



IN TOUCH AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2024

CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

Greetings from the Board of Management.

Search for a Minister Update:

Our search for a Minister is gaining momentum. The Oversight Committee met on 13th August and a plan of action for sourcing a full time Minister for St Francis is now in progress. A Consultative Committee comprising of 3 members of the Clergy, Anglican, Presbyterian and Methodist, as well as representatives from the Oversight Committee and Management Board will review the CV's of appropriate candidates, who will then be interviewed."

New Website: St Francis "new look"

Our new website is now operational. The website address is <https://stfrancissedgefield.co.za>;

Welcome to our Church Family:

Since the last newsletter we have welcomed new members, John (Chippy) and Heather Walker, and Ingrid de Villiers, and Mike Pittaway has been re-instated. We trust they will be made to feel at home as members of our St Francis family

The question is often asked, "Why have you come to church today?"

We attend church for a number of reasons. Some come because it is habit; others because they want to be seen as churchgoers; and there are those who come because they like the preacher. And then there are those who come with a genuine desire to worship God together with fellow believers. So, we could rather ask the question, "*Why have you NOT come to church today?*"

There are genuine reasons for staying out of church such as being ill or away, but there are also excuses made that cannot please God.

During the last month our attendances at Sunday services have fluctuated between 56 and 83. This is quite a difference, but there may well be a perfectly acceptable explanation. However, there is a concern that some are staying away from services because they do not like the preacher for that day. If you are staying away from church, because of the preacher, I would ask you to consider this prayerfully, considering that we should be coming to hear God's voice through whoever is preaching.

If you have a genuine complaint regarding any of our preachers, please bring this to the attention of one of our Board members. We are here to serve the congregation and, as such, we are responsible for approving those who fill the pulpit on Sundays.

My prayer is that the sense of love and unity that fills our church may continue into the future as we serve God in the community of Sedgefield, and as we move forward in the selection of a minister for St Francis. With this in mind we quote the prayer that Hamish introduced to the Board. It comes from Romans 15 :5 – 6

"May the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Abundant blessings,

George

SO WHO IS RUNNING THE SHOW : MEET YOUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

JAN DUVENHAGE VICE -CHAIRMAN - FINANCE PORTFOLIO



We all breathed a sigh of relief when Jan was nominated to the Board in the position Vice-Chairman, responsible for the Finance Portfolio.

Jan is a Mining Engineer. As a Mining Consultant he was involved in the development, planning, design and construction of medium-sized mining projects in East Africa, West Africa and Asia.

The Board has already felt the positive impact of Jan's leadership skills, knowledge and experience. He has implemented financial processes to ensure that St Francis remains financially sound and stable. This is demonstrated by the financial report for the month of July 2024:

	July 2024	YTD
Income	45 917	267 715
Expenditure	29 681	161 316
Surplus	16 236	106 399
Cash Reserves	833 494	735 000
Inc. Cash Reserves	19 494	98 493
Community Outreach	1 600	15 880

Jan is married to Colleen and blessed with two sons (Declan 39yrs and Marc 36yrs) and two grandchildren aged 9 years old: Skye and Blake. Jan unashamedly admits he is an avid sports enthusiast and enjoys watching all sport - from the couch! He also enjoys hunting.

As a Christian, Jan strives to live out his faith in his daily life through service to God at St Francis United Church and the wider Sedgefield Community. Jan believes in the Christian values of a non-judgmental attitude, love, acceptance and, above all, "the spirit of unity in the bond of peace." (Ephesians 4: 3-6)

IAN AHRENS SOCIAL OUTREACH PROJECTS



Ian has taken over the Outreach Portfolio, previously held by Viv Grater.

Ian is a Chemical Engineer and studied at Cape Town University. He has been married to Brenda for 45 years, and they have four children and 8 grandchildren, with number 9 on the way! Ian and Brenda retired to Sedgefield in 2016 and enjoy a lot of what Sedgefield has to offer - namely, cycling, swimming, fishing, and tennis.

Ian became a Christian in 1973 when he was in the Army and Brenda came to a saving faith in Jesus Christ when she was in primary school. Ian and Brenda have attended various churches from traditional to more modern, over the years, having been involved in Sunday School, worship and Alpha at various stages.

Ian writes:

"Our hope is for St Francis to be a fully functional family church for all, with a supported full-time minister."

A man for all seasons, Ian also assists with the overheads on a Sunday and plays the guitar.

St Francis has a well-established footprint in the Sedgefield Community, and we are already benefitting from Ian's methodical investigative approach to the charities we support.

To date the following beneficiaries have received financial support for specific projects:

- 1. Knysna Epilepsy Association**
- 2. The Living Cornerstone**

ETHEL PITTAWAY FELLOWSHIP PORTFOLIO



Hebrews 11:1 says “Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”

This verse encapsulates the essence of my faith. James 2:17 reminds us that ‘Faith without corresponding actions is dead’. Faith expresses itself through love, producing tangible evidence of its presence in a person's life. My hope for the fellowship portfolio is to foster unity where people come together, not divided by who washes the teacups, but united as the body of Christ supporting one another, having fun together and holding each other accountable to be faithful followers of Christ.

