

WELCOME LETTER

A Word of Welcome By The Kumkani Hintsa District

The Presiding Bishop, Former Presiding Bishop, Presiding Bishop Elect, General Secretary, Lay President, General Treasurer, District Bishops, Lay Leaders, Unit Leaders, Conference delegates, Distinguished Guests and the Conference at large.

Warm Christian greetings in the wonderful name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We are thankful to God that post the hard years of COVID-19 we are the very first District to host a physical MCSA Conference. On behalf of the Kumkani Hintsa District I am delighted to welcome you to the MCSA 133rd Annual Conference. It was 10 years ago, before the restructuring and renaming of our District (Queenstown to Kumkani Hintsa) when last we hosted Conference and it gives us pleasure to welcome you back to our beautiful shores. We are excited beyond measure to welcome the Presiding Bishop in our District, as this is her final Conference that she will lead. It excites us even more to welcome the next incoming MCSA female Presiding Bishop. Indeed, it is history in the making. We feel so blessed and graced by their spirit and presence. As we welcome the 2023 Conference, we are glad to receive, with humility, the Conference theme, **“Awakening Prophetic Urgency and Agency”**.

This year marks the third year since we hold the name: **Kumkani Hintsa**. The history tells us that Kumkani Hintsa, was the son of **Khawuta**. He was a great king of **AmaXhosa**. He ruled from 1820 until his death in 1835. During his reign, he covered the area stretching from Mbashe River, South of Mthatha to the Gamtoos River in the Southern part of Eastern Cape. Where you are converged, in East London, comprises central part of Kumkani Hintsa's territory. East London city boasts beach resorts on the east bank of the Buffalo River. Early morning hours allow one to breath and enjoy the sweet breeze of the ocean air. East London's underlying areas are administered by the Buffalo City Municipality. Within the city we have our historical churches such as, Victoria, Trinity, Cambridge, Nahoon, Gonubie, Vincent, Greenfields and Ernest Baartman, Kwa-Nondlwana, in Mdantsane. Some of these churches will host Conference services and you will have an opportunity to walk their aisles and sit on their pews.

You will be present in a vast District, comprising 39 Circuits, of which the greatest part is rural. It has an estimated membership of 23 212 members made up of full members, on trial, youth and children. For those who may not be aware, the District has been exposed to moments of sorrow and tragedy; as we are still healing from the agony of the Enyobeni tragedy and untimely fires resulting in the death of our clergy families. At the beginning of August this year, we were shocked by the tragic death of Ms Zoleka Gantana and her helper due to GBV. We hope that your presence will be a comforting and healing moment to us and the bereaved families.

The District is demarcated into five regions, namely: Queenstown, Drakensburg, Gcaleka, Border Coastal and Border inland (where you are being hosted). Queenstown region is known for her unique history, where Lesseyton Methodist Seminary and Mission station were established in 1847. Later the area became an industrial institute offering industrial education, later it was used by primary and secondary school institutions. In 1883 A theological training school was established and it has produced the great forefathers of this church, viz, Rev ZR Mahabane and Rev Dr EJ Mqoboli. As today's Methodists, we bask in the pride and the

satisfaction of the great educational and industrial institutions for which, we as the generations are beneficiaries. As we celebrate the past moving forward, we are proud of our living mother of faith, Mama Ntshinga who has just celebrated her 100-year birthday. We are also proud of our supernumeraries who have been a blessing to us.

Madam Presiding Bishop, we are thankful to God for the many years that you have served us with outstanding humility, obedience and respect. You are leaving behind a traceable record. As you prepare to superannuate from active ministry, may you leave behind with us your sound mind, spirit and wisdom. We wish you happiness and a well-deserved rest. Madam PB Elect we are looking forward to your leadership, to which we pledge our support and prayers.

May the Holy Spirit guide and control all the deliberations of the Conference. May the Presiding Bishop be covered with the Lord's grace and strengthened by God's mighty hand as she leads the Conference in our District.

This Conference is undoubtedly a success due to the dedication and selflessness of our members who gave their utmost as they serve on the Conference Planning Committee. They offered their time, gifts, talents and ideas beyond their ability, to make a memorable and successful Conference. Details of the team will be added to your Conference bags. You are welcome to chat with them should you enquire any assistance.

We hope that you will all enjoy your stay and find the 2023 Conference to be a spirit-filled and awakening event. As you rise from this Conference, going back to your various Districts, kindly experience our love and hospitality.

Safe journey to you all

TO GOD BE THE GLORY