

The fundamental role of the Listening Committee was to consolidate the message that comes from the Congress and to draft the Mission Charter which was meant to be one of the outcomes of the Congress.

NOTE: Kindly note that this document should be read in conjunction with the Mission Charter in order to provide information about the decisions taken at the Mission Congress. The next document in the pipeline deals with Strategic Planning and will be more of a Guideline document which will provide time frames for specific objectives. This will be sent out in Feb/ March. The final document which contains all the information about the Mission Congress will be sent out hopefully in May 2005. Please do not hesitate to contact the Mission Unit for more information.

THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA MISSION CONGRESS 2004

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1. Introduction

After a lengthy debate on the Vernon Rose Impact Assessment which was tabled by the Mission Unit at Conference 2003 in Pretoria, the idea of a Mission Congress was mooted. The Impact Assessment was commissioned by the Mission Unit in an attempt to establish the effectiveness of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa in Mission. The report applauded the MCSA for its powerful Vision and Mission statements, "A Christ Healed Africa for the Healing of Nations", and "God calls the Methodist people to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ for Healing and transformation" - as well as a sound Mission Strategy comprising four Mission Imperatives, namely:



- **Spirituality**
- **Justice Service and Reconciliation**
- **Evangelism and Church growth**
- **Development and Economic Empowerment**

The report concluded that while the MCSA had a Mission framework in place, there was no appropriate Implementation Plan. It was as a result of the Impact Assessment that our Conference resolved that a Mission Congress should be convened in 2004.

The fundamental purpose of the Mission Congress was laid down clearly by our Conference as follows;

"The purpose of the Mission should be to identify obstacles to Mission-and provide appropriate solutions" (Year Book, 2004 : 37.)

In an attempt to give effect to this resolution, the Mission Unit consulted with the Bishops and all the Unit leaders to determine the process to be followed that would ensure that we all sang from the same hymn sheet. The first meeting involving all our districts was held in Mthatha where it was unanimously agreed that a Steering Committee should be elected to take the process forward.

5. COMMITTEES

THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The following members were elected,

1. Presiding Bishop (chair),
2. Mission Unit Director,
3. Bishop Bill Meaker,
4. Mr Ivan Saamdaam,
5. Ms Sue Pretorius,
6. Ms Val Pauquet
7. The General Secretary of Conference and the Director of EMMU were co-opted.

THE LISTENING COMMITTEE

The steering committee also appointed people to serve in the Listening Committee for the Congress. The following names were appointed;

- Rev Vido Nyobole (chair)
- Presiding bishop
- Bishop Gavin Taylor
- Mission Unit Director
- General Secretary of Conference
- Rev Sephapho Sephapho
- Prof Simphiwe Mini
- Prof Steve Hendricks
- Ms Sue Pretorius
- Ms Paddy Brauteseth
- Ms Zodwa Memela-Kutu
- Mr Ivan Samdaam
- Rev Lauren Matthew
- Xolani Tutu

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIME LINE	MONITORING
To identify Land for Sustainable Livelihood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Advocacy programmes & projects to ensure sustainable use of MCSA Land To develop Theological and Biblical Material for our members and strengthen Ecumenical relations 	Bishops & Mission Unit & EMMU	To be determined by the Strategic Planning document	Conference
To promote commitment to sacrificial giving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intentionally encourage people to invest their time, energy and finances with the Church To encourage bequests to the Church. 	Ministers		Bishops

All our Districts were asked through their synods, to identify obstacles and solutions to mission and to submit them to the Mission Unit. These submissions were then tabled before the Bishop's meeting and divided into topics that would constitute the agenda for the Mission Congress. Out of this process sixteen topics were extracted which formed the main agenda for the Congress. In addition, a list of Conference resolutions which had been referred to the Mission Congress for appropriate responses, was also incorporated. These topics were then collated under each relevant Mission Imperatives, and Co-ordinators and Facilitators were appointed for each of the four Imperatives.

