

June 2018

The Challenge

East Claremont Congregational Church Newsletter

A gospel community on mission

www.eccc.org.za

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From the editor

Dear Friends

Its the beginning of a new month and we're excited at the prospect of a fresh start. We make goals and resolutions and promise to be more organized, more involved, more productive, more, more, more.

But as the days go along, most of us have long forgotten those things or we've become tired of trying. Maybe we aren't seeing the progress we want to see. Maybe our prayers don't seem to be answered. Maybe we're just rundown. Maybe the last few days have just been hard.

Here are some suggestions to push through the fatigue of everyday life and to keep honouring God daily.

Say Thanks : Even if you're having a rough year, there are many small moments where God showed up in your life— in friendship and coffee, in laughter and dinners, in movies, in music and so on.

Celebrate : It's easy to rush through the day and get it over with so you can start fresh. Celebrate rest. It may not always be a perfect rest. It may be interrupted by pets or babies or noise, but celebrate the few hours of rest that God allows because he created rest for us to enjoy and not just so we could be more productive. Rest is a gift.

Have Faith : if God doesn't seem to be answering your prayers, know that He is still there and still listening.

Wait : So much about Christianity is about waiting and if you feel like you've been waiting for an answer, a cure, a break— know that God delivers.

It's easy to want to give up on waiting on God because it's tiring to hold fast to God. It's tiring to pray the same prayers. It's draining to be physically sick and needing a cure. Keep waiting and don't give up hope. God is faithful in waiting and His timing, His answers, are never late. Know that He has an answer for you even if you don't see it yet.

Love Linda

From the study:



#MeToo – a Christian response

Recently actress Florence Masebe has added her name to the #MeToo campaign^[1]. This movement keeps on growing, as it should, until the voices of these women are clearly heard and society responds appropriately. For those who are not familiar: the #MeToo campaign is an international movement against sexual harassment and assault of women. #MeToo spread virally in October 2017 as a hashtag used on social media to help demonstrate the widespread prevalence of sexual assault and harassment, especially in the workplace.^[2] Women who previously felt they had no voice or platform are finding the strength and courage to stand against the scourge of sexism, misogyny, harassment, and abuse that they have endured.

The common thread in the stories of these women is that men have misused their position and power. These power abuses included unwanted advances, trading sexual willingness for favour from 'the boss', and an expectation that it is acceptable for a man to act in this way. The prominent men implicated include Bill Cosby, Harvey Weinstein, Aziz Ansari and Roland van Hauwermeiren. But there are also many unnamed men who have perpetrated injustices just as bad.

You would expect that this would not happen in the Christian context but where people have power, abuse of this power is always a risk. This was brought home to me when I read about two unrelated incidents/accounts regarding two respected Christian leaders: Beth Moore and Bill Hybels.

Value women

Women are made in the image of God, co-creators with men (and God) of culture and life on earth. Women and men are equal in capacity, dignity, and value (irrespective of your position on role distinction in marriage and church). In too many ways we (both men and women) have been conditioned by society to think of women as the lesser of the two. This is plainly evident when you look at the history of voting, access to education, value of the first-born child, remuneration at work, or access to employment.

It is also evident when you look at the way many men have used their physical strength to exert power, both sexually and physically, against women. Though some women are larger and more muscular than certain men, this is by far the exception. Looking at statistics, how can it be that:

- “on average, one in five South African women older than 18 has experienced physical violence”^[3]
- “Four women are murdered every day, three by their partners or ex-partners.”^[4]
- “Police crime statistics in... 2014/2015 [indicated] a total of 53 617 sexual offences [were] reported to the South African Police Services (SAPS). This translates into 147 cases per day. The difficulty with using statistics released by the SAPS is that many incidents of rape go unreported.”^[5] (emphasis added)

And this is to say nothing about verbal abuse and other forms of discrimination. How is it that these statistics have become so normalised in our society that we accept this as tolerable behaviour from men to women?

A Christian response

We need to stand up for the inherent equality of men and women based on the image of God in all human beings. If we truly understand the value that God places on women we would reject and confront the 'acceptable attitudes' of our contemporary culture. The attitude and actions of Jesus Christ with the women he met in his ministry demonstrates this clearly.

In Zechariah 7:9-10a we have the “quartet of the vulnerable”^[6] in society: the widow, the fatherless, the foreigner, the poor. Deuteronomy 10:18 says God defends, loves and cares for the vulnerable of society. Christ-like living and the Holy Spirit in us should be compelling us to act in similar ways to God: defend, hear the cry, love and care for!

