

The Presiding Bishop's Charge - 2019

This year's Charge will be a slight departure from the normal style. Instead of a single address we will be dividing the Charge into three shorter talks. This will hopefully give us time to reflect on particular aspects of the challenge as well as have opportunity to discuss ways in which we can make progress.

Over these three days we will focus on:

1. Our REACH-SA Structure
2. Our REACH-SA Ministry and Workers
3. Our REACH-SA Strategy

Part 1

Our REACH-SA Structure

In January 2003 a fully loaded US Air commuter Flight 5481 took off from Charlotte International Airport. Less than a minute later the aircraft stalled and crashed, killing all on board. Lengthy investigations revealed some critical oversights resulted in this deadly conclusion. One major error was a gross undercalculation of the average passenger weight.

It was discovered that, up until this 2003 crash, US airlines were using an outdated calculation chart based on average adult weights in the 1940's. What had not been considered, was the steadily increasing weight of the average citizen living in the "MacDonald's" fast food era. Added to this, hand luggage was no longer a light briefcase or a fur coat, but heavy lap top bags containing multiple weighty devices. All this contributed to the inevitable deadly disaster.

The lesson of Flight 5481 has bearing on many institutions, not just the airline industry. There is a danger of "doing it the way we have always done" for all sorts of companies and organizations. Just ask Kodak. In the case of the airline industry, it can have deadly consequences. In the case of a church organization, it can have deadly eternal consequences.

Let me be clear, I am not talking about a need to change our gospel. That temptation is vividly and repeatedly warned against in Scripture. We are called to preach the unchanging gospel to our constantly changing society as it lurches restlessly from fashions to foolishness in search of happiness. Our challenge relates to the hard work required in bringing the gospel to as many people as possible in a world that has rapidly changed not just since the 1940's but since 1940! In these circumstances, we must be willing to regularly interrogate our structure and practice in order to make right adjustments and remain as effective as possible in our unchanging, God given mission.

CESA's REACH

It's become pretty much the elephant in the room, but the question needs to be put on the table. Is our federal denominational structure conducive to facilitating growth in our current South African context? Or does it help perpetuate an "over-realized autonomy" that works contrary to the goal of partnering effectively for gospel growth? (The very reason why we have a denomination.) This is especially challenging given the vast socio-economic diversity so evident in South African society.

In asking this question, I must add that several of our local churches do demonstrate gospel partnership across social and economic context, and it is a great encouragement to see. But the questions remain: Are we doing enough? And, are we effective in what we *are* doing?

Statistically we are struggling to grow and sustain ministry amongst the poorest and largest population groups in our country. Estimates put up to 50% of South Africa's urban population in townships.¹ We are seeing a rise in SA's middle class but it's still only 1 out of 5 people. One encouraging sign is that the black middle class has increased from 47% (2008) to 64% (2017).²

Top Ten Townships (2011 census)³

Township	Population	Neighbouring city/town	REACH-SA Church	Members / Adherents
Soweto	1,271,628	Johannesburg	2	120+
Tembisa ⁴	463,109	Midrand	1?	
Katlehong	407,294	Germiston	0	
Umlazi	404,811	Durban	4	600+
Soshanguve	403,162	Pretoria	0	
Khayelitsha ⁵	391,749	Cape Town	1	
Mamelodi	334,577	Pretoria	0	
Mitchell's Plain	310,485	Cape Town	2	100+
Daveyton / Etwatwa	279,033	Benoni	1	
Ibhayi	237,799	Port Elizabeth	0	
Total			11	

¹ <https://businesstech.co.za/news/general/132269/these-are-the-biggest-townships-in-south-africa/>

² <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/05/07/africa/south-africa-elections-inequality-intl/index.html>

³ The [2016 Stats SA](#) survey places significantly higher estimates on these population figures.

⁴ Some researchers place [Mdantsane](#) near East London (Buffalo City) as the second largest in South Africa.

⁵ [Khayelitsha](#) is reported to be South Africa's fastest growing township.

Statistics

Rank	Province	Population (2011)	GDP per capita (2013; ZAR)	REACH-SA Churches / Plants / Posts	Campus Ministries
1	Gauteng	12,272,263	94,179	26	3
2	Western Cape	5,822,734	80,839	36	3
3	North West	3,509,953	66,171	1+5	0
4	Mpumalanga	4,039,939	64,910	0	0
5	Free State	2,745,590	64,909	10	1
6	Northern Cape	1,145,861	61,388	0	0
7	KwaZulu-Natal	10,267,300	53,674	57	2
8	Limpopo	5,404,868	46,336	2	0
9	Eastern Cape	6,562,053	40,712	6	1
 South Africa		51,770,561	66,488	143	10

We are all aware that we live in a country with massive economic disparity. Much of the current political and social upheaval is a clear indicator of the country's economic, criminal, political and social frustrations.

There are many examples of challenges we face as a result of this disparity and social inequality. The fact remains that much change remains stagnant 25 years after Apartheid. This is reflected in our different churches. Uniformity in church workers stipends, for example, is a real problem. The question of opportunity is also a factor. Suburban churches are more able to secure large bonds and find local donors. Something which township and low-income communities will not be able to achieve on the same scale.

As I discuss these challenges with church leaders beyond our denomination, I note that they grapple with these same questions. The encouraging truth is that people *are* grappling with these issues and not ignoring them.

