

Bantu Methodist Church of Southern Africa

INDUCTION SERVICE

**Venue: Ethembeni - Ladysmith Circuit
KwaZulu Natal District
Date: 1 December 2019**



**Rev. MM Dladla
Presiding Bishop Elect's Reply**

Bantu Methodist Church of Southern Africa

Presiding Bishop Elect – Rev. M.M. Dladla's Reply At Ladysmith on the 1st December 2019

GREETINGS AND GRATITUDE:

The Presiding Bishop, Ex Presiding Bishop, General Secretary Elect and the Secretariat, Office of the Treasury, Connexional Presidents of various Departments and their Offices, District Bishops, Lady District Bishops, Superintendent Ministers, Lady Superintendents, Ministers, Evangelists, Biblewomen, Conference delegates, all Manyanos, Distinguished Guests, I greet you all in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Amen.

Firstly, let me start by expressing the words of gratitude to the members of the Bantu Methodist Church of Southern Africa throughout the Connexion. I am really humbled by the confidence bestowed on me, to be elected the spiritual leader of the BMCSA. To me, it is a huge honour, privilege and a huge responsibility. If my Mother MaNdlovu, umntaka Mdubudubu was still alive, she would be weeping like Nitzevet. *"As Samuel anointed David, the sound of weeping could be heard from outside the great hall. It was the voice of Nitzevet, David's lone supporter and solitary source of comfort. From TheJewish Woman.org"*. To me, it is not about the position but it is about the destination of the souls of the members of the Church and their families and friends as well as everybody that needs to see Jesus Christ as the Saviour. A huge responsibility indeed. I cannot imagine what lies ahead for me as an individual. There will be resistance, ridicule, sabotage, undermining etc. Meanwhile, I am sure that God will raise those who will offer help, support and care.

We are gathered here in Ladysmith today on the day that is called, the World Aids day. So let us all do the correct thing, be faithful, live a healthy lifestyle and support the infected and affected.

Before I go too far, allow me to convey heartfelt condolences to the Royal Family of the Xhosa nation and the nation as a whole. May the soul of Kumkani Mpendulo Zwelonke Sigcawu rest in peace. Ukuphumula bakuphiwe.

It has been a pleasant sight to see the South Africans united by the victory of Amabhokobhoko, abafana bebuya nayo indebe beyiletha eMzansi. The unfortunate part is that some evil people reduced the victory to ethnic group glory. It is also good news that our Soccer under 23 team has booked a place on 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, China. I wish them all the best.

As we are gathered here, we are on the seventh (7) day of the 16 days of Activism against Gender-based Violence. It is disgusting to see such rise of gender based violence and killings. So many incidents of this type. So many defenseless women and children are being abused, raped, molested and killed. What has gone wrong with the human race? Madoda, let us be the ones who say not in my home, not in my workplace, not in my Society, not in my Church, not in my BMCSA. Let us protect our women, mothers, grannies, sisters and daughters. They must not suffer in our hands, especially if we claim to love them. Kwenele Madoda Kwenele. On the eve of the launch of 16 days of Activism against Gender based Violence, two very bad incidents happened. A Limpompo student by the name of Precious Ramabulana was stabbed 52 times. That's what a low life somebody did to a 21 year old girl. That was not all same weekend, at Qunu, in Umthatha a 44 year old Methodist Minister, Rev. Thoko Giwu-Tshangela was raped in the Mission house. "Sobeka phi na, Thixo, Singabeki kuwe? Soncedwa ngubani na, Singancedwa nguwe?" Madoda, we definitely need to say enough is enough, lobubulwane abungenzeki egameni lethu. Let us be counted in. We have to make 16 days of activism a life style, this activism shouldn't be for 16 days.

Recently, we witnessed the tornados (iziphepho noma izinkanyamba) that caused a lot of damage especially in this Province (KwaZulu Natal). Some people lost their lives and some were left homeless. All these things show that we have a big task. The Bible says, "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their

wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7v14. The solution to all these challenges is with us, we need to pray.

Let me close this section by congratulating the Methodist Church of Southern Africa for a historical election of the first female Presiding Bishop, Halala Rev. Nomthandazo Purity Malinga, Halala. Reverend Malinga who was born in a small rural town Ixopo in the KwaZulu Natal made history as she is the 100th Presiding Bishop of the MCSA. There has been 99 male Presiding Bishops of which 90 were white. She really needs to be congratulated together with the Church for taking such a bold stand.

BANTU METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA:

Coming back home, my BMCSA, in 2010 our Conference theme was, “New beginnings” and this year our Conference theme “Niyigcine lenkonzo”. The task that I together with my team (the Conference Executive and the District Bishops) is to sustain the new beginnings, is to ensure that we keep our heritage, we service and keep our taxi to our creator safe and sound. Siyigcine inkonzo yabazali bethu. Ngikuzwile Presiding Sir, uwushumayela lomgomo kwiConference and I am honoured to take the baton from you because you were my Role Model in the days when you were preaching on TV, Ngcwanini!!!

