership qualities within the Zimbabwe Synod and in the wider Zimbabwe.



Rev Mosweu Simane

Rev Mosweu Simane is a member in good standing and an ordained minister of the UCCSA. He is currently a minister in charge of Kopong Congregational Church and a seconded minister to Botswana Council of Churches where he serves as the General Secretary since April 2010. Rev Simane holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Theology from Glasgow Bible College awarded by Open University. He is near completion of a Master's Degree in Theology with the University of Botswana.

Rev Simane has a wealth of knowledge and experience in both leadership and management positions. Over the past 20 years of his work and witness as a minister of the word and sacrament in the UCCSA, he has served the Church and the society at large in various capacities. These include: as the Chairperson of the Southern Regional Council of the UCCSA Synod of Botswana; Mission Secretary of the UCCSA Synod of Botswana; Mission Convenor of the UCCSA Denomination; UCCSA representative to the CWM Africa Region HIV & AIDS Committee; a member of the Botswana National Council on Population and Development and Rural Development Council; Synod Secretary of the UCCSA Synod of Botswana. In these leadership positions, he was responsible for the administration and ministerial functions of the Synod Office.

As Synod Secretary, he had the privilege of providing leadership and representation of the Synod at different structures of the UCCSA and different Institutional Boards such as Moeding College Board, Lephoi Centre Board, Maun Senior Secondary School Board. He has served as Deputy General Secretary of Botswana Council of Churches and is now its General Secretary.



NOMINATIONS FOR UCCSA PRESIDENT-ELECT



Rev Ian Booth

Rev Ian Booth is a member in good standing and an Ordained Minister of the UCCSA. Rev Booth was ordained in 1985 after studying at FedSem and doing two years of Internship in Port Elizabeth.

He became Treasurer of the Algoa Region soon after, and in this capacity represented Algoa on the UCCSA Executive Committee. After a few years he stood down as Treasurer and was elected Secretary, and continued to attend Executive Committee meetings. While in Algoa he also served as TMC Director for the Region.

Rev Booth moved to KwaZuluNatal (KZN) and was elected Regional Chairperson of the KZN Region, and continued attending the Executive Committee meetings of the UCCSA. He is Moderator for KZN, and Training for Ministry Committee (TMC) Director for the SA Synod. As TMC Director for the Synod, he represents the Synod on the Executive Committee of the UCCSA and the Assembly Ministerial Committee (AMC).

In 1997 he was elected President-Elect, and served as President from 1999-2001. Rev Booth was also Fellowship of Vocation (FoV) Director in KZN when the FoV first started, and then again in 2008-2010.

Rev Booth currently serves as Chairperson of the Diakonia Council of Churches, an ecumenical agency in Durban, and General Secretary/CEO of the Greater Durban YMCA, an ecumenical youth development organisation.





UCCSA 37th ASSEMBLY

September 18-24, 2013

St Joseph Pastoral Centre

Mmabatho, South Africa



Come Worship & Celebrate!



"Christ is Calling Us: Participating in Suffering and Struggle"



UCCSA JUSTICE WEEK 2013

The UCCSA Justice week is an annual event which is marked during **September 30 to October 6** each year. Justice Week is an important part of the UCCSA calendar because it encourages the whole church to bear witness to God's mission of justice and righteousness at all levels of society. Justice Week is an opportunity as a church to be in prayer and solidarity with communities beyond ourselves. Through Justice Week we show that the church is not only concerned about ecclesiastical and church matters; it highlights a concern for the well-being of all God's people and especially those who are oppressed, abused, sick, poor and downtrodden.

The first Justice Week was marked in 2010 to raise awareness of issues of global poverty and poverty in the very countries in which UCCSA has member churches. **For the 2013 Justice Week, UCCSA stands in solidarity with the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).** Justice Week 2013 is inspired by the **Global Ministries Congo Initiative** which encourages the sharing of stories, building partnerships and taking action in solidarity with the people of the Congo.

The conflict for control of minerals and other natural resources in the Congo has caused much violence in the Congo and has resulted in one of the world's deadliest conflict zones since World War II. What is even more tragic is that the Congo is a place the world has left for dead and mostly forgotten.

For a deeper understanding of the challenges and concerns of our brothers and sister in the Congo; stories of the Congo, Bible studies; special projects you can support in the Congo and ways YOU CAN TAKE ACTION please go to: www.globalministries.org/congo-initiative/.

