

DIOCESE OF PORT ELIZABETH
Anglican Church of Southern Africa



THE CHARGE OF
THE RIGHT REVD DR EDWARD RONALD DANIELS

THEME: “Embracing Change with Faith, Unity and Purpose”

TWENTY- SIXTH SESSION OF SYNOD

FAIRVIEW SPORTS CENTRE, WILLOW ROAD, FAIRVIEW

23RD OCTOBER 2024

BISHOP'S CHARGE TO DIOCESAN SYNOD

23 October 2024

My beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, esteemed members of the clergy, and the laity of the Diocese of Port Elizabeth, honourable guests. As I stand before you today, on the precipice of retirement, my heart is filled with a multitude of emotions:

- **Gratitude**, for the journey we have shared.
- **Hope**, for the future that lies ahead. And
- **Love**, for this diocese and all of you, which words can scarcely convey.

Today, I wish to offer you an exhortation, a charge if you will, as we contemplate the path that lies before us in the wake of my immanent departure.

1. Embrace unity in diversity

I urge you to continue in the spirit of unity that has been our strength, even as we celebrate our diverse gifts and perspectives. Remember, it is through our varied lenses that we gain a fuller understanding of God's purpose for us. Let us then move forward as a diocese, united in our diversity, striving always to be the embodiment of Christ's inclusive love in the world. As we gather in this convocation, let us remember that we are brought together not by the sameness that the world often seeks but by the rich tapestry of diversity that the Divine has woven into the very fabric of creation.

In the scriptures, we are reminded, "...4 Now there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, 5 and there are varieties of services but the same Lord, 6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone." (1 Cor. 12:4-6). This passage is not merely a testament to the variety of gifts bestowed upon us by the Holy Spirit, but a clarion call to recognise the inherent beauty and strength that lies within our differences, united under the banner of our shared faith.

As members of the body of Christ, each one of us is likened to a unique part, indispensable, with a role that contributes to the health and efficacy of the whole. Just as the eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you," we, in our diversity of thought, culture, and expression, cannot and should not dismiss the value that each brings to the collective mission of our church. In unity, there is strength; in diversity, there is richness; and in both, there is a reflection of the kingdom of God.

In this era, our world is rife with divisions and discord, sowing seeds of distrust and disunity among peoples and nations. Yet, it is precisely within this context that our message of unity in diversity becomes not just relevant but essential. We are called to be beacons of light in the darkness, exemplars of love that

transcends boundaries, and architects of bridges over the chasms that separate humanity.

Our mission is to demonstrate that unity does not necessitate uniformity, and that in our loving embrace of diversity, we echo the divine harmony intended by our Creator.

Therefore, as we deliberate, discuss, and discern the path forward for our community, let us do so with hearts open to the diversity amongst us. Let us listen with empathy, speak with kindness, and act with love. Let us remember that in every face, there is the image of God, and in every voice, there is a reflection of His word. Our unity in diversity is not merely a goal to aspire to; it is the very essence of our identity as a faith community.

So, may our discussions be fruitful, our resolutions inspired, and our actions guided by the Holy Spirit. And may we, through our embrace of unity in diversity, become a living testament to the power of faith to unite, heal, and transcend all barriers.

2. Seek discernment with open hearts

As the sun sets on my tenure as your bishop, a tenure graced with both challenges and triumphs, joys and sorrows, I stand before you with a heart full of gratitude and a spirit imbued with serene hope.

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, as we continue to navigate the waters of our shared journey, we find ourselves at a juncture that calls for deep reflection, prayerful consideration, and discernment.

It is in moments such as these that our faith is both tested and fortified, revealing the true strength of our collective spirit and the steadfastness of our commitment to the path laid out by our Saviour.

As the process to elect a new shepherd for our diocese unfolds, I call upon each of you to engage in this period of discernment with open hearts and minds. Allow yourselves to be guided by the Holy Spirit, trusting that God will provide a leader who will carry forward the mission of the diocese with wisdom, courage, and a pastoral heart that echoes the love of Christ for all.

The process of electing a new bishop in the Anglican Church can sometimes be seen as quite political, leading to humorous/cynical remarks about the process. There often exists a tension between the spiritual nature of the church's mission and the human dynamics that often play out in such important decisions. The joke about "inviting the Holy Spirit to the next elective assembly" underscores the idea that the process can become so entangled in politics and personal agendas that the true spiritual discernment might seem sidelined. It's

a reminder to all involved to keep the focus on prayer and spiritual guidance, even amid necessary administrative and political considerations.