The question we need to ask ourselves is: who are the 21st century equivalents of the quartet of the vulnerable. My answer certainly (and most unfortunately) includes women. We are to stand with and stand up for the broken, the marginalised, and the victims of abuse and harassment. “We are called to stand with every woman who has had her life turned upside down by the hands of another.”^[7]

We also need to listen. As men we need to overcome our default response; “how could that be true?” or “she was asking for it”, or “I would never do that”. We need to really listen. There is no room for defensive and insecure responses. If a woman is brave enough to expose a wrong, the very (absolute and abysmal) least we can do is listen!

It is important to clarify that I am not writing this because someone from our community at ECCC has brought any such abuse to my attention. However, as someone who seeks justice for all, I would like to assure the women of our church that should they need to be heard, their stories will be received and they will be listened to. Also, this is a call to all of us, particularly those of us who have power, and in this instance, it is the good men amongst us, to stand with us against any injustice.

God bless,
Grant, Joanne and the boys

[1] <http://ewn.co.za/2018/04/23/listen-florence-masebe-time-to-talk-about-sa-s-metoo-campaign>

[2] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Me_Too_movement

[3] <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2017-05-15-statistics-sa-one-in-five-sa-women-experience-physical-violence-young-women-hard-hit-by-hiv-aids/#.WwP-4UiFOHs>

[4] https://www.huffingtonpost.co.za/2017/08/31/the-horrific-reality-of-south-africas-rape-problem-will-shock-you_a_23192126/

[5] <https://rapecrisis.org.za/rape-in-south-africa/>

[6] Term coined by Nicholas Wolterstorff in his book *Justice*

[7] <https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2018/january/simone-biles-metoo.html>

Minister's memo

Please would you remember the following people in your prayers:

- Those facing cancer: Paddy Case, Fred Ross, each of their families
- Those whom we visit with communion: Sue Herringer
- Ron Wilson who has now moved in to Huis Luckhoff. He has been diagnosed with dementia
- Gloria and her family after the passing of her husband

POWER
of
PRAYER



Seeing Through Heaven's Eyes

I periodically need to remind myself of the value that God places on other human beings, even when I don't know the other person or when he or she is very different from me. But to be honest, that's not natural for me to do.

Every once in a while, though, I get a reminder, like reading about an incident that occurred in North Carolina in 1995. Ten year-old Lawrence Shields was picking through a bucket of debris in a gemstone mine when a rock piqued his interest. "I just liked the shape of it," he said.

When he knocked off the dirt and grit that were clinging to it, and as he rubbed it on his shirt to polish it up, he saw that this was much more than just a rock. It turned out to be a sapphire. And not just any sapphire — a *1,061-carat* sapphire!

Here's the point: when we look at other people, we tend to focus on the outside, which is soiled by sin. We see the rebellion or failure, the bizarre lifestyle or proud attitude, and we often overlook the real value that's on the inside — where each one of us is a gem of incalculable worth, created in the image of almighty God.

We, as individuals, are so valued and loved that God was willing to pay the infinite price of his Son's death to clean away our sin and restore us to Himself.

So when you look at someone whose life has been thoroughly corrupted by sin, can you say to yourself, "Their life situation may be *awful*, but the image of God within them is *awesome!*" Can you look at the people you may have devalued because they're different from you or poorer than you or less educated than you, and imagine the ultimate value that God attaches to them despite their circumstances?

It's like one of my favourite songs, "In Heaven's Eyes," in which Phil McHugh pictured people as they appear to God and found no worthless losers and no hopeless causes. When we see people from God's perspective, all of a sudden we have a new inspiration to treat them with the same dignity, respect, and honour that we desire for ourselves.

Does that sound naive? Maybe so. But apart from that divinely altered perception, I don't have a chance of being obedient to Christ's command that I love others as myself. It's simply not going to happen.

That's one reason why a motto of the church where I became a Christian is that people matter to God. *All* people. It's a reminder to all of us that we need to see each other as having untold value in the eyes of Jesus.

