

AFRICA EVANGELICAL CHURCH
Annual General Conference 2017



**Christ Building His
Own Church**

YEAR 2018 - VERSE:

“On this rock, ***I will build my church...***”
(Matthew 16:18b NIV)

OUR VISION STATEMENT:

"By faith we see the church working in unity in diversity of language, race, culture and gender, with an agreed evangelical doctrine of salvation whose body life is experienced by all members so that it disciplines and reproduces itself in holiness of living."

OBJECTIVES:

1. *To plan specific activities and projects where we are working together, in mission and outreach programmes both locally and abroad. This would also include regular sharing of specific prayer requests among our different churches.*
2. *To conduct periodic reviews (written or verbal) of the membership in order to find their understanding of the evangelical doctrine of salvation. Where there is lack of knowledge or understanding, the leadership in the church will address it.*
3. *To conduct seminars for our church leaders on the biblical teaching of body life and how it should be operating in our churches.*
4. *To conduct a course on evangelism and discipleship (verbal or written for all our members) and that each one be given or should find a disciple to minister to (2 Timothy 2:2).*
5. *To hold seminars on holiness of life and that a system in our churches be adopted to help the membership to be accountable to each other with relevant programmes, i.e., brother/brother, sister/sister programme.*

AEC CORE VALUES:

1. **BIBLE** is our ultimate source of authority and its truth is essential for transformation of lives. 2 Timothy 3:16-17.
2. **PEOPLE** matter. Genesis 4:9-12; 9:5-6.
3. We value **HOLINESS** and that full devotion to Christ and relational health are to be norms of every believer." 2 Peter 3:18; Romans 12:1-2.
4. **UNITY** We value that the church should operate as a loving unified community of servants that celebrates diversity in gifts, function and preference. 1 Corinthians 12:1-31 (4-7); Ephesians 4:3-7; 11-13.
5. **LEADERSHIP** is the critical value of Godly character, personal integrity, ministry skill and relational health in leadership at all levels of ministry. Philippians 2:19-23.
6. **EXCELLENCE** honours God and inspires people. Genesis 39:4-15.
7. **RELEVANCE** We value that the Church should be culturally relevant while holding to God's eternal truth. 1 Corinthians 9:20.
8. **INNOVATION** We value that gifts of innovation should be encouraged in all that we do. Galatians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 15:58.
9. **MISSION** We value the encouragement, development and exercise of each believer's ministry gifts and skills in fulfilling mission work." 1 Corinthians 14:29-33.
10. **STEWARDSHIP** We value that every believer has God-given resources that should be used for eternal purposes. Ephesians 2:10.

APPRECIATION –

"The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy." Psalm 126:3 (ESV).

2017 continued with threatening events, and disturbing, locally, nationally and globally. Disasters of nature and those that are triggered by man all point to the end times. I feel the agony of the nations, the cry of the needy and desolate, the anguish of the suffering displaced peoples in the world. Politically, economically, socially, spiritually and psychologically humanity has just lost it. This is why we have so many church groups that are mushrooming and trending in their false teachings. Some use the same Bible we have, and some mix culture behaviours that captures people with miracles, fame, possessions etc which breaks the heart of many who know the truth. Indeed, humanity is totally depraved. We also belong to that species.

We are grateful to all the members of the AEC and prayer partners who carried us through the year with their prayers, gifts, words of encouragement and comfort. It was a difficult year to many of us, but the Lord carried us along. Let us praise Him for that. Thank you!

Personally, I am grateful to my family, home church, leadership groups that I worked with from the Local Church, circuits, regions, task teams, structural leadership and the Board. Through it all I learnt to trust in Jesus. It is true that storms produce skilled sailors.

THE 2016 CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS –

Ikhwezi Lokusa Special School in uMthatha hosted us again after the Eastern Cape organizing team was disappointed from the venue they hoped to acquire. They worked very hard to meet the dead lines and they were ready for us when we arrived.

The venue could not hold us comfortably, but we have to use the tabernacle because we are still on the journey. We do appreciate the Eastern Cape Leadership from all structures as led by Rev TG Ntongana. God bless you dear people!

"...by His Spirit" theme rang from that week in the hearts and plans of many until now. We praise the Lord for those who adopted what the Word of the Lord teaches and lived it. Many times, when we face the storms of life we resort to our strength, wisdom, resources, gifts etc and the ever-ready helper – the Holy spirit is ignored or forgotten. We were reminded that the Lord wants to accomplish His purposes by His Spirit.

We were honoured to be visited by the two friends of AEC in the name of Revd Dr S Ngubane (SIMSA Director) and Revd Dr MG Mnisi (Principal – UBI). We are loved more than we know!

May the good Lord bless us all.

✠ HEAVEN REJOICED IN RECEIVING THEM –

Though death invades and destroys us, the climax of it all is that **DEATH WILL DIE** and resurrection will bring the freedom of perpetual life. Aches and pains, tears and sorrow will all cease.

Sibongile Praise Magewu the daughter of Mrs N Magewu went to be with her Lord on the 31 March 2017 her funeral was on the 8th April 2017 at Umzimkhulu. Our big thank you from the family goes to AEC as a whole for all that you did and more so to Durban Circuit led by Revd BT Chonco. Let us continue to support the Magewu family.

Ndwandwe, Mrs Joyce at Mooi River lost her life through a motor vehicle accident on 14 July and her funeral took place on 22 July 2017 at the Board members could not attend as we had our crucial meeting that weekend planning together with committees for this conference. We thank the brethren for supporting the Ndwandwe kids and relatives. The Gauteng entourage to the denomination's meeting stopped there on their way and others followed after the funeral to see the family and encourage them to continue with life.

