



JULY 2023

Dear Prayer Partners,

We ended May and started June with a lot of rain which once again caused the river to come down in flood as De Bos Dam was already 100% full. The bridge that crossed the river at the Grotto floated down, over the bridge at the pump house before coming to rest in the reeds further down. Amazingly staying intact. We also have a new beach at the Grotto. None of this is too surprising as the force of the water coming down at the waterfall is a sight to behold.

The field in front of Oak Cottage is a river and if it wasn't so cold one would be tempted to go and sail your toy boat there.

As yet the weather hasn't abated much and we have had more rain and lots of wind. We are thankful that there has not been any serious damage



on Volmoed though some trees and lots of small branches have come down.

June is Fine Arts time in Hermanus. Alyson and Audrey organized an exhibition in the meeting room and most of the artists participated. The opening went well and the sun came out for the event. Despite the road works and the weather there was a number of visitors until the weather and the lack of electricity put an end to it.

The combination of wind and rain had an effect not only on Volmoed but the most of Hermanus when the

pylons on Rotary Way came down and we were without power for four days. Once it came on in the Valley we were a phase down which meant a further lack of electricity in some areas. Eventually it all got sorted and life has returned back to normal.

With the loadshedding and power outages the accompanying picture caught my eye. So may you all experience moments in which your soul may be soothed—be it by candle light, tea, coffee or a warm fire. Or all of them at the same time.

In our previous prayer letters we asked you to keep Peterus and his Oupa in your prayers. In the midst of all the other happenings on Volmoed his Oupa passed away. So please continue keeping him and his family in your prayers.

Some good news is that our gate has eventually been fixed so please remember to check your gate code when coming to visit.



Esther

Dear Volmoed family

Even though I am by far not a winter person, my favourite day of the year comes on 21<sup>st</sup> June. Yes, for those of you who are looking for the warmth of summer, this is the day nature starts preparing it for the summer to return.

Looking back at the pictures taken this month I can report back on enormous amounts of rain, rivers of water all over the place. No electricity for 3 days and then only one phase for another 3 days was truly challenging. The Aloes are blooming bright red and are beautiful against the dark colours of the clouds and winter days. With all the rain of course comes a lot of mud, and cars being stuck. Thank goodness for bakkies and tractors to help out.

We also had to “fish” the bridge to the Grotto out of the river after it found a resting place on the debris of some reeds downstream. Then of course we had a warmer day and to our surprise had a Boomslang visiting. We all love making the most of the winter sun. In its absence nothing beats the warmth of a fire place, which was much appreciated when we had the Trustees Meeting.

Having the art exhibition for the Fine Arts in the Meeting room again was lovely as usual. Part of the cultural experience was the Stoep Kuier organised by The History Society. The group visited several farms in the Valley learning more about their history.

Here is some pictures to those who might have missed them on social media.



Mathilda

### THANKS GIVING

- For the continued safety of our staff as we mop up, pick up and generally get things looking spruce again.
- Our guests who come and stay and the value they add to our lives.
- That despite the weather the work on the road is coming along and hopefully soon we will not have to contend with the stop/go outside our gate anymore.
- For the prayer and financial support we receive from our Volmoed friends. You rock!

### JULY VISITORS

Our July visitors are mostly individuals coming for a break.

24-28 The University of Stellenbosch will be here.

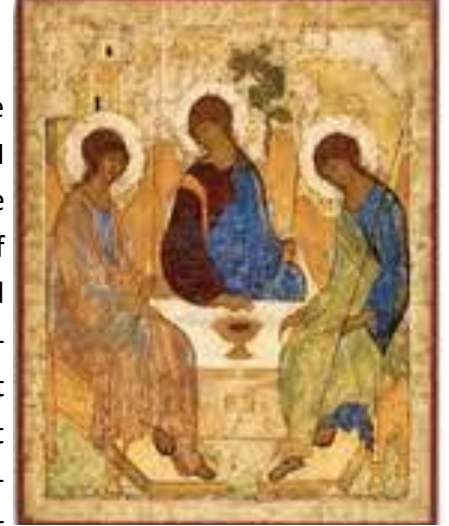
### SOME REVIEWS

- ♦ Very pleasant and serene circumstances and staff complimented to the depth of our retreat
- ♦ A beautiful, quiet and holy space to come to rest in the presence of the Creator. Well looked after gardens, lovely nature, well equipped units, and very friendly staff. I enjoyed the sacred rhythms of the Benedictine monks on the property.

Hello Volmoed

Spike Milligan's "poem for the lonely" contains one word: "Hello".

We are in the season of Trinity and Pentecost and all things related to the Spirit. Wherever I listen and read of the Trinity, which is often lately, I glimpse the simple truth that it is all about the community of God. Above my desk at home hangs an icon of the 3 visitors by Andrei Rublev. Each of the visitors seem to defer to both others in the attitude of utmost love and respect. The three are known to be the Trinity and together make the outline of the chalice of the covenant of the blood of Christ, a love gift that unites us all at our core. When I read the icon, I feel drawn into this sweet communion. I think that is the point of the Trinity. Later this year we will invite each other into this communion of love through the Volmoed Covenant of Love.



This covenant is not a bunch of rules by which we can hammer each other into some kind of tyrannical line. It is a pen that we can pick up, if we dare, and write on our own heart, words of love. These words will affect all areas of our relating at Volmoed. Actually, it gives me occasion to recall my favourite poster in Volmoed. I often refer to it, so please bear with me. It is a quote from Carl Jung: *"But what if I should discover that the very enemy himself is within me, that I myself am the enemy who must be loved – what then?"*

Please pray for Volmoed as we move with uncertain steps towards our high calling in Jesus Christ. We are hoping that as many relevant people as possible will find ownership of this covenant in their hearts.

Of course, when speaking of covenant of love, the proof is in the pudding. That somehow did not sound right... my mind is now on some brownies given by one of our visitors. The link is probably that both have the element of the divine. Okay, let me try again: the covenant shows itself in implementation. One area that we need prayer for is how to handle the reality of growing older at Volmoed. Enough said. Can you also add this to your prayer list?

There is much to say thank you for. One gratitude is that we have received some money to start to pay for some outstanding amounts. What makes this special for me personally is that this was a faith step for me. Sometimes we make bold assertions of God our provider, because we have a Scripture jump off the page at us. However, as time passes, it feels like the Word is returning to the page. Well, the Word did not return void and I am breathing slightly easier. However, keep praying for provision. We have had many costs that were not planned for. We still need more. However, this is the paragraph for saying thank you and we are very thankful to be loved.

We live in a world of uncertainty. As you can see Volmoed has not been exempt. However, please pray for others who have lost far more, who have been flooded, who could not escape the icy wind, who could not have the shelter that all deserve. The call of compassion and mercy rests on us. Have a great month. Come often to prayer. We all need that.

Love Tony

May I live this day , Compassion of heart  
Clear of word, Gracious in awareness  
Courageous in thought, Generous in Love

*John O' Donohue*

**VOLMOED 50 FUND LUCKY DRAW WINNERS**

R2000 Cash: Cindy Stephen

R1000 Cash: Caroline Goatley

Free weekend at Volmoed for 2: Alyson Guy

**Enquire at the office if you would like to participate.**