

# Contact



Provincial Newsletter of the Anglican Women's Fellowship

United in Prayer, Service & Love

## *From the President's Desk* *"Women Destined for God's Purpose"*



"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons and daughters by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will" (Ephesians 1:3-5). It is midyear and the winter season is upon us. We know the challenges that some people less fortunate than us go through during the chilly nights of this bitterly cold period of the year. It is also during this time when many homes

and families are destroyed through fires in the informal settlements ending in loss of life, floods that cause displacement of many people leaving them without homes nor food; or any other calamity affecting people at this time. To all my sisters in the AWF, this is an appeal to those of us who are fortunate and have something to spare, to please share and make a difference to those at your reach. During the month of July, remember Mandela Day and in his memory, take some time to undertake good deeds around the community and other places needing assistance. As indicated in my last communication regarding invitation from

the Anglican Women of Australia, I managed to attend their Biennial Conference held in Orange County, New South Wales, Australia on 13-17 April 2015, and was accompanied by the Vice President, Ms Lucille Henniker. During the conference we discovered a few similarities between the two organizations.

#### **Their Mission Statement is to:**

- promote service and worship
- provide a point of contact
- organize retreats, conferences and rallies
- operates to meet the needs of each diocese .

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## President's Desk from page 1 Their Aims and Objectives:

- work toward the extension of God's kingdom through workshops, study, service, fellowship and dedicated giving
- promote cooperation and understanding amongst groups that may exist in any one parish, and to make provision for those included in such groups.

This was an unforgettable experience. We had a lovely time with everyone and made a lot of friends, and exchanged ideas; they appealed to us to continue with this link and exchange information about our different programmes and projects. I will forever be thankful to the AWF for affording me the opportunity to interact with our sisters across the globe. We had our first Provincial Executive Meeting at the Syrene Boutique Hotel, Rivonia, in the Diocese of Johannesburg from 21-24 May 2015. We also welcomed Bishop Dan Kgomo as our new Liaison Bishop and Chaplain, and thanked him for accepting to be our Shepherd, also by taking time in his busy schedule to be with us at our first PEXCO Meeting. We are convinced that working together would bring a sense of balance and yield good deeds. And as we had not met for a lengthy period since our election nine months ago, this led to many unanswered questions about whether we would be able to meet all the challenges set before us. It is quite natural to be plagued with such questions at one stage or another. However since embarking on this journey as the new leadership of the AWF, these questions have instead strengthened our resolve to forge ahead, and have spurred us on to reach our maximum potential in ensuring that we put the AWF on another level. Despite not meeting regularly, we have kept in touch through regular communication and correspondence.

We wish to thank our sisters in the Diocese of Johannesburg for their warm welcome, and for making our stay very comfortable. We noticed how hard the executive of your Diocese worked ensuring that the aims and objectives of the AWF are realized. Like our Patron Saints, you were the Marthas of the day, with particular emphasis on your President who was busy with all the preparations that had to be made; and of course we all found time to be Marys and sat at the Lord's feet, listening to his teachings.

The Doris Gregorowski Bursary Fund for 2014/2015 was awarded to Rev Kunene

who had been the only applicant, and was funded to study at the College of Transfiguration. We have also received an application from Ms Margareth Jane Paulse from the Diocese of Namibia who wishes to complete her Diploma in Theology. Her application and credentials are under discussion.

The following are some of the priests/students assisted by this fund to complete their Theological studies:

1. Revd Keabetswe Tsikwe from the **Diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman**
2. Revd Linea Hilfa from the **Diocese of Namibia**
3. Doris Tsike from the **Diocese of Mthatha**
4. Revd Natali Simons from the **Diocese of Cape Town**
5. Revd Sybil Solomons from the **Diocese of Cape Town**
6. Revd Matsietso Duma from the **Diocese of Lesotho**
7. Revd Lindiwe Kunene from the **Diocese of Grahamstown** (currently studying)

We wish to extend our sincere gratitude to all the Dioceses which have continued to contribute toward the bursary fund throughout these years, and we're also grateful to Cluster Coordinators who have ensured that all contributions are made in time. The 2014 Provincial Council Meeting resolved to leave the contribution at R60.00 per Branch per annum.

