



St Columba's Presbyterian Church

March 2013

THE CHALLENGE





Editor's Note

Teach your children well . . .

Once again, this issue of Challenge is filled with news, activities, votes of thanks to our fantastic committees and some thoughts on the type of world we are living in and raising our children in.

While we cannot protect our children from seeing and hearing about some of the horrors we're dealing with in our country at the moment, we can raise them in the spirit of the community of service and compassion that is St Columba's. Sunday School and the Alchemists are incredible places to "ground" children who may otherwise feel a little "out at sea" with events beyond their control (and even comprehension) upsetting their parents.

Of course, then there is the fine example set for each of us by members of our Church. The service and genuine caring shown within our community must certainly be carried through to our everyday lives, and felt even by those not part of this "haven" in Parkview.

Please contact any of the committee members if you'd like to volunteer your time and talents and be an example to our broader community. As Chunky says, there's much to be done – and who better to do it than one of us?

With kind regards
Bridget Badenhorst

Let's work to heal our land

Dear Friends,

We are often told about direct and indirect consequences. We know that a direct consequence is often and anticipated, or planned for, outcome. An unintended consequence is when something happens as a result of an intended act, deed, plan or strategy and along the way you are confronted by an issue that you had not anticipated at all.

Sadly, we all know that we live in a country with very high levels of violence. None of us, however, would or could have imagined the case of the young girl who was raped and murdered, nor the shooting incident involving one of our prominent athletes. These two incidents have brought home to many the extremes of violence that can and do take place in our society on a daily basis.

Because of the nature of their brutality, and the people involved both of these cases have had extensive media coverage. Obviously both were very newsworthy and the public did have a right to know what had happened. As a consequence, we have seen a flurry of advertising against sexual violence and a local radio station has launched a campaign to educate people in an attempt to try and curb future acts of sexual violence.

In the other case, the one involving the shooting of a young woman, we see a renewed attempt to ignite interest in the Gun Free Campaign launched many years ago in South Africa. In fact, one of our politicians stated "If there were no guns in the house Reeva would be alive today." One could, in a sense, anticipate these and other

Let's work to heal our land

continued

reactions. In the last week, however, I have had to deal with cases which perhaps are not so obvious.

There have been a number of people who have come to see me who find themselves frightened, depressed, continually crying and battling to sleep. The strange thing is that for most of them, there was no one recent incident in their lives which had triggered their emotions.

On further discussion, I found that many of these people had suffered from some sort of violence, or had been exposed to a violent act, within the last five or six years. That did interest me, and what I was able to understand was that the two unprecedented acts of highly published violence had set off triggers in people's own minds and they were, in a sense, re-living their initial experience or as we know they were reliving the experience of a friend, partner or someone in the work place who had also suffered a previous violent attack or threat.

In the most bizarre incident, a man in his sixties was cut off on the road by a police officer. He chased the officer down, and when the officer got out of his car the man punched him. This was a man who had never ever shown any previous violence toward anyone and he now faces a charge of violence with the intent to do grievous bodily harm. On further investi-

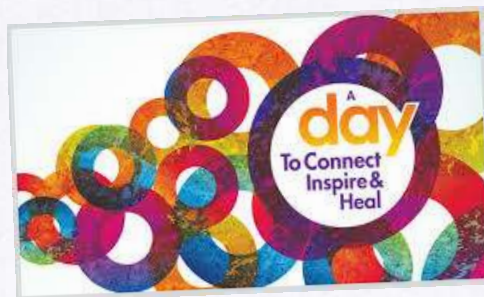
gation, it appeared that the man was so angry with the policeman in the trial that he failed to understand his own reaction.

I remember some of the research I did during my Doctoral Programme, which highlighted the trauma levels most South Africans live under without even realising it. We, as a church, need to be able to care for all members of our community, people who are living on a proverbial knife edge.

In this Challenge you will read of all the wonderful things that St. Columba's does in our community. If the truth be told, there is just so much more we need to do to heal our land.

Your friend and minister

Chunky



Coffee Table Book

Buy the book . . .

ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH - THE FIRST 90 YEARS

This is a truly beautiful book, detailing the history of St Columba's Church and its role in Parkview and the wider community. It includes our Outreach and Pastoral work, feeding and clothing schemes, music and worship and, above all, the people that have made St Columba's what it is – a hub of compassion and caring in a struggling South Africa.



At only R300 a copy, this book would make a lovely gift for friends and family. Please order your copy through the Church Office by calling 011 646 5420.

For EFT payments please use your surname/CTB as a reference.

**BANK DETAILS:
ST COLUMBA'S
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
STANDARD BANK
ROSEBANK BRANCH
CODE: 004305
ACCOUNT NO: 001948776**

We are who we are because of who we serve

This edition of Challenge is the first for 2013 - and my, how this year has already gathered momentum.

A few weeks ago China celebrated its New Year which in their calendar is the Year of the Snake and they believe that it will herald many changes in their lives. While we do not celebrate our New Year as they do and we have different beliefs, what we do have in common is change.

I have always been of the opinion that to remain static, or not to change, means one is marking time or even regressing.

At St. Columba's, we have always been proactive and actually sought change and improvements in everything we do. We do not change for the sake of changing, but to be better at what we do and deliver what we say we will.

I firmly believe that because of this ethos, we offer a valuable service to our congregation and the broader community. In the midst of all the chaos and uncertainty around us, our Church has become an island of love and fellowship. Let's build on that.

To all our "volunteers" - thank you for all you do. To those who would like to get involved, please get in touch with one of us. I used the word "volunteer" earlier - but I truly believe we receive a calling to get involved. If you are led to offer your time and talents, we will help you make good use of them.

As you will read in the rest of Challenge, all our committees and structures are working well and functioning optimally. We are who we are because of who we serve.

God Bless.
Ernie Blom
Session Clerk

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

How we're faring from the inside....

The challenges of 2013 in terms of the Board of Management remain as in 2012; the financial well being of St Columba's both in 2013 and in the longer term and the exploitation of the potential of our assets. Here's what we're dealing with:

Board of Management **Finance**

The business end of the church is robust and professionally managed. Our computer systems have been improved and our database management has moved forward into a new and more stable era. The Treasury under Graham Hamilton and Andy White closely monitors and controls the monetary needs of the church. Managing the available resources and thus ensuring our continued delivery to the community.

Our financial position governs what we are able to do and is also the result of St Columba's doing the right thing. Rest assured that your gifts and offerings are being made to work to the maximum we can make them.

Board of Management **Property**

The Property committee is now busy on the 2013 programme, having embarked on and in some cases completed the following projects:

- The service kitchen in the hall
- Refurbishment and repairs to the Manse
- Refurbishing the Dalziel House flat for the sorting and redistribution of clothes and goods
- Building the counselling centre at Dalziel House
- The church kitchen refurbishment
- Special polishing of the church floor
- Stonework care

Board of Management Stewardship

Stewardship

Changes in the Stewardship Committee

Our current Stewardship Year is drawing to a close and our best estimate is that we will receive pledge income in the twelve months ending 31 March 2013 of R3 150 000. This is in line with our previous projections and compares with a figure of R3 017 712 for the previous year.

Our database, which works well in other areas, has been a problem as far as Stewardship is concerned and we are still checking that the few remaining teething problems have been resolved by the developers. This has prevented us from being able to write to all donors acknowledging actual cash receipts in the usual way and we apologise for not being able to do so. We are hopeful that we will be able to do this at the end of March.

A big thank you is once again due to all donors from the Ministers, Exco, the Session and the Board of Management for your wonderful involvement. Please continue to support St Columba's to the extent you can whether that be through attendance, bringing potential new members to worship with us, giving under our Stewardship Programme or the use of your time and talents to further the work of St Columba's.


The time has come for a change in the convenor of the Stewardship Committee. Richard Clowes retains responsibility for last year's appeal that runs until 31 March 2013 and will be succeeded by Mike Lovell who has taken

over responsibility for the 2013/2014 appeal.

You will be aware of the new Stewardship appeal which was launched at the beginning of March with a target of R3 250 000. In the last three months we have suffered the death of our third largest donor and did not wish to set an unachievable target. The increase in our target is therefore relatively small and we would dearly like to beat it.