Mrs Lindiwe Zwane the wife of Pastor Zwane of East Rand went to be with the Lord and her funeral took place on Sunday 23 July in Brakpan, Gauteng. Mrs Zwane was a strong prayer warrior and resilient in fighting the strange spirits and behaviours in the church. She was indeed a soldier of the cross. We were privileged to know her and work with her.

Mthembu, Mrs QN at KwaNgwnase went to be with Lord on the 31 October and her remains were buried on the 4th November 2017. I could not be there due to other commitment but saw the family after the funeral and they expressed their heartfelt thanks and praise to God for everything that happened within a week and many people who came from all regions to pay tribute to the committed '**QN**' as she was known. The church lost a committed and passionate worker and we cry to God "Send us many more like that to have the heart of children."

We thank God for allowing us to rub shoulders with her while she was still alive in all committees from the local church to the denomination, she had that passion for the children and love for God. Pray for the family as they continue with life without her.

Indeed, heaven rejoices when the saints are added like this in our heavenly home but we are left with broken hearts as always.

✠ **ARRIVALS:**

We welcome all boys and girls who were born this year, 2017. That is one of the indications that we are still here on earth where we continually welcome the new generation that God gives us.

Let us embrace them with our prayers, love and faith. We pray and long for their growth, health, security, welfare and participation in new life in Christ.

We also welcome all those who became members of the body of Christ and of AEC this year. There are those who got married in 2017. In all regions, there were weddings, even this month we welcome the Newly Weds and pray that the good Lord might guide and direct them as they minister to one another. May their love and friendship grow by day and solidify their oneness as young families.

✦ **SOARING HIGHER:**

Some of our members in 2017 graduated from different fields of learning. Children and adults became excited when they accomplished their goals. Some got promotions, others ventured to new business opportunities, others moved to new communities.

HERE AND THERE

FEBRUARY 3 - 5 BOARD MEETING AT MEET MEKAAR - MTUBATUBA

This was our evaluation meeting and also hand over meeting as it was the first seating of the New Board which was elected during the AGCC 2016 at uMthatha. The Women's Committee also requested to have their hand over meeting during this time. The new members were welcomed and the incoming reminded that this was our new term.

We thank the Lord for shared vision in AEC leadership. It is costly to be a leader. We often remind ourselves what it means to lead. The mammoth responsibility that the Lord commissions His people on behalf of the Great Shepherd.

MARCH 23-24; JUL 07 & 27-28 OCT – SIM-SA COUNCIL MEETING: CAPE TOWN

We are grateful to God who allowed me to attend all three meetings of SIM-SA in 2017. It has been a financially challenging year to attend these meetings which are important for our shared vision. The July meeting was held at Skogheim and it was a blessing to me not to incur flying costs to Cape Town. The fields are ever white for harvest. It appears that as population grows the workers dwindle. Unfortunately, the world is moving towards the spiritual darkness as the wisdom of this world grows.

Do pray for Missionaries who are scattered all over the world, some face hardship of language, health, life dangers, family, finance, getting visas etc even today. Read Missionary stories and you will never be the same again. Capture their faith in God and how God accomplishes His purpose through some of them.

May 4 - 7 – Workers' Seminar – Meet Mekaar - KZN

The Lord allowed us to meet for an unforgettable experience at Meet Mekaar in 2017. All four regions were well represented though the accommodation became a challenge on arrival, but it was finally solved late at night. We are grateful to Revd MX Dladla who coordinated most of our stay there and running all over.

We did not come up with another theme, "by His Spirit" rang specifically to the leaders. Though these seminars are designed not to be heavy in content but we are often compelled to go deeper as we don't have such opportunities as leaders. 172 leaders invaded the place and it is an honour to see the leaders together and hear them sing, pray, laugh, smile, greet each other, take their seats in the dining room and hall etc. We have a mighty army of leaders in AEC. It was during this Seminar that some of our workers decided to give towards the UBI electric fence. Though others delayed meeting the dead line but the project was completed in November 2017. Revd MG Mnisi is grateful to this unexpected gift to renew the whole institute's electric fence using a credible company. May the good Lord bless you all and those who are still to fulfil their promises to do it wholeheartedly. Thank you!

May 27-28 – Cape Town

Revd TG Ntongana, the Eastern Cape Regional Chair planned a two week visit to Cape Town in May and he took two young people (Enam Jula and Andiswa Lugomo) with him and his wife joined him during the last weekend. I also joined them on Saturday and Sunday.

They worked hard coordinating a number of meetings as these preaching points are scattered – Khayelitsha, Nyanga, Villiersdorp, Stellenbosch and the climax weekend was held at Killarney Bible College. The Lord did many extra ordinary things in bringing people to the meetings and Him. One boy invited all his friends (more than 25) to the camp who came with adult leaders. God is designing a solid infrastructure for AEC in Cape town. Thank you for the support of people who prayed and gave so that the Ntonganas could take that trip.

June 16 – Lutubeni – Eastern Cape

This was the special occasion for the Kunju family at Lutubeni. June 16 has many different reflections to different people and communities. Lutubeni community was very jovial on the day as the Kunju family were celebrating birthday and anniversary on the day. Though it was a youth day to many but for that family they decided to give God glory for the gift of life to Revd Kunju and gift of marriage to him and Miss Nazo many years ago.

Many leaders graced the occasion which was led by Pastor S Keti and his wife as programme coordinators. It took the whole day, starting at the church where they renewed their vows led by Revd WTA Xaba. Former Miss Nazo looked like Miss Eastern Cape and Revd Kunju looked like a Director of some big international company. We then moved to their home where many things happened and their children shared about their parents. Revd AM Zondo shared his heart and wishes to the couple. It was a long happy day that never ended.