During October 2015 we will be holding our second Biennial meeting of the PEXCO and Diocesan Presidents in the Diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman. The venue is the Airport Hotel. This is a continuation of all the decisions taken at the first joint meeting and to ensure that some have already been implemented in our different dioceses, also to ensure that set goals are realized in taking the AWF forward to the next level. The "Action, Outreach and Social Issues" Portfolio introduced new Provincial Resolutions drawn for 2014-16 to complement our new theme: "Women Destined for God's Purpose".

The Resolutions have been based on the four focus points namely:

- Nation Building – as responsible citizens and Christian women to lead by example.
- Human Dignity – is the basis of human rights. Each person has values and is worth great respect.

- Equality – pledging to be accepting of all God's people and refrain from any form of discrimination.
- Accountability – undertaking to accept responsibility when actions lead to results which impacts negatively on others.

Our members are strongly encouraged to utilize these resolutions in terms of interaction with the Mothers' Union and other groups within your parishes. Members are further requested that in the forthcoming PEXCO and Presidents' Meeting to put more effort when writing their reports and to ensure that they reflect activities undertaken along the four focus points of the Provincial Council Resolutions. Members of the above Portfolio have further come up with a Diary for 2015 featuring special holidays for women both locally and internationally, and AWF members are encouraged to take note of these special days, if possible to take part during their various celebrations. The Diary appeared on the back page of the Lenten Issue of Contact. Over the years the Provincial Structures of the AWF have had the desire to establish a Provincial Office which would be centrally based for easy access within the following Dioceses: Highveld, Christ the King, Johannesburg and Pretoria. This move would enable to centralize administration and operation. Towards the end of 2014 we were offered office space at St Edmund Parish Kempton Park in the Diocese of the Highveld, in the meantime awaiting a response from the Diocese of Pretoria as the discussions were at an advanced stage. It is now my duty to officially announce that the AWF Provincial Office has been relocated to the recently renovated and revamped Diocesan Offices at 802 Pretorius Street, Arcadia, Diocese of Pretoria, and occupation is effective from 01 July 2015.

Provincial Standing Committee (PSC) will take place on 17-19 September 2015 at Kopanong Hotel and Conference Centre.

"Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue, and if there is anything praiseworthy; meditate on these things. The things you learned and received, heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you" (Philippians 4:8-9).

**Yours in Prayer, Service and Love**  
**Nana Khoza**  
**Provincial President**

## Message from the Liaison Bishop The Rt Revd Daniel Malesela Kgomoso

### Dear Friends and Sisters in Christ

I would like to share with you a few thoughts on the subject of true neighbourliness. This is in light of the unfortunate and regrettable violent incidents which occurred in South Africa in the past few months. Some have chosen to refer to such as either xenophobia or Afrophobia. Irrespective of your personal description of what happened, the fact is that the whole scenario is indicative of the absence of the spirit of true neighbourliness and ubuntu on our part. How do we account for the fact that victims of xenophobia happen to be from South Africa's neighbouring countries and that some of those happen to be fellow Christians and possibly members of the Anglican Church in Southern Africa? For argument sake they could be from elsewhere in the world. The reality is that they are all God's children and they deserve to be treated in a humane way. "Now which of these three do you think seemed to be a neighbour to him who fell among the robbers?" He said, "He who showed mercy on him". Then Jesus said to him. "Go and do likewise." (Luke 10:37) The question in my mind has to do with the erosion in people's minds of South Africa's struggle for justice, freedom and equality. What happened to Archbishop Emeritus Desmond's vision of this country being a rainbow people of God? After being subjected to violence and oppression over decades, South Africans are supposed to shun and reject this phenomenon wherever it is to be found. Regrettably this picture of a country at peace with itself and with the rest of the world faded in 2008. This was when the picture of Mozambican Ernesto Nhamuave engulfed in flames woke the world up to South Africa's xenophobia. In fairness to all

peace loving citizens of this beloved land and there are many of those, I have to say well done for condemning the violent and reprehensible behaviour exhibited by some amongst our people. The challenge remains though for us to be like neighbours to those who are victims to the robbers. Jesus challenges us to show mercy on those who have fallen victim to the enemy on the Jericho road of life. In the time of Jesus, the road from Jerusalem to Jericho was notorious for its danger and difficulty. It was known as the "way of Blood" because of the blood which was often shed there by robbers. Things have not changed much in our time. There are numerous challenges facing people that some are ready to give up on life completely. These range from unemployment, homelessness, violence meted again women and children, abuse of drugs, etc, etc.