Good Governance:

Unity:

In order to ensure good governance we need to be united. The weapon that the devil is using to win the Christians is to divide them. When we continue to divide ourselves according to race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, sexuality and various cliques and groupings, have a distorted or no message at all to the world. In a divided Church there is bound to be minorities whose voices, issues and concerns are ignored and dominant group or groups “the more equal than others” whose issues dominate the agenda. Such a situation breeds hatred and endless conflicts. In the Christ Jesus, you are all children of God through faith. There is no longer Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus”. Gal 3v26-28. Unity ma-BMCSA, unity, athi umhlabeleli “Singabazalwane, singabazalwane.” Akungabi khona

Mfundisi ohlukunyezwa omunye uMfundisi, uMfundisi ohlukunyezwa unzalwane, uMzalwane ohlukunyezwa uMfundisi noMzalwane ohlukunyezwa omunye uMzalwane. Asibeni munye, eqinisweni sihlanganiswe inhloso yokuthi sifuna ukuthi uma kufika usuku lokubizwa kwethu siye ezulwini, nothing less and nothing more. Ekugcineni kumele sibambane siyofuna imiphefumulo edingayo emmangweni. Abantu abangabhubhi bengamazi uJesu Kristu ukuthi uyiNkosi noMsindisi sikhona.

Leadership:

In order to sustain our heritage, we have to have united leaders with a vision and a realistic goal. Leaders need to understand what is expected from them. Our Church will collapse if our leadership is not a collective.

- We must be careful of a tendency of autocratic leadership in our Church since it hinders the church growth and effectiveness. It is dangerous to understand leadership as power over others, domination, controlling and flexing muscles, leadership to be about self-gain and popularity. Some leaders have inflated egos. All these affect the relationship within the Church, create conflicts and turn people away from faith in God.
- Leadership must be careful of using a top to bottom approach when taking decisions. The members of the Church must be consulted and their voices must be heard through the constitutional structures, the Quarterly Meetings and District Synods. If we use top to bottom approach we will take resolutions that will never be implemented or that will cause conflicts.
- Leaders must be equipped and capacitated. We need to invest in training our leaders at all levels, clergy and lay. The source of income is us members of the Church.
- Leadership should come out of their shells or comfort zones and be visible and vocal.
- Leadership must lead by example, if we absent ourselves from the Connexional events how do we expect members where lead to avail themselves.
- As leadership we must not talk badly about our colleagues as the some things have a tendency of finding a way to come back and haunt us.

- Let us lead and build a church that will be for many generations to come.
- We need to identify the suitably qualified youth of our Church and use them in committees or positions where they can be useful. I would like to see us formulating a database of all the graduates and diplomats of our Church. They can even help with advice and ideas.

Ministers:

It is a fact that we are short of Ministers, we have more Circuits than Ministers. We therefore need to come up with a recruitment strategy, ukuze siyigcine lenkonzo. Good people, let us not compromise the standard requirements stipulated by the Constitution just because we want to recruit into Ministry the people who will be o-yes Sir. We need to recruit suitably qualified and open minded young men and ladies into our Ministry. Once recruited they must be formally trained.

Collectively, we need to come up with a clear direction as to what happens to the uniform of the Bishops when a Bishop has for instance retired or has vacated the position of a Bishop for whatever reason as well as what is his or her position thereafter.

Ecumenical:

As the Church we don't live in an island but we live with other Churches and organisations, so we need to join or partner with them. I was glad of the response by the members of the Conference when the GS reported that we were invited to the African Methodist Conference. I know this one is going to be sensitive to some of us Bab' uPresiding Bishop, I have a dream, where one day, all the Churches or most of the Churches who are calling themselves Donkey or have a Rev. T.M. Ramushu background would come together and share what is common amongst us. That could happen once in five years. I remember clearly what Bishop Paul Verryn said in Klerksdorp in 2008 during our 75th Anniversary about sharing what is common between us and the MCSA. To me we could have gained a lot if we took advantage of that. For instance, MCSA has a Theological College here in Pietermaritzburg we could use it if we talk to them.

Accountability:

In an organisation you can't be on your own, you have to account. As Methodists we have levels of accountability. The Society and Circuit Departments account to the Circuit at the Quarterly Meeting, Circuit accounts and District Departments account to the District through the District Synod, so are the Districts and Connexional Departments account to the Conference. Nobody is above the Constitution and the Church itself, so we are all to account. I would like to ask the Church Auditors to check and verify the statistics as well as finances. We have Circuits and Districts that are not participating on the Central Fund. We need to check if there are members in those Circuits and Districts, if there are members what is happening to their Contributions.

If you have a responsibility of leading a Circuit, District or Department and your area of leadership fails to report, then obviously you failed so you must be demoted. Sikhule la eSontweni kuthiwa uma uMfundisi ehluwe ukungenisa uRhona ofunekayo weSekethe yakhe, uyazazela ukuthi uzishintshe yena kuleyoSekethe.