Richard Clowes / Mike Lovell
Joint Convenors: Stewardship
Committee

Thank you to Richard Clowes for his wonderful leadership and commitment to this portfolio over the years. We are truly grateful for your tireless efforts and your dedication.



Meet our treasured members



Michelle von Benecke introduces one of the Outreach Committee members, Penny Shaddock, who is mainly responsible for the clothing distribution at St Columba's; but also Rahima Moosa hospital, Rainbow Clinic, Jordan House, Eeufeesoord, Marang House, Park Care and Key School.

I first went to St Columbas when I was five years old and Mrs McIvor used to run the Sunday School. I cannot tell you how many of us crammed into a car to go to the church - I think it was eight of us whose parents each took turns each week to take us.

Afterwards we would all go to the park to play until we were collected. I was later confirmed and married at St Columba's. My children attended Sunday School here and then I joined Andy and the team teaching. I stopped teaching when my parents came to live with me. After my Mom passed away, my Dad found it difficult to go to Church on his own.

I got involved in Outreach when Paul Hardingham was the Chairman and asked me to assist with initiatives at Coronation Hospital about 15 years ago. The little ones in the hospital

touched my heart – some were very ill, and some abandoned by parents when they were diagnosed HIV or their parents died. The staff members at Coronation Hospital are very kind and good to these little ones and today, with the help of ARV treatment for HIV, fewer children are so ill.

Rainbow Clinic, managed by Dr Cartwright, has turned out to be a very worthy cause and we make up parcels with the help of the congregation, to give the patients new underwear, toiletries and a toy. These are packaged inside beautiful bags that the Dorcas ladies make.

We now look after old age homes and other children's homes, all with the help of members who donate clothing and the items brought along for our White Elephant stall at the Christmas Market. This last year we were able to give R5 000 to the lady who works with Choc; donate money towards pillow cases for the Christmas parcels; and hold a Valentines lunch for the residents of Jordan Old Age Home in February, all a real pleasure.

Wendy Gardiner is my right hand lady and we prepare clothing for the homeless once a month. It humbles us to see how grateful they are. One chap was involved in a hit and run, and has a large indent in his head. Still, he never fails to say "Thank you and God bless"! What more does one need to feel gratified?



OUTREACH

News from the Worship Committee

We are the season of Lent which, this year, began not long after things had returned to normal after the festivities of Christmas. Ash Wednesday was on 13 February and Lent runs for roughly six weeks. Lent is traditionally described as lasting for forty days; in commemoration of the forty days which Jesus spent fasting in the desert before starting his public ministry.

Palm Sunday always falls on the sixth Sunday in Lent. It celebrates Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and marks the start of Holy Week. Services in the Church are scheduled as follows:

Palm Sunday 24 March: Services at 8.00am 9.30am and 7.00pm

Monday 25 March: Holy Week service 7.00pm
Rev Stephen van Schalkwyk

Tuesday 26 March: Holy Week service 7.00pm
Rev Stephen van Schalkwyk

Wednesday 27 March: Choral Service at 7.00pm

Thursday 28 March: The very moving service of Tenebrae, with Communion

Friday 29 March: Good Friday Service at 9.00am conducted by The Moderator of the Church of Scotland

Easter Day 31 March: Services at 8.00am, 9.30am and 7.00pm for the whole family.

Communion cards

As most already know, we stopped posting and delivering communion cards to the congregation some months ago, but blank cards are at the Church entrances each Communion Sunday. Please assist us with maintaining the Church records by filling in a card as you enter or leave the Church every Communion Service. Just your name is all we need and one card per couple is sufficient.



Favourite hymns

We will soon be placing an insert into the intimations for you to let the church know your favourite hymn. This hymn may have special significance for you on a specific day or anniversary. Hymns are chosen by the ministers to suit the theme of the service, but they have undertaken to try and include your favourite in the service on your special day if this is possible.

Ron Timm

Worship Committee Convenor

ST COLUMBA'S 'BEHIND THE SCENES'

St Columba's is widely acknowledged as a caring and compassionate church. Maintaining this enviable reputation requires many, many hours of dedicated work by our ministers, our staff and our volunteer members. Much of this valued and valuable work is done out of

the public eye - "behind the scenes".