In the Book of Proverbs, we are reminded, "...5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6). This profound piece of wisdom calls us to a posture of humility and trust, acknowledging that true discernment comes not from relying solely on human wisdom but from a heartfelt pursuit of divine direction.

As you seek this discernment, do so with open hearts; open to change, open to being challenged, and open to the surprising ways God may choose to reveal His will to us. It is only through this openness that we can truly hear the whisper of the Spirit, guiding us through the complexities of the decisions that lie ahead.

Furthermore, I urge you to approach this process with a spirit of unity, remembering that though we may have differing views and opinions, we are bound together by our common faith and our shared commitment to the Gospel. Let us listen to one another with empathy and respect, seeking not to **persuade** or **prevail** but to understand and discern the collective wisdom that emerges when God's people come together in prayerful consideration.

3. Renew your commitment to mission and service

We are called, each one of us, to a life of mission and service, a calling that does not diminish with time but rather deepens, urging us to renewed commitment and zeal.

Our Lord Jesus Christ's mandate to His disciples, to go forth and make disciples of all nations, remains our imperative. It is a charge that transcends time, cultures, and changing seasons of life, including this season of transition for our diocese.

As we stand at this crossroads, I exhort you, beloved in Christ, to renew your commitment to the mission and service that defines us as followers of Jesus. This renewal is not merely a call to action but a call to a deepening of faith - a faith that is alive, active, and attuned to the needs of the world around us.

Renewing our commitment to mission and service means recommitting to the Gospel in its fullness, embracing both its comfort and its challenge. It means reaching out to the marginalised, the forgotten, the 'unlovely', and the suffering with the compassionate heart of Christ. It means standing for justice, peace, and the dignity of every human being. And it means nurturing our communities of faith so they may be places of welcome, healing, and transformation.

As I reflect on the time I have spent among you as your bishop, I am struck by the countless ways I have seen the love of Christ manifested in our diocese. Through acts of kindness, through moments of shared prayer and worship, through the dedication to service and the pursuit of justice - I have seen the face of Christ in you.

This gives me great hope and confidence as I entrust this charge to you, praying that the work we have begun together will continue to flourish.

As I look to the future, I do so with the assurance that comes from faith in Christ, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). I entrust you to the loving care of our Heavenly Father, and to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. May they guide, protect, and inspire you as you continue to respond to the call to mission and service.

Though my role among you is changing, my love and prayers for you remain steadfast. I am confident that, together, you will continue to build upon the foundation we have laid, advancing the Kingdom of God in the diocese and beyond.

4. Prioritise spiritual growth

I extend to you an exhortation; a call to prioritise spiritual growth as the bedrock upon which we embrace God's mission for God's world.

The journey we are called to is not for the faint of heart. It is a path marked by the signs of the cross, illuminated by the light of Christ, and guided by the Holy Spirit. Our mission, to be bearers of light in a world that often wanders in shadows, requires a foundation rooted in deep, personal, and communal spiritual growth.

For it is from the wellspring of our relationship with the Divine that we draw the strength, wisdom, and compassion necessary to carry out God's work in the world.

5. Cultivate a life of prayer and worship

Commit to cultivating a life rich in prayer and worship. Our prayer life is the compass that directs our hearts towards God, aligning our will with His. It is through prayer that we find peace in tumultuous times, strength in weakness, and clarity amid confusion. I encourage you to establish regular rhythms of prayer, both individually and as a community. Let worship be at the centre of your life together, for it is in worship that we encounter the living God, whose love transforms and equips us for our mission.

As we gather for worship, let us remember the power of communal prayer. In Matthew 18:20, Jesus reassures us, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." This profound promise invites us to

understand that our collective worship has the power to invoke the presence of Christ in our midst, igniting our hearts and emboldening our spirits for the tasks that lie ahead.

6. Engage with scripture and tradition

As we seek to grow spiritually, let us immerse ourselves in the Holy Scriptures and the rich traditions of our faith. These are not merely historical documents or rituals but living wells from which we draw knowledge, inspiration, and guidance.

In them, we find the narratives of those who have walked this path before us, encountering God amid life's complexities.

Engaging with Scripture and Tradition invites us to delve deeper into the foundational beliefs of our faith, including the 39 Articles of Religion. These Articles, rooted in the Anglican tradition, serve as a guide to understanding how Scripture informs our beliefs and practices. They affirm the centrality of the Holy Scriptures as the ultimate authority for our faith, emphasizing that they are sufficient for salvation and essential for spiritual growth.

