



methodist homes

MHA *on the Bay*

No. 36
December 2022

APRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS



Loving God, as we head into the Christmas season we must confess that we are an odd bunch of people. We thank you for the widely different types of people and expressions of faith which constitute the membership of the churches we belong to and every church throughout the world and for the people who do not connect with any church.

We give thanks for those who appear born to express their faith through rigid creeds and behaviour.

We give thanks for others who seem destined to follow Christ among questions and doubts.

We give thanks for people whose faith appears to be a profound childlike simplicity, unhurried and unworried.

We give thanks for those who seem unable to find one satisfying word with which to describe you, yet whose faith is constantly renewed by a wordless awe in the presence of your Love. We give thanks for those who try to live a good life without connecting to any church.

O God, Lover of diversity, Lover of every thing and every person you have made, continue to give us the grace to treasure each other with all our oddness and to accept these differences, as we live alongside and care for each other in our villages, bed-sits and Frail care. Most of all we thank you for your love that will not let us go.

We thank you that the Christ born in Bethlehem is "the true light that gives light to everyone" (John 1. 9) who comes into the world.

So, please meet us where we are and join us in solidarity with all of human kind. Help us to touch the human need that is closest to us and to live so that your will may be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

Amen.

(with grateful thanks to Bishop George Irvine - MHA's founder President)

Loving Father,
help us remember the birth of Jesus,
that we may share in the song of the angels,
the gladness of the shepherds
and the wisdom of the wise men.
~ Robert Louis Stevenson



THE
MAGIC OF

Christmas
is not in the presents

BUT IN HIS PRESENCE

May you have the gift of faith this Christmas
and many blessings throughout the New Year.



With grateful thanks for sponsorship:

Siyayenza



www.sfood.co.za 021 919 9802





Message from HEIN BARNARD

My ten years tenure at Methodist Homes has been the best in my life - I love what I do and do what I love! As we enter the celebration of the birth of Christ, I reflect on a year that presented many challenges that our MHA team dealt with. I salute all our staff who diligently served our residents during this year. Malcolm Stewart and the rest of the Board were my pillars of strength. It is my sincere wish that all our residents are blessed abundantly above and beyond your wildest dreams.

To God be the Glory!
Hein Barnard



Message from MATRON SANET MARX

It has been 5 years since I started working at MHA and never before have I seen the hand of God's grace in everything around me, daily. I feel so blessed to be part of this organization where miracles happen daily.

In order to see these miracles, we have to open ourselves up and completely hand it all over to God. Team members working together to reach a common goal, residents supporting each other, and many people carrying us in prayer. I would like to thank these prayer warriors; they know who they are. Without you, we would not be able to be patient, and provide care and love for everyone around us. Without you, we would not have survived Covid and the lockdown.

Thank you to each staff member who tirelessly works to ensure the well-being of our residents. Thank you to each resident who accepts our care so graciously.

May 2023 only bring us joy!



AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

What an honour it was to attend the Thanksgiving Service on the 27th November 2022 after a three year delay due to Covid. We had the pleasure of the former Methodist Bishop George Irvine and current Anglican Bishop Eddie Daniels who had us in stitches of laughter. The service is held to remind us of our daily blessings and the work that is done behind the scenes at Methodist Homes for the Aged. Our managers sadly reported on villagers who have passed on during this time. We were also treated to the staff of CP Bradfield singing to us. Thank you for the delicious treats, coffee and tea.



WATER WISE



Christmas is once again just around the corner. This time of the year gives us an opportunity to pause and reflect on the important things around us.

Several changes have been made at our various villages. Head Office has moved to Aldersgate Cottage 80, security cameras have been installed at all villages to ensure our safety and residents have installed water tanks at their own expense to try and assist with the water shortage our city is experiencing.

As of the 27 October 2022 a total of 327 tanks have been installed throughout our villages up from 281 in June. Our monthly average consumption now stands at 1881kl (on average a month) slightly down from 2047kl in June. Our usage is still way above the capacity of our tanks so we still need to be very vigilant about our use of water. With all the visitors and tourists flocking to Gqeberha we can only hope and pray that the water in the dams lasts and that we have some good rains to fill our tanks.





SEEN AROUND OUR VILLAGES



Many celebrations including:
Heritage Day
Christmas in July
General fun in Cassia Gardens
Aldersgate Nonagenarian Tea
Wales vs SA in the Hall
do you recognise anyone in these photographs?





CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

As Chairman of the Board of Methodist Homes for the Aged (Eastern Cape), I have pleasure in presenting my 2021-2022 Report.

I have latched onto the word 'draining' to describe the year under review. The dictionary tells us that something that's draining tires you out physically and/or emotionally; you're exhausted, leaving you depleted and fatigued. This is probably how most of us feel. Getting through Covid was a long, hard battle for staff, residents and for the organization. It is almost unbelievable that MHA has had an overall infection rate of 23% (114 cases amongst 560 residents, and 38 cases amongst 97 staff), and yet only 7 Covid-related deaths were recorded between March 2020 and July 2022. This was undoubtedly due to the prompt and decisive action by CovidCom when the pandemic broke out in our country, to the co-operation on the part of residents and their loved ones, to the dedication and professionalism of all staff, and to God's protection over everyone and everything. It has been encouraging to witness how individuals and the organization adapted and survived to the extent we have done. We have so much to be grateful for, and words will never sufficiently express our heartfelt gratitude to our wonderful, caring staff. They were, and still are, our 'frontline soldiers', and each one deserves a medal!