***From "God's Outrageous Claims: Thirteen Discoveries that can Transform Your Life"
by Lee Strobel.***

THE HANDY CORNER

GENT'S HAIRSTYLIST - Rosemary Hacha - 021 761 0934/084 846 2824
LADIES' & GENTS' HAIR STYLIST - Yvonne Legg - 021 671 5908 / 0724141669
ELECTRICIAN/HANDYMAN - Clyde Oliphant - 021 697 5626/072 643 4949
ELDERLY/HOUSE/PETS-SITTING - Janine Alger - 021 683 0598/082 789 1720
ALTERATIONS / KNITTING - Connie Meyer - 021 6715908
UPDATE YOUR WILL, ETC - Gail Bergmann - Tel: 021674506/Fax: 0216711225
E-mail : gbergmann@telkomsa.net



Please also remember our on-going ministries :
bottle top collection,
bread tags, Bless a Baby, Margaret's House, Shalom



Flowers

Have you put your name on the calendar at the back of the Church to provide flowers in the Church one Sunday?



Any arrangement, big or small, would be most welcome.



My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?

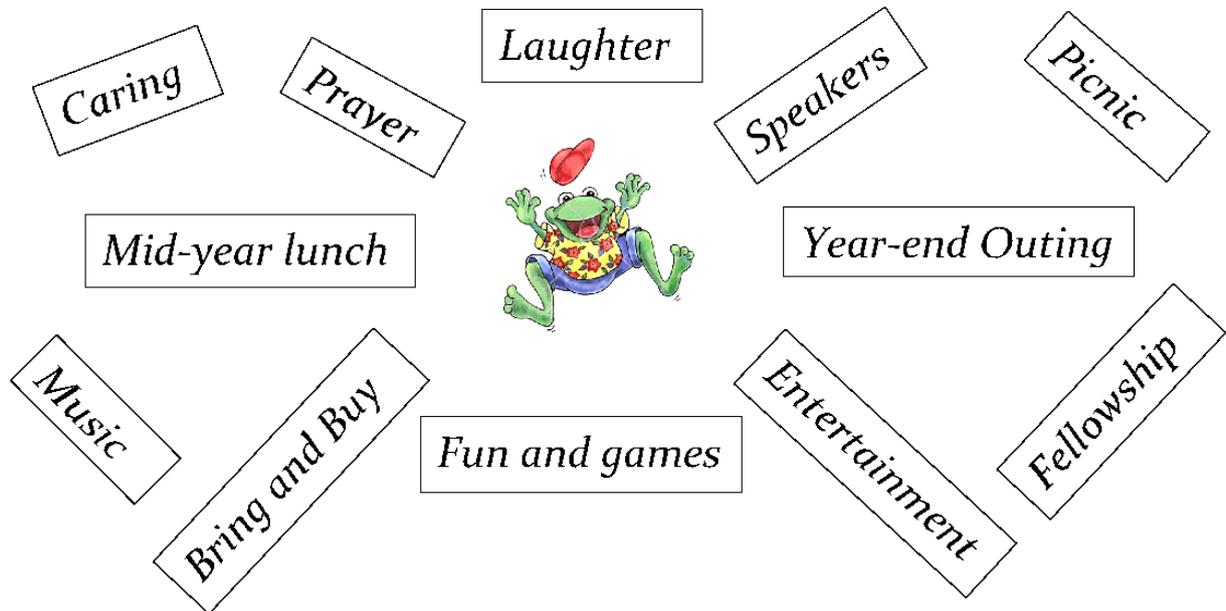
Psalm 42:2 (NIV)



HIRING OF CHURCH TRAILER

R50 per day (Donation)
Contact Peter Anderson
Tel: 021671 4688 Cell: 083 422 3490

SOCIAL MORNING



Join us at our monthly get-togethers from January to November (refer to the Church Calendar for dates and times or contact Anne Snyders on (021) 671-8732)



THE HARRY ATTWOOD BLANKET FUND

The Blanket Fund is now closed. Grateful thanks to all those who contributed to a most worthy cause.

God Loves a Cheerful Giver! (2 Corinthians 9 6:7)



THANK YOU!

ECCC – Thank you all for your love and support shown in so many ways to us during this period of such sadness with the passing of Richard.

Gloria and family

A LETTER FROM THE ELDERS ABOUT REPLACING THE PEWS WITH CHAIRS

Dear Congregation,

There was a very important matter discussed at the 27th May 2018 church meeting. Although all church members are meant to attend all church meetings, this explanation serves to help members and adherents understand and process the decision that has been made. The church meeting decided to replace the pews with chairs in a phased manner. We will start with the centre section and then move to the two sides as money from the building fund, matching chairs, and matching carpets are available.

