iindaba

The Ad Laos for the Diocese of Port Elizabeth, together with parish news
Anglican Church of Southern Africa

Vol 37 No 10 **November 2026**

The Bishop writes ...

Creation blooms amid humanity's groans

Dear Family of God,

October is widely regarded as one of the most beautiful months of the year. We are now in the final quarter of the year, and spring has arrived. Flowers are blooming, trees are coming into leaf, and I am seeing all kinds of birds in our garden and in the trees. Something about this new season seems to lift our spirits. People seem a little happier, and a renewed sense of life surrounds us.

I am reminded of the words from the Song of Solomon:

"See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone. Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come, the cooing of doves is heard in our land" (Song of Solomon 2:11–12).

Bishop Grant with our Diocesan representatives. See Synod report on page 3.

Yet, even as we celebrate the beauty of God's creation, we cannot ignore the harsh realities facing our world, our beloved South Africa and our Diocese of Port Elizabeth. For many of our people, the hardship of winter may have passed. However, poverty, unemployment, violent crime, corruption and the rising cost of living continue to place enormous pressure on individuals, families and communities.

St Paul reminds us in Romans 8:22 that *"the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time."* These words remind us that, amid the beauty of creation, there is also suffering, pain and longing for renewal. As Christians, we must express our hope in God in how we respond to the suffering of others and in our commitment to building communities where human dignity, justice, and compassion are upheld.

Soon, on 4 November 2026, we will be heading to the polling stations for our local government elections. As responsible and active citizens, we are called to approach these elections with discerning hearts and minds, recognising that our votes carry both a democratic right and a responsibility towards the communities in which we live.

The prophet Micah reminds us of what the Lord requires of us: *"To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God"* (Micah 6:8). These words speak to our responsibilities as citizens and to those who seek public office and are entrusted with the responsibility of governing and serving our communities.

However, our responsibility as active citizens must not end when we cast

Cont on page 2

Pray for humble leaders

Homeless Jesus statue in Glasgow, Scotland.

He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. **Micah 6:8**

Lord, establish justice for the poor, vulnerable, unemployed, elderly, children, women and marginalised communities, as Justice and Righteousness are the foundations of your throne.

Let Justice roll down like a river, Righteousness like a never-failing stream.

Amos 5:24

God bless Africa

Protect her children

Transform her leaders

Heal her communities

Restore her dignity

And give her peace

For Jesus Christ's sake.

Amen

The Bishop writes continued

our votes. In many respects, that is where our responsibility continues in earnest. We must hold those elected to public office accountable for the mandate the people entrusted to them. Public office is a responsibility to serve, and those elected must govern with honesty, transparency, integrity and faithfulness to the people they represent.

We know too well the consequences of poor service delivery, financial mismanagement and corruption. These are realities that affect the daily lives of our congregants and communities. When municipalities fail to provide reliable water, sanitation, electricity, refuse removal and other essential services, it is ordinary people, particularly the poor and vulnerable, who suffer most.

Our Christian calling therefore extends beyond the walls of our churches. We have a responsibility to participate in the life of our communities, speak against injustice, demand accountability, and work alongside others for the common good. This responsibility does not depend on which political party holds office. Those entrusted with public responsibility must be held to the same standards of honest and faithful service.

As we enjoy the beauty of spring and the renewal of life around us, may we also renew our commitment to the wellbeing of our neighbours and communities. Let the hope we profess as Christians be seen in our actions, our concern for one another and our willingness to take responsibility for the communities in which God has placed us.

To God be all the glory for the great things God has said and the great things God has done.

+ Grant Port Elizabeth.

Buntu wins top award

Nomphelo Mbuzwana

Buntu Khali, the chief server at St Agnes Church in Noupoort, is also a member of the AYF (Anglican Youth Fellowship) which he joined in August. He is 16, and is a grade 11 learner at Enoch Mthetho High School in Noupoort.

This year Buntu had the honour of being selected as a Provincial debater, and went on to win the Provincial Best Speaker. He was selected by the District Road Safety Debate Competition as part of the Provincial team that represented the Province at the National Road Safety Debate Competition in Johannesburg, where on 1 October he was awarded the National Best Speaker at the competition.

Buntu Khali proudly holds his Best Speaker trophy.

Buntu joined the Road Safety Debate Competition in 2024 at the age of 14. That same year he was chosen as the District Best Speaker, but due to financial constraints he wasn't able to attend the Provincial and National competition.

Again in 2025, at the District Road Safety Debate Competition, he won the Best Speaker award.

Tag lines!

The earth has music
for those who listen.