My husband Mike and I have been married for 52 years and were the owners of an export company for over 18 years. During this time we were blessed to raise our two children, supporting them in obtaining their academic degrees, celebrating their marriages and experiencing the blessing of 4 grandchildren. We give thanks daily for the answered prayers of our parents and grandparents evident in the lives of our families.

As a lay Canon in the Anglican church for over 15 years my focus was on theological studies and sharing knowledge through workshops, seminars, conferences, bible studies and tutoring theology students. Although I am no longer as active in teaching, my passion to spend time in studying scripture is still vital to my spiritual growth. My hobbies include gardening, reading, mosaicking and enjoying nature.

Ethel leads the prayer meeting on a Friday morning at 8h30 in the chapel, and we have been blessed by her ministry as one of the preachers on Sundays. She also serves Communion to the residents of Sedgemoor Park. Ethel is on the Board of Masithandane, and well respected in the Sedgemoor Community for her devoted service in empowerment and upliftment of women.

HAMISH BURGESS-SIMPSON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Hamish and Mary Lou Burgess Simpson have been faithful and valued members of St Francis for many years. They have two sons: one in Cornwall and one in Gozo near Malta. 18 months ago they became the proud grandparents of a baby girl. Hamish writes:

“Over the years I have enjoyed managing farms, working for yacht building companies and sailing to distant shores. Sport has been a lifelong interest, especially rugby, cricket and Formula 1 racing. I enjoy cooking and trying recipes from around the globe. I enjoy reading and have loaded bookshelves displaying a wide range of subject matter.”

Hamish has an in-depth knowledge of the scriptures and a deep spirituality. **The St Francis Small Group Ministry has already felt the impact of Hamish’ spiritual leadership:-**

- Two new evening groups have been established over the past month. One meets on Mondays at 7pm to 8pm at the home of Derrick and Haniki Main – the group currently numbers 8 members, couples and singles, and could accommodate two more.
- The other new group to join the St Francis small group “cluster” is Dan Vaughan’s Online group. They meet via Zoom on Tuesdays at 18h30 until 19h00.
- We have six day-time groups meeting in the church and at people’s homes, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays – four of which can accommodate more members. Numbers in the various groups range from 4 or 5 regular attendees to 9 or 10.

Men for the Master is currently attracting more than 20 men on a Monday morning once a month.

If you would like to join a small group or Bible Study group, please contact Hamish for further information on 076 901 3222

Women's Day : Women of Valour

This year's Women of Valour 2024 event, held on 9th August, was nothing short of spectacular. Hosted by Masithandane and organized by Ethel Pittaway, the event celebrated the strength, resilience, and contributions of women in the Garden Route.

The highlight of the event was undoubtedly the introduction of the twelve Women of Valour, one of whom was our own Irene Pavey, who shared her experiences in caring for abandoned babies in a Salvation Army Home. Each woman's story and talk title offered a glimpse into their remarkable journeys, and they did not disappoint. The audience listened intently as these extraordinary women shared their wisdom, experiences, and insights:



- ✚ Elsabe Barkhuizen : Music and Friends Changed My Life
- ✚ Anita Van Rensburg : Food for Thought
- ✚ Sharon Wildeman : All Someone Needs is a Helping Hand
- ✚ Celia Kossar: The Grace Fellowship Story
- ✚ Helia Ventura Van Zyl : Be the Changes You Want to See
- ✚ Lillith Seals : Victory Belongs to the Tenacious
- ✚ Tariro Munonyara Mutenure : God's Grace
- ✚ Christene Bertsch: GBS Awareness
- ✚ Di Young : A Seed is Planted
- ✚ Colleen Thyse : SAM's Mission and Vision
- ✚ Irene Pavey : Unconditional Acceptance
- ✚ Linda Evans and Revive Sedge : Together We Can Make a Difference

The Women of Valour 2024 was not just a celebration; it was a testament to the incredible impact women have in their communities and a reminder of the strength that lies within each of them. This year's event has set a high standard for the future, and we look forward to seeing what next year's celebration will bring

Women's Day Celebration : The Living Cornerstone.

The Sedgefield Town Hall was abuzz with excitement, as ladies, dressed in purple feathers and frills, gathered to support a very worthy cause: The Living Cornerstone, which offers nursing care, and spiritual and emotional support to Dementia and Alzheimer sufferers and their families. The main speaker, Dr John Brough, emphasised the importance of Resilience, and not only being able to bounce back, but to bounce forward and make a difference in the community. The Line Dancing group of Sedgefield Christian Church thrilled the audience with their moves and many ladies joined in the fun. Each lady even received a goodie bag made by the residents of TLC. Approximately R27000 was raised, which has enabled TLC to purchase a frail care hospital bed.



