



October 2022

Dear Prayer Partners,

Many of our visitors are great photographers, whether amateur or professional. In August we were privileged to have Clare de Wet staying on Volmoed. She has sent us some photographs and we would like to share two of them with you.



The rainbow always reminds us of God's faithfulness towards us and always builds faith. The pine dam is a favourite spot for many people and features on our welcome cards. So for those who cannot visit Volmoed regularly we trust you enjoy these Volmoed pictures.



As we think of visitors to Volmoed we always enjoy seeing familiar faces. It was a great pleasure to have Margie Hare join us at the Chapel a week or two ago.

Oban Gilmour has been coming regularly and we enjoy spending some time with her during her stays.

Christ Church Kenilworth ladies are regular yearly visitors and we look forward to their visit this month.

Another visitor who has returned, whom we rarely, if ever see, but makes his/her presence known is the Cuckoo, with its distinctive Piet-my-Vrou echoing across the farm.

Wedding season is upon us and during September we had two weddings on one rainy weekend. The one in the Chapel was the wedding of the local Chaplin to the Emergency Services—Mark Robson. It is always a pleasure to work with him and accommodate members of the Emergency Services who need a break on Volmoed.

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*Compassion is born when we discover in the centre of our own existence not only that God is God and man is man, but also that our neighbour is really our fellow man.*

Herni J M Nouwen

## DIRECTORS PERSPECTIVE— Tony Schnell

I have been on a few days' leave. This was much needed. There is a lot that happens at Volmoed, because we are not just a place of accommodation, but a community and a ministry. In sport terms, Volmoed is much more like a hiking trail than a velodrome. We do not fit into the clock-work orange status at all. Of course, this makes it difficult when Volmoed is both a business and a ministry. That means that things are not as neat as we would have liked as a business. It also means that things are not as free-flowing and responsive as we would like as a ministry. The window that I would like to show you as you peep behind the scenes with me is a mixed bag, but a blessing.

On Sunday we were privileged to share the Sunday service with the Pilgrimage of Grace, an ecumenical service that comes towards the end of a pilgrimage by numerous people from across SA who were concerned to take the next step towards reconciliation and healing which is needed even (and maybe especially) in our mission places like Genadendal (Valley of Grace), and yes, even Volmoed. Here, in a diverse group of people, Church leaders and local folk, a new unity was found in the Way of Jesus, and the presence of God was experienced by all in the service at the Volmoed chapel. Somewhere there was an element of restorative justice or restorative repentance. I wish you were there. I wish I was there for the whole journey. This was a ministry process that was at the core of who Volmoed is, in terms of healing and reconciliation. Volmoed was honoured to be part of the process. It would have been difficult to do otherwise.

However, we did not stop having a business to run. If we did not meet our costs, Volmoed could not continue its ministry. We need parameters of discipline and generosity so that we can plot a path in our hike towards the goal of our high offer, our special place in the Hemel and Aarde Valley to others in need of reconciliation and healing. This requires that we find principles that can operate as guidelines so that we can find the call in Jesus Christ. So, most of my time is spent trying to forge a trail to facilitate our holy journey. Very often this is not about finding solutions for problems, but rather finding strategic pointers for managing tensions. It is these, often difficult mapping strategies that make us need a break from time to time. However, what a privilege to be part of the creative growth of healing in this wounded country of ours.

I end the peep behind the scenes of working at Volmoed with an African idiom that I am particularly fond of:

“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” We want to go far, very far in this beautiful journey of reconciliation and healing.

PS, the painted lady flowers are out, if you look carefully. They look just like orchids, although they are not. Look for them as you spot the new signs of spring and appreciate the new trees. When you see the new growth and beauty, please be aware that all beauty has a hidden cost. There is no resurrection without the cross. Even in the bombed ruin of Coventry Cathedral yielded not only nails, but through enacting forgiveness by strangers, a global community of the Cross of Nails, of which Volmoed is a part. As we plant trees, we need to find money to fix the tractor. Such is the dance of Grace that makes us Volmoed!

## *Trees*

Joyce Kilmer 1886-1918

I think that I shall never see  
A poem lovely as a tree.  
A tree whose hungry mouth is prest  
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;  
A tree that looks at God all day,  
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;  
A tree that may in summer wear  
A nest of robins in her hair;  
Upon whose bosom snow has lain;  
Who intimately lives with rain.  
Poems are made by fools like me,  
But only God can make a tree.



The words of this poem moved me when I heard it. So much so that it still pops up in my mind almost daily. When I see a tree or look at the children playing at school. Because “only God can make a me”.

### **OCTOBER VISITORS**

7-9 Christ Church Kenilworth

15-20 Unyoke

24-30 Healing of Memories Group

Pilgrims walking the Pilgrimage of Hope will be staying over during the month.

We have two weddings this month—1st and 15th October

### **THANKS GIVING AND PRAYER REQUESTS**

- Continued prayers for Mike, whose health has greatly improved.
- Nomveliso and baby Akuminto, who was born premature. She is still struggling to breathe on her own.
- Peterus' daughter Zoe, we are thankful for a good report when she went for a check-up
- Wilma, our Chaplain, as she travels to California, where she will officiate at a wedding and visit friends
- Safety of our staff at home and work. Especially those who are busy with the alien clearing.
- We give thanks for all the visitors that have stayed on Volmoed and the good feedback we get from them.

*Tony, Mathilda & Esther*