THE MISSION CHARTER

The Mission Charter was drafted by the Listening Committee and was presented before the Congress during the closing ceremonies and – according to plan - officially signed by the Presiding Bishop. Copies of the Mission Charter were distributed in Mthatha and further copies were sent to all the delegates and Facilitators via the Office of the Presiding Bishop.

A CHRIST-HEALED AFRICA

THE NEXT STEP

Many people were concerned that the process should not collapse after so much work had been done. The Mission Unit Steering Committee was asked to take the process forward in order to keep the fire burning. This booklet comes to you as part of our strategy to maintain the momentum. The responses from the Congress will be taken to Conference in 2005 for ratification.

THE ROLE OF DISTRICTS

It is incumbent upon all our districts to keep the flame burning by communicating the outcomes of the Congress so that Societies and Circuits should be in tune with the outcomes and the on-going process of the Mission Congress. A suggestion was made that districts should organize their own Mission Congresses in order to ignite the fire in their areas. It is hoped that Districts will implement this decision which will significantly impact their Mission work. The doors are open to all our districts should they need support.

I want to take this opportunity once more to express my sincerest gratitude to the Presiding Bishop, to all our Bishops, Steering Committee, the Listening Committee, the Bishop of the Clarkebury District, the Logistics Committee, the Co-ordinators, the Facilitators, the staff of the Mission Unit, and to all the volunteers for putting their full weight behind this important event in the life of the MCSA, and for making it a wonderful success. I also want to thank all the members of our Church who prayed fervently for the Congress.

I trust that every Methodist throughout our Connexion will strive to become a missionary, and thus be an agent of transformation. Let us respond with a resounding "yes!" to our Presiding Bishop who asks whether history will judge the Mission Congress as a watershed moment in which the Church was restored and the flame re-ignited in the hearts of the people called Methodist.

God bless you

Gcobani G. M. Vika

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Date : 25 January 2005

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JUSTICE & SERVICE

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIME LINE	MONITORING
To combat racism, sexism and all other forms of discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop programmes and projects that build cross racial relationships Move towards truly integrated circuits through non-racial stationing of ministers and to set targets as well as performance measurements for each district. 	Bishops & Circuit Stewards	To be determined by the Strategic document	Presiding Bishop, CE/ Conference
To develop a vigorous response to HIV & Aids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each District encouraged to establish or strengthen similar existing structures for Multi-disciplinary HIV & AIDS & Poverty Alleviation Group to implement appropriate actions for the context 	Bishops & District Mission Secretaries		Bishops & Synods
To become a Church in solidarity with the poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revive the prophetic role of the church on critical social issues 	Presiding Bishop, Bishops & Ministers		Conference

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIME LINE	MONITORING
Co-ordinated programmes for Christian education	To develop a comprehensive model of Christian Education for the whole MCSA, while taking cognizance of other faiths.	EMMU & Mission Unit	To be determined by the Strategic Planning document	Conference
To provide training in Evangelism	Districts encouraged to arrange Seminars and Evangelical Campaigns annually	Bishop & District Mission Secretary or other person appointed by the District Executive		Synods & Mission Unit
Training Ministers for the African Context	Radical review of Ministerial training within the context of Mission	CE		Presiding Bishop
To become a more Youth & Child centred Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create space and opportunities for Children & Youth to express their faith freely through appropriate and well planned programmes ● Actively involve Children and Youth in the life of the Church by providing necessary resources for Mission. 	Local Ministry		Supts & Bishops & Connexional Youth Coordinator

CHARTER OF THE MISSION CONGRESS OF THE MCSA ADOPTED IN MTHATHA IN NOVEMBER 2004

Where there is no vision the people perish.
Where there is no passion the vision dies.

God has given us the vision of
"A Christ healed Africa for the healing of nations".

We have been challenged to share more deeply God's passion for healing and transformation.
As members of the Methodist family, we came to Mthatha to face this challenge.
We found direction as the Holy Spirit inspired us to continue the pilgrimage which has led us through Obedience 81 and the Journey to the New Land to the present day.