The recent motion on prayers of blessing for those in same-sex relationships, which was defeated in the Provincial Synod, should not be seen as a rejection of persons. Rather, it is part of a robust and ongoing debate about how Scripture speaks to the institution of marriage. As we navigate these complexities, we must uphold the Biblical standards regarding the authority of Scripture, which - as Martin Luther reminds us - is above all.

The 39 Articles remind us that the teachings of Scripture are not just historical accounts but living truths that continue to shape our lives today. They encourage us to interpret Scripture through the lens of tradition, acknowledging the wisdom of those who have gone before us while remaining open to the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit.

In this way, we find both a solid foundation and a dynamic pathway for our spiritual journeys, drawing from the wellspring of faith that sustains us through life's challenges. As we engage with these texts and traditions, we are invited into a deeper relationship with God and a more profound understanding of our place within the body of Christ.

7. Live out the call to service

Henri Nouwen profoundly reminds us that true spiritual growth is inextricably linked to the call to service. He speaks of service not as an obligation but as a way of living out our faith in action, grounded in humility and compassion. Nouwen teaches that service is at the heart of the Christian life, calling us to be vulnerable, to listen, and to be present with others in their brokenness. This

is where we meet Christ - in serving, we discover the face of Jesus in those we serve.

The reference to Henri Nouwen's view on service, as described in the statement, can be drawn from several of his works. One of the most notable is "The Wounded Healer: Ministry in Contemporary Society", where Nouwen emphasises that Christian service arises from vulnerability and brokenness, rather than from strength or obligation. He discusses how service and ministry are opportunities to connect with others in their suffering and need.

Nouwen also touches on this in "Life of the Beloved", where he speaks about love in action as an essential part of Christian discipleship - an outward expression of the inner transformation that comes from following Christ.

These themes of service as "love in action" are central to Nouwen's theology, which always points to the inseparable link between love for God and love for others, lived out through humble and compassionate service.

As we grow in our relationship with God, let our faith manifest in acts of love, justice, and mercy in our communities and beyond. Christ himself came not to be served, but to serve. Let us be the hands and feet of Jesus, serving those in need, advocating for the voiceless, and stewarding the creation entrusted to our care. Service is faith lived out in action, a dynamic expression of our call to love our neighbours as ourselves. In this way, we embody the Gospel and participate in God's work of healing and reconciliation in the world.

8. Foster community and unity

In this sacred mission, we are not solitary travellers. Rather, we are integral members of the body of Christ, where every individual plays a vital role in the overall health and effectiveness of the whole. As Paul reminds us, "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it" (1 Corinthians 12:26).

Therefore, we must prioritise the cultivation of community and unity, recognising that our strength lies not in isolation but in our interdependence.

In a world increasingly divided by culture, ideology, and circumstance, we, the Church, must stand as a living example of what true unity looks like. In his book *The Contemporary Christian: Applying God's Word to Today's World* (1992), Stott emphasises the need for Christians to have a broad and inclusive vision of God's work in the world, urging believers to transcend local or national boundaries in their mission and outreach. "We must be global Christians with a global vision because our God is a global God." This vision calls us to rise above our differences, to embody a love that transcends borders, and to showcase the transformative power of the Gospel. But our unity is not

superficial; it must be rooted in love, mutual accountability, and a commitment to one another. We are called to be agents of healing and transformation, going beyond the act of forgiveness toward a covenantal commitment to live as one family under God. A family that is vibrant in worship, effective in its structures, and intentional in discipling others.

In this pursuit, we must become a community that, despite the challenges and imperfections, reflects the Kingdom of God here on earth - a community marked by grace, mercy, and peace. In doing so, our love and mutual support will testify to the world of the life-giving power of the Gospel.

9. Be Open to the leading of the Holy Spirit

Let us be ever open to the leading of the Holy Spirit, trusting in God's guidance and provision. Our plans, while important, must be held loosely, ready to yield to the Spirit's promptings. For it is God who directs our path, and His ways are higher than our ways.

In the busyness of life and the myriad responsibilities that come with our calling, the necessity of personal spiritual growth can sometimes be overlooked. I urge you, dear friends, to make your relationship with God a priority. Deepen your prayer life, immerse yourself in the Scriptures, and partake of the sacraments with renewed devotion. It is in drawing closer to God that we find the strength and direction to lead others.

10. Face change with courage and hope

As we stand at the crossroads of change, a profound truth emerges: our journey with God is marked by a blend of uncertainty, anticipation, and, at times, fear. Yet, within the heart of our faith lies the promise of God's enduring presence and the constant renewal of His creation. Change, while unsettling, is also the fertile ground from which new beginnings spring forth.