To say that God's people cannot be used effectively to address challenges facing the world in our time is incorrect. This will be tantamount to saying that God has failed in God's mission of transforming the world. As members of the AWF I suggest we are ideally situated to partner with God and God's Church in carrying out this agenda. We are called to love, to serve and to be in fellowship with one another and I dare add with the rest of God's people. We have been mandated as Jesus' disciples to share the love of Jesus with the world. Didn't He say to the church: A new commandment I give unto you, love one another as I have loved you. If there is this love among you, so will all men know that you are my disciples (John 13:34). Women destined for God's purpose are always guided by the principle of love in whatever they are doing. Without love and faith I dare say it will be impossible for



us to please God. Our greatest statesman ever, the late Nelson Mandela, in his autobiography, Long Walk to Freedom has this to say about love: "No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite."

Dear friends, we must bear the example of the Good Samaritan consciously in mind at all times. We are called to be humane, to practice Ubuntu and to be compassionate to all people irrespective of who they are. We have to show mercy even to the unlovable and to those we consider our enemies. According to Calvin in his Institutes of a Christian man, man was created for the sake of man. The equivalent of this statement in Zulu is that umuntu unguntu ngabantu. A person is a person because of others. No person is an island. We belong together. I am because you are. A person in African culture belongs in society and this excludes the notion of individualism. According to Calvin, people are not born

merely for themselves but must live for their neighbours. Francis Correia writes in a Facebook post-dated 1 April 2015 that: Our capacity to empathise, to feel with another, even an unknown other is part of what makes us distinctly human. It is from our ability to be affected by the pain and grief of another that many of the most heroic and poignant acts of humanity stem.

**Correia concludes:** Our God is not distant. God is not immune to our pain. God does not look from a heavenly side-line. Rather God is here with us now. God is with the child who lays suffering. God is present in the war zones, in the violence and the anger, suffering with the broken hearted. God is with us in our pain. God offers hope when all seems hopeless. God invites us to live in the reality of redemption; we are not alone. God invites us to live in the reality of the resurrection; in the promise of the fullness of life.

**Grace and peace,**

**Rt Revd Dr Dan Kgomoso  
Bishop of Mpumalanga**



## Diocese of Highveld celebrates 25 years of existence



Certificates of recognition were awarded to Past Diocesan Presidents who have played a pivotal role in establishing our Diocese and who contributed to the growth of the AWF. They also received gifts.

AWF members from various parishes were awarded with certificates of recognition. Branches, excelled in supporting Diocesan projects and responded timeously to Diocesan needs, were awarded trophies and certificates of recognition. We were blessed with the presence of our Bishop and parish Priests.

Before the celebration started, all AWF members together with the priests



from various parishes within the Diocese, paraded with their banners and placards "BRING BACK OUR GIRLS" in support of abducted Nigerian girls. Special prayers for the release of these girls were offered.

Our Events-team did a

sterling job in organizing an event of such a nature. There was joy, singing and dancing.

It was indeed a memorable day for all of us in the Diocese. We bless the Lord for this day.

- Pam



## Diocese of St Mark the Evangelist in the peaceful province of Limpopo Enhancing fellowship in the AWF

The AWF is a rich organisation, with an easy to follow constitution, guided by the eight aims and members who are living organisms, not just rate payers. Fellowship is at the centre of the organisation in the Diocese. We strive to fellowship in love; first love for God and also love for our fellow human beings. This is the greatest commandment, and God says if we love Him, we will follow his commandments.

In a quest to revive the AWF in the Diocese, the leadership has embarked on a project to visit branches individually. During the visits there is sharing at branch level on the Aims of the AWF; challenges which the branch might experience and deliberations on ways to ensure the members are revived and projects started.

We are called to go out, we cannot be Christians in an isolated place, praying and caring for ourselves only. Where will our good deeds

be? We need to find niches to carry out the purpose God created us for. We worship God in the smallest activity we do. Romans 12:6-8 encourages us to engage in the different purposes according to the grace given. Whatever we do for any person, we do it as a form of worship to God, and He who is the enabler will ensure we do it right and to the right measure.