I regularly witness Christian ministries applying innovative and experimental tactics with varying degrees of success. Yet it is reassuring to see that people *are* trying different approaches to reach our communities for Christ. Several of God's people are going to the lost and establishing ministries to the poorest sectors of our population. This should not surprise us, because that is the Biblical picture of the church at work in the world. The surprise from the Bible's point of view, is that some who count themselves among God's people are *not*

participating in prayerful ministry and outreach to the lost, the poor and the marginalized.

Given the complexity of the challenge its clear we are not going to discover a secret key that opens an undiscovered path to ministry effectiveness here. Scripture teaches, and history confirms, that God grows His church through trials and hardship. Struggle and pain go with gospel growth and success. This does not mean, however, that we give up trying to do ministry more effectively and less painfully. It's part of our task to be honestly looking at our challenges and partnering to make workable solutions happen.

Lets consider our current structure and then some possible alternatives:

Federal Model: In essence, under our current Federal model, each local church largely carries responsibility for its own affairs (e.g. staff employment, ministry strategy). Each local church functions within the agreed framework of our CESA constitution and our Reformed Evangelical Anglican distinctives. Accountability is maintained through gospel workers and clergy being ordained and/or licenced by the Presiding Bishop. Each minister is employed by the local church but is accountable to the Bishops with regards doctrine and moral conduct. All properties and assets are registered in the name of the Central Trustees but with the interests of each local church constitutionally preserved (as long as they abide by the constitution and procedures of CESA). Synod has the final say (under God) in all our denominational affairs.

Each local church pays a 10% levy into to a central fund. This fund largely goes back into the regions to support needs and ministries in local churches. Allocations are also made toward administration, episcopal oversight, GWC training, conferences and Synod. In the years that we have had surplus income we have also been able to supplement a Church Planting and Church Development fund. (It's a concern for me that these growth funds are at the back of the queue and it's my prayer that we will be able to have more consistent funding for these church growth essentials in a future model.)

Some challenges with this system relate to preserving our partnership across a diverse range of church communities. A federal approach does also rely on the willingness of local churches to participate in national and regional structures and ministry initiatives. Not all churches pay their levies, nor do they always willingly submit to episcopal oversight. It's easy for a local church to become quite independently minded and function without any meaningful partnership or resource sharing with other REACH-SA churches.

This system also means the denomination functions on a relatively small budget. There is not enough income to pay full time Bishops and Administrators for every region unless we reduce allocations to local churches. This places quite a lot of pressure on our area bishops who have to balance their local church responsibilities with often demanding denominational issues.

Centralized Model: A central administration receives a large portion of all local church income and administers affairs from a central office. They would pay all clergy salaries, purchase and maintain buildings and take care of many other administrative affairs. The percentage of each local church's 'levy' or 'assessment' would be determined by a designated financial committee

This model certainly seems a more advantageous option in a country such as ours with its wide economic disparity. In theory more consistent stipends could be paid to workers across all communities. It's also true that wealthier churches can still manage to grow staff and facilities by gaining donors and project funding elsewhere (much like the former Model C government schools provide more teachers and facilities through charging higher school fees and creating a donor culture). This model is also intensely admin orientated and will require a significant number of employed staff. This could even offset any gains made by centralizing our denomination.

One other more Anglican variant of this model needs to be considered.

Diocesan System: Currently REACH-SA / CESA functions as a single diocese with five Areas or Regions. We also have associate REACH denominations in neighbouring countries. If we re-organized into multiple dioceses, we would effectively become a REACH-SA Province. Other REACH countries (REACH-Namibia; Zimbabwe, Mozambique etc) could also, effectively, be dioceses within the Province. Each one manages their own clergy, workers, funds and ministry strategy. The diocese receives a levy from each local church. From various enquiries I have discovered that this levy ranges from 10% to 50% depending on the church and diocese⁶. The Presiding Bishop and a Central Admin office would oversee the "Province" of REACH-Southern Africa. They would be funded by a levy from each diocese.

This more traditional Anglican system for REACH-SA was floated at the recent GAFCON Primates Meeting. The possibility of REACH-Southern Africa becoming the recognized GAFCON province in Southern Africa was briefly discussed but not formally moved. We would need to initiate further discussion from our side.

There is much to think about here. On the one hand, being the recognized GAFCON province in Southern Africa would certainly open the door to many disenchanting Anglicans who are seeking a home where the authority of Scripture is held above the whims and fashions of liberal churches and secular society. There are many people who seek an Anglican church that holds to the historic Articles and Reformation distinctives of the faith rather than the spirit of the day.

⁶ From personal discussions with other Anglican clergy I have learned that there are moves in some dioceses to return to a standard 10% levy on local churches.

There may also be some challenges. I don't think any of us would be keen on applying a parish system, which could restrict church planting. Would we also accept the wider expressions of Anglican practice (High Church and Charismatic) within REACH-SA? Historically the Anglo-Catholic disagreement was the reason for our exclusion from the Anglican Communion. Are we concerned that with our wider 'reach' we may lose the "E" in our REACH-SA distinctives? It's also true that most of our local REACH-SA churches are very low church in their practice. Would this more intentional Anglican ecclesiology facilitate growth and church planting in REACH, or would it inhibit it?

