



AUGUST 2023

Dear Prayer Partners,

As I go on my daily walks I am so aware of what a privilege it is to live and work in a place surrounded by so much beauty. This morning at first light I saw an owl outlined against the sky as it sat on a bare branch before gliding noiselessly to another perch.

Walking on the path up to the cross with a friend, she enthused about the varying colours of the Restia as they swayed in the breeze and caught the sunlight. This reminds me of the song—'How lovely are thy dwelling places, my soul longs for the courts of the Lord' Ps 84:1

As I contemplate living on Volmoed I cannot but think of the next step we are taking in adopting the Covenant of Love on the 24th of August. Our patrons have been invited for this event, which will be followed by our AGM in the afternoon. Please keep both these events in your prayers.

Part of our journey with this Covenant is the stories that are being shared every Wednesday morning when the staff and residents (who are able) come together for a prayer meeting.

Each sharing a little bit of their back ground, how they came to Volmoed and what Volmoed means to them. As we recount these stories we cannot forget those who laid the foundations of Volmoed, acting on the vision God gave them of a place of Reconciliation. Bernhard and Jane who have retired to Onrus Manor and Barry and Molly Wood. Making it an appropriate time to commemorate Barry's passing 5 years ago on the 23 July. The picture is the flower arrangement Molly did in the Chapel to commemorate his passing. We also think of Willie and Margi Hare who joined Bernhard and Jane at the beginning. Then there were all the volunteers who helped establish Volmoed whether coming out for a weekend or for a more extended period.



In keeping with this theme of memories it was very special to meet John and Betty Cupido's one son who arrived on Volmoed recently to come and see where his parents stayed. With the help of our photo albums we were able to show him pictures of the time they were staying in Faith while John was overseeing the building of the houses. Serghay, our maintenance manager and one of our Members of Council, in his story called John the 'master builder'.

So we invite you to share some of your memories with us by sending us an email to

admin@volmoed.co.za

Esther

AUGUST GUESTS

- 10—13 Michael Battle
- 16—18 Gemeente Dienste Netwerk
- 14 –18 Leana van Wyk
- 24th Volmoed AGM and acceptance of The Covenant of Love Service
- 26—2 Sept Unyoke

Today was Mandela Day. While I enjoyed seeing photos of many of you visiting the VYLTP at their drum-making project in Zwelihle, I did not get there myself. Mandela Day celebrates giving self for a cause. I spoke the other day with Franci and we shared how important it is to have meaning in life, especially living in a world which may be abhorrent in many ways to Madiba. For me meaning is not so much in crossing things off a bucket list, but rather in my intention towards a goal, whether or not I am successful in that intention. One of these goals for Volmoed is The Covenant of Love and what it signifies.



In perfect Irish, the reason for Volmoed being a community is that it believes that it is. I suppose that one could call this the intentional community. I believe that this intentionality creates space for the embodiment of this in action. However, it does not remove the reality of humanity and its condition as it is expressed in and through every one of us. Nor does it have specific vows that create an order, literally. It exists in a relationship with Jesus Christ, individually and corporately understood, and linked to a place that is called Volmoed. I think each generation of Volmoed has ploughed its deposit of personal and corporate investment into this place and its people at the time. Gradually, through pain and joy, this has built up an accumulative intergenerational human capital deposit that becomes Volmoed. This includes physical labour, thoughts and conversations, actions, prayers, smiles and tears, our own life struggles and many other relational things. Above all, there is the mysterious element of I am who I am, who we would say brings certain people and their influence to bear on Volmoed at certain times. There is an undefined mysterious presence which we call God. That is another reason why your prayers are so important.

Secondly, we are flesh and blood and we share a common humanity. This is the basis of Jesus who is the core of all community because Jesus embodies the sense that the mystery of God and the flesh and blood beings, we call people have come to a covenantal relationship of “witness” with each other. This is not changed by any new covenant, but is accessed through the underlying mystical covenant between people and God. In a sense the Volmoed covenant of love merely re-states this, which can feel like a pressure to enact it. How can we even talk of a covenant of love when we sometimes are barely respectful in the way we speak with each other? Well, actually by virtue of being humans, we share the characteristics of choice to act in ways that do not describe love. We also share the burden of centuries of disrespect and trauma. We do not have the covenant of love, because we think that we are worthy of it or almost at the grade where we love most of the time and respect all of the time. We write words that are contrary to the collective wound that we share. We are part of the offensive contradiction of the cross. Actually, it is precisely in the sense that “we do not measure up” to community that the intentional community finds meaning and is being pulled towards a higher calling.

We will be offering a platform for those who have spoken to us and asked how we could help. More later.

Thank you all for your love and prayer support. We are indeed blessed.

Love Tony

PRAYER REQUESTS

- For the safety of our staff, especially for those living in Zwelihle where violence seems to have escalated .
- For continued health with the cold weather we are experiencing.

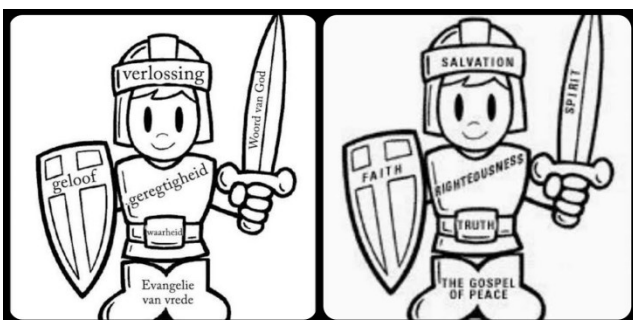
Dear Volmoed family

It's the middle of the year and everyone is starting to take leave. It is also a July that I can appreciate the thought of "Christmas in July". We are so thankful that the road works in front of our entrance has also gone! Of course the rest of the road is still being worked on, but we are free to enter and exit without wondering which way the traffic is going. It's great that we no longer have to worry about our guests having to leave the property outside of office hours when there was no one to assist them with regards to the flow of traffic.

Looking back at this month the severe weather conditions (across the country) stand out. While visiting in Pretoria it was snowing in Johannesburg. The cold has not left us yet. Morning temperatures this past week ranged between 2.5°C and 4°C between 07h00 and 07h30. As I'm typing this, the barometer has gone down significantly, an indication of the cold and rainy weather predicted for the weekend. Hopefully there will not be serious effects On the other hand Graham Ward was here for a flash visit. He was telling me we are having spring weather. It seems like the Coral tree is agreeing with him with its red blossoms coming out all over.



We want to thank W/O Matthee, W/O Davids and SGT Dywaba who came to share information with our staff around domestic violence and the protection act, as part of the Police Social Awareness Campaign. We appreciate them sharing options around issues in your own home, that of a friend or loved one. They also shared around the role of the absent father and the importance of raising our sons to break that cycle, teaching them the importance of the word "No" and further information on protecting our children from possible issues as they grow up. Let's remind ourselves and teach them to wear the Armour of God as we are taught in Ef 6:11



Mathilda