Although the presenting issue was the question of “pews versus chairs”, the real issues were much deeper and more fundamental than this. In the meeting Grant described the matter of the “pews versus chairs” as a metaphor for the deeper and more important issues of “old versus new”. By this he meant that the replacing of the pews with chairs represents an acknowledgement of the need to actively include and accept the presence and contribution of the new.

It is not possible for us (the Elders) to capture all the content of the discussion that led to this decision at the church meeting in a brief letter. Perhaps the best way is to share the sentiment of the meeting in a couple of statements:

- An awareness of power – those who have institutional and positional power need to recognise that power and be ready to part with it if they want those who have previously not had that power to feel that ECCC is their church.
- A need to listen – all the voices of the people in the church should be heard and listened to; we have heard the words of others but not really listened empathetically (showing an ability to understand and share the feelings of another).
- It was hard – people had to hear about the pain of other Christian brothers and sisters that they were not aware of because they allowed themselves not to be aware of it.
- It was raw – people explained their frustration and pain; their brave and honest words spoke to the present lived reality of the legacy of the past.
- An appropriate response – the decision to replace the pews with chairs was a fitting way to acknowledge the voice of those who needed to be heard and understood.

The one sentiment that stood out most clearly to the Elders was a tension: feeling welcome to the church and into the fellowship, but with the unspoken condition that the status quo remain unchanged. It could be expressed like this: “we want you to be here but we don’t want you to change things”.

Thank you

Thank you to all those who spoke and to those who listened with fresh ears. These matters are never easy to confront, nor is it comfortable to be on this journey – especially when we are not sure how long the journey will take or where it will end. However, we would encourage you to lean into the conversations with its pains and frustrations.

Unity in love

What binds Christians together is far more powerful and primary than their differences. All of us are children of God – this is our primary identity. All have experienced the same grace from God. All have the same Father. All are going to live in the perfect unity of heaven together forever! All have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5) and we should carry the hope in our hearts that, if we stay with each other on this journey, remaining open, humble and teachable, then we will emerge on the other side with a Christian unity, a depth of mutual understanding and an interdependence that will be more beautiful and valuable than we could ever have imagined.

The Elders would like to encourage you to wrestle with yourself and with the Holy Spirit. These are complex issues that we are dealing with in South Africa at the moment. We are facing these issues on an everyday basis. Let us come together with the assurance that we will be able to discern the will of God by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

In light of this vision of what the gospel is able to do, we would like to invite you to:

1. An ECCC forum, Thursday 14th June, 19:30

The concept of the forum is to provide a safe space where people can share their struggles, questions, and contributions (ask difficult questions and give difficult answers) with regard to the journey thus far at ECCC. We have been engaging the matters of social justice, white privilege, #mustfalls, and many other contentious social issues for the last 3 years now and the Deacons feel that it would be helpful to have a forum (or series of forums) to help people talk through these matters.

2. Three evenings of prayer, Monday 11th -13th June, 18:00-19:00

Come and wrestle in prayer as we seek God's will for us together as a congregation. Some of the Elders will be present each evening to facilitate the prayer. This matter is not simply a spiritual matter, nor is it simply a physical matter. There is a war on (Eph. 6:10-13) and we need to pray for God to protect, provide and guide.

A closing word from Grant

For my part, I would like to offer an apology for the ways and times I have used my position and influence to silence necessary conversations; for the times I have said "Peace, peace' where there is no peace" (Jeremiah 8:11); for allowing myself not to be aware of others' pain and frustration; and for not truly hearing people when they spoke.

ECCC Elders



Donations needed for the Maranatha Chatsworth Food Kitchen Project – Rice, lentils, dried beans, soya mince, sunflower oil, pocket potatoes, onions, pepper, stock cubes.

Contact **Jaqui Sterrenberg**

Bread tags for wheelchairs – Please don't forget to collect these and put in the glass jar in the foyer of the church. The tags are sold to a recycling company and every 270 kg collected pays for a wheelchair. Sasko and Kwikloc, the tag manufacturers, have also pledged to donate two wheelchairs for every one wheelchair that is "bought" with the tags.

Contact **Jaqui Sterrenberg**

Old style rectangular canvas camp cots (with the fixed plywood base on a fold up metal tube frame). Any donations of these are welcome. Any available mattresses would also be a bonus. Please phone 021 785 4049 between 9:00 and 13:00 weekdays and ask for **JP**.

WEST COAST APPEAL

Lamberts Bay, Elands Bay, Graafwater, Vredendal

Food, clothing, blankets, household items

Many thanks, Jaqui

Zephaniah 3:17 (NIV)

The LORD your God is with you,
the Mighty Warrior who saves.

