



January/February 2023

Dear Prayer Partners,

We ended 2022 with a re-union of university friends and started 2023 with a family get together. How lovely it was to see children play on the field and be aware of constant activity around us. Public Holidays became work days for some of us to be able to accommodate this, but it was well worth it. So despite the rumours of new strains of Covid we have a sense of leaving the 'old' behind and looking forward to the new.

The good news as we look forward to new things is the improvement in Mike's health. Many of you might well be up to date with his progress as Alyson puts out regular updates. An excerpt of the latest update is: *'Although restoration of the left foot movement has been slow, there are definite improvements. He has even recently walked a short distance with an elbow crutch, the AFO in the shoe gives good support and stability. Soon will be trying the use of 2 sticks which he received as a gift.'*

One of our continuing projects is fighting the alien trees—Deon and his team have been doing a sterling job in this regard. They are not the only ones doing this though so we would like to say big **THANK YOU**, to Marietjie and her husband Dirk who tirelessly come on a Wednesday morning to hack away at the aliens. At the moment, with the hot weather, I often see their car parked when going for my early morning walk, usually before seven.



The New Year has also seen the return of Brother Daniel to Volmoed after his Sabbatical. For the locals who are interested he will be sharing some of his experience of walking the Camino on Thursday the 26th January after the 10H00 service.



The gift of the Grand Piano we received a number of years ago is coming into its own as we have a joint Fundraiser on the 22 January at 15h00, an afternoon of piano music and poetry by Lara Kirsten who is a Hermanus local.

### **WE HAD THE DRAW FOR THE VOLMOED 50 FUND AT THE END OF DECEMBER**

Jane Turkstra won the R1000.00 prize

Lettie Velthuisen won the R2000.00 prize

John & Jane Damant won the weekend at Volmoed.

*Esther*

### **GUEST FEEDBACK**

**Stunningly beautiful, peaceful, restful, lovely cottage.** (Faith)

*I loved the retreat and rest and nature was fantastic. Loved the accommodation and waterfall was beautiful. What a quiet wonderful retreat with friendly, helpful accommodating staff.*

Who shot the starter's gun for the 2023 marathon to start? I was still musing about the start of the year and then the marathon was underway and the first water point is not yet in sight, so I am reflecting on my feet.



I feel the closeness of my seconder in the marathon, Holy Spirit. A small example may suffice, coming from today. The office needed a new printer. The old one had been causing havoc for a while. We ordered one on Friday. Someone donated the exact amount on the same day we ordered. Just a little reminder that we are not alone.

At present I am preparing for the Trustee's meeting which is taking place on 24<sup>th</sup>. Please pray for wisdom as we deliberate on so many things, but also as we discern the sense of call on the life of Volmoed, the reason we are here, if you like. It comes down to Healing and Reconciliation. This is not new and yet we are challenged to embody this in deeper ways.

This year we are also hoping to draw up a comprehensive data base of the Volmoed community, if such a venture is possible. Of course, this will have to be maintained, but we are hoping that it will allow a new sense of meeting and participating in the life of Volmoed.

We have been doing staff appraisals for the first time. This has been so far such a positive experience for us and for them. We are privileged to work with great people, who are talented in so many different ways and ensure that the Volmoed facilities which we know and love, stay beautiful. Please continue to bear all staff in your prayers. The whole COVID scenario hit the world hard and Volmoed was not exempt. We have managed to maintain all staff and have ensured that staff are able to work a full week, but it has been tough. Although bookings are up (Thank God!), the financial recovery has been gradual and we are not yet in the clear. Please pray that through God's favour and God's wisdom we can fully make the transition from surviving to thriving.

So, as we run into this year (I am not a runner), I am reminded of a space in all exercise, where people enter a zone of quietness and purpose and rhythm. During this zone, time stands still and there comes a synchronicity of all things. I want to enter that creative zone at Volmoed, where the struggle is absorbed into the eternal purpose and time into a mindful eternity. Pray for us in the office that we can face 2023 mindfully, peacefully and with joyful purpose.