The view from pulpit and pew

❖ *iindaba* is sad that there seems to be nothing going on with any of the members of our Diocese that is worthy of sharing!

Make a difference - vote on 4 November. Choose wisely.

Clergy on the move

• Fumi Kula was installed as Dean of the Diocese on 4 October;
• New Archdeacons:
- Philile Lobese, Karoo;
- Sharon Nell, Archdeacon to the Ordinary, Administration;
• Archdeacon moves:
- Andrea Potgieter moves as Archdeacon of Bay North;
- Karen Groepe takes over as Archdeacon of Bay South.
• Clergy moves:
Zolani Gaxamba, Locum Priest in Charge, St Augustine's, 18 October;
- Jogra Gallant ,Locum Priest in Charge, St Philips, 1 November;
-Wendy Lutchman,Locum Priest in Charge, St Katharine, 1 November;
- Brian Axcell, Locum Priest in Charge, St Paul's, 1 November
-Relton Groepe, Rector of St Mary Magdalene, 1 November
- Rowan Jacobs, Rector of St Mark and St John, 1 November.
• iindaba asks prayers for those being Ordained to the Diaconate on 16 December at 10h00 -
Claudia Fritz,
Leroy Mario Heugh,
Andile Ngetu,
Mandla Tofo and
Chantelle van Niekerk.

Provincial Synod Briefs

ACSA web page

Our Provincial Synod representatives with Bishop Grant and the administrator, Sharon Nell were:

Clergy - Deon Lombard, Lulamile Ngesi, Andrea Potgieter;

Lay - Michelle Beneke, Corinne Gin and Charles Qoto.

Dioceses and organisations across the Province proposed resolutions and delivered messages of thanksgiving to Archbishop Thabo Makgoba during the final session of Synod 2026.

He retires only in September 2027, but this was his last meeting presiding at Provincial Synod.

The full text of the thanks and tributes are available in the Minutes of Synod, posted on the Anglican Church of Southern Africa site, as are all the decisions taken.

The following are among the many decisions taken by Provincial Synod.

After an impassioned debate on ACSA's record of drawing young people fully into participating in the Church, and of implementing resolutions on the youth and the environment, Synod adopted a resolution asking that a questionnaire be sent to all Dioceses asking for feedback on the implementation of past decisions.

Among past resolutions named were those urging 25 percent youth representation at all levels in the Church, a call for the Province to respond to high unemployment amongst youth, and a range of appeals on the environment such as parishes starting community gardens and saving on the use of water.

Synod adopted a resolution opposing the establishment of data centres in the Province. The resolution said the environmental and social costs of such centres, which can run for 24 hours around the clock, using large amounts of electricity, are carried by local communities. Digital development must serve people, it added.

Synod resolved to mandate a task team to continue work already under way to revise the current Provincial vision statement by developing a "Vision and Mission Statement 2030".

Synod approved a resolution saying that "the Church's ministry to the elderly must be rooted in pastoral care, compassion, and justice," and that the elderly should not be put under pressure to contribute financially to parishes when they could not afford to do so.

Synod congratulated the Diocese of Zululand on its 150th anniversary.

Synod called upon dioceses, guilds and other groups to appoint Disability Champions to advocate for people living with disabilities to enable, as one example, wheelchair access to church buildings.

Synod heard a report from Growing the Church, which has done extensive work recently in Eastern Cape dioceses, and has also visited the church of the island of St Helena. It has done training and ministry in at least six other dioceses, and is due to visit Namibia, George and others.

Synod heard a report on progress towards including the Diocese of Botswana in our Province. It has been for many years part of the Church of the Province of Central Africa, but that province has voted to dissolve and be replaced by three national provinces for Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Synod resolved to give Botswana an opportunity to complete the work necessary for it to comply with Canon 21, and the matter will be considered again next year.

Synod endorsed a partnership being developed between ACSA, the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, and the University of the Free State arising from a sabbatical spent at the university by Archbishop Thabo focussed on eco-theology and an Ecumenical Water Conference in Amsterdam.

Full texts of all these and other resolutions are on the ACSA web page with the Minutes of Synod

Standing against GBV by wearing black are members of Holy Trinity and St Mary Magdalene.

Our new Dean licensed

Anda Nanana

Our new Dean of the Diocese, Fumi Kula, was licensed at the Cathedral on Sunday, 4 October, as members of the Diocese gathered for a memorable Evensong service to celebrate his licensing and that of two new Archdeacons and the re-licencing of the other Archdeacons.

The two newly appointed Archdeacons are Philile Lobese, as Archdeacon of Karoo and Sharon Nell, Archdeacon to the Ordinary, responsible for administration.