One of the questions which the President posed to the members during AGM 2015 was: What are we doing with our members who are elderly and not able to join our activities anymore? These elderly women loved and still love the AWF, and definitely miss the fellowship. Giving up a day or part of a day to spend with these "golden oldies", really makes a difference in their lives and they cherish these moments. Several branches visited their senior members since the AGM such as: St Augustine, the President visited Mrs Jane

Selepe, Christ the King members visited Mrs Lephondo, and St Matthews visited Mrs Mary Motlanthe. These are precious moments that elderly people cherish which bring fellowship to their homes.





Left to Right: AWF St Bernard the Martyr and AWF Christ the King visiting Mrs Lephondo, an elderly member and stalwart of the AWF.

### Highlights of Quiet Day 2015 at St Bernard the Martyr

The Chaplain taught on exemplary lives of women from the Bible, how they feared God, how they spread the good news and even welcomed other believers in their homes.

Women such as Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, Mary the mother of Jesus, the Samaritan woman, Priscilla, Phoebe and Aquilla, and many others were mentioned. He also referred to women in the history of our church such as Manche Masemola, Agnes Mokgethoa, Monica, mother of St Augustine of Hippo, Teresa of Avilla, Cathrine of Siena. These women gave themselves up for the service of God despite hardships on their paths.

Women in community development and leadership should remain true to Christian principles, remain true to Christ and speak out.



The Chaplain of the AWF in the Diocese of St Mark the Evangelist, the Revd MN Mothiba, addressing AWF members during the Quiet Day.



The Chaplain further laid the path on how to achieve God’s purpose:

- Introspection: preparing the heart, being open to suggestions from God in your heart, allowing God to use you and hear the voice of God, forgetting what people may say.
- Have quality time with God: come apart daily and be in quietness, purify your soul in penitence, and try to ensure that your other senses do not disturb you.
- Have the inner drive/desire to change.
- Maintain spiritual/prayer partner(s).
- Be generous to listen to God in which ever way He talks to you.
- Be patient and humble.
- Guard against being irritable, critical of others and avoid derailment when in meditation or prayer, and do today what has to be done without postponing.

He concluded with a message Paul gave the Corinthians in 2 Cor.13:11-14



Some of the MU and St Mary Magdelene members who participated in the AWF Quiet Day.

We strive to remain united in Prayer, Service and Love. We are one in the Diocese.

- Kgabo Ledwaba



## Newly elected Executive members pledge to put God first



*President: Mimi Petros pledges to lead the AWF*

8 March 2015 was a very significant day in the calendar on the Anglican Womens' Fellowship in the diocese of Kahlamba. The day saw 90 members of the AWF from different Parishes witnessing the induction of the Diocesan Executive Committee.

Marking the importance of the day, Sombawo, Bishop Mazwi blessed the occasion with a solemn service. The executive, led by the President Mimi Petros, Vice President Bukeka Shenxane, Alternate Vice President Ntosh Ndaba, Secretary Thoko Damane and Treasurer Thami Daweti, committed themselves to lead the guild in the Diocese with diligence, and with God as their guide in executing their duties.

All members agreed that it takes the whole membership to ensure that the Executive dispenses of their tasks meticulously. A member remarked that it is our responsibility to give them all the support they need.

Confirming acceptance of the task, the newly inducted President expressed appreciation and delight for the vote of confidence bestowed in the Executive, indicating that with all the opportunities and challenges that come with their willingness to serve, she acknowledges and believes that the journey will not always be smooth, if the Executive has to walk it alone. The support and commitment of each member is vital.



AWF members from various parishes donated items to the hosting parish. "Giving" is one of the important principles that the guild embraces. The items included toilet paper, soap, candles, wine, wafers, etc. As we say: "No one has ever become poor from giving".

- Thobeka

### AWF members in the Diocese of Kahlamba march against Xenophobia and partake in a reviving retreat

On 1 May 2015 the Anglican Women's Fellowship in the Diocese of Kahlamba, took to the streets of Ezibeleni township in Queenstown to show their support to the campaign against xenophobia, chanting the slogan "We are Africa". We distributed leaflets containing information which sought to educate the community on the ills of discrimination with special focus to xenophobic tendencies. The women, determined to make a mark, had one supreme message: "We are all equal before the face of the Lord". The march was focussed on a strong belief that the church plays a very important role in carrying messages that seek to build social cohesion.



