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**UPDATE**

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*For supporters in GP and Western Cape:*

Dr Raymond Perrier will be delivering a lecture "The Role of the Laity in the Church: lessons from the life of Paddy Kearney" on the following dates:

- **Monday 30 October** at 10am at St Michael's Rondebosch, CPT (in association with 'The Southern Cross'). RSVP to [Eugene Jackson](#).

- **Saturday 11 November** at 10am at 15 Molesey Avenue, Auckland Park, JHB (in association with the Jesuit Institute and We Are All Church - SA). RSVP to [Doug Irvine](#).

*All are welcome.*

## September 2023

**Meet Maighlin, our new Clinic Co-ordinator**  
**Irish and Israeli youth leading sports**  
**Church conference on social justice**  
**Ways of marking Heritage Month**



**Rest and  
chat between  
games**



**Let the  
Church Arise!**



**Heritage  
Day at Dalton**

### WELCOME TO OUR NEW CLINIC CO-ORDINATOR

Maighlin Andrews (pronounced 'May-Lin'), introduces herself: "My path to be in South Africa began in the most unlikely of ways. In 2016, during my third year at Michigan State University, in the United States, my planned trip to study in Eastern Europe was suddenly cancelled. My advisor suggested I might be a good fit for a new program being started at UKZN in South Africa. I agreed, and soon found myself in Durban for a 5 month program.

"One month into my trip, I met my now husband, Hyron. We managed a long distance relationship for over 6 years, got engaged in Ireland in September 2021, and then I moved to Durban full-time in December 2021. We married in July 2022 and welcomed our beautiful son, Hendrix, 5 months ago. Hyron is about to begin his 11th season playing rugby for the Hollywood Bets Sharks rugby team, and I can be found cheering him on (from near or far) during all the rugby matches.

"I began volunteering at the DHC in 2017 after Fr Brett Williams at St. Joseph's told me about the wonderful clinic. I was in South Africa for 3 months after graduating from university and before I continued my studies in the US in the medical field. I truly fell in love with the clinic and was inspired by the service and care provided to those who are most vulnerable. I continued to volunteer when I was visiting Durban; in August 2022 I became an employee of the clinic. The DHC clinic is the epitome of everything that made me want to go into medicine in the first place. It gives me the chance to work with those who are most in need and to provide life-changing care.

"My background is primarily emergency medicine, and this has proven to be particularly helpful as we frequently have emergencies and critically ill patients that present at our clinic. Volunteering at the DHC gave me a particular interest in TB and HIV, so I really enjoyed running that aspect of our work before I left on maternity leave. I was honoured to take over as Clinic Coordinator when I returned this month, as I know what incredible things we do at our clinic and I want to help make sure we continue to do this important work.

"My vision for the DHC clinic is that we continue to provide outstanding care both on site and at our outreach locations. One thing I am very passionate about is supporting those affected by gender-based violence (GBV). I am working to help our clinic better address this major issue, as we currently do not have any programs to specifically address GBV. The joint work with our social workers to help individuals with substance-use disorders to go to rehab has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my work. Nothing makes me happier than when I see our patients come back with a new perspective on life after going through this process."

*We are always keen to hear from qualified primary-health care nurses who are interested in part-time or full-time work in our clinic. See attached for more information and please pass on to anyone you know who meets the criteria.*



## **HANDS ACROSS THE SEAS**

The arrival of a group of Irish volunteers only three days after the Irish team defeated the Springboks in the Rugby World Cup could have been bad timing. But the charm and energy brought by the young men from the North of Ireland has more than won over the wounded hearts of the South Africans that they have met.

The group, under the leadership of Paddy Doyle, comes from Connections Youth project in Belfast. This is a much postponed visit that was initially prevented by COVID and then further delayed by flight problems when they tried to come last year. Paddy has previously brought three groups to Durban where they work as volunteers at the DHC and also at Isithumba in the Valley of 1000 Hills.

Some of the young men are trainee teachers or hoping to be personal trainers so they were keen to do a sports activity with a local school and we were pleased to connect them with St Augustine's Primary. Located in Greyville since the 1950s, St Augustine's started off in 1906 as a 'coloured' Catholic school in the building where the DHC now stands. They are memorialized in the bricks of 'St Augustine's Café' on the first floor.

The school learners come from a wonderfully interesting mix of backgrounds: South Africans who are Zulu, Coloured and Indian plus increasingly Nigerians, Congolese and Burundians. To further enhance the diversity, our Irish

volunteers were joined for their first day but some Israeli volunteers who are in Durban as part of the TEN programme. The Israelis are already working with schools in Inanda and so could give some useful guidance to the Irish, fresh off the plane.

They worked with learners aged between 11 and 13 (almost 200 in total) playing different sports and games, undaunted by the heat of the Durban sun. Durban-based Irish priest, Fr Seán Mullin CSSp, came down to welcome them, fittingly since the playing field they were using had been created by him. In between sessions, the children had a chance to chat to the overseas volunteers and for Angela Pienaar, Deputy Principal, this was one of the very special moments: "These children have so little opportunity to have direct contact with the wider world and they really enjoyed hearing about life in other places."

Afterwards, there was a time for the two groups of volunteers to reflect on their experiences and to share a bit about why they were volunteering. There was a strong similarity between the two groups: that they wanted to see the wider world, they wanted to do something useful, and they also wanted to be changed and shaped by new experiences. As one of the Israelis commented: "It reminds us that children can enjoy themselves without the latest mobile phone or expensive toys but just the joy of playing." They were unanimous in their praise for how engaged, curious, smart and fun the children were. "Not like the school children where we come from!"