Those whose licenses were renewed were Deon Lombard, Archdeacon of the Bay; Mark Barth, Archdeacon of Bay West; Vincent Mdidimba, Archdeacon of Bay East; Karen Groepe, Archdeacon of Bay South; Andrea Potgieter, Archdeacon of Bay North; Paul Mosdell, Archdeacon of Tsitsikama; Lulamile Ngesi, Archdeacon of Greater Addo; and Claire Phelps, who serves as Archdeacon to the Ordinary with responsibility for Safe Church - she was licensed in absentia as she is on Sabbatical.

An enhanced Cathedral choir filled the church with their beautiful music as did the (unofficial) diocesan choir with their own isiXhosa songs. Their music added a sense of reverence and celebration to an already significant evening, creating an atmosphere that reflected both the solemnity of the occasion and the joy of a community coming together.

The Evensong service was conducted by the Cathedral's assistant priest, Daniswa Blouw, and enhanced by the presence of Bishop Grant. Adding to the significance of the occasion was the presence of Dean Lyndon Du Plessis, of the Diocese of George, who travelled to Gqeberha, to stand alongside Fumi as we celebrated his installation.

Fumi Kula kneels before Bishop Grant as he is instituted as the Dean of the Diocese. Flanking Bishop Grant are his Chaplain for the service and Daniswa Blouw, the Assistant Priest of the Cathedral.

At the heart of the service was the prayer that the Spirit of the Lord would rest upon those taking on their new responsibilities. It was more than a formal installation, it was a celebration of faith, community and service, and a moment that many present will remember.

Deon licensed as Rector of St Francis Xavier

Charles Qoto

Bishop Grant licensing Deon Lombard as the new Rector of St Francis Xavier on Saturday 3 October. With Deon are the churchwardens - Stanley Ting Chong and Larry Pow Chong.

Leaders discuss final strategies

After deliberating strategy during their final meeting before the elections, a few of the Christian leaders carried on the discussion over coffee before going back to putting ideas into action.

World-wide MU celebrate 150th anniversary

Veronica Kaibe

Our diocesan delegation at the Conference Centre in Durban.

About 2 000 Mothers' Union members from across 84 countries gathered from 30 September to 3 October at the Durban International Conference Centre to celebrate 150 years since the start of the MU by Mary Sumner.

The theme was: "Lighting the ways to generations to come" Ukukhanyisela indlela yezizukulwana ezizayo meaning: God's Word giving light and wisdom

Psalm 119:105 *(Lisisibane ezinyaweni zam ilizwi lakho ,Niselukhanyiso emendweni wam (Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path).*

A key anniversary highlight was the closing service in St Paul's Church on 4 June where the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dame Sarah Mullally, preached. Not only the MU delegates, but many civil and church leaders attended.

The Bishop of Natal, Nkosinathi Ndwandwe, led the opening service, saying, "Your presence here reminds us we are more than dioceses and provinces, we are a worldwide family in Christ".

Worldwide President, Kathleen Snow, gave the keynote address on 'Arise, Shine – 150 Years of Lighting the Way'.

She said that rather than looking back at every chapter of Mothers' Union's history, she encouraged delegates to remember with gratitude, recognise God's faithfulness and look ahead with hope.

Kathleen went on to say, "We are a movement not just an organisation. We are continuously evolving, speaking different languages and wearing different dress, but we are one in the Lord."

Following the opening service, Maria van Staden, Zonal Trustee for Zone E (Central Africa, Nigeria, South Sudan and Southern Africa) told the delegates that their mission is still as vital today as it was in 1876,' Confirming that our mission is still vital to day as it was in 1876 as a movement not just an organization

Today the movement counts over 4 million members working to tackle, poverty, and gender based violence and social justice.

AWF celebrate 60 with a High Tea

Lungsi Ntlokwana

Thembela Sixaba, the AWF chaplain with Siphokasi Gxoyiya and Lungsi Ntlokwana enjoy a rest before the High Tea.

On 17 September the Anglican Women's Fellowship of the Diocese of Port Elizabeth hosted a delightful High Tea, commemorating an incredible 60 years of faith, fellowship, and service. It was a joyous occasion, filled with laughter and meaningful connections as we gathered to celebrate our journey together.

A special highlight was the presence of our esteemed clergy, dedicated members of the Mothers' Union, and friends from various denominations. Their participation enriched the atmosphere, reminding us of the beautiful tapestry of the community we share.

Thank you to everyone who joined us in this celebration! Here's to many more years of unity and grace.