He will take great delight in you;
in his love he will no longer rebuke you,
but will rejoice over you with singing



God showed how much he loved us by sending his only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love . . . he sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins” (1 John 4:9–10 NLT).

Everything in life changes—relationships, jobs, fame. One minute you feel like a hero; the next minute you feel like a zero. But there’s one thing in the universe that will never change: God’s love.

Knowing that God still loves you no matter what happens — your failures, your brokenness, your sin — provides a rock solid foundation in your life.

Consider the small word “so” that goes before “love” in the Bible’s most famous verse, John 3:16. The verse says, “*God so loved the world . . .*” (NIV).

God loves you with an extravagant, lavish love that can never be taken away. It’s beyond comprehension. He loves you on your good days and your bad days. He loves you when it’s raining and when the sun is shining.

God says he doesn’t want you to just recognize this lavish love intellectually. He wants you to recognize it emotionally. Love is God’s nature. God created the universe and everything in it for no other reason than so he could love it. And God created you so he could love you.

In fact, in Jesus, God shows us what real love, his love, looks like. “God showed how much he loved us by sending his only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love . . . he sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins” (1 John 4:9–10 NLT).

Many people say they love you. God showed you how much he loves you. He loved you so much it hurt. He sacrificed his Son. When Jesus died for you, he was saying he loved you so much he’d rather die than live without you.

And the Bible says that’s what real love, the kind of love that you can build your life upon, looks like. Real love makes sacrifices. Real love endures to the end. Real love gives all. That’s the kind of love only God has for you. And he’s waiting with open arms to show you.

Talk It Over :

How does it make you feel when you read, “God loves you with an extravagant, lavish love that it can never be taken away”?

When are you most likely to doubt the love of God?

What does God’s self-sacrificing love demonstrated in Jesus tell you about how you should love others?

J. Sterrenberg

Making Disciples Takes More Than One Big Weekend

By Pastor Rick Warren

Big-attendance days, like Easter and Christmas, are important for the growth of a church. You get to meet a lot of guests and then follow up with them after they visit. You also get a visual picture of what your church can look like a year down the road on an average Sunday.

The problem with big days, however, is that we sometimes see them as the end goal, and they're not. High-attendance days are just one part of a bigger picture when it comes to making disciples.

After Easter, a lot of churches start preparing for what many leaders refer to as the "summer slump," when attendance and giving decrease because of vacation travel, sports, and other interests competing with the church for time on the weekend.

That's why it's vital to focus, on a regular basis, on the *systems* you have in place for making disciples in between those big days.

To put it another way, you have five or six weeks per year to invite as many people as possible to attend a special worship event, but you have 52 weeks per year to help people take their next step in their spiritual walk.

Every week, you can consistently teach the truth of the Bible in a way that helps people apply it in their daily lives. That means planning your preaching over months at a time, teaching in series, and growing in your understanding of preaching for life change.

Every week, your church can see people growing spiritually by helping them develop the spiritual disciplines. You can use a membership class, followed by a discipleship class, followed by classes to help people start serving and sharing their faith, too.

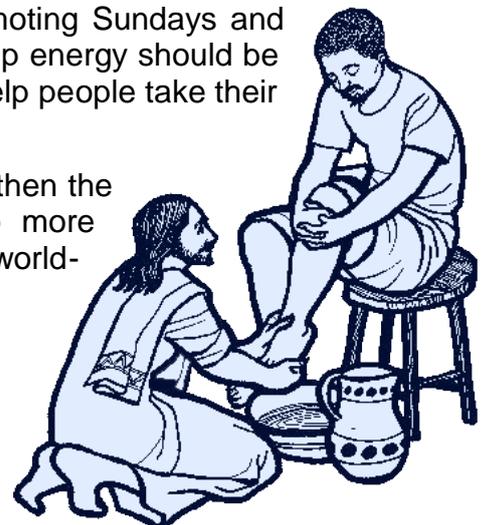
Every week, you can connect more people in vital relationships by helping them join a small group or start a small group themselves. To make this happen, focus on building a small groups system that develops leaders who can coach other leaders.

Every week, you can help people discover how God has shaped them for ministry and offer opportunities to serve others. Every new believer has been given a gift by the Holy Spirit, and every week is an opportunity to open the door for someone else to serve.