June 18 – Putuma – Eastern Cape

Putuma was one of the victims of the past captured circuit and we lost credibility and our Christian stand was challenged. But truly we are so grateful to God for the fight of faith that our Eastern Cape brethren showed hitherto. Pastor Ntoyaphi and his wife from Phoswayo family have kept the fire burning with their leadership in the area over the years. When I was there, I was amazed to see the free access Pastor Ntoyaphi has with the local chiefs. Two of them came on the day and they spoke well of AEC. Rev LLP Mafuna had been conducting revival in the area for a week. The climax was the Sunday that I happened to be there with the Regional Chair TG Ntongana and his wife, Rev Nkosibomvu.

July 21 – 23 2017 Board and Denomination's Committees – Durban - KZN

This was a special time of praying and vision for the programme of this conference with all structures. It was humbling to see two members who left their beloved ones in the mortuaries but really decided to come to fulfil the expectations that God had put in them for the church. There were numerous funerals that were on in all our regions and we listed some and took time to pray for the families and the church.

We appreciate the team spirit that is displayed within the structures in these meetings. The way they sing, lead and pray refreshes the soul. The programme of this conference was conceived during this meeting through prayer and projecting

ourselves to Soshanguve 2017. Most of the board members slept after 01h00 because of long agenda and other reports which were tabled at that meeting.

Thank you again to all members of different structures. It is a blessing to serve the risen Lord.

September 9 – 10 - Gauteng

Due to the fact that we had conflict of dates in July, the plan was that I should be in Gauteng and meet most of the leaders on the 9th September at AEC – Jabavu which was a blessing to me to be there after more than 20 years. I was impressed with their cinema seats which looked too comfortable to listen to the sermon from and have a good eye contact. But it was a unique upgrade indeed.

The aim was to share few things with the leaders which the Regional Chair, Revd GM Makwela afforded me opportunity which I enjoyed. My itinerary was well planned with names of people responsible, time and places to be for the weekend. Thanks to the Gauteng Executive in making my stay enjoyable and the warmth of the saints there. During that meeting they also had few items in their planning for this conference. I appreciated the commitment from leaders who came as far as Pretoria for that morning.

AEC Roodepoort North

In the evening we had great fellowship at Roodepoort North where Revd D Siziba leads. I saw a group of leaders who love and support one another. I thank God for such fellowship. It was during that meeting that I heard of two future weddings. This meeting was just to eat, share, laugh, listen, enjoy one another together. Indeed, the cup was running over of unity and joy!

AEC Simunye on Sunday September 10, the itinerary was that I will start at **Simunye** preaching point with Past T Mabitsela who picked me up and we enjoyed driving with his family to the place. This, I was told was a preaching point which started in an extraordinary way. Meeting in a classroom with no instruments for sound made it real in my heart to see the embryo of Christians who desire to know Him is life eternal. Since it was Grandparents day, I met two grandmothers who were appreciated that day.

AEC Randfontein September 10

From Simunye we went to Randfontein where Revd VP Malinga is based. We had a good number of pastors who came inter alia the Dubes, Ngwenyas, Malingas, Makwela, Ndinisa and other brethren from Pretoria. Seeing the brethren there and the property that the Lord has provided for them and what more work is still to be done made us feel even trusting God more.

The extra ordinary thing that happened to me after service, we went to Malinga's house for lunch, and we kept on eating I really don't know how many courses that menu had. We thank the Lord for such generosity and joy we enjoyed.

September 23 – AEC Matsapha – Swaziland

This was an extra ordinary day at AEC Matsapha as they dedicated their place of worship after working tirelessly and sacrificially to give back to God who allowed them

to fulfil what they purposed. It was indeed a glorious day to see everybody happy, smiling, laughing and clapping hands.

These brethren worked very hard to upgrade their facilities to a beautiful place of worship. The weather was favourable on the day and to dedicate that building was humbling and a reminder that we can do great things if we are united and share one vision.

We thank the Lord for Revd BE Tsela, his family, leadership and the membership as a whole. AEC Matsapha is one of the extraordinary local church. I was told that due to people coming from afar, they serve light lunch every Sunday after service. Let us all celebrate with them as they enjoy that building and beautiful seating.

October 1 – Mahlungulu, KwaNgwanase – KwaZulu-Natal

The immediate question that comes to mind is where is Mahlungulu? Mahlungulu is next to the Kosi Bay Border Control and Ponta do Oura to Mozambique north of Manguze. This is a fast-growing preaching point under Thengane with very active members who support one another in many ways. My visit there was to see how effectively did they used the used windows and a door which was given away by individuals who heard that they were needing even used windows and a door to complete their structure. I was encouraged indeed to see what somebody else might not need might in turn be an extension of a precious blessing.

The structure is unique in that it constructed with umbhuma walls. They are now raising funds for their better larger structure on the beautiful site. On the day several locals under Thengane decided to gather there using a tent just for few hours. They really worked very hard in team work with all logistics. The weather was cloudy and favourable for the occasion. The children, youth and the matured were full of great anticipation. It will be hard for all of us who were there to forget the day. The Circuit leader Revd ZN Nxumalo and his wife they could be seen fully of joy and floating like butterflies trying to coordinate some of the final touches. Mrs QN Mthembu and her husband were also filled with joy to see that work becoming stable.

I did appreciate their record keeping and the seriousness of the task of keeping the books of their activities visible.

November 05 – AEC Slovo - Pretoria

This was another happy day for Rev LA Rahlogo and his family, Slovo brethren, Pretoria circuit, Gauteng Region to have a church building dedicated for the worship of our Lord Jesus Christ. The being of this local church took many years and they had many disappointments but, on this day, we marvelled as we dedicated the building to the glory of God. They sand “Inhliziyo kaJesu” song with meaning as they reflected to His lovingkindness.

Revd Dr KH Oh (SIM) Missionary was instrumental in coordinating the gifts from Korean Saints channelled to the building of this church building. I was humbled when I read on the day that the South African Rand is very strong to Korean Won (R1 = 78 Korean Won). You can see the sacrifice that the Korean church has towards Slovo. We are grateful to God. They still have to finish the building and the same time build the real church – the body of Christ. Let us encourage them by our encouragements, prayers and gifts.