I'm not convinced that we are in a position to facilitate such a complete change into an Anglican Province without lengthy and expensive legal processes. It might, however, be possible to make some initial adjustments with minimal constitutional disruption, but some legal consulting would be needed.

Note: Since distributing drafts of this Charge I have received some very thoughtful contributions from our clergy. Several proposals centred around a version of a "three dioceses" model, with Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town being the centres, each under a full time Bishop and a part time admin team.⁷ Much more needs to be done in unpacking and testing the details of this proposed restructuring.

Lastly, a mild caution. Any wholesale revamps must be approached with caution. Sometimes the new management don't realize that the nail in the wall was there for a reason. We may remove something that seems obsolete, only to find the whole house can't stand without it.

So let us pray, talk and work together on a way forward, keeping our God given gospel mandate at the centre. We are about the building of God's Kingdom. Let us resolve to build together on what is right and wise for gospel growth in Southern Africa. May we have the courage to make right and prayerfully considered changes. And, may we be willing to put the bigger interests of the Kingdom above our own desires.

Doing all for His glory not ours.

⁷ This type of proposal was first tabled by our Chancellor during the Feb 2018 National Executive Meeting.

Questions

1. Would a centralized model provide a more effective approach to church planting and growth, especially in poorer communities and townships? How would you see this happening?
2. A centralized denomination would require a higher level of employed admin staff and local church oversight. What pros and cons would there be to this?
3. REACH-SA as a Province, providing alternative orthodox Anglican oversight? What advantages and disadvantages could this scenario present?
4. Is a three dioceses REACH-SA possible? What advantages would this give us? What are the potential disadvantages?

Part 2

REACH-SA Ministry

This year's Synod and Ministry Conference theme is "Building the Kingdom". We cannot be about the work of the Kingdom without godly and gifted men and women being identified, equipped and sent into the harvest fields.

I want us to consider today how best we can be doing that.

Ministry Workers

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." - (Matthew 9:37,38)

We are no doubt all conscious of the need for more workers in the harvest field. I don't think any of our churches could say that they have sufficient lay and employed workers equal to the task at hand. Missionaries, Church Planters and Church Workers are desperately needed. As always, finding and financing the right people is a challenge.

We must also not overlook the fact that the primary solution Jesus gives to this need is **prayer** (Matt.9:37,38). It is the Lord alone who sends out the workers. More than that, it's clear from these words that the entire enterprise is *all* the Lord's work. It's His disciples, His harvest, His sending, His workers, and His harvest field. This short verse is of such a weight in implication that it should drive us to our knees daily.

I wonder if much of our ministry problems relate to our lack of trust and prayer in this regard. It sometimes seems like we act as if the *harvest* is few and the *workers* are plentiful! Or that the harvest is thinning, and the workers must just look after the crop they already have? In my own heart I confess that sort of unbelief creeps in all too easily.

We certainly are facing many difficulties in the harvest task. Our economy (along with much of the world) is flagging. There is much political and financial uncertainty. Crime statistics are looking bleak, particularly here in Cape Town as we meet on the doorstep of a turbulent Cape Flats.

In the markets we are seeing a struggling economy. Our own REACH-SA financial reports have been showing notable a drop in levy income. This means most of you have had a difficult financial year.

We are also facing a western influenced, worldwide social trend which is turning ever more aggressively against Biblical truth. Social media is a strong and instant influencer here. We are all well aware of the growing move toward normalizing sexual relationships and gender constructs that contradict the God given picture in Scripture.

It may be said that we are facing overwhelming obstacles, and yet, it's in the face of just this type of context that Jesus says, the field is ripe for harvest!

I have said before that the economic squeeze must be seen as part of our sovereign God's discipline on His church. He is able to supply more than we could ever ask or imagine. Which means our lack has a purpose. Our hardships throw us back upon His sustaining grace and away from our sinful self-reliance. Financial pressures also lead us to be prayerfully careful with our limited resources. Shortages make our leadership more circumspect when it comes to investing in the right people. We cannot afford to carry people who lack giftedness, godliness and gospel gumption.

Financial limitations also lead us to be more creative in recruiting training and equipping lay workers for ministry in our local churches. I know of ministry teams that are combinations of retired volunteers, self-supported ministers and part time employees. Volunteer or self-supported ministry workers are the norm in many regions and countries today and we may be looking more and more at that scenario in years to come.

It's also important to be clear that the denomination is not sitting on pots of money. Given that we only collect a 10% levy from churches, we work with a relatively small amount of distributable income compared to the needs of our churches and ministries. Fortunately, we do not carry a large denominational staff and most of our income goes back into the churches. Even so, we can only supplement some people and projects and not exclusively finance them. If there is a surplus it is not invested in banks but rather in church building and church planting funds. This is the Kingdom investment that best befits the money God's people give to gospel ministry in REACH-SA. We want to be generous with gospel investment, including partnering and sharing what we have for the cause of Christ. I'm sure that desire echoes with us all.

Ministry Training

It's most appropriate that we meet at George Whitefield College in their 30th anniversary year. At this year's Gospel Workers Conference, we have been able to see and benefit first-hand from the faculty and facilities of this valued institution. We are grateful to the kindness of our God for providing this premier training facility to equip our future ministry workers. We affirm again that GWC remains our official theological college for men and women seeking to serve in our REACH-SA churches.