Every week, you can equip people to share their faith, live on mission, and invest their time, talent, and treasure for the Kingdom's sake. On high-attendance weekends, you'll have a lot of people who come to observe what you're like as a church. Your goal is to empower them to move from being consumers of the church to contributors within the church.

Some of the work you do as a church leader has to do with promoting Sundays and inviting more people to attend. But a larger portion of your leadership energy should be devoted to growing people and building the systems necessary to help people take their next steps.

If you will focus on making disciples on a regular, consistent basis, then the high-attendance weekends simply become opportunities to help more people plug into the body so they can grow spiritually and become world-changing missionaries.



Thoughts for the month

The Day of the LORD

Joel 2:28-29 NIV

²⁸ *“And afterward,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your old men will dream dreams,
your young men will see visions.
²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days.*

And it will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.

And even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

And I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, blood, fire, and columns of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes.

And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the LORD will be delivered; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who escape, as the LORD has said, even among the survivors whom the LORD calls.

Do we have a record of your Birthday or wedding anniversary? Even if you are not a member of the church but you attend regularly, drop us an email at lmattwood2@gmail.com and we'll ensure you get your birthday wish.

Congratulations for Birthdays go to the following folk in June :

06 Harry Ditchfield
08 Susan Norman
24 Gloria Laubscher
25 Ivy Pick
26 Paddy Case



Anniversary wishes :

29 Steve and Debbie Bassingthwaighte

Blessings to all on their special days



Dear "flower arrangers"

Thank you very much for serving the Lord in this way with your beautiful arrangements provided every week - they are much enjoyed and appreciated by all!

The flowers are usually taken by Grant to someone in need, so if they could be left as a gift, they will provide a further blessing in the week.

Knowing God's Word will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from knowing His Word.

MESSAGES RECEIVED TO COMMEMORATE THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAYING OF THE FOUNDATION STONE BY REV SULSTON ON 4TH MAY, 1968

Rt Rev Dr Warwick Cole-Edwardes

Mary and I send to you all our warmest greetings and congratulations as you celebrate your 50th.

We had 3 wonderful years with you all, we were married during that time and, in many ways, you set down the foundations for our future ministry. Des Riley, Peggy Brown, Paul Hardingham, and Harry Attwood formed a great council.

Thank you for allowing us to serve you in the early 70's – it was a fantastic time for us.

Robert Smith

We remember the warm restorative fellowship of your congregation during 1979 after a difficult year before. Perhaps Dr Rory Attwood is still around but cannot think there will be many others. We trust you, as a congregation, are still walking in the best Congregational tradition of such giants as the writers of the Savoy Declaration. The Sovereign LORD bless you and enable you to stand fast in His Truth.

Dale and Karen Viljoen

First of all, CONGRATULATIONS on your celebration of 50 years of God's goodness to you as a congregation, and God's love and grace shown through you these past 50 years to the people of Claremont and Cape Town.

Although my ministry at ECCC was only 9 months in 1978, those months were amazing ones that God used to prepare and discipline me for my nearly 40 years of ministry in Japan.

The diaconate and members were my mentors. Everyone was very gracious to welcome, encourage and forgive this brash youngster fresh out of Bible College.

I could not believe that anyone could pray like Des Riley did, talking to Jesus as his closest friends. Des was an amazing mentor and his wife, Isa, was also such a good friend and help to my late mother. Harry Attwood was a Barnabas in my life. I am still in touch with Rory and Jaqui. Peggy Brown befriended me and taught me so much about loving others, rooted in Jesus. Then there were the Sloans, the Cases, the Wehrlis..... and so many more.

While drinking countless cups of coffee, I learned to value and appreciate the older folk, and to understand a little of their frustrations and fears. I officiated at many funerals those 9 months (mostly family and friends of church members). A few of those funerals were unbearably hard to take, reminding me that Jesus Himself was not embarrassed to cry (Lazarus).

Thank you for your faithfulness in praying and supporting us all these years, including Maude (until her home call in 2007), and Karen (since 2008). Each time I have returned to South Africa, it has been a privilege to minister during a Sunday Service at ECCC.

Our prayers are with you as you celebrate God's goodness on May 6th.

Dave (Watts) and Carol (Macallan)

Sadly we will not be able to be present for this milestone in the Church's life. ECCC and its people have always been very special to us and we remember the many friends we have left behind. God bless you all.

Lindy (Bateman)

I owe so much of my foundational growth and faith journey to the fellowship at East Claremont and I am so grateful for the love and care and many opportunities I had to grow in various ministry areas during my high school and 'varsity years there, Sunday School teaching and Youth leading and worship ministry. There are so many pillars in ECCC church... and some of those same people are still doing ministry years later – that's faithfulness!