November 11 – SD focus on Conference Centre

The Swaziland Region dedicated second Saturday night to raise funds for the conference centre and the booked venue was ideal and well attended. This initiative was exhausting to the front runners as people responded late. But what I appreciated was the attendance of many friends of AEC from the government and from other denominations and some of them left their contributions and others promised.

This project is the public eye and news in Swaziland and God will break through and bond many people to God and AEC when this reality is accomplished. I still believe that God is waiting for us to take a first step of faith. Not even a giant one but just a simple step of faith. Not by our abilities or our money but by His Spirit this will happen. The enemy will engage us in war of unbelieving heart, stingy hearts, wait and see attitude, strange interpretations of the project, shifting the responsibility to somebody else, looking outside from our rich being as AEC.

OUR GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Explosion of information – The advance of / in technology has invaded our lives. Our hard-earned money is consumed before we have it. Many people are living in heavy debts and many groups are ready to loan money with 3% interest, buying in bulk is cheaper by a fraction but that money is spent. Our giving to the Lord might go down because of the fact that we forget who we are and we are not strong to take our decisions without any advert convince to buy. We buy what we don't need and we find ourselves having skew budgets. Our young people waste a lot of money on social media and data buying than giving. Some might go without food but not without data bundles or Wifi.

Let us invest in our children. There are many influential agents ruining our children and youth before they mature to adulthood. Their complex human development in these five core areas (**moral, spiritual, physical, emotional and intellectual dimensions of life**) is corrupt before they learn to make Godly decisions in their lives.

We will survive if we weigh everything that comes our way through the Word of God properly interpreted. There a trending behaviour within our church of bringing the worldview, the politics, the human logic into the church. People easily say “all churches do this now but we are behind the modern days.” Let us remember that we have a King who I eternal, His Word that is powerful and life that should make a difference wherever we happen to be placed.

“I will build my church” He said many years ago!

REGIONAL CONFERENCES

1. KWAZULU-NATAL: 08 JULY 2017

This region met at Khulangolwazi Special School in Durban and was privileged to be there on the very last day. The spirit of worship, love, anticipation and expectation was very high. I was grateful to God to see our young and old in attendance. AEC generally has happy and beautiful people. I heard how the Word of God was rightly divided during the conference and reminded us all to just do the Word.

We have great knowledge of deeper truth of God's design for our lives but we lack practical living what we know. I heard how the venue in a suburb was acquired and unknown requirements were a shock and education to the leadership. Upgrade! Upgrade! Upgrade! May I say thank you to Revd MX Dladla and his team of leaders in all structures who afforded me opportunity to address the conference on "obedience" on that last morning. May our knowledge overflow and touch many people who are still lacking knowledge of the Word.

2. EASTERN CAPE – MTHATHA - 15 - 16 JULY 2017

We salute the Eastern Cape Region for quick decision they made after they discovered that their original dates were captured by the department at the eleventh hour. They shifted their conference and to all of us we saw the Lord's dealing indeed as the attendance and the spirit of comradeship was reverting. The Word of God was to the point and the testimonies were uplifting to the soul.

We were further encouraged to see the workers being increased in this region. The East London work also is something to note as we speak of Eastern Cape. May the good Lord indeed increase the fruit daily in all our region as we endeavour to fulfil the mandate of going and sharing the good news.

Let us remember that Cape is wide, there is Eastern, Western and Northern Cape. It appears that people from Eastern Cape are also found in the Western and Northern Cape.

3. GAUTENG – SUNDAY – 16 JULY 2017

I could not make it to Gauteng RCC which was held on the 16th July this year as I was in the Eastern Cape on the same day and the arrangements were made to see the leadership of all structures on the 9th September 2017.

4. SWAZILAND: MBULUZI - 24 - 27 AUGUST 2017

Swaziland Regional Conference was held at Mbuluzi in 2017. It was a busy time for all members as Saturday coincided with the sod cutting at the conference centre site at Mankayane. I saw life in the church. The way different programmes were executed showed me that we have upgraded the way we do things. I saw the joy when time came to give offering toward Conference Centre. Young and old. We still have some people who like to dance during this time and, at the same time, give little. I say it again, we need millions of rand now to fulfil what we need to do.

AEC Mlindazwe was presented to the Regional Conference as a new local church graduating from preaching point under the visionary leadership of Revd and Mrs AS Matsenjwa of Ezulwini area. It was a very encouraging welcome to see many children and young people in that group. May the Lord prosper Mlindazwe AEC.

August 28, I planned to see Mrs P Mbhamali just to express my belated condolences after the demise of our resilient warrior, her husband. I was honoured to visit her where she works and we had brief encouraging moments of reflection to the grace of God. As I listened to her brief story my heart was drawn to her new passage of widowhood. I am grateful to those churches, structures and individuals who decide to walk close to our widows in the church. It has been in my heart to write a book on this subject as I have met this precious and lovely group of people who have lost their husbands in the church. Indeed, we all are in the queue, we might be ready but those

that we leave behind will never be ready. Our widows have a great story to tell to all of us. There are sensitive things and words that we should learn when we communicate with these special people. Pray and love them!

After that short stop I had planned with MTE Mtetwa and his wife to help me meet **Mrs H Dube of Swazi Gospel Singers** who has been operated on her body many times since her accident which happened on the 27 September 2015. To the praise of our Lord she was at home that week from hospital with her family. After greeting her on her couch, the Swazi Gospel Singers sang a Quartet. The songs are in their souls as well as the keys. Guitar or no guitar, key board or no key board church, function, car, home it doesn't matter the song rings out! No wonder they have been singing for 40 years.

