



JUNE 2023

Dear Prayer Partners

Winter will officially be here on the 21st but already we are starting to bundle up and we see smoke coming out of the chimneys as our guests keep themselves warm. This has also been accompanied by the sound of the log splitter as the staff work towards stocking up our firewood supply.

In the office we take a break during the morning to stand in the sun, like the dassies (Rock Hyrax) on the field, trying to warm ourselves. This reminds me of the scripture we shared with the staff during our morning prayers. 1 Tim 6: 17God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. How rich we are on Volmoed as there is so much we can and do enjoy.



Over the last month or so we have enjoyed seeing the many different proteas blooming each bush covered with an abundance of flowers. The pictures don't really do it justice.

In other areas we have an abundance of leaves on the ground as more come wafting down lazily in the breeze or more vigorously when we have strong winds.

Outside the office the purples of the salvias provide a bountiful splash of colour against the backdrop of green trees and those with changing leaves.

How often we take things for granted or just see their 'nuisance' value. I was reminded of this when we had our visitors from the Diocese of York here and the baboons arrived to sun themselves on the pump house roof and logs close by. Our guests brought out their cameras and enjoyed the sight of our furry neighbours. Even those can be moments to enjoy the riches of what we have on Volmoed.

Our guests and staff all bring a richness to living and working on Volmoed. As such we continue striving to enhance and grow in our relationships as staff and residents. Last year we took a step in that direction by

participating in a "Healing of Memories" course presented by Michael Lapsley, now we are looking at the next step as we explore what The Covenant of Love looks like and how it can impact our community and guests. As one of our guests wrote recently—*"Thanks for preserving the beauty and tranquility of this place. Volmoed is beyond words"*

So we hope that you, our friends and prayer partners, will have occasion to come and visit and enjoy the riches we have here and that those of you who read this letter while here on Volmoed will experience this riches and enjoy it .

WINTER SPECIAL



PLAN AHEAD
JOIN US FOR A WINTER FAMILY BREAK
DURING THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Esther

We have another month that can witness to the mercy and provision of God within Volmoed. This month, I want to comment on the very finely tuned network of people that make up the Volmoed family. As I grow into the life of the Volmoed community, I am realizing with joy that despite the many challenges that we have at Volmoed, I can attest to the Holy Spirit doing something very special in and amongst us at Volmoed, in a way that cannot be put down to mere chance or hard work. I have on a number of occasions been aware of the Holy Other at work, reinterpreting Volmoed's vision of Healing and Reconciliation. I have also been touched by God in so many of you, whether on a Thursday or just exchanges with staff or residents through the week. I have been amazed how many of you pray for me and I feel it. Thank you. Please continue to do so. The challenges have been huge recently as each bit of Volmoed's infrastructure has required attention. We believe in the God who provides. This is the God who provides the ram for sacrifice even when we have nothing to give. In this mysterious way, we are children like Isaac, of the promise. After so many thousands of years, we are still learning what that means.

As a community we are looking at the process of integrating an instrument which we have called the "Covenant of Love". Please remember us in prayer as we show our seriousness to become a community in a society that does not necessarily value the same levels of commitment to live out our faith. This is a sensitive process and the covenant is not a law, but a beacon. Pray for us that it may become a beacon pulling people to its light.

Today the sun is warm. The sky is blue and there is a soft buzz of chatter in the beautiful quietness on Volmoed. As staff, we all went out with our tea, and soaked it in (sun and tea!). Sometimes that is all that is necessary. The autumn leaves were so pretty and in that moment, I said to myself: "It is well. It is well with my soul." And it was! May you be blessed with many such moments in this autumn time.

I would also like to comment on the Thursday services which have been rather full lately. Yes, I know: You noticed too! Change can be disruptive, a disruptive grace. One of the areas of the covenant refers to Volmoed's commitment to the intergenerational relationships. Disruptive change is a grace, but on the other side, it is, well, what can I say: disruptive, messy. The goal of disruptive change is to learn. Please pray that both the youth and the not so young will find those surprising moments of humanity where we are surprised by the God of Grace, even while we struggle to come to terms with the peculiar otherness that accompanies such meetings, asking for curiosity, patience and care. The growth area for Volmoed is not to say that the elderly are the bearers of the legacy of Volmoed or that the youth are the future of Volmoed. Rather, it is to allow ourselves in the space in-between, to be surprised by how we can grow in grace. As we pray through this, we may be surprised that much of the growth in Volmoed is in the space between new and old. *"You've got to give a little, take a little... That's the story of, that's the glory of love"* (Bette Midler)

Have a blessed month. I have opted to share a few themes more personally, rather than everything that is going on in an impersonal level. Your prayers are much appreciated and valued. Keep warm.

Love Tony



Dear Volmoed Family

Holes and spaces seem to be on my mind this month. People leaving us for reasons other than dying like retiring or emigration. Of course you just miss some people because they are not with you right now.

We recently lost our much loved cat, and the intense hurt brought back childhood memories of losing pets. What makes it worse is the helplessness to the total destruction it caused my son's heart and mind. It made me think of the comparison once made between a person losing a husband/wife and the single person losing a pet as their companion for many years. Of course there is no difference in the hurt and the void left behind in both these instances.

The void people leave behind knowingly or not became more evident again in these last few days, as we deal with the loss of people on different levels in our lives as the "next/younger generation."

For this reason we decided to start a Roll of Honour paying tribute to those individuals, parishes and institutions that got us to where we are today, with gratitude to God's grace and glory.

At the end of it all we are grateful for the ones that come into our lives to fill some of the emptiness and heal some of the pain. Although we cannot replace a loved one, we can love again through a new addition pet, friend or service. We thank God for those sent to help us and hold our hands as we go forward. We hope that one day we would have made a difference in someone else's life too.

Still, moving on is not always something bad. We can move on from hurt and misunderstandings, from wrong perceptions and half truths.

It's Ascension day today, let's remember that we are never alone, and let's move on with the Spirit as our guide.

Mathilda



JUNE VISITORS

2-4 Diocese of False Bay

5-12 Denise & Peter Holden

8-18 Art Exhibition in the Conference Room for FynArts

9-13 Denise Sanders

9-11 Ruach Kha'hee Ministries

12 for a long stay - Eric de Jongh

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Peterus whose Oupa isn't well and needs lots of care.
- The continued safety of our staff especially as they travel to and from work
- Our continued discussions as we explore the meaning of the covenant of love

YELLOW DAISY

In the midst of death,
Like a bright and vibrant flower,
There is always life.

From Between Heaven and Earth by Isobel de Gruchy