From baptism to funeral, St Columba's touches the lives of its members and its community. In future editions of this quarterly magazine, we will identify these many dedicated volunteers

in the form of short pen pictures as a way of giving recognition to their magnificent contributions in maintaining St Columba's reputation as a caring Church with a happy and compassionate community.

Ron Schreuder

Alchemist & Confirmation

'Sparkling' alchemists bid fond farewell to Chris

The Alchemist Group have said an emotional fond 'fair-well' to our fearless leader, Chris Griswold. Chris prepared personal tributes to each of the members of the group, pointing out the gifts and talents each young adult has brought to the group. He encouraged and affirmed each person and it was suddenly very clear why "Alchemists" is the most appropriate name for the group: Here, in the mystery of community, very precious and valuable elements are being cultivated and nurtured. The inherent value of each person simply rises to the surface and they sparkle!

We are very grateful to Chris for fabulous work and the team (Mike, Linda, Donna, and Stephen) are committed to continuing to grow this amazing core of young people at St. Columba's. If you are between grades 7 and 10, come along and join this dynamic group of gems on a Sunday at 9h30.



Confirmation Class



A journey of the brave.

The 2013 programme has kicked off for the grade 10 to 12's who are preparing to enter into full adult membership of the church. It is always a privilege to journey with such vibrant, intelligent and passionate young adults. I am always deeply inspired by the levels of thought and commitment that the Confirmation class demonstrate in response to the challenges that South African life throws at all of us.

These young people are reclaiming the cliché that the hope of the world rests in young hands. We are working through the values of the Christian faith and how those values impact our communities and society. It is not a journey for the faint-of-heart: we question and interrogate the meaning of salvation in the 21st Century, the creeds and their use and effect, Christian ethics as they are applied to modern problems like abortion, euthanasia, stem-cell research, and bio-ethical sustainability.

With full academic, sporting, and social calendars, I am very grateful for the time and effort that the candidates and their parents commit to during this first half of the year, and I am looking forward to another beautiful confirmation service on 21 July this year.

Stephen van Schalkwyk

Meet the Elders



MIKE LOVELL (Spouse Marianne)

Mike was born – the year is his secret - into St. Columba’s Church. He was ordained an Elder in 2009, currently serves on the Church’s Exco and Board of Management. Mike also served, for a brief period, on St. Columba’s Finance Committee and has just assumed the mantle of Convenor of the Stewardship Committee.

Mike is a Chartered Accountant (SA). After completing his articles, he moved into commerce and held executive positions in a number of companies, the longest time being in the liquor industry (St Columba’s often “abused” its relationship with him!).

He is now a leading expert on black economic empowerment (BEE), has run his own BEE verification agency and consults on BEE, finance and operations. Mike’s wife Marianne has run her own business (teaching English to foreigners) for the past 26 years.

Mike’s interests include fishing, wildlife (beasts and birds) and protection of the environment. He and Marianne particularly enjoy family holidays with their two sons, both of whom were baptised by Alan Maker.



ANGELA MILLER (Spouse Brad)

Having grown up in Zambia, Angela went on to become a qualified personal assistant and worked in commerce. Her passion as a child was gymnastics and she has been teaching gymnastics as an extra mural activity at St. Katharine’s School in Parktown for the past 25 years.

She married Brad at St. Columba’s Church in 1980 and their children, Leanne and Ross, were baptised by Alan Maker. Angela was ordained as an elder in 2003. She served on the Outreach Committee for a couple of years and has organised the collection of Easter Eggs for the past 8 years. (“Anyone want to take over?” she quips!)

Angela plays tennis and bridge, loves travelling, game reserves and birding. As Leanne and Ross both live in the UK, she fills the “empty nest” with overseas medical students doing their International Electives at Baragwanath. She also works part time for five companies.



M+Wig 2013

Paul and Ron report on where we've been and where we're going. Join us for some exciting and interesting visits.