The AWF was instituted in 1966 (with some roots or foundational milestones around 1965) by Archbishop Robert Selby Taylor. It was created to be more inclusive of all women in the church compared to older groups like the international Mothers' Union (MU), which at the time restricted membership based on marital status (such as excluding divorcees and unmarried mothers) and had become heavily localized.

It was started as an umbrella organisation covering all Anglican Women's Guilds and Associations in the hope of bringing their members into a fellowship to enable the sharing of aims and ideas.

Thurible wanted

Contact Siyahluma Pieters 073 104 9992

Parish of Sundays River Valley

Heritage Day celebrated

A Memorable Chinese Luncheon Banquet at St Francis Xavier Parish

This year, members of St. Francis Xavier Parish decided to break from tradition. Moving away from our usual Chinese Food Fair and Chinese takeaways, the parish hosted a spectacular Heritage Day Chinese Luncheon Banquet in the Gordon Loyson Memorial Hall.

After careful deliberation by our talented chefs, a magnificent seven course menu was finalised. The feast showcased several speciality dishes, including Snow Blossom Chicken Soup, Poached Chicken in Ginger Shallot Sauce, Red Braised Pork, and Spicy Mapo Tofu. The response from the community was overwhelming, resulting in a completely sold-out event with 160 guests in attendance.

The afternoon was made even more special by the presence of our esteemed guests. We were overjoyed to welcome Bishop Grant Walters and Abigail, alongside Abigail's mother, Brenda Speelman, who travelled all the way from Cape Town. Our distinguished clergy guests included our outgoing Rector, Rev. Brian Axcell and Lynette; Rev. Michael Julius and Lorraine; and our incoming Rector, Rev. Deon Lombard and Kerryn. The lively, joyful atmosphere elicited a wealth of high praise and compliments from everyone at the tables.

CR Sisters foundation

In a moment of deep gratitude, the parish formally acknowledged the Anglican nuns of the Community of the Resurrection of our Lord. More than a century ago, these dedicated sisters began their mission of evangelising and teaching the Chinese community in Port Elizabeth under the umbrella of the Anglican Church—laying the very foundation for the vibrant community we celebrate today at St Francis Xavier.

Eds note: The CR Sisters are still active in Makhanda and will welcome any woman who is interested in joining a Religious Order to contact **Mother Keke: 063 363 9149**

Traditional dress and food at HTC

Some of the members of Holy Trinity who attended the Sunday morning service in traditional dress.

On Sunday 26 October members of Holy Trinity attende the Eucharist service dressed in their traditional clothes to celebrate Heritage Day.

After the service they gathered in the hall and garden to share traditional dishes - and, of course, there was a braai, which was enjoyed not only by the South Africans.

Holy Trinity is known as the home of many African nations.

Happening at St Hugh's

Jill Bromiley

St Hugh's family held our Harvest Festival on Sunday 4 October. It was attended by Sabelo Ndlebe, the Locum Priest in Charge at the Good Samaritan Chapelry in Ikamvelihle, Motherwell who was attending the service to receive the donations on behalf of the chapelry ... the chapelry is doing tremendous work in the community.

Keith Burns and Bernie Clark with Sabelo Ndlebe while Rector, Andrea Potgieter looks on.

Retired Priest Michael du Plessis with Sandi and Anne, who were all celebrating their birthdays, assist the Rector, Andrea Potgieter during the Eucharist during September.

A legend speaks hope for South Africa

Michael Cassidy answers a question after his address. AE Team Leader, Theuns Pauw looks on.

Many people attended Joy to the Nations Church on Tuesday night 13 October to hear World-renowned evangelist, Dr Michael Cassidy, bring a message of hope for South Africa.

Michael, who has four grandchildren living in South Africa, said that people here are worried about what their grandchildren will inherit.

He said that there are tremendous possibilities, but there are conditions. Siting the revivals in John Wesley's era and other great revivals, he said that transformational revival has to go beyond experiences - it has to be the transformation of churches. There needs to be a call to prayer for evangelistic outreaches that will bring outsiders in from the streets. There needs to be a cry for the renewal of Gospel preaching that will bring social change such as followed those early preachers in the UK. These were the changes that stopped 84 000 children from being sent down the mines; and the abolishment of slavery.

We need to keep our eyes on the prize, not just singing and clapping on Sundays, but working for change.

He said, "South Africa can be fixed ... I see the Lord raising people up," and he went on to ask, saying, "God has a plan on the go - will you cooperate with Him, to use you as an agent of change for the ministry of reconciliation?"

He said the politicians cannot fix the problems so we need to pick them up and move forward to a turn around with every member taking part.