BASIC FACTS ABOUT THE CONGO*

History & Geography

1. Congo is located in the heart of Africa straddling the equator.
2. Congo is bordered by nine other countries and is the size of Western Europe with a population of 65 million people.
3. The lingua franca is French however four major languages (Lingala, Kikongo, Tshiluba, and Swahili) are spoken in more than 250 ethnic groups.
4. Congo's Ishango Bones, a binary counting system and lunar calendar, are among the oldest mathematical artefacts in the world, dating to 20,000 BC.
5. The Kongo empire reigned during the period of African enslavement and prior to the Colonization era.
6. Congo was "given" to King Leopold II of Belgium at the 1884/85 Berlin Conference.
7. King Leopold II ruled Congo as his own personal property for 23 years (1885 – 1908) during which time approximately 10 million Congolese were slaughtered.
8. As a result of international grassroots pressure, King Leopold II had to relinquish ownership of the Congo to the Belgian state in 1908 and Belgium ruled as a colonial power until 1960.



BASIC FACTS ABOUT THE CONGO*

Politics

1. Congo obtained independence from Belgium on June 30, 1960 under the elected leadership of Prime Minister Patrice Emery Lumumba who was summarily assassinated within months by Western powers and Congolese sycophants.
2. Pursuant to Lumumba's assassination, the United States installed and backed dictator Joseph Desire Mobutu for over three decades.
3. U.S. allies, Rwanda and Uganda invaded the Congo twice (1996 & 1998) which resulted in the removal of Mobutu in 1997 and the unleashing of the deaths of nearly six million.
4. The overthrow of Mobutu resulted in the installation of Laurent Desire Kabila in 1997, who was assassinated in 2001 and followed by his son Joseph Kabila who following the 2006 and 2011 elections is the current President.

The Tragedy

1. It is estimated that nearly six million people have died as a result of conflict and conflict related causes in the Congo since 1996. Forty-five thousand continue to die each month.
2. Hundreds of thousands of women have been raped as weapon of war.
3. Eighty percent of the population lives on 30 cents or less per day.
4. The international community is systematically looting Congo's spectacular wealth.

The Potential

1. Congo's people represent its greatest potential with a population of over 65 million, half under the age of 18.
2. Congo is a storehouse of strategic minerals (cobalt, copper, zinc, gold, diamond, silver, magnesium, germanium, uranium, coltan, petroleum and many other resources).
3. Congo possesses 64 percent of the world's reserve of coltan (a mineral found in cell phones and other electronic devices).
4. Congo has 34 percent of world's cobalt and 10 percent of its copper.
5. Congo is a part of the second largest rainforest in the world, which is vital in the fight against global warming and climate change.
6. Congo has the hydro capacity to provide electricity for the entire African continent, southern Europe and parts of the Middle East.
7. Congo has the agricultural capacity to feed the entire world through 2050.

*Adapted from the *Friends of the Congo Fact Sheet*. To learn more visit: www.friendsofthecongo.org.

You can also support the Raise Hope for Congo campaign. To learn more visit: <http://www.raisehopeforcongo.org>



NEWS BRIEFS

Valedictory Service for Rev DZ Sibanda held at Welkom UCCSA



L-R Rev Adam Ceasar, Rev DZ Sibanda), Rev Culture Matibisi and Rev Jerry Batshelakang

On July 28, 2013 members of UCCSA Churches in the Free State Region attended the Valedictory Service for Rev Sibanda in large numbers. Rev DZ Sibanda is the Outgoing Moderator and Minister of the Welkom Cluster Churches. Rev Sibanda will now take up the call of ministry in the North West Region and will serve at the K.Petso Memorial Congregational Church in Mahikeng in the North West Region of the UCCSA South Africa Synod.

Friends and well-wishers expressed their gratitude to Rev Sibanda and Mrs Sibanda for the service and ministry in the Free State Region. They were presented with gifts and the leadership and members in the Region offered prayers of support for Rev Sibanda's continued ministry. Rev Sibanda will be accompanied in service to the ministry at the new charge by his wife and his young children Arthur and Grace. UCCSA shares in the celebration and prayers for the continued ministry of Rev Sibanda and his family.

World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) General Secretary Rev. Dr. Setri Nyomi, calls Member Churches to pray for Syria

September 4, 2013

In a recent letter to the WCRC Church family Rev Dr Setri issued a call for prayer for the people of Syria. In his letter to member churches he said: "We have been painfully following events in Syria for more than two years now. More than a hundred thousand people have lost their lives. Communities and properties have been destroyed. To add to this miserable litany, reports of the deadly chemical weapons attacks on August 21 in which the victims included children are simply sickening. The World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) deplores any form of violence and especially the violence of these attacks and do not condone them in any way.