We recognize the vital importance of the local church and rejoice in the many circuits and societies where life-giving mission is taking place.

In trust and obedience we commit ourselves anew to the **four imperatives for mission** in our time
A deepened Spirituality as individuals and a Christian Community.
Justice and Service in Church and Society.
Evangelism and Church growth which build up the people of God.
Empowerment and Development which give dignity and new purpose to those who have been deprived.

We resolve to take intentional and sustained action to implement these imperatives in such areas as:

- The Healing Ministry.
- Deepening our understanding of African and other Spiritualities.
- Co-ordinated programmes for Christian Education, information and communication.
- Building meaningful relationships that transcend racism, sexism and all other forms of discrimination.
- A vigorous response to the crisis of HIV and AIDS
- Informing our prophetic ministry by research into socio-economic issues.
- Identifying land for sustainable livelihood.
- Sacrificial giving.
- Becoming a church in solidarity with the poor.
- Providing training in evangelism
- Training Ministers for the African context.
- Implementing Anti-Bias training.
- Becoming a more youth and Child centred church.

We invite the people of God throughout Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland, to join us as we put ourselves at God's disposal to carry forward God's mission in this sub-continent.

Let us each renew our personal commitment to Jesus Christ and seek to grow in grace and in love for God, one another and the world.

Let us ensure that our mission of healing and transformation is holistic, embracing all the imperatives for mission.

Let us participate in God's mission in ways that are appropriate to our local contexts and in partnership with the wider church and community.

Let us celebrate our diversity and the gifts God has given to each of us; support each other, challenge each other and pray for each other.

Finally, we encourage every Circuit to set aside the last Sunday in May to celebrate what God is doing among us and to commit ourselves once again to our high calling in Christ.

God bless this Africa which is our home.
Give us grace to follow Jesus the healer,
Jesus the peacemaker,
Jesus the Saviour of the world,
Jesus the Lord of all life.
Restore us and make your face shine on us
That we may be saved.

3. MISSION OBJECTIVES

1. Healing ministry
2. Deepening of our understanding of African and other Spiritualities
3. Co-ordinated programmes for Christian Education, information and communication.
4. Building meaningful relationships that transcend racism sexism and all other forms of discrimination
5. A vigorous response to the crisis of HIV/Aids
6. Informing our prophetic ministry by researching socio-economic issues.
7. Identifying land for sustainable livelihood.
8. Sacrificial giving
9. Becoming a church in solidarity with the poor
10. Providing training in Evangelism
11. Training ministers for the African context.
12. Implementing anti-bias training.
13. Becoming a more youth and child centred church

4. THE FOUR PILLARS

There was a Co-ordinator for each Pillar

- 4.1 Spirituality - BISHOP PURITY MALINGA
- 4.2 Evangelism and Church Growth - BISHOP PAUL VERRYIN
- 4.3 Justice and Service - BISHOP GAVIN TAYLOR
- 4.4 Development and economic Empowerment - BISHOP ZIPHO SIWA

SPIRITUALITY

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	TIME LINE	MONITORING
To promote healing ministry	Local churches encouraged to hold regular healing services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Laying of hands & using symbols such as Holy oil, incense, candles, water etc ● Free up liturgy to provide more opportunities for holistic healing in our services Provide training & equip all people for healing ministry	Local Ministers, Evangelists, Biblewomen, Deacons	To be determined by the Strategic Planning document	Superintendents & Bishops
Deepening our understanding of African & other spiritualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Exposing & training our people in African spirituality & other spiritualities ● Encourage use of African symbols in worship, e.g. drums, cymbals, horns, harp, lyre, pipes, flutes, whistles. ● Facilitate growth of members towards spiritual maturity through bible studies, prayer cells, Alpha courses, Emmaus sessions etc. 	Local Ministers, Evangelists, Biblewomen, Deacons		Superintendents & Bishops