Day Outings now confirmed

Tuesday 25 June 2013

FREEDOM PARK

We have had such good reports of this monument to democracy that we feel we must go there. It was a key presidential project in 2001. In 1994 Nelson Mandela said, "the day should not be far off when we shall have a people's shrine, a Freedom Park, where we shall honour with all the dignity they deserve, those who endured pain so we should experience the joy of Freedom". Freedom Park is such a place. We will take a tour and will have lunch at the Voortrekker Monument, right next door. The tour starts at 10h00 so we will meet in the car park at 09h45.

This tour is limited to 20 people. For directions and bookings contact Paul at zoomers@mweb.co.za or phone: 011 462 9682 / 082 445 5413.

Tuesday April 9 2013

TOUR OF THE CAXTON NEWS-PAPER PRINTING WORKS

This tour includes a brief look at the Citizen Newspaper editorial offices, too. Be there when they are printing the Citizen or the Caxton "knock 'n drop" community newspapers. Hear the roar of the printing presses, smell the printing ink, see the editorial team at work and watch the papers getting ready for distribution.

Book with Paul: 011 462 9682 / 082 445 5413. Again, we are limiting this tour to 20 people.

STAYAWAYS

FEBRUARY 25 to March 1 2013

STERKFRONTEIN NATURE RESERVE AND DAM

Report back:

Those of us who went were lucky to have participated in this event had a most exciting and varied trip, and the picture here shows our group having just returned to the surface after being 56 storeys below ground.

We were at the 'Pump Storage Facility' near Phutaditjaba, (pronounce that with your teeth in) in Quaqua. You can see we're all quite cheerful – this was after we returned to the surface. Pictured here are St Columba's elders Pete, (and Lynette) Visser, Ron, (and Carol) Timm, Paul, (and Gill) Hardingham and two ladies from our Village, Esme Solomons and Sheila von der Becke. Our guide, Bheki Mlamba, was the best!

Any suggestions for future events? Let us hear about them.

Paul Hardingham:

011 462 96892

082 445 5413

Ron Timm:

011 802 3687

082 979 9252

The

LINK

A Letter from our Minister, The Reverend Dr Martin Young

Dear Friends,

If you were in church of a recent Sunday evening you would have heard what could only have been described by me as an “outburst.” I was ANGRY!!! And still am. It all started on the previous Monday morning when our receptionist, Grace needed to be admitted to hospital urgently – and I mean URGENTLY!

Grace, like most of our staff, is a member of Discovery medical aid. She has a hospital plan and when Stephen tried to get her into the Rosebank Clinic they suggested the Garden City as they weren’t “equipped to deal with her”. What did that mean? So Stephen took Grace to the Garden City, the staff of which was committed, welcoming and very concerned for Grace.



The problem lay with Discovery who refused to give Grace an authorisation number because, would you credit it, she had not seen her GP. We were all stunned as Grace was in no condition to be able to get to see her

GP. After numerous phone calls, Discovery finally relented and Grace was then taken into hospital and the next day they transferred her into High Care as she had had a seizure during the night.

My concern was the feeling that the “Lesser people,” even though they pay their way with an organisation like Discovery, are not treated the same as you or me if we had to be rushed into hospital. It seems as if this compulsive need to make as much money, as quickly as possible, has become the most important aspect of business. If we were asking a favour, and they said no... I could understand. But Grace is a paid up member of the scheme!

Then on Sunday afternoon, while reading News24 as I always do, I read of these big four or five construction companies who are under investigation for manipulating tenders and had colluded in price fixing for a great deal of the work done, for example, the construction work in the build-up to the World Cup, the Gautrain and many other projects.

The

LINK CONTINUED

Two things have got to me. Firstly, it seems as if we as a public, and rightly so, are very quick to point fingers at the government, the State President, municipalities and many others for price fixing, tenders and corruption. Now we hear it is just as rife in the private sector as well. It really made me angry. And then to make matters worse, I read of this pitiful plea: “We will tell you the truth we will come clean, if we are guaranteed immunity from prosecution!!”