As a business, MHA continued to operate as efficiently and effectively as we could, under the circumstances, and we are beginning to embrace the 'new normal'. I want to highlight the following:

- The Directors met, in person, for four Board meetings during the year under review, one less than scheduled. In his inimitable way, our CEO Hein Barnard presented the Directors with comprehensive monthly Board Reports which provided us with all the information required for us to be fully informed of what was happening across every aspect of the business
- Unfortunately the Directors and the CEO have not yet gathered together to tackle some strategic issues which could ultimately change our business in some necessary ways, to everyone's benefit. While our accommodation products and services have stood the test of time since we opened our first Village in 1985, it is now time for us to redefine, and try to improve, how we deliver "independent living", "assisted living" and "frail care" services and facilities. MHA must remain relevant, attractive and the 'retirement destination' of choice, while still staying true to our stated Mission. At the same time we must respond to input from our existing residents, and the changing needs of those who are on our waiting list. Covid got in the way of this process, which we began in November 2019, and the Directors and our CEO regard it as necessary and now urgent work in progress
- During the period under review Sr Lesley Lawson retired as a Director, and we welcomed Prince Matonsi to the Board
- A decision was made to close down Epworth Close, our residential facility in Central, and all residents were happily relocated to Bob Zeiss Bedsitters or to Frail Care. Sadly, the Central area of our City is not an attractive or safe place to be, for the elderly in particular, and this prompted the Board and the CEO to set about disposing of the Epworth Close property and the adjoining Cragg House, our Head Office. Transfer to the new owner is taking longer than expected, but is nearing finality. We are also dealing with the siting and format of a replacement Head Office building, away from Central
- In March 2022 we appointed new caterers, for the provision of food to our Frail Care units and to our Bedsitter unit. The transfer went seamlessly, and the improved quality and variety of meals has been complimented by our residents
- We continue to focus tenaciously on the security of our facilities, and of the safety of those who live and work there. Going back twenty years our residential Villages were partially enclosed by knee-high ranch-style wooden fencing, and an alarm was a bedside device to wake you up if you needed an early start to your day! Nowadays our Villages and other facilities are surrounded by high, rugged steel fences and automatic gates with electrified strands on top, residents each have a panic button and some have private alarm systems, we have electronic access control for vehicles and pedestrians, and we are busy installing CCTV cameras with offsite monitoring of the entrances and perimeter of each of our facilities. We spent R1.5 million during the period April 2021 to March 2022 on securing our facilities against criminals, and we are currently spending a further R3.8 million on the CCTV equipment, with a monthly monitoring fee of R46500, in addition. The safety and security of our residents, staff, visitors and our assets is a non-negotiable part of what MHA has been doing for years, and will continue doing, to keep a step ahead of those who would do us harm. In addition to all of this, residents are frequently reminded by their Managers and in meetings that their safety begins with them, and how they should take personal care of their possessions and themselves. The elderly are vulnerable targets for criminals who do harm via petty theft or violent crime or electronic fraud
- On 11 January 2022 we celebrated 40 years since the founding of MHA as a legal entity; it took a further three years to officially open our first Village, Cassia Gardens (Phase 1). Since then, we have received an unqualified annual report from our Auditors every year, including our Annual Audit Report for the year ending 31 March 2022. This requires consistent and professional work within our Head Office, and so we acknowledge, with pride and gratitude, our CEO and his team, their predecessors, and service providers who made this happen.

I close this Report by thanking the following:

- ★ Each and every one of MHA's dedicated staff, under the tireless leadership of CEO Hein Barnard and Nursing Services Manager Matron Sanet Marx. It is clearly evident that you do what you love and you love what you do, which positively infects those who serve under your leadership, and differentiates MHA from other organizations
- ★ Our business partners, service providers and advisors, who help and support us in so many ways
- ★ My fellow Directors and our Founder President, for your contributions to the task of keeping the organization focussed, compliant and honest
- ★ The members of CovidCom (Hein Barnard, Sanet Marx, Nelmar Windell and Gillian le Roux). We held 37 official meetings and had countless ad hoc meetings and conversations, as we negotiated the path through the many shifting Covid minefields. Above all, my involvement strengthened my faith in God and in people. As I said in my last Report, and want to repeat again now, it has been a privilege to go to war with you
- ★ I again want to make special mention of the residents of MHA. In many ways this second year of Covid was harder than the first, with a noticeable increase in frustration, impatience, loss of freedom, loss of people close to us, and difficulty to breathe through the masks (and to understand what other mask-wearers are saying to us!). On the brighter side, for the first time in our lives we actually looked forward to being injected! On behalf of the Board and Management Team, I salute you.

Keep well, and continue to stay safe.
MALCOLM STEWART
BOARD CHAIRMAN
26 JULY 2022