We remain aware, however, of the difficulty and sacrifice involved in coming to study full time at GWC. We are not ignorant of the fact that this move can be costly for many and even impossible for some. We are more than willing to find ways to navigate exceptional cases.

Yet it must also be remembered that hardship and sacrifice *is* part of gospel service. This must not be overlooked in an age that too easily values earthly comfort over Kingdom cost.

Our denomination and college leadership are not unaware of the difficulties involved with relocating for full time study. We want willing, godly, gifted men and women to be trained to the best possible standards. A lot of work goes into raising bursaries and funds in order to make residential Theological education as accessible as possible.

It is also true that not everyone can, nor needs to be trained at GWC. Very able men and women serve the Lord in many effective ways without a GWC Theological education or REACH-SA ordination. We certainly are called to study and progress as we seek to be more effective in the work of the Gospel. GWC is a part of that training spectrum, not the whole.

We realise that there is a growing need for more online, regional and local church based training in our country. I have long held that we should formalize a more comprehensive, nationwide training standard and network for our denomination. Both pre-college training (Ministry Apprenticeship) and post graduate training. A secondary network of Bible and ministry training centres could be a helpful boost to expanding our equipping network. Some discussions have already begun between Johannesburg Bible College and GWC and there are also other options to be explored in other cities.

More also needs to be done with regard to specialised training schools and courses for subjects like expository preaching, church planting, student ministry, Biblical counselling and missions. This is something for future conversations.

Curacy / Post Graduate Training

I've often been told that we are placing a great deal of emphasis on ongoing training for male graduates working toward ordained pastoral ministry but not on other ministry workers. I don't think we should apologise for our focus on the best possible training for our clergy. But we do need to work at increasing and widening the focus on training for other fields of local church ministry.

Currently we have a two year, post graduate Curacy program (LMin) for GWC graduates going into ordained pastoral ministry. There is no reason why the program can't be expanded into other streams such as Children's Workers and Women's Workers. We have already begun including women graduates on the LMin program, but it is time for us to be more intentional in this practice.

I have been in discussions with various role players to develop a two year 'on-the-job' LMin program for Children's Workers and Women's Workers and we hope to have the curriculum ready for implementation in the new year.

I also believe in the future we could look at LMin modules for Expository Preaching, Youth Ministry, Student Ministry, Church Planting, and Biblical Counselling. (The complexity of today's pastoral issues requires us to pay more attention to Biblical counselling ministry and I'm most encouraged to have various training opportunities being offered at this year's Synod.)

Women and Men and Ministry

Much has been said in previous synods and charges about the **role of women** in the church. We had a special focus on understanding Complementarian theology at last year's synod with excellent input from our guest speaker, [Carrie Sandom](#).⁸ I do not want to revisit all the details but I want to affirm again our convinced Complementarian stance in REACH-SA.

We see the Biblical picture of Male and Female in Genesis 1 and 2, created equal but within an order that includes male headship of God's creation. We see that order distorted and broken in our fallen creation (Gen.3) and we see that Christ restores that order in the New Creation, which we are called to reflect in the Christian church on earth (Eph.5; 1 Tim.2,3). God calls men to the role of headship in the home family and the local church family. The Bible affirms the equality of both men and women in the sight of God as well as the distinct and valued roles He has given to each gender. We do not have time to unpack this further [here](#).⁹

I realize this teaching flies in the face of our modern secular society as well as other Christian denominations and organizations who choose an Egalitarian approach. Given the context of where we are in society and the potential implications of our stance, we don't do this lightly.¹⁰

It is important for us to be clear minded and united as we go forward. There are loud voices opposing even the mere mention of distinctive roles for (just) two genders. History shows us that the church has often failed in these sorts of challenges by either capitulating to the mood of the day or retreating into rigid rejection of change. Neither of these approaches reflect a Biblical expectation for God's people to be constantly reforming our minds and actions according to the Scriptures.

The #metoo movement should not make us rally the defences and batten down the hatches. Rather it should cause us to honestly examine the Scriptures and our own hearts and prayerfully implement right and Biblical practice in our local churches.

We affirm the dignity and worth of all men *and* women who are equally made in the image of God - *and* equally fallen and in need of redemption through faith in Christ.

⁸ [Sandom, C \(2012\) Different by Design – Christian Focus](#)

⁹ See: [Smith, C \(2012\) God's Good Design - Matthias Media](#)

¹⁰ Further reading on the current debate:

[Beck, J.R. \(ed\) \(2005\) Two Views on Women in Ministry- Grand Rapids, Zondervan](#)

[Keller, K \(2012\) Jesus, Justice and Gender Roles – Grand Rapids, Zondervan](#)

[Dickson, J \(2012\) Hearing Her Voice – Grand Rapids, Zondervan](#)

(latest) [Kevin de Young critique of "Hearing Her Voice"](#)

We also call on Christ's redeemed men and women to live out their Biblical roles and exercise their Spiritual gifts in our local churches.

As much as we may also lament the sometimes liberal (and even intolerant) excesses of the politically correct brigade, there are also cautions against rejecting the sin that it *does* expose. We *do* need to repent of prejudice. We *do* need to call out abuse. We *do* need stand against injustice, hate and bigotry. The current level of violence against women and children is horrific and totally unacceptable. We are called to stand against this both in word and deed.