The WCRC is aware of the current moves towards military response to these attacks and calls for restraint. However heinous the chemical attacks are, military response is not the answer. Every effort needs to be made to increase opportunities for bringing all factions to dialogue and seek diplomatic solutions. Military response can only serve to increase the suffering of the peoples of Syria who have already suffered so much."

Rev Nyomi called for a special time of prayer on September 7 and 8 for the peoples of Syria. He concluded with a prayer for "world leaders that they may use their power to work tirelessly to find life-giving solutions that will end the crisis.



PRAY WITH US

Lord Jesus Christ,
 watch over those who are leaders in your church.
 Keep them faithful to their vocation
 and to the proclamation of your message.
 Teach them to recognise and interpret the signs of
 the times.
 Strengthen them with the gifts of the Spirit,
 and help them to serve others, especially the poor
 and the lowly.
 Give them a vivid sense of your presence in the
 world and a knowledge of how to show it to
 others.
 Amen

Remember to pray for:

- Give thanks for the work and service of Rev Dr. Moiraele Prince Dibeela who completes 8 years of service as the 5th General Secretary to the UCCSA.
- Pray for the people of Syria for protection from violence and an end to the crisis.
- Pray for the work and programmes of the UCCSA Leadership Academy.
- Pray for the witness and business of the UCCSA 37th Assembly in Mahikeng and for the safe journey of all Assembly Delegates, Visitors, Staff and participants.

If you would like to submit a prayer request for publication please write to us at **UCCSA**
P.O. Box 96014, Brixton, 2019,
Johannesburg, South Africa or send us an
 e-mail at tellus.uccsa@gmail.com.

“The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective” James 5:16.
 Prayer changes things!



Have you resolved to read and study your Bible more this year? We encourage you to search the scriptures daily. Daily devotionals, Bible reading and even a daily dose of laughter can enrich your spiritual practices and nourish your soul. Here are the Sunday Lectionary readings for June that you can use for your Bible reading in the new month.

Sunday, October 06, 2013

Readings:

- Lamentations 1:1-6 Lamentations 3:19-26 or Psalm 137
- Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4 and Psalm 37:1-9
- 2 Timothy 1:1-14
- Luke 17:5-10

Sunday, October 13, 2013

Readings:

- Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7 and Psalm 66:1-12
- 2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c and Psalm 111
- 2 Timothy 2:8-15
- Luke 17:11-19

Sunday, October 20, 2013

Readings:

- Jeremiah 31:27-34 and Psalm 119:97-104
- Genesis 32:22-31 and Psalm 121
- 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5
- Luke 18:1-8

Sunday, October 27, 2013

Readings:

- Joel 2:23-32 and Psalm 65
- Sirach 35:12-17 or Jeremiah 14:7-10, 19-22 and Psalm 84:1-7
- 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18
- Luke 18:9-14



CONTACT US

Please send all Contributions to:

UCCSA

**P. O. Box 96014,
Brixton, 2019,
Johannesburg,
South Africa.**

Telephone: 011 837 9997

Fax Numbers: 011 837 2570

E-mail: tellus.uccsa@gmail.com

Media Contacts:

Rev Dr. M. Dibeela
The General Secretary:
prince@uccsa.co.za

Rev Alistair Arends
Mission Secretary
revarends@gmail.com

Miss Ayana McCalman
Communications & Justice Advocacy
Officer:
ayana_gy@yahoo.com

Website: www.uccsa.co.za

Facebook: "Congregationalists"
www.facebook.com/Congregationalists

"For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience"

Colossians 1:9-11



EVENTS To Remember and Pray For:

Sept 18-24 UCCSA 37th Assembly(Mahikeng)

Sept 30- 6Oct UCCSA Justice Week

1 Oct International Day of Older People

6 Oct UCCSA Day

13-17Oct Interns Conference

27 Oct Reformation Sunday

Oct 31-8 Nov WCC Assembly (Busan, Korea)



Find Us Online

We are currently updating our social media spaces on the internet. Be sure to connect with us and look out for daily updates, photos and videos from the UCCSA 37thAssembly.

Find us on Facebook, Youtube and Twitter:



www.facebook.com/Congregationalists



www.youtube.com/user/UCCSAMedia



<https://twitter.com/TheUCCSA>