It is interesting that the places from which the volunteers came - Israel and the North of Ireland - are both areas of the world which, like South Africa, have known great conflict in modern times. Oddly, here during the Struggle and in Ireland during the Troubles, different sides claimed an allegiance with either Israel or Palestine and so the conflict in the Holy Land was also visible in their own political tensions.

But with one voice the young people from Ireland and Israel agreed with a young Zulu woman who was accompanying them. "Today we are not looking to the conflicts of the past but we are trying to build a future for ourselves." The feeling was strongly felt that sometimes history holds people back and imprisons them in long-past grievances, distracting them from the real economic and political issues of today.



### **IBANDLA MALUVUKE: LET THE CHURCH ARISE!**

120 Christians (pastors, church members and NGO workers) gathered recently at Home Ground, the Baptist Church in Westville to consider this famous text from Micah 6:8: "What does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God."

We were being challenged to ask ourselves: What does this look like in the context of our neighbourhoods? In the context of our city, our province, our country?

The event was co-ordinated by the Church Alliance for Social Transformation (CAST) which partners with churches to help them better understand their community and their call, and then equip and empower them towards justice initiatives that will bring about transformation.

The church members came from across eThekweni and also from as far as Howick and KwaDukuza; they were joined by theologians, worship-leaders and social activists from around South Africa. A number of themes were explored: addiction, food security, employment, housing, race & xenophobia,

crime and violence, peace-building and broken families. The DHC was asked to lead the session on homelessness.

Stuart Talbot and Raymond Perrier started off by inviting the church members in their small group to share what they felt they were already doing to help and how they felt homeless people responded. Unbeknown to them, we had three people in the room with lived experience of being homeless, Norman Sibisi, Nolwandle Nzimande and Thami Shandu (*pictured at the top with Kate Baker from Makabongwe Pre-Primary*). After listening politely, the three then shared what it actually felt like from their perspective. While they appreciated the food and other services that churches offered, they also still felt excluded by the churches and many church members. They did not feel welcome in the liturgies and were sometimes suspicious of the churches' motives. As one of them said: "When the Muslims feed us, they feed us; when the Christians feed us, they take pictures."

As an organisation that feeds people but also takes pictures, it was helpful for us at the DHC to hear this and reflect on how we appropriately record what we do and share it with our supporters.

A key role of the conference was to expand people's imagination for what is possible in different areas of community development. So we continued our session by asking the participants to draw what they could imagine as the ideal welcoming church, aided by the homeless people present. It was interesting how quickly the challenge expanded to embrace a whole range of people who feel marginalised by current church buildings: not just the homeless but people with disabilities, older people, parents of young children. The group was keen to move away from the usual model of a Sunday worship space with some social services added-on, and explore a welcoming space which was usable by all parts of the community for a range of activities throughout the week, honouring God both through worship and service to others.

One of the keynote speakers was Rev René August, an Anglican priest from Cape Town. She showed how a 'prophetic imagination' can help us to look very differently not only at social issues but also at the role the church can play in addressing them. The whole of the DHC Management Team joined the CAST team the day after the conference to spend more time with René and be led by her in a new way of looking at a Gospel passage. She helped us to act out the two healings in Mark 5:21-43 and see how Christ's presence results in unlikely movements in the power dynamic in the situations he enters.

We hope to continue to draw on this approach and see how we can use our role to shift power dynamics in the social problems we encounter.

*Photo: on the far right Norman Sibisi (a Street Lit vendor) and Stuart Talbot help their group to develop a prophetic imagination for a welcoming church.*



## MARKING HERITAGE MONTH IN VARIOUS WAYS

September is Heritage Month in South Africa and we have all been enjoying opportunities to celebrate our various cultural heritages, through clothing, music and food.

As we do every year, our pre-school at Dalton held an event to help the 4 and 5-year-olds learn more about their Zulu culture. They had the fun of wearing traditional clothing and also learnt dances to perform for their families and some of the homeless men in the area. (*See picture at the top*).

We were pleased to provide kitchen space to assist the Cathedral parish with their preparations for a Heritage Day event after Mass one Sunday. On the same day, the homeless were treated to a special meal inside the main hall at the DHC. Sitting at the banqueting tables they enjoyed even better food than usual and also had a chance to perform songs and poetry for each other. This was made possible thanks to a very generous donation from Rani Joseph in Australia in honour of her late mother Mohagani Govender. We also had the assistance of some extra volunteers from the Durban branch of Good Deeds.

As well as a chance for each person to celebrate their own culture, Heritage Month should also be an opportunity to deepen our understanding of other cultures. (This was discussed by Raymond in this month's 'Southern Cross'. [Click here to sign up for your subscription to South Africa's 101-year-old paper which is part of the heritage of the Church in this part of the world.](#))

So we organised an event in which we gathered people together to give them a chance to talk about how they celebrate special events (like coming-of-age and marriage) in their home culture, and also learn how they are marked by others. Our own staff and interns participated who between them cover a number of the cultures: Zulu, Xhosa, Mpondo, Tsonga, Sotho, Coloured, Indian, British, American, Burundian and Congolese; they were joined by our visiting Irish volunteers and also some students from a US university who added Afghani, Algerian and Chinese into the mix.

People learnt some fascinating things about each other: some people were shocked to hear about dowry payments and others equally shocked to learn that other cultures do not have them. We also saw how cultural traditions affect the whole of one's life from the various ways of naming children to the different ways of honouring dead bodies. Several participants took up the invitation to wear something that expressed their heritage (from beadwork to baseball caps); a few also brought distinctive food to share so people could enjoy samoosas or shortbread or amadumbe.

The exercise helped us appreciate what makes us different and discover what unites us.

*Photo: Five of our staff members sharing about heritage (left to right) Dudu Ntombela, Maighlin Andrews with Hendrix, Thembeke Mchunu, Sr Cathy Murugan and Leanne Banks.*



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