



SEPTEMBER 2023

Dear Prayer Partners

Despite the cold in the air Spring is definitely knocking on our door as we notice all the signs of new growth. In the Wellspring/Book Inn gardens the bluebells are providing us with a beautiful splash of colour. As yet we haven't heard the harbinger of Spring's persistent call of 'Piet-my-vrou'.

August saw the return of one of our regular visitors, Lena van Wyk. She brings a group of ladies every year who spend their time praying for their community. By all accounts she has been doing this for at least 20 years except for COVID.



The 24th was an auspicious day as we committed ourselves to the Volmoed Covenant of Love. At the same time we dedicated the new lectern cloth which mirrors the banner on the back wall. (Both the artistic work of Isobel de Gruchy). We were privileged to have all the patrons attending for this occasion. They are seen in the picture on the left behind the lectern. The poem below by Gerard Manley Hopkins was read by Mary Burton during the service. Plaques with the words of the Covenant in both English and Afrikaans have been attached to the wall at the Chapel below the plaque with Volmoed prayer. The isiXhosa, which is at the engravers, will soon be added later.

"We love because God first loved us" (1 John 4:19)

We commit to follow Jesus, to care for Volmoed as a place God has set aside for the ministry of healing, justice and reconciliation; to welcome friend and stranger; old and young; and to love one another as God in Christ loves us.

It is good to hear from our guests that we are accomplishing what we set out to do. One of the delegates participating in a workshop has shared with us how healing and restorative his time on Volmoed has been. Not only the program but just the ability to walk in nature. The tranquility of the place.

If not on Volmoed may you find a place of peace and tranquility this month.

Esther

SEPTEMBER VISITORS

7-10 Embrace South Africa Tours

11-15 Constantia Archdeaconry

29 –1st Annie Abrahams Group

Individuals coming stay to throughout the month



Pied Beauty

Glory be to God for dappled things—

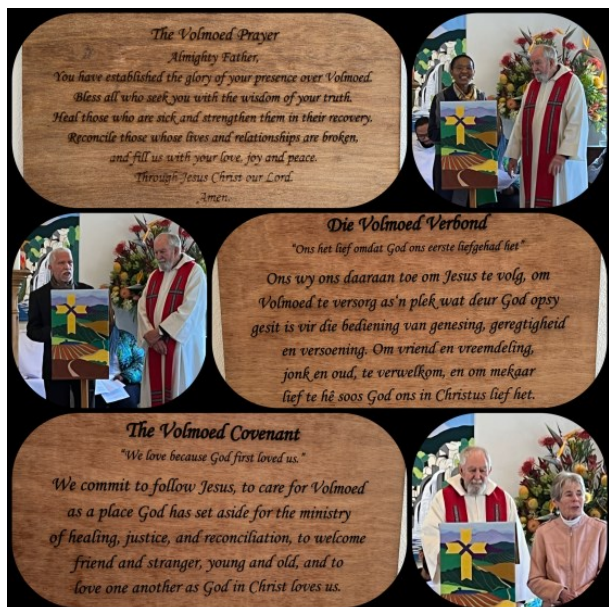
For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough;
And àll tràdes, their gear and tackle and trim.
All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise him.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

Dear Volmoed Family

Spring is in the air or is it? The Coral tree says yes!! It's beautifully red. I recall from school days having to wear summer uniform from the 1st September and it mostly being a very cold day; Seems like it will be the same this year. While we will be wearing summer clothes in our minds, our eyes will see jackets and scarves.

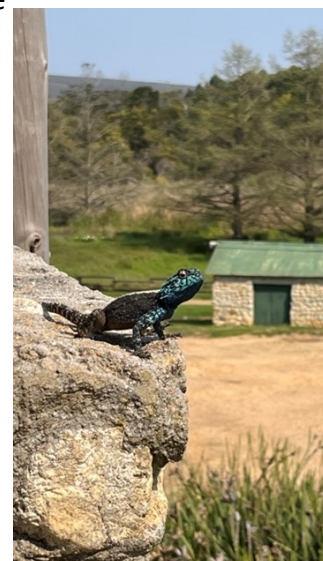
Looking back at the month of August the First Covenant service stands out. It was attended by many Friends of Volmoed including our staff and Patrons. Pumla shared her love for Ps 121 and reminded us to be light. Lionel remembers coming here and "unyoking" at Volmoed a place of reflection to be refreshed, renewing commitment to our work and spirituality while Mary left us with the beautiful poem "Pied Beauty" by Gerard Manley Hopkins



The following excerpt from the "Proslogion of Anselm of Canterbury" spoke to me and I would like to share it with you.