I was humbled and honoured to visit them in their home. My faith was refreshed as Mrs Dube just glowed brighter as she emerged from her room to the lounge. It was George A. Young who penned this song many years ago: God leads His dear children along.

In shady, green pastures, so rich and so sweet,
God leads His dear children along;
Where the water's cool flow bathes the weary one's feet,
God leads His dear children along.

Some through the waters, some through the flood,
Some through the fire, but all through the blood;
Some through great sorrow, but God gives a song,
In the night season and all the day long.

CAPE TOWN - 02 -05 NOVEMBER 2017

The passion that Fikile and Ndzimba have about Cape town attracted Rev LB Dlamini from Swaziland who joined them for the unforgettable weekend at Khayelitsha. They did open air and door to door and 10 people came to know the Lord from those extra outreach initiatives. This was a limited outreach because of time they did not touch Villiersdorp, Stellenbosch, Dunoon and Nyanga. Our lady Nonkosi Dinko Mapempeni also graduated from Bible College after studying part time for years. I believe that God is setting the pegs and the strands that should be connected and produce a web that will encompass Western Cape. We are grateful to God for those who pray for Cape Town and also who take initiative of going there and minister like Revd LB Dlamini who came back excited and feels that he should go there again for a longer period. It is God's time to move hearts and the AEC as a whole. He is building His church in His own way!

FROM OUR STRUCTURES:

EXCELLENCE honours God and inspires people. I am happy to repeat what I said last year. **“Upgrade! Upgrade! Upgrade!”** Let us upgrade ourselves in all spheres of our activity and leadership. *Let us do well.* The way we counsel, dress, give, pray, preach, sing, speak, teach, worship, write, set up logistics etc., let us just upgrade ourselves. Again, I say, **“Upgrade! Upgrade! Upgrade!”**

The Women's leadership is grateful for another great exciting year in all regions which is witnessed during their Regional Retreats. Some have upgraded even in the places where they meet. They have stretched themselves in meeting in hotels, holiday resorts etc where they don't bother themselves thinking of catering. This is a giant stretch.

They have seen the increase in attendance as well as their giving. May I hasten to say, whatever we do in our giving let us stick to Biblical guidelines. Let us refrain from unbiblical gimmicks of our time that are used in getting funds. Their desire is to see the AEC members working in unity and also displaying the ethos of AEC character in their homes, local churches, circuits, regions and at this conference.

They also would like every member to care for one another as the Lord opens our eyes to the needs of others. Improved Conference giving has been upgraded by women and others. We need millions of rand before this time next year. Beloved Women, let's do it! This is the time.

The Children's Ministry:

Much was said last year about the importance of this ministry. We grow up and become what we were when we were growing up. Our leaders organize camps, rallies, meetings, classes and workshops to win children for the Lord and upgrade themselves as teachers with relevant skills. Some children discover their calling while they are young. The Children workers who have passion for their ministry are loved and respected by children. The exposure of these children who come to AGCC is unique in that they see the denomination in full.

The observation I have after reading their report, I discovered the obvious truth that is evidenced in many local churches that we don't have enough Sunday School Teachers; we rarely have Male children workers and the funds are limited for this important ministry. I feel that this is the ministry that should have all resources needed without straining. May I invite us all to focus on children's ministry through prayer, human and financial resources. It is said that many leaders in Christian ministry today when young, did attend Sunday School. Hence their spirituality is stable, morally upright, physically balanced, emotionally mature and intellectually well ahead of other secular leaders. Let us invest in the next generation and not suffocate and rob them of what they should have today.

We thank God for 550 teachers we have and more than 6000 Sunday School attendees for this past year. Your labour is not in vain in the Lord. Our Sunday Schools are thankful to Pastors and local churches that have supported them during the past year. They request the church to pray for more workers, financial support and God's favour as He builds His church through the children of today who will be in leadership in few years to come.

The Youth Ministry:

Our young people reported positive happenings in their regions in 2017. We are grateful for the marriage doors that were opened to some of them and commit them to the Lord as our enemy is against unity and love. Some did us proud in different centres of learning and leadership as I have already mentioned in summary.

There have been many activities that take place during the year to help them grow in all angles. I have noted that people who don't grow, also don't do anything in the church. Most of our so-called gospel artists and other renowned artists they once sang in the church choirs. Nowadays that is pushed aside by the so-called praise teams. Let us be aware that as we develop, we don't suppress the maximum participation and the development of the masses in the family of God.

Our young people are also stretched to think of Missions and Outreach. Their camps and retreats, from time to time, incorporate the outside community. Let us encourage that.

They have concerns that may be addressed in their local churches, circuits and regions let us make every effort to bond with our youth. Let us promote the positives and shun the negatives.

The Young Adults:

The Young Adults will take time to come into full bloom because of a number of things. But we are grateful to God for the united effort demonstrated by the interim committee. They have worked on certain items for this conference in unity. It is true that in other areas the vision is still deem.

When you touch a moving snail that leaves a trail it coils up and you cannot move it except by removing it. When you touch a tortoise or turtle it coils in the shell and it will never move unless you move it away.

Nelson Mandela once said, "When the water starts boiling it is foolish to turn off the heat." Confusion has come to the Board some suggesting entry year to Young adults, some not happy about the structure as a whole, some having unknown negative outlook to what God is doing. Brethren, allow me to take you back a little and see how the Lord matures has His church.

The Women's Ministry is vibrant today. How did it start? When the conferences started only pastors and evangelists used to attend for business purposes. Then these leaders were joined by their spouses voluntarily, some to take care of them during their stay where the meeting was held. That women attendance was added by other women who were delegated to cook for the delegates. As the number grew, the women proposed that they also meet during the business session and encourage each other according to their needs. Eventually the Women Structure was born. First chairperson was Mrs FN Magewu. The birth pain started and nobody could stop that birth. God builds His church. That has grown and it is a great blessing today. See where they are today!

