



Dear Volmoed family

SEPTEMBER 2022

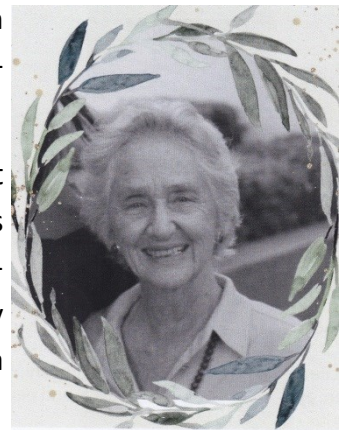
As you read along you will find that we are changing the format of the prayer letter and it will come to you from different perspectives. Just like with any other experiment, this too will take its time to find its groove. Please bear with us as we put pen to paper to let you know about the things we are doing.

August was a busy month with a lot of news .... and ranging from Choirs to Clergy, Art and School reunions. We were blessed to have so many people around.

One of the words I would use to describe the past month would be "Homecoming". I was reminded of the American tradition of homecoming kings and queens.

Our homecoming king—Mike Guy. It is great to have him back home on Volmoed. We thank you for all your prayers for him, Alyson, Gaby and Tabitha.

Our homecoming queen—Elvia Bury has her homecoming not to Volmoed but to her eternal home where I am sure there was much rejoicing. We will miss her though. We think of her thoughtful kindness as she kept a lot of us supplied with various of her homeopathic pills when she became aware of any illness. I still have a bottle of eyedrops that she gave to us as part of a 'survival' kit when we had the fire in 2019.



The Houtbay Ingoma Choir spent a weekend and sang at the Sunday morning Service to the enjoyment of all present.

Between visitors old and new, we had a visit from the SABC camera crew doing a documentary on Art and Religion. John de Gruchy was interviewed and the art room was used for a practical art session. The picture to the left shows the local Zwelihle artists and their completed work.

The strong winds we have had recently blew down branches and uprooted a tree—with no damage to property. This will give us the opportunity to extend our tree planting efforts. We have planted an avenue of trees along the private road as well as in other areas. This has been made possible through donations from many of our Thursday visi-

tors. **Esther**

Lena van Wyk's group came for (their 18<sup>th</sup>) which would have been their 20<sup>th</sup> consecutive year had it not been for covid. What a privilege to have these faithful ladies for a week, praying for their community.

The staff and residents participated in the Healing of Memories workshop, which helped them to deal with matters from their past. The phrase "in a world where you can be anything, be kind" rang true.



As Esther mentioned above we had to say goodbye to some people near and dear to us and after the storm another tree or two. As the saying goes, the old making way for the new, we will be planting a tree in Elvia's honour where the Keurbooms came out.

After all the rain the waterfall is gushing, and the river in flood. The question in the back of our minds, will Blazio need a boat to cross the river to milk the cows .... While the water is running strong, it's still comfortably under the bridge after the debris was cleaned away.

We were able to get rid of some biomass, which adds up with the alien clearing, while the winter season is still with us. Now the last of the new trees can find their resting place too. **Mathilda**

As Tony remarked too, we had groups including Michael Battle's group from America, to share around theological issues of justice and the life of Tutu, SABC looking at youth and art in a Christian context and Healing of Memories. "What on earth is Healing of Memories?" you are probably asking. Well, firstly, it is another step in the process of Volmoed taking active steps as a community to embody its vision of healing and reconciliation. It involved residents and staff. In creative and non-threatening ways, we were able to connect with our inner stories, with its pain and joy. Why? We are building a greater appreciation of the larger Volmoed story, which is written in the lives of all its people. We are moving towards a covenant of love in which everyone is a part.

Elvia Bury left us in August at the age of 94. She passed away peacefully at home (of course, typical Elvia) with all her faculties intact. What a remarkable influence she has had, not just in Volmoed, but in so many



places. Volmoed is so rich in legacies. We are witnesses to a wealth of life experience. Thank you to all of you who are living legacies. We honour you. That just gets me thinking again. At one level, Volmoed is not just a place. It is a community of rich life experience, much more than the sum of its parts.