Peter & Pam Briggs

East Claremont was the first church my father, Roy Briggs, served as a minister. I'm not sure of the exact dates but it was about 1953 – 1957. During this time he and my mother, Audrey, married and later I was born. In 1994 when I went to Cape Town to study for the ministry, I met a member whose first words were "I changed your nappies!"

My parents, both now in Heaven, had happy memories of East Claremont and made good friends, some of whom are still dear to our generation. We left when I was one year old so I don't have any memories from there but here are two stories that were repeated in our family.

I shall always owe to East Claremont the fact that I was baptised there. My mother had to sit through the first part of the service with baby me in the front row, with an expanse of wooden floor in front of us. This was, of course, in the old building. To keep me quiet she tried a dummy for the first time. She dipped it in honey and popped it in my mouth. This worked fine until I had licked off all the honey. When there was no more taste on this thing I spat it out, really hard. Of course this had to happen in a quiet moment of the service. The dummy rolled and rattled right across the wooden floor and my young mother cringed with embarrassment!

One evening my father was walking home along Lansdowne Road. At this part the sidewalk was bounded by buildings on one side and the road full of busy traffic on the other. It was too busy for one to put a foot onto the road, the only space was on the sidewalk. So as he walked along, wearing his clerical collar, he saw two tough-looking youths fighting each other, taking up the whole space under the next streetlight. There was nowhere to go but through their fight. So as he walked he prayed a prayer of faith: "Well, Lord, this looks like being a rather short ministry but I suppose you know what you're doing!" As he approached they sprang apart and stood on either side of the pavement. Now the only way was between them! Each one spoke: "Good evening, Father." "Good evening, Father." "Good evening, good evening," he replied and walked between them and onward. When he had his breath again, he looked back. They were beating each other up, just as before!

After Christmas 1996 my parents visited us in the Cape and stayed in the house of our dear friend Thelma Hyde. On the way my father was injured in a bus accident. He received excellent hospital treatment but some embolisms still got through and on Sunday 12 January 1997 he died. East Claremont Church had invited me to preach that day and just after the service we got the emergency call, but it was over. We shall never forget the loving support the church gave us, especially Rev Peter Anderson. We held my father's memorial service forty-four years to the day after his ordination service in the same church (but in the new building). Coming full-circle gave us a wonderful sense of completion.

I hope this little contribution is of some use to you. God bless your church in your celebrations and may you be Spirit-filled witnesses for years to come!

Welcome the test 'God tested Abraham.' Genesis 22:1 NKJV

The Bible says: 'God tested Abraham, and said... "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." So Abraham... went to the place of which God had told him' (vv. 1-3 NKJV). You say, 'Why would God test me?' First, to prove Himself faithful to you. Second, to give you an opportunity to prove yourself faithful to Him. Your tests are God's proving grounds. They're the way you graduate to the next level in His kingdom.

That day Abraham proved there was nothing he loved more than God. And that was the day when God introduced Himself to Abraham as 'Jehovah Jireh', the Lord who provides. It's when you exercise your faith that you discover God's faithfulness. That's why God will test your faith. The tests get progressively harder as the stakes get higher. And the tests will undoubtedly revolve around what's most important to you. What do you find your identity in? What do you find your security in? That's your 'Isaac'. God will test you to make sure your identity and your security are found in Him alone. Indeed, He will go after anything you trust in more than you trust Him until you put it on the altar. Don't worry; you don't have to live in fear that God is going to take away what is most important to you. But if the gift ever becomes more important to you than the Giver, then the very thing God gave you to serve His purposes is undermining His plan for your life. And that's why God will deal with it.

K. Begg



Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. ...
By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so
that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.



Hebrews 11:1,3

The prayer below was given at the opening of Kansas legislature. When Pastor Joe Wright was asked to open the new session of the Kansas Senate, everyone was expecting the usual politically correct generalities. But on this day what they heard instead was a stirring prayer passionately calling our country to repentance and righteousness. The response was immediate – with a number of legislators walking out during the prayer.

In six short weeks, Central Christian Church logged more than 5,000 phone calls with only 47 of those calls responding negatively. Commentator Paul Harvey aired Pastor Wright's prayer in its entirety on the radio and received a larger response to this program than any other program Paul Harvey has ever aired. In addition, Central Christian Church has received international requests for copies of the prayer from India, Africa, and Korea.