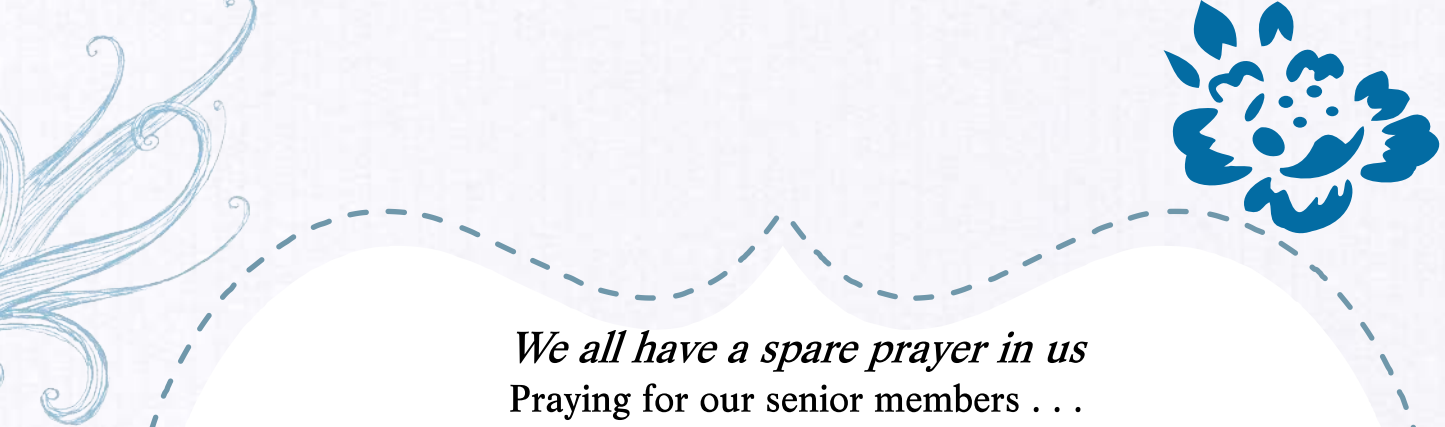
Since when are crooks allowed to set the conditions for telling the truth? The bible talks about Grace and Truth, but grace is a response by God to truth and the natural outworking of grace should be gratitude and then graciousness. It is not the other way around.

If these business people want to show contrition they must confess what they have done, expose themselves to the law - and once the law has dealt with them, they should give all of their ill-gotten gains back to the State. This should apply to corrupt, tender rigging politicians as well. I suppose the real question is this; where is the moral fibre of our Democracy?

Nietzsche once suggested that a society could be judged on how they treat their prisoners, and he was correct. I would like to believe that in our country, we should all be judged on how we treat the poor, the marginalised, those who have been excluded because of very poor and ineffective health care.

We have a floundering education system, while those who are seemingly at the head and forefront of our society and should be setting an example, spend more and more time on sophisticated schemes to enrich themselves. And why must it be at the expense of the poor? Jesus was on to something when he said, in the Kingdom of God, “the first will be last, and the last will be first”.

In a week or two, I will write about the farce that is the alliance between the ANC and COSATU and the effect that this expedient, unholy alliance is having on the marginalised, the poor, labour relations and productivity in South Africa. Usually one feels better after blowing one’s top but I have to say that I feel no better for it knowing that iniquities exist and nothing seems to be done about them.



We all have a spare prayer in us
Praying for our senior members . . .

Zoe Henning

Doug Foster

Claude Hall

Jane Grounds

Hans Nel

Yvonne Kritzinger

Pat Dalziel

Nella Mather

Connie Bryce

Forbes McKay

Ian Whitehead

Rhona Oxlee

Ken Macleod

Justine Nel

Arty Lambrianos

Prue Tough

Phyllis Mitchell

Nancy Cook

Don Bartlett



We all have a spare prayer in us

. . . and those who are ill at home

Moira Winslow,

Ada Jenkins

Margaret Gaul

Mary Livonius

Daphne Glendinning

May Schwanecke

Jack Coningsby

Helen Beggs

Mavis and Charles Dewar

Willi Norman

Isabella de Beer

Peter Barnes

Lindiwe Mthembu

*“But His angels here are human, not the shining hosts
above; and the drum beats of his army, are the heartbeats of
our love.”*