August was also the homecoming of Mike Guy. Which just goes to prove my point. Volmoed jumped into action. Alex became a secondary apprentice physiotherapist. Mathilda also became a quality controller for the physio. Serghay built a wheelchair ramp. People were in and out of the Nessie. You could see Mike's spirit picking up, with his typical humour and all. Volmoed was doing what Volmoed does and it is good, wholesome and healing.

Dear Volmoed, thank you for being and becoming what you already are.

"Almighty Father, You have established the glory of your presence over Volmoed..."



Mike coming home

**Love Tony**



## PRIORY NEWS



A former member of the monastic community returned for a two-week visit at the beginning of August. He has applied to re-enter the Order, and intends to do so here at St Benedict's Priory shortly

before Holy Week next year. He spent some time with the Camphill community during his visit, as he hopes to volunteer there in future.

Our relationship with the Volmoed community was further strengthened through participation in the Healing of Memories process led by Rev Michael Lapsley. We were pleased to welcome several groups and individuals to our prayers and Eucharists. These included the Hout Bay Ingoma Choir and the Tutu Travel Seminar led by Rev Michael Battle.

Br Luc spent the second half of August in KwaZulu Natal, visiting friends and also men who have expressed interest in joining our community. He returns to us after a weekend in Cape Town, seeing some sights.

Br Roger provided some spiritual accompaniment to Rev Jerry Gelant of the local St Peter's Anglican parish during his retreat at Volmoed. This is one of the ways in which the relationship between Volmoed and the parish is being strengthened.

Br Scott and Br Roger served on the search committee for the selection of a new principal for the Order's Holy Cross School in Makhanda. We believe a good choice was made through a careful process, and the preferred candidate has accepted the offer of the position.

Br Daniel continued his sabbatical. He has started a two-month pilgrimage along the Camino de Santiago from the western coastal border between France and Spain. He has been blessed with experiences of beautiful places and interesting people.

Please pray for:

Edwin Kriel as he enters the Novitiate of our Order here at St Benedict's Priory on 1 September. We are very pleased that he will be joining our community and pray that the blessing will be mutual.

Br Luc as he returns to the US on 15 September. Unfortunately, efforts to extend his visa were unsuccessful, but we hope that he will be able to return to us again before too long.

Holy Cross School as we announce the new principal at an event there on Holy Cross Day, 14 September. Br Roger will be representing the Order on that occasion.

Br Daniel as he continues his pilgrimage, for safety and good health and enjoyment for him, and that he would be a blessing as he is blessed.



Pictures from Daniels travels

## NEWS FLASH

To assist with the changes we are making to the prayer letter, giving everyone an opportunity to contribute their news and thoughts without the restriction of space; we will be transitioning 'The Priory News' and 'The Chaplains Corner' with links to their respective blogs.

In this edition 'The Chaplains Corner' is a separate attachment.

From next month we should be providing you with links to both blogs on the Volmoed Website.

## THANKSGIVING & PRAYER REQUESTS

- We give thanks for your continued prayer support.
- We give thanks for the busy August we had. Please continue to pray for our bookings which remains the main source of our income.
- Nomveliso, who works in the laundry has had a baby girl who was born prematurely due to her mother's high blood pressure. Baby has had to be on oxygen in ICU.
- Mike's continued recovery. There has been much improvement as he diligently does his required exercises with the help of Bello the carer, and Alex.
- The office staff and load they carry.
- Continued safety of our staff. We are thankful for the good reports we receive from our visitors

## Our September visitors

2-4 VYLTP—doing a contextual Bible Study Workshop  
facilitated by Thandi Gamedze & Carol Powell  
Seth Hanson Wedding  
Various individual visitors

16—18 Eleanor Slabbert's wedding.

17 Wedding organized by Mark Robson







24 –25 A group of people from SACLI

27th O'Reilly Wedding

30—2 Oct Lutheran Evangelical Church

During the week we have individual people staying on Volmoed for Retreats, visiting family or just taking time out.

## What a great poem by the late Spike Milligan about smiling

 Smiling is infectious  
You catch it like the flu  
When someone smiled at me today  
I started smiling too   
I walked around the corner  
And someone saw me grin  
 When he smiled I realised  
I had passed it on to him  
I thought about the smile  
And then realised its worth  
A single smile like mine   
Could travel round the earth  
 So if you feel a smile begin  
Don't leave it undetected  
Start an epidemic   
And get the world infected.