The Youth Structure was next structure that followed. Youth were not encouraged to go to conferences but some went voluntarily. They were encouraged to go to Camps at that time. It was at Mbuluzi in January 1977 that President EJ Mfeka requested me and Miss Elizabeth Nkambule to '*do something*' with Youth in the afternoon. If I remember well, it was two afternoons. We did not preach to young people who were there, but we had an open discussion about the future and their needs and we had proposals that we submitted to the Board after our meetings. Then in January 1979 (*as there was no conference in 1978*) at Mseleni same thing happened which necessitated that the structure be launched the following year which was 1980 at

Nkanga Mission. The Youth Structure was born and nobody could stop the birth of that child. See where they are today!

The Children's Ministry Structure followed in the same pattern. This proposal was tabled in 1991 and, eventually, the steering committee was elected in 1996 and guidelines were drafted and presented to the Board and delegates. Those guidelines were adopted in December 2000 at Hebron College in Pretoria. Today we have more than 6000 of children enrolled in this ministry. Who can stop those thousands of children who have been transformed into spiritual champions? At AEC one of our core value is that **PEOPLE MATTER**. The Lord is building His church not by might nor by power but by His Spirit.

The Men's Fellowship followed in the same pattern. Men were not keen in going to conferences, the trail blazers were those who came as delegates from local churches. But other local churches came in groups of men and then during the business session the other men hanged around doing nothing. Eventually it was felt that they also meet and their first committee was elected in December 1994. The Men's Guidelines were adopted together with Children's Ministry guidelines in December 2000 at Hebron College in Pretoria. See what is happening today! The mighty army of men is marching ahead in response to the call that the Master Builder of His church has called.

I have put these reflections under Young Adult Structure to help us see how God builds His church. They are here and the needs have brought them together. We need wide spiritual leadership to discern the working of the Holy Spirit without our wisdom or plans. All these structures came to being at His own time and also raised the leaders to take these structures to where God directs us all. It is encouraging to see God works His purpose through His people in His own way so that nobody may boast as if he/she is instrumental.

The Men's Ministry:

I like the positive spirit that is igniting with some Men. The way some of our men have upgraded their worship, involvement, leadership style, innovation, vision, questions that are being asked it all amazes me.

There were different Men activities in all our regions even in 2017. We praise God for men leadership from the local churches up to this level. May your vision be broader than you think and delve into deeper valleys of commitment and passion in your life. You are never alone. It is true that in other local church there might be one man, but that one-man having faith in God might do amazing things. Our God usually doesn't work with majority. He shows Himself who He is if we don't believe.

OUR HORIZONTAL INVOLVEMENT

UNION BIBLE INSTITUTE – www.ubi.ac.za UBI is a registered, accredited, approved and credible institution offering *Higher Certificate in Theology; Diploma in Theology and Bachelor of Theology*. This is where Christ-like Servant Leaders are developed and launched to make a difference in our world. The request is still pertinent that fees should be paid in advance. Students come from all over South Africa and neighbouring countries.

We are grateful to God as we saw one of our students from Umzimkhulu, Mr SS Madlala graduate (Cum Laude). The first six students graduated with BTh degrees for the first time from UBI.

We are grateful to the contribution that we as a church made to school in seeing that the electric fence was installed and paid for through the action of those who attended the Meet Mekaar Workers Seminar. Some are still planning to finish off their commitment in the new year. The Principal Revd Dr GM Mnisi and the management were thankful to God for such a contribution. The full financial report will be made public in 2018.

AEC is a member of the Council and as such we will continue to be involved financially, through prayer and to recommend the school to those that the Lord calls to study His Word. I am attaching these banking details if you don't have them for our joint contribution to the school:

ACCOUNT NAME: AFRICA EVANGELICAL CHURCH
ACCOUNT NUMBER: 38023171110
BANK: ABSA BANK
REFERENCE: UBI

BIBLE SOCIETY – www.biblesociety.co.za We are grateful to God for another year in which the Bible could be produced and distributed in different formats. The IsiZulu translation is still going on in Durban.

Take note that every year the prices of Bibles are adjusted at the beginning of November. Also, when you transfer the AEC donation to the Bible Society of South Africa use this new donor **reference number 700876** so that your gift will go under AEC. We are members of Bible Society and as such we are deeply involved in our support. The Bible Society is ever indebted to Africa Evangelical Church for unfailingly making contributions on an annual basis for the translation, printing, production and distribution of the Scriptures. There are many individuals who, without the contributions from the Africa Evangelical Church, would never have owned a Bible of their own. Every member of this church has, over the years, laid a brick or bricks towards the completion of God's house. Please keep on doing your sterling work for the Lord. Great is your reward in Heaven!

MODERN SIGNAGE AND DIRECTIONS

We appreciate those local churches who have put up their AEC place of worship signs in 2017. It is an ongoing project. The majority don't have signs pointing people to their places of worship. May I say it again, GPS is here to stay we must know how to read and key coordinates on our smart phones at least. Times have changed. Welcome to the new age!

HIV/AIDS & TODAY FOR TOMORROW –

This year we did have activities mainly in training or workshops for the Today for Tomorrow programmes in Swaziland and KZN. Rev Chris Maphosa, a Missionary now under SIM is passionate with Today for Tomorrow programme, did team up with Mrs E Mndzebele, Mrs Mbatha from Mankayane, the Xabas in KZN. Also, the report that came in is that out of six lesson books, all regions have covered two books but Gauteng they are on Book three.

The HIV/AIDS programmes are going on in different areas and levels and we are grateful to the governments who have prioritized this programme with the view of elimination of it from our region which is not easy.

