



The Methodist Church of Southern Africa

Tel: +27 11 615 1616
Fax: +27 11 615 1499

Methodist Connexional Office
33 Ernest Oppenheimer Ave
Bruma Office Park, Bruma
Private Bag X11
Garden View 2047

9 February 2016

Re: Mission Congress 2016

Dear Bishops, Synod Secretaries and Superintendent Ministers,

Greetings to you all in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As a Discipleship Movement there is need for us *to be constantly attentive to current mission challenges and opportunities presented by our context and discern how God is calling us to respond both at the local level and Connexionally.*

In view of the ever changing context in which we do mission, Conference of 2015 resolved that “a 2nd Mission Congress be held at the Seth Mokitimi Methodist Seminary in November 2016 in order to ‘reflect on the foundations, motives and the nature of mission as well as the missionary shape of our discipleship movement’ (adapted from the Presiding Bishop’s Address to Conference 2015) with the view to nurturing mission effectiveness through making every congregation a conduit of Connexional vision and facilitator of mission.” (Yearbook 2015, pg. 103, para. 2.32).

The Mission Congress of 2016 will be held from 24 to 27 November 2016.

Given the critical importance of the Mission Congress, the process of informing the content of the Mission Congress should not be something which is conceived “from above” but rather that it comes from Methodist people on the ground and who are at the coalface of mission.

With this in mind, Conference asked that 2016 April Circuit Quarterly meetings and District Synods be intentionally missional in their discussions as we prepare for the Mission Congress. The following processes are therefore suggested by the Mission Congress Working Team:

Firstly that Circuit Quarterly Meetings (CQMs) respond to the following questions:

1.

- How would you describe the social environment of your Circuit (**for example** poverty, unemployment, women and child abuse, and other forms of abuse, alcohol and substance abuse, etc)
- What mission efforts is the Circuit currently involved in and would like to celebrate.
- What are the other critical needs which have not yet been responded to?
- How do you think the Circuit could respond to these needs?
- What support do we need to respond to these mission challenges/opportunities?

Please Note.

It is strongly suggested that each Circuit put together a small team before hand to examine the mission context of the Circuit by reflecting on the questions listed above. This will ensure that prior work is done and that the discussions of the CQM are informed by serious and informed reflection done by a smaller team.

A Christ-healed Africa for the Healing of Nations

Presiding Bishop: Rev Ziphosihle D. Siwa
e-mail: presbish@mco.org.za

Lay General Treasurer: Mrs Thini Ngonyama
e-mail: lgtreasurer@mco.org.za

General Secretary: Rev Charmaine Morgan
e-mail: gensec@mco.org.za

2. At the Circuit Quarterly meeting, the small team would then make a presentation on their findings and engage as well as gather responses from the CQM. Enough time should be given to this important Conversation on the Work of God) – see **The Book of Order page 96; Order of Business for CQMs** .
3. Each CQM to Identify 2 or 3 priority mission issues they would like the Mission Congress to address. Superintendents are requested to feed through the responses of the CQM to the District Mission Coordinator, Synod Secretary and or a District working group (to be set up by the District Leadership) who will collate Circuit responses and forward them to the District Bishop and the Mission Unit.

Secondly, that at Synods:

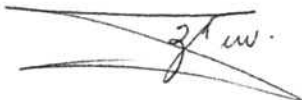
- The Bishop's address be an overall/ bird's eye view of the state of mission in the district
- A summary of Circuit Responses be presented at Synod by the District Mission Coordinator on the results of the District working group/ a summary of circuit responses and that the summary report form the basis for Conversation on the Work of God - see **The Book of Order page 186; Order of Business for Synods**). Synods are urged to give enough time for this exercise
- There be commissions to look at the above (summary from circuits) and also respond to the following questions:
 - ✓ What are the mission achievements which we should acknowledge and celebrate as a District?
 - ✓ What are the current common missional challenges and opportunities in the District (as reflected in the responses of the Circuits)?
 - ✓ What are the critical issues which the Synod would recommend that the Mission Congress address?

District Mission Coordinators will need to feed through the information (signed off by the Bishop) to the Mission Congress Planning Team through the Mission Unit by 10 June 2016.

We urge all Methodist people to pray for this process and together discern how God is calling us to effective as a Discipleship Movement in this era. This must be done bearing in mind the over-arching vision of the MCSA: *"A Christ healed Africa for the Healing of Nations"*

Should you have any questions for clarity or further suggestions, please contact the Mission Unit Director.

Yours in God's Service,



Ziphosihle Siwa
Presiding Bishop



Kenaleone Ketshabile
Director: Mission Unit

A Christ-healed Africa for the Healing of Nations