PRAYER CHAIN

More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of. Tennyson



Are you facing illness or a personal crisis? Do you need someone to pray for you?

St Francis is a praying community. Prayer is at the centre of our worship, fellowship and outreach to the community. The prayer chain, run by Irene Pavey, is one of the most valuable ministries at St Francis. **If you need prayer, please contact Irene Pavey on 072 208 1208** so that she can place your name on the Prayer Chain. There have been many wonderful answers to prayer through this valuable ministry. *If you have experienced such answers to prayer, please inform Irene as this will be a great encouragement to others.*

Please join us as we continue to pray for the sick and those with special needs.

JOY GROUP NEWS

SOUP AND PUD

The Joy Group invited ladies from the various churches in Sedgfield to a Soup and Pud afternoon. There was fun, fellowship and nostalgia as the ladies were invited to share their most memorable decade - the best ten years of their lives. 25 ladies from St Francis and 23 ladies from other churches attended. Once again, the Joy Group have demonstrated Christian Unity and that "We are all One in Christ." Well done, Ladies!



(Photos : Truus Grater)

MADHATTERS TEA PARTY SEDGEMEER PARK

I don't know about you, but I do wonder sometimes what really goes on at Sedgemeer Park? A Mad Hatters Tea party? A Belly Dancer? Believe it or not! Who said growing old was not for sissies? Looks like fun and games to me!



**Next Joy Group Event: Spring Breakfast
24 September**

CONDOLENCES

We extend our heartfelt condolences to Meg Isherwood and family on the sad passing of Tony Isherwood, husband, father and grandfather. May he rest in peace.

Settling in Polokwane - Desbe Odendaal

Dear Friends and a special hello to my dear Friends at Sedgemeer,

Covi and I have settled well into our new home and adjusting to our new routine and life. Covi is missing his lagoon walks and his doggie friends and their Moms but he is meeting new ones here and enjoying exploring the new smells. I haven't found a spiritual home yet but am still looking. I have been enjoying gardening and redoing my garden here. As you can imagine the soil here is so different to Sedgfield soil. From real sandy soil to a dry, red soil... not sure if I like either?? I have put in loads of compost so I do hope that will make a difference. As you can imagine, succulents are really popular here as the water shortage is a real problem...I have never seen so many water trucks doing a daily round!

The sunsets are spectacular at the moment and each day my breath is taken away by the beauty and color of them. Just when you think God can't possibly think of another shade of orange/pink God comes up with another masterpiece. The awe and wonder of God's Creation continues to fill my soul. I haven't joined any groups as yet as I am still finding my feet. The children are busy writing exams and studying so that really keeps me on my toes at the moment. The holidays are just around the corner so we are looking forward to that and finding activities to keep us busy. My heart is filled with such a deep joy when I hear those little voices at the gate and they tell me they have just come to say hello. What a gift!

I think of so many of you often and wonder how you are all doing? I especially miss my dear friends at Sedgemeer, but I hear Ethel is doing a fine job there and I know she will take extra care of all of you!

Take care Friends and remember to always be kind and loving to one another. Grace and peace, joy and love to you all.

DESBE

They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like Eagles, they shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint. Isaiah 40:31

Birding News: Andre Victor



Juvenile Fish Eagle : Rondevlei Bird Hide

"I was at Rondevlei chatting to a fellow photographer when this Juvenile Fish Eagle swooped down, attempting to catch a fish in the water. He had not quite perfected the skill yet, splashed around in the water, and then tried again twice, before giving it up as not much fun, and soared into the sky."

Teddy's Second Hand Furniture Shop

We visited Woodstock on our recent trip to Cape Town. It was a poignant moment as I sat down in front of the Salvation Army Corps in Milner Road, where I had been stationed in the 1970's. I was 23 years of age, a young Lieutenant, newly commissioned. Just around the corner we held our open-air meetings in Roodebloem road. District Six was located at the top of Milner Road and little did I know then, but I would become an integral part of our country's tragic history during the forced removal of hundreds of Cape Malays from District Six, that colourful, vibrant community. The Moravian Mission Church was the only building that remained intact, and hundreds of people crowded in there for protection. All faiths worked together to provide shelter, food, protection to these dear people as their homes, were razed to the ground by bulldozers.

To this day this land remains desolate, almost as a memorial to those who were driven so mercilessly from their homes

Yet there was warmth in my heart and a smile on my face as I sat on the kerb that day. The Salvation Army church had been renovated and painted bright green. The Crest, with the insignia "blood and fire" had been removed, and replaced with a delightful Yorkshire terrier called "Teddy." The building was renamed "Teddy's Second-Hand Furniture Shop." Poetic justice? Perhaps.



Teddy's second hand furniture shop, Milner Road, Woodstock



Lieutenant Pam Allan, Open Air Meeting, Roodebloem Road. Woodstock. 1975

If you have any special stories to tell, or news to share, please contact me. Pam Victor on pamelay097@gmail.com or 0724044902 and I will publish them in the Newsletter.

Next Edition: October/November 2024