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves,
for the rights of all who are destitute.
Speak up and judge fairly;
defend the rights of the poor and needy.

(Prov.31:8,9)

Of course, this is a short visit to this discussion. I don't think we have done nearly enough in unpacking the gospel implications of Christ's love ethic in the context of our fractured society.

<>< ><>

As we affirm the roles of women from our Complementarian theology, here are some examples of how that could look in our REACH-SA context:

Our current denominational structures

- Women elected onto National Executive and Trustees.
- Women in senior administration and ministry support roles.
- Women serving in regional leadership roles (e.g. heading up community care networks or ECDs).
- Women serving in missions leadership roles

In our local churches

- Women represented on local church councils (diaconal role). My only caution would be with regards to Wardens given the nature of their task.
- Women leading ministries in church and para-church organizations.
- Specialized skills such as pastoral counselling (women to women).
- Specialized trainers and teachers in local church (e.g. administration; parenting; legal; finance; community care; ECDs; etc)
- Participating in public services.

In our Theological college

- Women being trained to the same standard as the men without discrimination.

- Women excelling in their specialized Theological fields (we need more women Theologians who hold to Complementarian theology).
- Women serving on staff and faculty at Theological college level.

Lastly: As we uphold ministry and teaching roles for women in our local churches, we must not give in to the mistake of creating some sort of secondary class of 'non-ministry' women who stay at home and raise children. The world does enough on its own to make stay-at-home mothers feel insignificant. I'm hope no one needs to be convinced of the high status the Bible gives to motherhood and parenting as well as the essential role that is given to those women who are married and have children. We must affirm both the high calling of ministry as well as marriage and motherhood - for those to whom God gives these gifts and responsibilities. It is also critical for us not to miss just how interconnected these responsibilities are (Titus 2:3-5; 1 Tim.2; 2 Tim.1:5; 3:14-17).

The Gospel Workers Licence

The establishment of the Gospel Workers Licence was an attempt to demonstrate a more formal recognition for all non-ordained ministry workers in our churches (both male and female). It was also seen as a way to get a wider range of recognised and licenced ministry workers into the field. The minimum requirement for this licence (the old Lay-Reader's licence) is the Explore Course Certificate. It must be added (to clear up confusion) that the Gospel Workers Licence is not automatically issued to all Explore graduates. The licence is specifically for those working in our REACH-SA churches, under the oversight of one of our Rectors, who also needs to initiate the application.

There are clear advantages to having licenced Gospel Workers:

- **Denominational Recognition:** Gospel Workers receive a profile across the entire REACH-SA family. They are included in our database of ministry workers and in so doing their qualifications and ministry are known and recognised by us all.
- **Transferability:** It is far easier for local churches to access and offer positions to those who are suitably qualified and formally recognized in our denomination.
- **Accountability:** Some may see this as a disadvantage but is it right and Biblical for us to be accountable to one another. This is not often welcomed in our individualistic and anti-authoritarian society, but proper church discipline and accountability is an essential part of God's church.

It has been noted that even with the Gospel Workers Licence we are still seeing little if any requests to have men and women licenced as Gospel Workers in our local churches. I'd be glad to hear more feedback with regards to the reasons.

Deacons

I know I'm not alone in being convinced that the role of Deacon is a Biblical role for both men and women. It seems to me that we have danced around this issue for way too long and some positive progress needs to be made. We came so close to ratifying women Deacons almost 20 years ago and no real progress has been made since.

Part of the problem is the perception of double ordinations (Deacon and Presbyter) and the way we apply the two responsibilities. I believe it's time for a clearer policy here and the first step is a proper review of our offices and how they are practiced. We did have a 'deaconing' service for women in our Handbook of Procedures, but it had not actually been ratified by the Synod of 2000 (only tabled) Its quite critical for us to clarify this going forward. I would be very glad if synod even gave us permission to re-establish the Deacon review committee and bring their recommendations and guidelines to the area councils for Synod 2020.

One other factor with regards to recognizing women Deacons. It is important to disconnect ourselves from the worldly notion that there is some sort of professional career advancement in mind here. The common perception is that one "progresses" from Deacon all the way to Bishop. Sadly, we too easily create that impression, even giving an unbiblical power status to the offices, particularly to the Bishop's role. Ministry is not a professional career, nor is it a ladder climbing exercise. If we do come across any ladders in the course of our ministry, the Biblical move would be to climb down not up! We are servants of the Master not superior saints. We wash others feet, not our own crowns.

Employment

We must add a final reality check here too. It's likely that none of these changes will open up a massive run of employment opportunities in our local churches and structures. In the current economic circumstances even some of our Rectors are having to find ways to supplement their income. It's also no longer unusual for married ministry workers to have a working spouse helping to supplement their income.

Ministry comes with hardship (Ac.14:22) but I must also add that our God is faithful. It has long been my experience that those who are willing to work hard and who serve willingly in the place where they are gifted and called to be, discover a God who is more than able to supply our needs -not our greeds. (Matt.6:25-34; 2 Cor.9:8). Yes, it may take some creative and prayerful approaches (and you should not expect any reward for sitting around doing nothing) but our God cares for His servants - through His servants.

And the Lord will grow His church!

