

## THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA NATAL COASTAL DISTRICT

#### **BISHOP MIKE VORSTER**

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# NATAL COASTAL DISTRICT COMMUNIQUE OCTOBER 2012

#### THE PEACE OF THE LORD BE WITH YOU

#### MCSA CONFERENCE 2012:

Is done and dusted. **We congratulate Rev Hloks Mothibi and Rev Everett Lawrence** on becoming part of the Order of Presbyters through the laying on of hands on Sunday 23 September 2012. Both are Non-Itinerant Ministers and are now Ordained. We wish them God's strength and blessings in their respective ministries.

I trust that you have received all the correspondence from MCSA Conference, especially the Message from Conference. Kindly ensure that this is read to your congregations – it is a message for all members of the MCSA. (If you have not received it – check your email and then contact Hazel at the District Office)

## **WESLEY GUILD CONVENTION 2012:**

Our youth are thriving in this section of our church. I congratulate the new Executive who were inducted on Friday 5 October 2012. You have our support and prayers. An excellent and appropriate theme was chosen:"Is my heart right as my heart is with your heart...If it be give me your hand." WG President Rev Thulani Dimaza addressed the issue of violence within the Church and in wider society. Don't give me your right hand of fellowship and then say and do things harmful to me. Is your heart right with my heart then let's extend our hand of fellowship.

### **2013 YEAR PLANNING:**

This takes place on **THURSDAY 18 OCTOBER**, 9.30 for 10am to 1pm at MUSGRAVE METHODIST CHURCH. All Superintendents, Organisational Leaders, District Mission Unit leaders, District Youth Unit, Ecumenical Affairs, District Executive and District EMMU are expected. Even if you have no District dates to contribute, we nevertheless need to be informed about what is happening in our District, therefore it is essential that every Circuit, Organisation, respective Units are present. For further information phone Hazel at the District office

# **REFLECTION:**

# UNFORGIVENESS IS HARMFUL FOR OUR HEALTH: ARE WE LIVING IN A LIBERATED STATE OF FORGIVENESS?

The story of Joseph in the Hebrew Bible has been the focus of my recent devotions. Reflecting on the climax of the story in Genesis 50: 15 to 26. When Jacob (Israel) dies, the brothers fear retribution from Joseph. He says to them: "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to harm me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as God is doing today." (19&20).

My companion for my devotions was Mike Holroyd (Iona Community Scotland). He says that **Joseph and Jesus were already living in the LIBERATED STATE OF FORGIVENESS.** "When will we learn the truth that shouts from the pages of scripture and from the Cross of Christ, that forgiveness is unconditional and non-contractual? Jesus did not say on the cross, "If they are sorry, and mean it, then please forgive them," he said, 'Forgive them; for they know not what they do' (Luke 23:24). This is unconditional, just as Joseph's forgiveness is unconditional."

Yes, we have heard all this before, but listen carefully what Mike H says next: "UNFORGIVENESS IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CAUSE OF PHYSICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SPIRITUAL ILL-HEALTH TODAY. "Mandela once said not to forgive is like drinking poison and hoping the other person will die. Unforgiveness is harmful for our health.

"THE STORY OF JOSEPH SHOWS US THAT THERE IS ANOTHER WAY, THAT RELATIONSHIPS CAN BE RESTORED AND THAT THE FUTURE OF BOTH THE FORGIVER AND FORGIVEN CAN BE FAR BETTER THAN WE EVER HOPE OR IMAGINE." (Remember forgiveness sometimes needs to be a process as in Matthew 18:21 to 35.)

"Forgive us our harmful ways as we forgive others who harm us" could be our mantra for us to say over and over until we feel the liberated state of forgiveness.

#### TAKING A BREAK

Carol and I will be away in Grahamstown from Monday 8 to Tuesday 16 October. Our Vice-Chair Rev Dr Lumka Sigaba will have oversight of the District during my absence.

#### **Shalom**

**Bishop Mike** 

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