These two programmes need to be evaluated so that we could see the impact or footprints they are leaving in the church, community and individual lives. Rev Chris Maphosa is mostly available to be used in training of those who are available in our regions. 2018 comes with that opportunity. We request the Regional Leadership to see whether in their 2018-year calendar they can accommodate the training of T4T teachers in their regions and get in touch with the General Secretary for final planning.

GRANDPARENTS DAY – SEPTEMBER 10 2017

“When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.” II Timothy 1:5.

We praise God for those who took time in 2017 and thanked the Lord for the grandmothers and fathers they have in their local churches. The amazing thing is that other local churches don't have these people and others have only grandmothers with no grandfathers and yet others again have a good number of both. These are the blessings we have in the church.

These senior people have experience in many areas of life. Some have walked with the Lord for years and they know the God on the mountain who is still God in the valley. The God of the day is still the God of the night. Next Grandparents day will be on the **09 September 2018.**

✠ CLERGY APPRECIATION DAY – OCTOBER 2017

A number of pastors have shared with me how their local churches appreciated them and thanked God for their leadership in 2017. We say thank to those churches and may I encourage those that did nothing to consult other people from other churches for advice or tips. Unfortunately, I cannot share in public what other people are doing because we are not at the same level. But thank God for your pastor and the good Lord will encourage you in many ways. Thank you!

The Clergy Appreciation Day for 2018 will be on **14 October 2018.** You may start preparing your innovations and budget early in the year.

Conference Centre Project – This is exciting year of action as our verse reminds us. Not by might or by power but by my Spirit. The heart beat is Mankayane December 2018. The excitement is high with others and the giving is sacrificial from others and yet a good percentage don't believe on the expected accomplishment that will happen.

The sod was cut on August 26 2017 at Mankayane site, the witnesses were many and the pot is already boiling. The news media from both Radio and TV were there. The Mankayane Interim Mayor Khanya Mabuza applauded the building of the centre. He mentioned that it will upgrade the town. Job opportunities for the young people and growing of the economy. Bringing E42 million will be a giant upgrade to Mankayane.

November 11 2017 at Mavuso Centre in Swaziland the spirit of the AEC conference centre at Mankayane captured the Government leaders, the pastors from other Evangelical Churches and the brethren from different communities adorned the evening. The government on behalf of His excellency the Prime Minister Dr B Dlamini, the Minister of Public Service Owen Sithole said government was supportive of such initiatives. Incidentally the structure is in line with Swaziland 2022 proclamation that the country should show the world the improved better living. He invited the nation as a whole and the business to be supportive of this project. He gladly contributed few thousand Emalangenzi towards the building of the centre.

The AEC was praised for good leadership by the Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs Anthony Masilela. He said: *"We congratulate you on this huge project you are embarking on and wish you all the best as you raise funds for this project. Government is supportive of such good initiatives, especially because it will also benefit the community."*

Unexpected and extra ordinary News:

AEC Property bought in Springs, Gauteng.

Let me announce that Gauteng Region saw property that was going to auctioned last year in Springs which was used by Aveng Grinaker. They decided to follow up the matter and eventually bought that property. Some people went there to see it during this conference. At the present moment the property is in the process of being registered under Africa Evangelical Church. It huge property which could be used as Conference Centre if we develop it. What is there is workshops, block of offices etc.

Since this was a quick decision when I consulted with the region, they did present their case that they were not distancing themselves from the Mankayane project. They are with the vision and the commitment in full. At the same time, I request that we also get involved in contributing to the Gauteng Property Development as there is much work still to be done in restoring the place and make it habitable.

I think we were in the desert too long. The invasion of the bigger things or cities is happening simultaneously. It is time to give our all. Bond with one another as never before. Indeed, things are happening very fast because we must move and make our presence felt in Southern Africa. Let us not delay the Lord as He builds His church!

May I say thank you to all committees who served in the past in different leadership roles from local churches, circuits, regions and AGCC. Let us acknowledge the work they did and truly thank God for their passionate lives. Perhaps they were in a task team, worship team, programme coordinator, usher, cleaner, caterer, draper etc they all contributed to the family of God. God first, selflessness, humility and focus.

Let us pray for the 2018 leadership in all levels and embrace them. They are leading the children of God in difficult end times. When everything trends let us remain resolute *"by not becoming like the people of this world. Instead change the way you think."* (Romans 12:2).

I thank God for the opportunity He gave me and many leaders here with us and some at home to serve so many beautiful people. We daily learn that people matter. Young

or Matured, they all matter. May I repeat what I said last year that I learnt to appraise and applaud; to lead and to be led; to invest in lives, give and encourage; to laugh, listen and love; to observe and to pray; to read and to smile; to think, touch and trust; to reach out and solidify those contacts.

I thank my local church, Esikhaleni for taking great strides so that I could do most of the things. The joy of their loving faces inspired me to inspire others. When the body complained, your prayers refreshed me with new energy just enough for that day. When problems came our way, the Lord opened my eyes to see the enemy behind what could be seen.

The Board that the Lord has given us bonded well during our first year. Their contribution to the body of Christ encouraged me to stretch myself more in love.

May I take this opportunity and wish all members of our church a Peaceful Merry Christmas and a joyful, fruitful, healthy and industrious Happy New Year 2018. Let us bond with one another as we jointly linger before the throne of grace, until we meet again, next December God willing in Swaziland. For the South Africans get your Passports ready in time.

I thank God for the privilege of being nothing but a servant, seeing Him increase while I decrease. Yes, as Christ builds His Own Church!

