



THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
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MCSA ECUMENICAL AFFAIRS UNIT FIRST THURSDAYS NEWSLETTER

Twelve

4 June 2020

Greetings and Peace be with you.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

2 Corinthians 13:13

Today and in the coming week I invite us to pray together for ecumenism and the agencies striving to make real the communion of the Holy Spirit

COVID 19 ECUMENICAL AFFAIRS PRAYERS FOR THURSDAY 4 JUNE 2020

The Methodist Church of Southern Africa is primarily committed to the Gospel imperatives of Mission and Unity. Our conference Directive is very clear about this:

*ECUMENICAL AFFAIRS UNIT: shall encourage ecumenical involvement throughout the Connexion. It shall ensure that Methodist people realise that ecumenical involvement is central to the mission of the Church. The Ecumenical Affairs Unit is led by the Director in conjunction with the Office of the Presiding Bishop.*¹ Each of the 16 Synods have Ecumenical Affairs Secretaries who together with the Bishops are to do likewise.

As taught by Wesley, Methodists in general hold this view that a relationship of love, acceptance, trust and mutual co-operation is to exist among all Christians. It is for that reason that they take ecumenism seriously.

COME AND JOIN US AS WE PRAY FOR ECUMENICAL EXPRESSIONS OF WHICH WAS MCSA ARE A PART

Local; Synod, Connexional, Continental and Global levels

LOCAL:

We pray for all local ecumenical expressions which brings together churches of different denominations and traditions, through:

- Fraternals
- Fellowships
- Forums

We pray that as these local churches and fraternals work together that strong effective Local Ecumenical Action Networks (see attached document for details) are mobilised throughout the MCSA

¹ L&D paragraph 8.5

Connexion (Botswana; Lesotho; Mozambique; Namibia eSwatini and South Africa), especially in response to COVID 19.

SYNODS

In each geographical area of our Connexion we have ecumenical expressions: Through provincial councils of churches mainly in South Africa.

CONNEXIONAL:

And in each country in our Connexion churches all are mobilised to respond to the COVID 19 virus in addition to the socio-economic challenge each country faces we pray for:

- Botswana Council of Churches – their efforts to maintain a land and economic just system.
- Christian Council of Lesotho – as they deal with abject poverty and political strife
- Christian Council of Mozambique –as they deal with thousands of people who are affected by the violence of insurgency and low lever war fuelled by greed over rich resources People are seeking comfort and support from the churches. We pray for a lasting just peace
<https://www.msn.com/en-za/news/world/mozambique-forces-in-major-fighting-with-insurgents-says-president/ar-BB14Q2Wb?ocid=spartandhp> “*Luiz Fernando Lisboa, the Bishop of Pemba, said hundreds of people had arrived in the city from Macomia in recent days. He has previously said around 200,000 people have fled to the city to escape the violence.*”
- Christian Council of Namibia – for the eradication of government corruption and gender-based violence <https://www.groundup.org.za/article/covid-19-grant-we-can-learn-namibia/>
- Christian Council of eSwatini – that a just system of governance which serves all the people would come to fruition
- South African Council of Churches. - eradication of growing systemic corruption; unnecessary inequity of resources; femicide; sexism; racism; xenophobia and the disgusting way South Africans abuse children
- We pray for the Church Unity Commission and the general secretary Rev Sikawu Makubalo as they strive together to unite churches that have for centuries been divided.

CONTINENT:

We pray for our Continent Africa as each nation responds to COVID 19 we pray especially for

- All Africa Conference of Churches is probably the most representative Ecumenical Church body in Africa as they give account for more than 122 million Christians across our beloved African continent.
- We pray for our newly birthed Africa Methodist Council -we celebrate that a Wesleyan expression our Christian faith is in 50 of our 54 states in Africa, may their witness of social holiness bear much fruit.

We pray for other continental ecumenical bodies:

Serving as a leading voice of witness to the living Christ in the public square since 1950, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCC) brings together 38 member communions and more than 40 million Christians in a common expression of God's love and promise of unity. <http://nationalcouncilofchurches.us>

- We pray especially for the National Council of Churches in the USA. Strengthen their prophetic voice for change of the current dangerously childish and foolish -USA Government administration.
Strengthen their prophetic voice for change as they seek to overcome the scourge of racism

Anti-Racism Resources



The **A.C.T. Now to End Racism** initiative of the National Council of Churches urges the NCC, its members and partners to **Awaken** to the many manifestations of white supremacy and racism especially in the church, to **Confront** the need for change, and to work to **Transform** church and society into a reflection of the inclusive and equitable reign of God.

ACT Now is a recent call, but NCC members and partners have been engaged in the work against racism for many decades. Indeed, the very existence of the Historic African American Churches constitutes faithfulness to an inclusive gospel of justice and peace and resistance to racism and white supremacy. Over the years, NCC member communions have developed educational resources and tools fitting their context to further the struggle for racial justice and equity. Here you can find a library of materials for study, discussion, analysis, strategizing, and organizing. Wherever you are on your journey for justice, you are likely to find something here to help you take the next step. <http://nationalcouncilofchurches.us/a-c-t-now-to-end-racism/>

GLOBAL

We pray for world ecumenical bodies

- World Council of Churches for their peace-making efforts in global situations of conflict. We pray especially for their efforts in Sudan and between North and South Korea. We pray as they search for a new General Secretary

<https://www.oikoumene.org>

- World Methodist Council: We pray for the General Secretary Bishop Ivan Abrahams as they seek to unite the Wesleyan family. Which gives account for 80 million Wesleyan Christians. We pray especially for the United Methodist Church in the USA as they struggle with divisions over same-sex relationships.

worldmethodistcouncil.org;

FirstFridayLetter.worldmethodistcouncil.org.

Lord we are aware of our global challenge of COVID 19 pandemic that your people are struggling with, in addition to all the injustices brought about by our selfishness and greed, prejudice, racism, sexism; homophobia – we pray that you would use your church universal to bring comfort to those who mourn; feed those who are hungry and challenge those who promote injustices which affects both the quality of life of your people and the ecology of your creation.

Come Holy Spirit Unite your church for the common good and justness of your earth and all its inhabitants.

In the name of God our Parent, Son and Holy Spirit –

God who is Love; God who is Grace and God who is Unifier; God who is Creator, God who is Redeemer and God who is Sustainer

Amen

Be safe; take care

Peace and Grace

Rev Mike Vorster

MCSA Director Ecumenical Affairs Unit