"Heavenly Father, we come before you today to ask Your forgiveness and to seek Your discretion and guidance. We know Your Word says, "Woe to those who call evil good," but that's exactly what we have done. We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and inverted our values. We confess that :

We have ridiculed the absolute truth of Your Word and called it pluralism
We have worshipped other gods and called it multi-culturalism
We have endorsed perversion and called it an alternative lifestyle
We have exploited the poor and called it the lottery
We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare
We have neglected the needy and called it self-preservation
We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare
We have killed our unborn and called it choice
We have shot abortionists and called it justifiable
We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building self-esteem
We have abused power and called it political savvy
We have coveted our neighbours possessions and called it ambition
We have polluted the airwaves with profanity and called it freedom of expression
We have ridiculed the time-honoured values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment

Search us , O God, and know our hearts today; try us and see if there be some wicked way in us; cleanse us from sin and set us free. Guide and bless these men and women who have been sent here by the people of Kansas, and who have been ordained by You, to govern this great state. Grant them Your wisdom to rule and may their decisions direct us to the centre of Your will. Amen"

Submitted by A. Snyders

LEVITICUS 1 : 1 – 3 : 17

Be holy as the Lord is holy

How can you live a holy life when the world around is unholy?

As the people of God are about to enter the promised land, there is what Eugene Peterson describes as a 'narrative pause'; an 'extended time-out of instruction, a detailed and meticulous preparation for living "holy" in a culture that doesn't have the faintest idea what "holy" is.

'First', he writes, 'every detail of our lives is affected by the presence of this holy God.' You are called to holiness in every aspect of your day-to-day life. Second, he continues, 'God provides a way (the sacrifices and feasts and Sabbaths) to bring everything in and about us into his holy presence, transformed in the fiery blaze of the holy.'

The language of Leviticus sounds very strange to our modern ears. The law required that the sacrifice be perfect – 'without defect' (1:3). Through the sacrifice, 'atonement' was made (v.4)

Symbolically, through the laying on of hands on the head of the bulls, goats and lambs (for example 3:2,8) the sin passed to a substitute who would be sacrificed on behalf of human beings. The blood of the sacrifice was extremely important (1:5; 3:2,8,13).

All this can only be understood fully in the light of the New Testament. The writer of Hebrews tells us that '*without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness*' (Hebrews 9:22). He tells us that the law is a 'copy' (v.23) and a 'shadow' (10:1). In other words, this is just a foreshadowing and a picture of something far greater and more wonderful.

He writes, 'The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming – not the realities themselves... *It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins*' (vv.1,4).

All this was leading up to 'the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ *once for all*' (v.10). 'By one sacrifice he has *made perfect* for ever those who are being *made holy*' (v.14). We receive total forgiveness; '*sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary*' (v.18).

So, the New Testament tells us none of these sacrifices are needed anymore. However, they form the background to the sacrifice of Jesus and help us to understand just how amazing it is. Holiness starts by putting your faith in what Jesus has done for you and asking his Holy Spirit to come into your life to help you to begin to live a holy life.

In gratitude for all that God has done for you, by the sacrifice of Jesus on your behalf, offer your body as 'a living sacrifice, *holy* and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper *worship*' (Romans 12:1–2).

Lord, full of thankfulness and praise, I offer you my body as a living sacrifice. Help me, through your Holy Spirit who lives in me, to be holy as you are holy.

K. Begg



JUNE 2018



Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
				01	02	03 Guest Preacher : Mr Brian Koela Communion
04	05	06	07 Craft Class @ 1.30 p.m. Prayer Meeting @ 7.00 p.m.	08	09	10 The Minister Fellowship Meal after the AM service Biblical Justice Evening service
11 Elders Meeting	12	13	14 Prayer Meeting @ 7 pm	15	16 TLC @ King of Kings	17 The Minister
18	19 Leaders Forum @ 7.30 p.m.	20	21 Prayer Meeting @ 7 pm	22	23	24 The Minister - Praise & Prayer service @ 6.00 p.m.
25	26	27	28 Social morning @ 10 a.m. Prayer Meeting @ 7 pm	29	30	

What's Happening each week :

Sunday - 9:15 Morning
Family Service with Children's Church

Community groups
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
Morning and evening
(Community groups and Youth groups take a break during the school holidays)

Prayer meeting in Church Lounge
Thursday - 19:00

Friday – Senior Youth

19:30-22:00