Humbly presented by



Reed P Mtambo, PRESIDENT
AFRICA EVANGELICAL CHURCH
19 DECEMBER 2017

Prayer Pointers for the Year 2018:

1. Conference Centre Giving, Building, Skill, Wisdom
2. The entire leadership as they execute policies in different levels for the glory of God.
3. Let all of us live and do the Word.
4. Upgrade, good health, safety, fulfilment and joy in our communities and families.
5. Tangible brotherly love that will draw many to Jesus.
6. Biblical and cheerful giving within our denomination.
7. Authentic and timely in/to our commitments.
8. Important dates to note:

- ✓ 02- 04 February 2018 [Board Meeting]
- ✓ 10 - 13 May 2018 [Workers' Seminar]
- ✓ 13 May [Mother's Day]
- ✓ 17 June [Father's Day]
- ✓ 03-07 July 2018 [KZN RCC]
- ✓ 27 Jun - 01 July 2018 [EC RCC]
- ✓ 20 - 22 July Denominational Committees Mtg.
- ✓ 23 - 26 August 2018 [SD RCC]
- ✓ 09 September 2018 [Grandparents' Day]
- ✓ 14 October [Clergy Appreciation Day]
- ✓ 16 - 20 December 2018 [AGCC] Swaziland hosting

Let us be instruments that can be used by the Master Builder!

AFRICA EVANGELICAL CHURCH
ANNUAL GENERAL CONFERENCE
Filadelfia Special School -Soshanguve, Gauteng
RESPONSE TO THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT
19 December 2017
By Mandla Ngwenya

The President, Rev. Prince Mntambo, Members of the Board, Executive committees of the four regions, Pastors, Men, Women, Youth, Junior Church, I greet you all in the name of Jesus our Lord and Saviour.

It has humbled me to be given an opportunity to respond to the report of the President. However, it has been a great pleasure and a blessing to sit and listen to the annual report of the President as presented to us members of Africa Evangelical Church. The report is well covering all spheres, organs and denominational functionalities of the church.

In a snap shoot, the report has outlined the diary of the President's office, and as we follow through the activities reported, one turn to wonder how the President managed to cover such an all-year packed schedule. It requires inspiration, motivation, energy and more than all, the love of Christ. Paul said, "For the love of Christ compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died." 2 Corinthians 5: 14 NIV. Based on this report, we can attest that the love of Christ propels the president and the board to exert efforts in making their work effectively in the entire denomination among all the four regions. The president has already mentioned that he is stretching himself more in love.

The President's preamble does outline the trending events threatening peace and stability of the church from local level and globally. This has raised awareness of the need for going deeper on our knees as a church to pray for all structures of leadership, be it religious, political and private sector. Decision taken by all these structures affect the humankind in general in one way or the other. The theme verse of the previous conference should still give us all the courage brethren, that by His Spirit we shall conquer the mountain before us. More so, when "Christ is Building His Own Church"

Bereavements

As the report include those who has been promoted to be with the Lord, as much as this is not easy to accept, but it still reminds us of our home on the other side of the present life.

Board meeting

We appreciate that the board was able to meet for the evaluation and steering-up the vision of the church in AEC leadership. This gives us hope that the leadership is still inspired to take the church to greater strides in the beginning of their new term of office.

Financial Constrains

Sometimes one wonders if there is a world where the words 'financial constrains' are not applicable. The President mentioned that though he managed to attend the all

three meetings of the SIM-SA in 2017 but it was a financially challenging year to attend such meetings. This gives an indication of how much offering is still needed in the work of the Lord. It is also reported that even the children ministry is challenged by shortage of financial support.

Church Dedications

We thank God for the church buildings dedicated to the Lord in the year indicating the growth of the church even on infrastructure requirements.

Regional Conferences

We appreciated that the President made it to attend 3 of the 4 regional conferences. This is demanding in the travels the President has to undertake. We thank God, he still manages to do this ministry. I quote the President's words, "Upgrade! Upgrade! Upgrade!"

These words have been said loud and very clear in our ears brethren, like Daniel in the Bible times, he excelled in his administration. By His Spirit we can!

Children's Ministry

The challenge of both Sunday school teachers and adequate financial resources to support this ministry is still threatening the sustainability of the church. This requires leaders in all levels of the church structure to critically consider the allocation of resources to this ministry during church programme planning.

Expanding to New Horizons

We got the report that Rev. T Ntongana with his team visited Cape Town and did a wonderful work there of reaching so many souls with the Gospel. This is great news indeed. Though it remains a mystery, when learning from our church history that the AEC Missionaries started the church in Cape Town, but now there is no AEC Church in Cape Town. However, we still believe and pray to God that He give us Cape Town again.

Growth in church structure

We note the reflection forwarded in the report about the birth of most structures existing in the church today. This is seen as an illustration of growth in the structure of the church. We learn that everything that lives, it grows. The nurturing of the Young Adults structure to its maturity may not be over emphasized than what the President has articulated. As a church we have to embrace this growth of the new structure in the layers of the denomination.

Conference Centre Project – Mankayane

It inspires the church to hear that things are happening in a lightning speed on this project especially because the target time is already at hand. As the sod cutting was done in August, a red-carpet dinner done in November and grounds clearings already started in December of same, all this give hope that the commitment is great. Swaziland is already having sleepless nights to see this project happening. It is in our strongest belief that the church will remain focused and resolved to carry forward this vision. Next year this time, the AGCC will be in Swaziland. Really, God is building his church!

Conclusion

One has also deduced from the report that the President is passionate about the unity of the church. I may conclude by borrowing from some wise words said by **Chinua Achebe**, *“a man who calls his kinsman to a feast does not do so to redeem them from starving. They all have food in their own houses. When we gather together in the moonlight village ground, it is not because of the moon. Every man can see it in his own compound. We come together because it is good for kinsmen to do so. Let us find time to come together physically and enjoy the power of togetherness. Let’s smile not because we don’t have problems but because we are stronger than the problems.”*

Let the church unite in diversity!

I thank you President, for this humble submission.

May God Bless you mightily and the church at large.

Yours in his Service,

Mr. Mandla M. Ngwenya.

Matsapha AEC - Swaziland