Courage and hope are not mere words; they are the bedrock of our faith. Courage empowers us to step forward even when the path is unclear, trusting in God's guiding hand.

It allows us to embrace the unknown, secure in the knowledge that our steps are ordered by the Lord. Hope lifts our gaze from the immediacy of our circumstances to the eternal promises of God's kingdom. It reassures us that, despite the challenges we face, our ultimate destiny is one of joy, peace, and communion with God.

As you navigate the changes ahead, approach this season with a spirit of expectancy. Look for the ways in which God is moving and making all things new. Be attentive to the whispers of the Holy Spirit, guiding you into deeper truths and more profound expressions of love and service. The changes you

encounter are not merely organisational or structural; they are opportunities for spiritual growth and renewal, both personally and collectively.

In South Africa, we face significant challenges: economic instability, corruption, and social inequality. These realities can cast a shadow of uncertainty over our hopes for the future. Yet, as followers of Christ, we are called to be a people of hope. Our hope is not rooted in worldly assurances but anchored in God's faithfulness, goodness, and love.

Amid these trials, we must remember that we are called to be agents of change and transformation in our communities. The church has a vital role to play as the conscience of our nation - advocating for the marginalised, offering moral guidance, and fostering unity in diversity.

In times of unrest, let us embody the love of Christ through acts of kindness and service, ensuring that hope is not just a sentiment but a lived reality.

I encourage you to engage with the changes ahead as active participants in God's creative work. Each of us has a role to play in the unfolding story of our community. By offering our gifts, time, and hearts to serve one another and the world, we become co-creators with God, nurturing new beginnings.

As you embrace the changes that lie ahead, do so with courage and hope, inspired by the assurance that these new beginnings are part of God's divine plan for our lives and our community. Together, let us journey into the future, excited to see the new things God is doing among us. May your hearts be open, your spirits willing, and your hands ready to join in the work to which you are called, for the glory of God and the good of His people.

As I step back from my role as your diocesan bishop, know that my prayers and love will remain with you always. It has been a profound blessing to serve among you, and I look forward with eager anticipation to witnessing the ways in which God will continue to work in and through you.

May the peace of the Lord be with you all, now and forevermore. **Amen.**

26th Session of Synod – Bishop’s Charge, October 2024

NEW CLERGY WHO HAVE JOINED THE DIOCESE:

Revd Pamela Berning – From the Diocese of George

ORDAINED IN THE DIOCESE:

To the Diaconate:

2022

Duma Phumzile Moffat Caluza
Thembela Sixaba

2023

Robert Douglas Falconer
Patience Bulelwa Gogo
Sharon Anne Kleinsmidt
Thembela Harriet Sixaba

2024

Zolani Gaxamba
Zolani Brian Mqoqi

To the Priesthood:

2022

Andrew Euan White

2023

Quinton Craig Blignaut
Daniswa Eunice Blouw
Carol Ann Brand
Duma Phumzile Moffat Caluza
Karen Elizabeth Du Preez
Nizam Abdurahman Kader
Wendy Betty Lutchman
Lindiwe Maliti
Sabelo Ndlebe
Siphiwo Sweeny Salman
Thandiwe Cynthia Stokwe
Andile Patrick Tom
Michelle Lauren Werth
Christopher George Prince

2024

Robert Douglas Falconer
Zolani Gaxamba
Patience Bulelwa Gogo
Sharon Anne Kleinsmidt
Maureen Lamb
Zolani Brian Mqoqi
Themabela Harriet Sixaba

LEFT THE DIOCESE:

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RETIRED:**Stipendiary**

Jogra Gallant
Nicolette Nelleen Leonard

Self-supporting (turned 65 after Synod 2022)

Vuyisile Gladman Bell
Sharon Odette Brandt
Veronica Dobo
Beverley Gamiet
Sarah Jacobs
Christopher George Prince
Ruby Xoliswa Zauka

CALLED TO ETERNAL REST:**Clergy**

Revd Margaret Roux
Revd Jackie Trollip
Revd Lovemore Mofu

Lay (Including all priests' spouses):

Mr Geoffrey Brown – husband of Revd Angela
Mrs Nomvuyo Xhallie – widow of Revd Joseph
Mrs Glenda Taylor – wife of Revd Richard
Mr Aubrey Joubert – husband of Revd Pamela
Mrs Molly Stansbury – widow of Revd Alan

May they rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen!