



The Methodist Church of Southern Africa

Tel: +27 (0)11 615 1616
+27 (0)87 056 1201
Fax: +27 (0)11 615 1511

Methodist Connexional Office
33 Ernest Oppenheimer Ave
Bruma Office Park, Bruma
Private Bag X11
Garden View 2047

6 August 2021

A Message to MCSA Women this Women's Month

Dare to remember your worth!

National Women's Day in South Africa is on 9 August and the whole month of August was declared Women's month.

9 August commemorates a watershed moment in the history of protest marches in South Africa when a throng of 20 000 women marched to the Union Buildings in 1956 to deliver a petition against the Apartheid Pass Laws. This event was of momentous significance as it was about celebrating and honoring Women, from all walks of life, who came together to fight for their humanity. It is the actions of those militant and intrepid women on whose shoulders South African women stand today. Furthermore, this day and month draw attention to the issues that women of this rainbow nation, the Connexion, Africa and the world continue to face- issues that dehumanize them. It is hoped that this day will forever be treasured to challenge the oppressive systems that subsist as well as galvanise many more women to undertake this onerous and transformative journey towards gender justice and equality. The struggle for gender equality is, of course, a daily struggle for many women folk across racial, geographical and cultural spheres. This day and month help bring into sharp focus, the intractable issues women and girls face in our predominantly patriarchal societies.

I would like to give support and encouragement to all the activities that are organized by societies, circuits, organisations and synods- activities that seek to celebrate, affirm, encourage and support women and girls in the church and in our communities. One of the many challenges that women face today is gender-based –violence and femicide [GBVF]. The grim statistics suggest that we have reached 'pandemic levels' of women abuse in South Africa- a nation where women and girls are not safe in their homes, work and public spaces. The church, in general, and the MCSA in particular, can no longer deny its contribution and participation, whether overt or covert, in GBV and the entrenchment of patriarchy which degrades women, turning them into objects. Therefore, it is imperative that we play an active role in fighting this scourge, if we are to be true to our calling as a church. Together with our ecumenical partners, we have declared GBVF a sin-

A Christ-healed Africa for the Healing of Nations

Presiding Bishop:
Rev Purity N Malinga
E-mail: presbish@mco.org.za

General Secretary:
Rev Michel W Hansrod
E-mail: gensec@mco.org.za

Lay President:
Mr James M Nkosi
E-mail: jm.nkosi@gmail.com

General Treasurer:
Mr Rannoi Sedumo
E-mail: finance@mco.org.za

against God in whose image all humanity has been created. We lament the suffering of many women and girls who have and continue to live in fear in their homes as they experience harassment, physical and sexual abuse. We lament the death of women and girls at the hands of the men they are meant to love and trust. We remain committed and steadfast to fight all systems, actions, practices and attitudes that belittle, hurt, abuse and deny women (and men) full life.

Women are the backbone of the MCSA. We are by far the majority members! It is our sacrificial giving of time, skills, talents and resources that has enabled participation in God's mission! I thank, affirm and celebrate all women of the MCSA this month! May God continue to grant you strength and courage to be agents of positive change wherever you are! In the midst of many experiences of life as a woman in church and society, remember your worth! You are worth more than the clothes you wear or any material stuff that can be owned. You are worth more than the title before your name or anything that the world can give or take away from you! You are a beloved child of God- "fearfully and wonderfully made".

Dare to defy the odds! Prayerfully seek and find your purpose in life and live it. It might be different from that of your sister, mother or friend. Therein lies full life and our reason for joy! During this time of celebrating women, we have countless women to celebrate! Let us fight those things that kill our joy by supporting, encouraging and caring for one another towards full life. Let us use this time to draw out those women who, for various reasons, are marginalised, among us in the church or in our communities, into the center of our activities, conversations and prayers. Let us be guided by God's mission in all we do.

Happy Women's Month!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "N. W. Alinga", written in dark ink. The signature is fluid and stylized, with a large initial "N" and a long, sweeping underline.

Presiding Bishop