May your year also be one of healing and Reconciliation.

TONY

Dear Volmoed Family

It's already time to write to you again. Can it be that January is almost at its end?!

All our children are back at school and we are looking forward to a good year of learning and growing.

Can you believe that little Zoe (Peterus' daughter) will be 5 in April this year? Many of you will remember her battle with cancer and spending her first birthday in Tygerberg Hospital. Now in two years time, DV, she will also be going to school.

We give thanks to all of you praying with us for the Red Tape issues that needed to be worked through. It's a relief that some of them have been sorted out. We look forward to the ways that will be provided to finish off the last ones too!

As you would have seen from the other parts of the letter we had a very busy December and start to January. What a delight to have families together laughing and playing, cycling and running. Even though it takes a lot of planning, and keeping in tune with load shedding the ladies in the laundry had all the bedding ready every time we had a quick turnaround in groups departing and arriving the same day.

To the men helping to cart around linen between the laundry, linen room and houses and keeping the grounds beautiful. A special thank you to our staff for making it all work, also those jumping in to help make beds.

Looking at The Brothers the picture is complete again with Br Daniel back from his sabbatical. We look forward to hearing more about his adventures next week after the Thursday service. With brother Luc and Edwin here it is lovely to sit in the quiet listening to the five voices chanting the Psalms during prayers.

Wishing you many Blessings for 2023

Mathilda

## JANUARY/FEB VISITORS

23 –27 Jan	World Vision	03 Feb—05 Feb	YWAM
23 Jan	Br Robert James Magliula	24 Feb—26 Feb	Bill Carney
<b>24 Jan</b>	<b>Trustees meeting</b>	27 Feb—02 March	Unyoke
27 Jan—03 Feb	VYLTP		



## THE NEW VOLMOED PATRONS



The passing of Archbishop Desmond Tutu was a sad day for many people across the world as it was for us at Volmoed. The Arch who, in his final years often participated with us in our weekly Eucharist, was also our sole Patron for the past decade. So, we have good reason to claim him as our patron saint and, today we will plant a tree in his memory close to the place where he parked his car each Thursday. But how do you

replace Tutu as Patron? The Board of Trustees discussed this at length, and finally decided to invite three distinguished friends of Volmoed to jointly fulfil that role. As it happens, all three were friends and colleagues of Tutu, and shared his commitment to justice, reconciliation, and peace. So, there is a sense of apostolic succession and continuity in their appointment, but each brings a wealth of their own experience to help guide us as we move into the future. All three know Volmoed well and have often contributed in various ways to our life together. After the service today we will also plant a tree, near to that in memory of the Arch, as a sign of their appointment and also in gratitude to them for accepting their role as our new patrons.

Professor Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, is the Director of the Centre for the Study of the Afterlife of Violence and the Reparative Quest at Stellenbosch University. Pumla is a psychologist by profession, and internationally known for her work on dealing with trauma in contexts of violence. An Anglican by tradition, Pumla's vast experience in dealing with trauma and reconciliation connects well with Volmoed's founding vision as a place of healing, especially in times such as today. Dr Lionel Louw taught in the Department of Social Work at University of Cape Town for many years until his retirement a few

years ago. Lionel is a minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and the President of the Western Province Council of Churches. Deeply committed to the ecumenical church, Lionel has long been engaged in the struggle for justice and reconciliation in South Africa and has a passion to serve the new generation of church leaders as well as civil society. Dr Mary Burton, formerly the President of the Black Sash, served as a commissioner on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and continues to be engaged in the ongoing struggle for human rights, reconciliation and justice in South Africa. Together with her husband, Geoff, she is a member of St Thomas' Anglican Church in Rondebosch, Cape Town, where Barry Wood, one of our founders at Volmoed, was rector.

