

# COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

REPORT TO CONFERENCE 2011

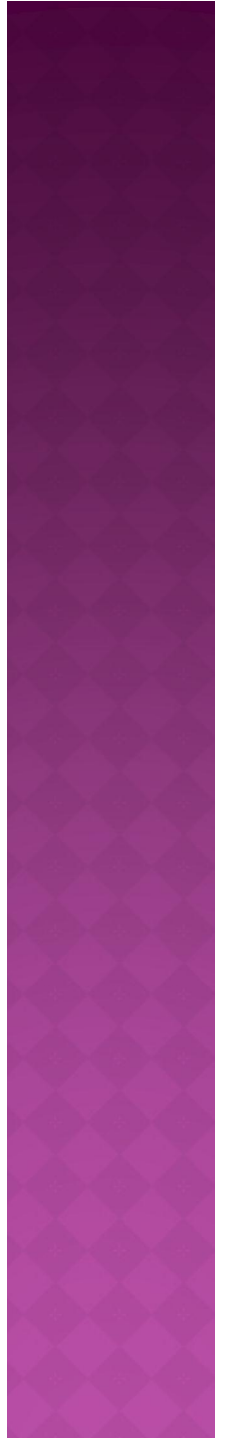
# THE YEAR IN RETROSPECT

- 2011 has been a rather difficult year for the unit especially the loss of Cindy who was the other half of the unit.
- We also seem to be chasing our tails finance wise - there is very little room for innovation and creativity when one is constantly playing financial catch up

- ◉ What I have found rather disconcerting is that, as I read through some minutes of board meetings held over 12 years ago when Val Pauquet was still the Director, we seem to be dealing with the exact same issues they had to contend with then- the need for the paper to make a profit; the fact that research reveals that there are really no church newspapers that ever makes a profit, most are highly subsidised and given away free; the debate that the cost of producing the paper should be carried by advertising etc.



- ◉ Although the ND- which is the mainstay of the Unit, is running smoothly, we have not recorded any growth in terms of subscriptions and directly linked to this, advertising
- ◉ I have suggested two solutions if the Communications Unit is to record growth and viability:



## Option 1

- ◉ The conference can make it an obligation for each society or circuit in the connexion to buy at least 20 copies of the paper @ R1560 a year. This would go a long way towards ensuring that we have a steady income ( if we receive 300 orders of 20- this will give us approx. R 468,000/annum-enough to cover the costs of production, printing and postage for the year)

## Option 2

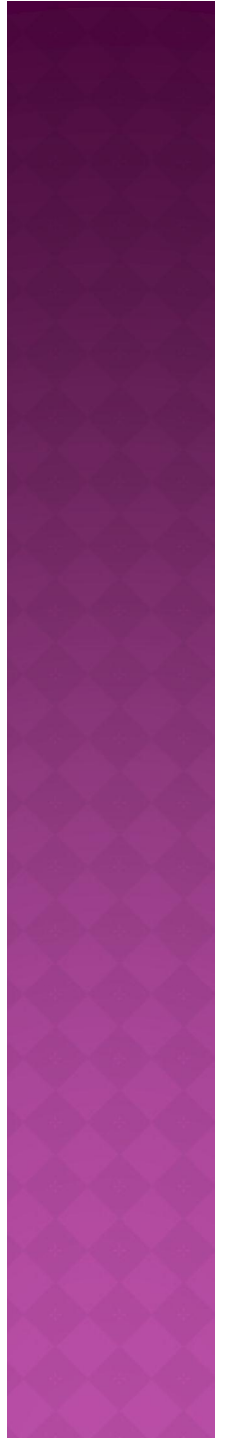
- ◉ Conference can make a decision to wholly take over the unit, fund it, and ensure that a monthly publication is produced for the connexion and sent to the various circuits. The cost of this move can be included in the assessment. This would allow for more time to focus on other information related issues.

# WEBSITE

- ◉ After a year of working and reworking the website, we have finally come up with a design that we believe is more relevant, broad and will give everyone using it easier access to information. ( show it on the screen)
- ◉ As of the end of August we do not have a webmaster and we are very grateful for the volunteered assistance we have received from Rev Michael Bishop who will be ordained at this conference on Sunday.

- ◉ As of this conference, I and the Press Officers in the 12 districts will be responsible for uploading information. ( this information will obviously be vetted by myself or someone else in a position to do this)
- ◉ I would like to urge the Bishops to please revisit their choice of press officers- there are some I have not heard from since we trained them last year in November. Please choose someone who is not only available but has a passion for the church and its activities, can string a few sentences together logically and is willing to do this pro-bono.

- We would also like to encourage all societies and organisations that have not already done so to please develop their own websites and send us links to them which we will put onto the main website. We do not have the manpower to facilitate this nor do we want the main website to be ‘cluttered’ with too much day to day information that is not connexional- our focus will be on more connexional issues and news.





## WMC

- A major achievement this year was the production of the WMC book that details the history of the MCSA, profiles our districts, Units and organisations and highlights a few of our projects.
- This is a book that we believe districts/ organisations may need to order and distribute as it encapsulates in a nutshell, who we are and is a great information tool. I will be accepting orders for these.

# MEMBERSHIPS...

- ◉ I am on the board of the Independent Forum for Religious Broadcasting
- ◉ World Association of Christian Communicators



# APPEAL

- ◉ We continue to appeal for buy-in from Bishops and ministers to improve the state of communication within the church. Ours is a church that is spread over a very broad surface area therefore enabling communication cannot be the sole responsibility of one individual or unit or organisation. It is everyone's responsibility.

# THANK YOU AND BEST WISHES

- ◉ I would like to take this opportunity to thank the PB for all his help and guidance since I took up office- he has been a tower of strength, support and wisdom- I have said to him on numerous occasions that he would also have done very well in the circular world because of the amazing ideas he has. We in the Comms Unit wish you well even as we congratulate and welcome the PB elect.