The reason why I am saying this is that I believe that there is a lot of Conference Money that is not reported to the Conference. We have to have controls in place, hence I am asking Auditors to help. I am getting old and soon I will be retiring, how will I retire if there is no pension? When will our stipends increase if all or most of the Circuits report the minimum amount to the Central Fund. To be honest our stipend should be increasing annually like all the workers. Sizoyigcina kanjani lenkonzo if singanikeli or if iminikelo ingayi lapho kufanele ukuthi iye khona na. I was tempted to name and shame the culprits but I decided to be polite today. So let us go back and work harder for the sake of our Church. Let me make this plea to all the Circuits, the Central Fund deposits must be done latest by the 23rd of the Month. Circuits delay the deposits and you find people complaining about late payments whilst the Office is dealing with late deposits.

Another thing when talking about accountability, members should adhere to the protocol, an issue in a Circuit should not be reported to the District Bishop or Presiding Bishop without following the proper channels. We also

need to resolve our issues and stop writing letters to the Office charging one another. Let us go back to basics. We experience some of the problems and conflicts because siyekile izinto esinge sizenzile asazenza, senza lezo zinto esinge singazenzi, akukho nokuphila kithi.

The image and integrity of the Church:

It is unfortunate that during our time of living and praying we see all sorts of things that done by the Believers that compromise the integrity and image of the Church. We must remember that the words we speak are worse than a weapon of mass destruction, because the weapon kills the body while the words kill the soul. So let us be careful of what we say and how we say it.

We now the things that we do which comprise the integrity and image of the Church which is the body of Christ. A sin will always be a sin and let us refrain from sinning. Ill-discipline also dents the integrity and image of the Church. Ake sibuyise isithunzi sebandla ngokuba nenhlonipho esikhule ikhona ebandleni, kungenziwa noma yuni noma kanjani.

Projects:

We have projects that are long overdue. These overdue projects are disturbing our progress. We have the Vredefort Church Hall Building, we have to do the right thing and finish up that building. We also have also the Head Office Project that is stuck because of finances. We have to have an imbizo of the Presiding Bishop's Executive together with the Connexional Trustees to come up with a strategic plan for our building Projects. It doesn't have to be a one man's baby but we all need to take ownership of our projects. As it is, the Office has a number of letters asking for financial assistance from the Conference. I believe that the Imbizo will help us resolve this issue and backlog.

Retaining members:

I once worked for a company that was marketing itself with the following sentences, "Clients for Life" and "Its about family". The strategy behind these sentences was that *"once the Client walks in that Client must be kept for life and must feel at home and be part of the family"*. The mainline Churches are losing the members especially the younger generation. The

solution back to basics, John Wesley in the early age of the Methodists introduced the Classes and Class Leaders, believe me this works. Even the Charismatic Churches have adopted this structure and they call it home cells. Let us make sure that Classes and Class Leaders (Abakhokheli) are revived and the Leaders are capacitated accordingly.

The other thing we have to invest in our young members. Once the child is baptized that child need to be looked after in a Christian way, and be fed Methodism so that when that child grows he / she will be having deep roots in the Church. Let us therefore ensure that all the Societies and Circuits have Sunday Schools. Even our Youth Conferences and Camps should cater for Sunday School.

Malihambe:

Kudala kwakuthiwa Malihambe ivangeli lize liyofika kwaSoshangane. We really need to look at spreading our wings / territory. During the workshops that we had earlier this year our statistics were shown in numbers as well as in a graph form. We need to grow out numbers. The great commission says, *“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” Matthew 28v19 KJV*. This is the instruction Jesus Christ gave to his Disciples and if we don’t follow it then ngeke siyigcine lenkonzo. I would like to ask the Missionary Department and YMPU to take an active role in ensuring the success of this great commission.

CONCLUSION:

I would like to thank everybody that made it to this historic service, oMongameli, abeFundisi, oBaba, oMama, izintombi, ulusha umkhosi wonke. I know one way or another we have met somewhere somehow, or you have met one of the members of my team. May God Bless you all. I wouldn’t be doing justice if I don’t thank my wife MaMbongwa, she couldn’t be hear with us today because of health reasons. Isupport yakhe yenza ngimamatheke namhlazane kufanele angabe ngidumele. INkosi imubusise.

I would like thank all the members of my family that are here today, ngiyabonga boMpembe, boZibula kaDela, omaliwa yindima kanti uyazalela, nina enakhetha ibala lokuma enaphembela aMaChunu umlilo.

Ngibonga okanina bami bakwaMazibuko abakanye nathi namhlanje.
Ngibonga uGogo uShangase (uMfundisi) esisuka naye eGeorgedale.
Ngibonga bonke oGogo engicele ukuthi babekhona baphumelela.
Ngibonga uMshumayeli owayewu-Secretary wami kwiYPD ngo-1986 siqala
iYPD Department kuleDistrict uMs Z. Mntungwa
Ngibonga uRev. D.V. Mkhize osuka eGeorgedale, ungumeluleki weNkosi
yaseMbo eHammarsdale. Khabazela ngithobekile kakhulu ngobukhona
bakho.
Ngibonga uMongameli wami uBishop J.V. Msuthu waseUnited Methodist
osuka eBizana, ngiyabonga kakhulu..... ya sisuka kude.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and Happy and Prosperous 2020.

I thank you.

Rev. Mark Mzwamandla Dladla

**God is Good
All
The Time**