After Michael's talk we were entertained by the Foxfires to an extremely energetic dance done to a spiritual song. The Foxfire programme encourages school leavers to give a year of their lives to be trained to go into schools and churches to evangelise the youth of our country. By Tuesday the team had already visited various churches on the Sunday and six schools.

Michael is an evangelist who was called by the Lord in 1957 to evangelise the cities of Africa. He returned to Pietermaritzburg where he formed African Enterprise and now has teams based in 12 African countries where they do outreach and help with community work and projects.

AE contact - info@ae.org.za Tel: 033 347 1911

Diocesan MU Conference

Andiswa Mzamo

Some of the MU members who took part in the Prayer Walk carry their placards on health and well-being.

The Diocesan Mothers' Union biannual conference held from 10 - 13 September at Pine Lodge Resort was a great success.

Hosted under the inspiring theme "Embracing and Extending God's Grace", the conference brought together 460 members from across the Diocese, as well as our sisters from the Eastern Cape Cluster - the Dioceses of Grahamstown, Mthatha, Khahlamba and Mbashe. The gathering was spiritually uplifting, filled with powerful worship, prayer, fellowship and renewed commitment to the work of God.

We were blessed by the presence and guidance of Bishop Grant, Dean Fumanekile Kula, many diocesan clergy, our Diocesan Chaplain Xola Nodwele and our Diocesan President, Veronica Kaibe, whose messages deeply enriched us and reflected our theme. The Diocesan Choir came to support us as well in worship and song.

We were further blessed to have as our Guest Speaker, Canon Casa from the Diocese of Mthatha, who delivered a powerful and inspiring message.

A highlight of the conference was our Prayer Walk, where we interceded for:

- An end to Gender-Based Violence (GBV)
- The care and protection of our Environment
- Cancer Education and support for those affected
- The general well-being of our country and its people

The atmosphere throughout the conference was one of joy, unity and spiritual revival. Members left strengthened, uplifted and motivated to continue embracing and extending God's grace in their families, parishes and communities.

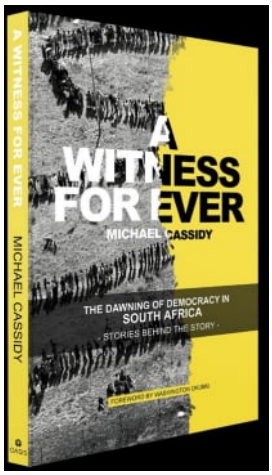
'Join us and Join In' - Mothers' Union is changing lives.

We give thanks to God for a truly memorable and blessed conference.

To God be the glory.

A Witness forever

by Michael Cassidy



On 26 April 1994 South Africans flocked to the polls for South Africa's first democratic election, and the world held it's breath - would the fragile peace prevail.

In this book Michael Cassidy reveals for the first time what went on behind the scenes to stop what could have been a bloody civil war - black on black; white on black; white on white.

Describing the unbearable suspense as the situation teetered on the brink of disaster and the sheer joy when a solution was reached just six days before the elections, Michael maintains that, whatever the future holds for South Africa, the extraordinary events leading up to April 1994 do indeed deserve to be held up as a witness for ever to the power of God.

The book is available from African Enterprise - cost R100

info@ae.org.za

If you don't ike reading books then watch "The Threatened Miracle of South Africa's democracy" on YouTube - featuring exclusive and in-depth interviews with Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, former President de Klerk, Danie Scutte, Frank Mdalose and Michael Cassidy.

Some Diocesan history

These 15 people were the second group to be admitted to the Order of the Diocese of Port Elizabeth.

They are:

Back - William Kuscus, Herbert Farmer, Westy Yon, Brian Sheir, Duncan Bowker;

Middle - Bill Niekerk, John Neville, Wilson John, Elizabeth Sheir, Patrick Mali, Clarence Witfield, Stanley Camphor;

Sitting - Khuthazwa Marele, Soya Mama and Phoebe Nogaya. Absent through illness was Emily Smallman.

The second service of admitting lay people to the Order of the Diocese was held in Christ the King on the evening of 22 June 1997. There were 15 people admitted by the late Bishop Eric Pike and Emily Smallman was admitted later as she was ill.

The first group of 11 were admitted by Bishop Eric before a Taizé service in the Cathedral on 3 November 1996.

The honour is bestowed on lay people who have served the Diocese in exceptional ways for at least 25 years

Upcoming events!

Please send *iindaba* notices of parish events which are open to the public so that members of other parishes can support them.

Remember that they need to be in by the 6th of month for the following month. In fact, the earlier the better!

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***iindaba* is the vehicle for sharing your parish news with the rest of the diocesan family.**

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