In summary:

Progress -

1. Post graduate LMin ('curacy') training streams:
 - a. Pastoral Ministry
 - b. Women's Ministry
 - c. Children's Ministry

2. Gospel Workers Licence for both male and female workers. Rectors need to apply on behalf of their workers and commission them under their oversight.

We need further discussions with regards:

- a. Women Deacons or a Deaconate for women?
- b. Formalizing a wider network of recognized training institutions for Gospel Workers in our churches.
- c. Agreed upon standards and curriculum for Ministry Apprentice Training and Post Grad (curacy) training in our local churches and regions.

Questions

- Do we have the right expectations of GWC within the wider context of ministry equipping and training?
- Are we placing too much focus on employed ministry workers? Is training and engaging a lay-worker ministry force possible? How?
- Is the Gospel-Workers licence needed? Understood? Too complicated? News to some of us?
- Are we missing something important?

Part Three

REACH-SA Going Forward

Over the last two days we have noted and discussed some key challenges and necessary changes we need to consider going forward. In this third session I want us to pull this all together, as we go from here, seeking to fulfil our role in the Lord's Kingdom building commission. We will consider briefly our main strengths and weaknesses, revisit our mission and then share a vision for future growth.

REACH-SA Strengths

- **Teaching:** REACH-SA has, under God, remained a fellowship of churches who are centred on the Divine Authority of God's Word. Paramount in our ministry practice is our commitment to expository preaching and faithful teaching and application of God's Word. We affirm that church tradition and human reason take second place to "God's Word Above All Things".
- **Leadership:** Our Bishops are united in confessing the Lordship of Christ in their life and ministry. That may sound obvious but looking at the current state of the Anglican world, it's not something to be taken for granted. We praise God for women who serve the Lord in all our REACH-SA ministry and leadership structures.
- **Training:** We do place a strong emphasis on training and equipping workers for gospel ministry. We do not licence our workers lightly but expect our requirements to be attained and adhered to. Our emphasis on high standards for Bible teachers has also helped in birthing one of the finest Reformed Evangelical Anglican Theological colleges in Africa. George Whitefield College is a preferred study destination not just for REACH-SA, but for many other students from churches and dioceses across the continent.
- **Unity:** We have remarkable denomination wide unity on doctrinal essentials and Anglican distinctives. We are grateful to God for such a kindness. These days we are seeing more and more traditional denominations fracturing beyond repair as the abandonment of Biblical authority continues along with the resulting moral and ethical corruptions.
- **Network:** It has already been identified that there is much room for improvement, and possibly even some restructuring, across our denomination. In saying that it is good to see that there is a strong 'family' feel to REACH-SA. We do have some good gospel networks and friendships in place. Several local churches have partnered quite effectively across society's economic, colour and culture lines.
- **Financial:** Perhaps this one is unexpected to some, but the reality is that we are not in major financial crisis nor are we carrying huge unserviceable loans or debts. We have a good banking record and most of our local

churches have been faithful in repaying their bonds and loans (often ahead of schedule). REACH-SA negotiates favourable interest rates on behalf of all our local churches, and we all share in the same financing pool. This benefits us all, *if* we abide by our loan and levy agreements. If one church defaults on their financial commitments, we all suffer the consequences.

- **Evangelism:** It's been pretty much the bread and butter of CESA ministry over the 20th century. Our churches grew and multiplied through people hearing and responding to evangelistic preaching and the call to decision. Many in our gathering today bear testimony to hearing and responding to the gospel through the intentional evangelistic ministry of a CESA church. My wife and I are counted in that number and we give thanks to God for His gospel preaching servants, several of whom have since gone on to glory.

It was a delight to see how enthusiastically our churches responded to the #REACH500 campaign and it was a wonderful confirmation of the evangelistic heart that beats in God's people. It's this same evangelistic heart that will be indispensable to our future growth goals.

- **Church Planting:** It has been a joy to see some traction come from our challenge to begin fresh church planting initiatives in new and strategic population areas (Universities, New Suburbs, Growing Townships). I am delighted to report that our Church Plant and Church Development funds have been used to help kick-start and/or sustain 8 plants.
 - Red Post – UCT, Cape Town
 - Hope Church – Uitzicht, Cape Town
 - Cross Central – Parow, Cape Town
 - Masiphumelele Church – Cape Town
 - Christ Church Zwelihle – Hermanus
 - Lamontville Church – Durban
 - Christ Church Cascades – Pietermaritzburg
 - Christ Central Church – Soweto

It's clear that making designated growth funds available does help incentivise local churches to actively pray, plan and partner together for church planting. It has also been a great help to have our Generate arm providing ongoing assistance and focus on planting and growth through conferences and help networks.

REACH-SA Challenges

I'm conscious that it's easier to criticise faults than to commend progress. I confess that as a young Bible college student I thought I could tell the incumbent leadership a thing or two about running this organization. Now that I am in the position myself, I find myself quickly repenting of my foolishness.

Structural: We have already discussed our federal structure and whether or not we need to be looking at adjustments or changes. We are also seeing some churches plateauing or even declining beyond hope of rescue. Some stubbornly refuse help or intervention (even showing themselves to be suspicious of our help). The reality is, we do need to make collective hard calls about some dying churches and also more strategic decisions about locating new churches. We all need to look beyond our own patch. A clear growth strategy will help us more effectively make these decisions.

Leadership: As much as we celebrate our born-again Bishops and other gospel centred leadership, some questions do need to be asked about our leadership pipeline. How effective are we in identifying and mentoring future leadership? Are we making real progress in the transformation we committed to almost 20 years ago during our watershed reconciliation ministry conference? Is Christian leadership training side-lined because of our strong focus on training Bible expositors?

Economic: Quite a few local churches are grappling with financial shortfalls which are symptomatic of our struggling national economy. We live with the reality of financial hardship in the majority of our Southern African communities. This affects our ability to employ staff as well as stock the necessary resources for doing gospel ministry. Let me say again we have much to learn from God's discipline in this area, particularly in resourcefulness, sacrifice and sharing.

Social: We are living in an increasingly secular society. The Christian gospel is no longer tolerated as a good option for life but is now actively opposed by many. There is a concerted effort to demonize Christianity¹¹ in some very prominent social (and social media) circles. We live in what some call an "outrage culture" and this hyper-sensitivity even causes a sub-conscious pressure on us not to offend. Some of us may not even be aware of how we have subtly taken on pressure to avoid preaching the 'unacceptable doctrines' (e.g. hell and judgement) and naming the modern 'acceptable sins' (e.g. materialism and homosexual practice).

<>< ><>

All these obstacles, however, are not actually cause to despair. In many ways they are cause for encouragement, because its in just such an environment that the Lord caused the gospel to first take root 2000 years ago. If anything, it was actually worse.

¹¹ <https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/from-do-gooders-to-do-badders/>

Its important for us not to lose sight of this seemingly obvious truth. The church on earth is commissioned by Christ to grow His Kingdom in the midst of sinful and satanic opposition. It is out of such unlikely looking ground that God's Holy Kingdom grows. The doctrine of the sovereignty of God is a great comfort here. God has chosen those He will call in every age and in every place. In the midst of rampant idolatry, attack, apathy and apostasy. The Lord reserves for Himself a remnant who have not bowed the knee to Baal.

So let us remember that context in which we minister is not a lost cause, but a mission field!

The Mission of REACH-SA

The collective purpose of REACH-SA as a fellowship of churches must reflect the immense gospel need of our country and aim to fulfil the command that the Lord Jesus gave to his church:

REACH-SA is a fellowship of Reformed, Evangelical Anglican churches partnered together in our Christ given mandate to go and make disciples of Christ among all people in our country, continent and world.

We can only pursue this goal in dependence upon God in prayer and in reliance upon the powerful work of his Holy Spirit to change hearts through His Word.

It is with this mission in mind that we focus on four key objectives.

1. LEADERSHIP

REACH-SA leadership must impart the urgency of gospel ministry and model a passion to make disciples.

Leadership will focus on:

- Directing the Gospel Centred **Vision** for Growth
- Preserving missional **Unity** across regions
- Actively **Mentoring** a new generation of leaders
- **Guarding** our Reformed, Evangelical, Anglican distinctives
- **Applying** and Modelling Godly Biblical Leadership

A. **Communication:** The online age has radically changed how we communicate. It is vital for us to properly harness new forms of media to help convey our vision. Each area would need to appoint Media Rep. A national co-ordinator would then help to establish and maintain an effective online presence. This medium would help us to reach unbelievers *and*

inform believers. A well planned and executed media strategy is essential to a growth plan. Discussions have already begun in this regard.

- B. **Contact:** Our Area leadership play an increasingly important role in promoting and supporting a network of local and regional relationships between pastors and churches. We must be more intentional in this regard. The evidence shows that grass-roots relationships build more effective and long-term partnerships than top down instructions. What must not be missed is that leadership still need to initiate, facilitate and co-ordinate these connections.

2. EQUIPPING

REACH-SA is responsible to help provide resources, people and expertise that will assist churches in fulfilling their mission to make disciples of Christ.

This will include:

- i. Regional Ministry Training standards and assessment.
- ii. Clear pipeline for ministry training:

Local Church Ministry Apprenticeship → Theological Education (GWC) → Assigned Church for OJT / Curacy (LMin) → Licence and/or Ordination
--
- iii. Providing churches with resources for effective evangelism and outreach.
- iv. Providing our workers with resources to grow in their leadership.
- v. Assist pastors and churches with accurate assessments of the latest trends and threats in theology and church practice.
- vi. Prioritise church growth and church planting funds.
- vii. Regular Generate, Preaching and Ministry conferences and workshops.

3. CARING

REACH-SA aims to source and provide encouragement and care for our church workers who labour amidst much apathy and hostility to the gospel.

We aim to help sustain our churches and their leaders in their mission in a context which is discouraging and increasingly hostile to the gospel

This will include:

- i. Working for the wellbeing of pastors, their wives and other church workers to promote a long term, fruitful ministry.
- ii. Committed to Biblical church discipline motivated by love.
- iii. Developing localized support networks that reduce pressure on a small central leadership.
- iv. Developing focussed prayer initiatives and networks.
- v. Co-ordinating resources to help support gifted and godly workers in struggling communities.

4. PLANTING

REACH-SA leadership are to assist local churches in identifying strategic church planting areas and directing available resources.

This will include:

- i. Ensuring priorities remain people, not profitability.
- ii. Making strategic calls with our limited resources.
- iii. Targeting critical demographic. New Suburbs; Young families; Students; High Population Townships.
- iv. Providing training and assistance through our Generate network.
- v. Providing available funds and other resources.