Diocesan President Ms Mimi Petros was leading the march. She addressed the participants and said: "As women under the banner of the Anglican Women's Fellowship, we cannot be quiet when there are incidents that destabilize our communities; - we will never endorse any form of violence. Let us thus stand together in the fight against xenophobia and any form of violence - we say: NO!"

The highlight of the day was an invigorating and serene Retreat that was led by our Chaplain Revd Makasi, who ensure she takes us through the day with biblical lessons that were geared towards growing the guild spiritually and ended with a prayer session which embraced the theme "The power of forgiveness". This solemn moment afforded all members time to reflect, examine, laying ourselves bear in front of the Lord, asking him to take over and guide our daily actions. Yes Lord, we are willing to walk in your footsteps. Grant us therefore strength and wisdom to be your servants. Amen!

## The AWF in the Diocese of Mbashe shines bright in her corner

The AWF in the Diocese of Mbashe started out with 9 parishes at the beginning of 2015. Since we started with "Operation Double Up", we have gained 6 new parishes. We are still working towards our aim with this project, which is to be 18 parishes strong by the end of 2015. Our membership has grown to 140. We give God all the praise and glory.

On 26 April we visited Dutywa Mahliwane - St. Paul's, to introduce AWF (still part of "Operation Double Up") and also to welcome the youngest organist, Konwaba Sfuba into the fold. All the pianists were blessed on this occasion. This is still in line with the aim to keep children off the streets.

On 20 May the Diocesan Executive accompanied Rev Voyiya and members of St. Chad to visit a very sick member in Tsomo, where Eucharist was served. This served to highlight one of our aims which is to visit the sick. When the need arises, we also do it on diocesan level.

Thanksgiving was a well-attended, episcopal event and was held on diocesan level at St. Cyprian's parish in Engcobo. Bishop S. Williams took his sermon from John 3:1-17. "Not only are we born in flesh, but also spiritually.

The Psalmz Gospel Group comprises mainly of AWF members and founded by the AWF president, entertained us. At the same event Mrs Nosiseko Gcanga, an MU representative gave a speech on a very sensitive topic on ULWALUKO - Our children are dying there and some learn to use drugs and liquor whilst at initiation schools. She urged women to become more proactive with their involvement in the lives of

the young people and she also asked that priests should educate these children on Christianity before going for initiation. Not only was this Thanksgiving an educational and blessed event, but also a fundraiser which was a huge success.

We attended a Unit Committee workshop, organized by the MU in the diocese of Mbashe. We learnt how they have arranged their Unit Committees to be in line with their Aims and Objectives and we intend aligning it to our Aims and Objectives as well. We were also taught about commitment, which is lacking in most of our members. As we are on "Operation Double Up", we have to liaise with parish priests for dates to visit their parishes to introduce AWF, but this is quite a slow process.

We are very proud to announce that our Guidelines Handbook has been successfully translated into isiXhosa by Mr. GBS Xundu, one of the writers in our diocese. We shall now submit it to the Provincial AWF to take it from there and do the necessary. We would like to challenge other dioceses to do likewise, by translating the book into their home language.

Our Mary and Martha Day Service will take place in Butterworth and we are planning to invite the poorest of the poor from neighboring schools and to give them jerseys. We are also inviting some of our members' children who are in distress and give them something to show that we care. We shall in future take care of the challenges of our members in the form of prayer and visits on Diocesan level as we believe:

"CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME".

- Pamela Mdaka



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## **“You raised me up to more than I could be”**

**There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven:  
Ecclesiastes 3:1**

My journey on the Provincial Executive Committee started in 2004 after the Provincial Council Meeting at Carmel in the Diocese of George.

It was a traumatic and tragic time in the life of the AWF. I was asked by Lillian Daniels to take over the stock for the remainder of her term. Two years became eleven years. It was an honour to serve God through the AWF. It was not always easy; there were times when I was totally overwhelmed, especially at Provincial Council Meetings. The hard work, late nights, early mornings, but it was worth it. God has called and equipped me.

The highlights totally overshadow the lows. The visits to the Dioceses, the love shared and relationships built, were amazing.

I thank all my sisters in Christ with whom I have worked over the years. You inspired and empowered me. Thank you for believing in me.

**God bless  
Ruby Whitehead**



**“Life is an exciting business, and it is most  
exciting when it is lived for others.”**

**- Helen Keller -**