Teach me to seek you,
and when I seek you show yourself to me,
for I cannot seek you unless you teach me,
nor can I find you unless you show yourself to me.
Let me seek you in desiring you
and desire you in seeking you,
let me find you by loving you,
and love you in finding you.

Wishing you many Blessings and a Happy Spring, from me and my lunch companion looking forward to enjoying warm sunny days.



Mathilda

SOUNDS of Seasons Fundraiser Concert

The music of Dutch composer, Herman Beeftink. The programme will include "The Seasons", excerpts from the piano suite "Water" as well as a selection of poems & improvisations.

Thomas de Bruin - flute
Lara Kirsten - piano & performance poet

R170 - Adults
R120 - Students/Pensioners
(Ticket includes coffee/tea & rusk after concert)

Sunday, 17 Sept 2023, 15:00
VOLMOED
Volmoed Chapel,
Hemel-en-Aarde Road, Hermanus (Just past the Ploaaskombuis)

Bookings @ Volmoed - 028 312 1282

Come and enjoy an afternoon of music with local pianist Lara Kirsten and flutist Thomas de Bruin in the beautiful surrounds of Volmoed.

Date: Sunday the 17th September.

Time: 15h00

Place: Volmoed

The end of winter comes, and while I am seeing the new pale green shoots and flowers coming out, we have had a few icy cold and windy days. This reminds me of the lifecycles of our life that come and go and then come again in all their freshness and newness. Volmoed also goes through lifecycles, some bigger and some smaller. It calls to mind some songs of yesteryear: "a wheel within a wheel..." Our first fellow of the Legacy Centre departed for Netherlands. It is interesting to hear the comments of someone who is relatively neutral. He reckons that Volmoed has made a real shift towards actively engaging what it means to be community. This has happened as we try and value the many layers of what it means to be a part of Volmoed... The many narratives we are hearing in morning prayers as staff and residents alike share their story of what Volmoed means to them, is an example of this. There is a certain dignity, honour and appreciation that comes from having one's story heard and recognized. The story of Volmoed is unfinished. Please pray that God will continue to be the author and finisher of our faith story at Volmoed. There is so much to tell and it is a wonderful intriguing story of God's love, especially as we come closer to Volmoed's 40th anniversary in 2026.

Talking of which, we had our AGM and covenant of love service. I have spoken quite a bit about the covenant of love, because covenant is such a strong word. It is a milestone in Volmoed's history and another step in a much larger process. We talked much about the covenant service not being obligatory, as in signing your life away, but rather a deep assent to something dear to us and a call on our heart that we lean into, rather than away from. Then also, we do not have a covenant of love because we are perfect, but rather that in our weakness we yearn for the embodying of God's Kingdom at Volmoed. I think I must stop explaining, because in its simplicity, it's like "Oreo: It's complicated!" However, we now have a beacon to walk towards and a framework in which to think and act. It was a beautiful, vibrant and diverse service, which is also what Volmoed is. So, this can be a prayer for God to transform us and also a prayer of thanksgiving. Esther has just told me that we all wrote about the covenant. I guess that just underlines how important this is in the journey of Volmoed. I won't speak more about this, although it was great to see all the patrons.

I always have something to say about finance, because that is what directors do I suppose. I celebrate the faithfulness of God and know that the valley that Volmoed has walked through will end in the sunshine, by God's love. The spring flowers attest to that and so does the covenant service. The provision of God is not always easy, but more of that next time. God our provider is good. Please continue to bear Volmoed in prayer. It is more important than you could imagine. Pray, also for the leadership of Volmoed that we make wise and strong decisions.

For those of you who want to cross the river to the waterfall, the bridge is back. Lucas is on the mend after falling from the bridge into the water and hurting his leg. Building bridges is not easy and sometimes painful! If you are a bridgebuilder, like I tend to be, you build at any rate. Whatever or whoever you are in God's work, do it anyway, in love. Bless you all



PRAYER REQUESTS

- The continued safety of our staff as they go about their daily tasks
- All those coming to Volmoed, that they may experience God's presence