It is with this mission, and these objectives in mind, that I finally outline our vision for building God's Kingdom through REACH-SA

Vision 2020

This consists of two tiers:

- A denomination wide 20 year strategy for church growth
- A local church challenge for 2020

1. Vision 2020: Is a denomination wide goal of establishing 200 local churches in 20 years.

Currently REACH-SA sits at about 143 local 'churches' (if we include our church plants and preaching posts (some of which are quite large).

In this breakdown, we have 112 potential "hub" churches (82 Constituent churches and 30 daughter churches).

The goal is to grow that total to 200 churches in 20 years. (Just over 4 per year) Current constituent churches will form the 'hub' for reaching a strategic population area (e.g. new suburb, high population township; growing numbers of young families; students). Training and resourcing will be channelled through these hubs.

I would recommend further studies examine our Bhekithemba 'model' (South Coast KZN). This one 'hub' church has established 10 daughter churches across the greater Umlazi area. Our most successful township church planting exercise.

We would love to replicate this in other areas. I'm glad to report that this conversation has been going for some time already and some momentum has already begun here in the Western Cape. I recommend you all take time to listen to Rev. Phumezo Masango's talk on township church planting when its made available online.

There is much more to unpack in this vision, particularly into the specifics around regions and cities. We will revisit this in future gatherings.

Now to the first and most immediate 'phase 1' of this Vision2020 plan.

2. REACH2020

Here is our REACH2020 challenge

Today I challenge each local church member to prayerfully commit to 20 evangelistic acts in 2020.

Make a similar chart to plot your progress.

- Invite friend to a Men's event
- Invite friend to a Women's event
- Develop a Bible Reading Relationship with an unbeliever
- Meet with someone for evangelistic and mission focussed prayer
- Seek out 20 personal evangelism opportunities
- Issue 20 invitations to church
- Pray for 20 missionaries / evangelists in a year
- Pray for 20 people who need Jesus all year
- Make 20 social media contacts you can witness to
- Begin a daily gospel reflection social media post
- Street Evangelism and tracts (still works in many of our contexts)
- Start a gospel discussion blog
- Write a letter sharing your faith
- Host an outreach dinner
- Attend an evangelism training course
- Start a community prayer group
- Host a coffee morning
- Participate in a short-term mission trip / outreach
- Join / Form a visitation team
- Start / Participate in neighbourhood care group.

Try and tick off **20 in 2020**

To help ensure this is effective each local church leadership needs to provide the opportunities for church members invite friends, family and colleagues to gospel gatherings (still the most effective means of gaining new visitors).

Some examples:

- TED type evangelistic talks (a specialist subject with gospel edge)
- Men's and Ladies events
- Marriage and Parenting events
- 'Hot topic' evangelistic sermon series
- Church social events (e.g. Heritage Day braai) with witness potential
- Debate evenings; Q&A sessions;
- Sharable social media pre-evangelism video clips.
- Children's events (Holiday Clubs; Family Days; Outings)
- Seasonal events (Carols, Easter Plays)
- Community care initiatives (e.g. Day Care; Food bank)

Some may think these are gimmicks or that its forcing someone to do ministry. That is clearly not our objective. (I certainly hope no one is in ministry because they feel pushed into it!) The purpose of our challenge is to provide channels and ideas for God's people to serve the Lord through opportunities for discipleship and evangelism (which cannot be separated).

I'm all the more convinced that we need to keep consciously returning to the call to be missional with our gospel. We too easily become comfortable or complacent. The secular world (both online and public) is also intimidating many believers into silence or shame. Our gospel is not socially accepted or even tolerated in many circles. Our response is not to be aggressive or 'fight back' but rather to 'love back' and sincerely and share the gospel with our lost, fractured, frustrated, broken world.

Like Jesus, we must seek to go into our world full of grace *and* truth.

I've been reflecting on the several parables Jesus taught about the coming of His Kingdom. Particularly the tension his teachings create in Matthew 24,25 regarding the need to be ready for his imminent return, and yet to also prepare for the delay.

"Therefore, keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

(Matt.24:42)

"Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns.

(Matt. 24:45,46)

Will the Master find His servants faithful *and* wise on His return? Will we be found to be feeding the servants at the proper time? Or will we be found feeding ourselves and exploiting God's servants (Matt.25:48f)? There are some sobering and fearful passages warning ministers not to expect heaven just because they wear a clerical collar. Your actions (or lack of it) betray your heart.

We servants must be about the Master's business, working hard in the delay, conscious of His imminent return. This is the perspective that must drive our service.

In 2001 we had our very first GWC hosted Synod. Meeting in this very place. It was during that Synod that the 9/11 planes hit the towers.

And the world was thrown into renewed turmoil.

And David Cook preached on the imminent return of the Lord Jesus.

Today we gather in this same place, and the world (and our neighbourhoods) are in renewed turmoil.

And the message remains, Jesus' return is imminent.

The Master will soon return and hold us all to account.

And in this delay, don't be lazy and do nothing.

And don't be selfish and beat and exploit the servants.

But make sure you are found to be about the Master's business when He returns.

So let us go forward, together.

Lord, give us Africa for Jesus.

iAfrika mayibuyele ku Jesu.

