

Maseru United Church Monthly News

Maseru United Church

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"The Church's one Foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord."

God's Overpowering Purpose

"I have appeared to you for this purpose. . . " (Acts 26:16).

The vision Paul had on the road to Damascus was not a passing emotional experience, but a vision that had very clear and emphatic directions for him. And Paul states, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19). Our Lord said to Paul, in effect, "Your whole life is to be overpowered or subdued by Me; you are to have no end, no aim, and no purpose but Mine." And the Lord also says to us, "*you did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go. . .*" (John 15:16).

When we are born again, if we are spiritual at all, we have visions of what Jesus wants us to be. It is important that I learn not to be "disobedient to the heavenly vision": — not to doubt that it can be attained. It is not enough to give mental assent to the fact that God has redeemed the world, nor even to know that the Holy Spirit can make all that Jesus did a reality in my life. I must have the foundation of a personal rela-

tionship with Him. Paul was not given a message or a doctrine to proclaim. He was brought into a vivid, personal, overpowering relationship with Jesus Christ. Acts 26:16 is tremendously compelling: ". . . To make you a minister and a witness . . ." There would be nothing there without a personal relationship. Paul was devoted to a Person, not to a cause. He belonged absolutely to Jesus Christ. He saw nothing else and he lived for nothing and no one else. "For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1Corinthians 2:2).

(Oswald Chambers—*My Utmost for His Highest*)

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O Master Workman of the Race - by Jay Stoking, 1912

1. O Master Workman of the race, Thou Man of Galilee, who with the eyes of early youth eternal thoughts didst see. We thank Thee for Thy boyhood faith that shone Thy whole life through; "Did ye not know it is my work, My Father's work to do?"

2. O Carpenter of Nazareth, Builder of life divine, who shapest man to God's own law, Thyself the fair design, build us a tower of Christ-like height, that we the land may view, and see, like Thee, our noblest work, Our Father's work to do.

3. O Thou who dost the vision send and givest each his task, and with the task sufficient strength, show us Thy will, we ask; Give us a conscience bold and good, Give us a purpose true, that it may be our highest joy Our Father's work to do.

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Question from Kids:

Why do we study the Bible?

Answer:

"Work hard so God can approve you. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth." 2Tim. 2:15



GETTING TO KNOW YOU—The Wayem Family

My name is John Wayem and my wife is Mahen Wayem. We have been here in Maseru, Lesotho, since October 2002. As an International Civil Servant working for the United Nations (UNDP), my family has moved around a lot. My last duty station was Lilongwe, Malawi, where I served as Economic Advisor for 4 years. Before that, I had served for 5 years in Banjul, The Gambia (1994-1998). When we move to our next duty station in March 2009, I would have served in six duty stations in 20 years with the UN.

Between us, my wife and I have seven children (4 female and 3 male), and 3 grandchildren. The difficulty faced by itinerant international civil service families like ours is the constant movement of kids from one country to another, which can be disruptive for kids because, when they are just beginning to establish semi-permanent friends among their peers in school, they get uprooted again to another cultural environment. We are thankful to God that our family did not have to endure that ordeal for long, because most of our kids have been in boarding educational institutions since our odyssey around the world: in fact, our last daughter is just about to finish University in the United States.

My wife and I both have strong Christian foundations from childhood: My late grandfather was a lay preacher of the Methodist Church in my town (Battor, in Ghana), while my wife's late father was the Organist for the Methodist Church in her hometown (Bakau, The Gambia).

Though I was a member of the Church Choir since my Primary School days, I had no direct knowledge of the saving grace of Christ, nor had I received Him as my personal Saviour until my second year in the University of Ghana, Legon (and became an active member of the University Christian Fellowship) in 1973. Despite the usual pitfalls that beset every aspiring young Christian, I have kept the faith, even though I cannot claim full perfection or maturity, as the Christian journey is a life-long one.

Our involvement with the Maseru United Church (MUC) began almost immediately we settled down in Lesotho in 2003. We joined the **Praise and Worship Ministry**, and, with the permission and encouragement of the then Minister, **Pastor Vernon Vera**, I formed and led the **MUC Choir**, which took its turn to lead the MUC Sunday Worship once every 3 or 4 weeks for almost 3 years, until the membership began to dwindle, owing to relocation out of Lesotho by some of its key members (apart from the passing away of our Guest Organist, the late Mr Victor Agbenu, from the Catholic Cathedral, a Ghanaian Music Director who was teaching at the Lesotho College of Education -- may his soul rest in perfect peace).

As part of our active involvement in the life of the MUC, my wife and I opened our home for use as the venue for the Men's Fellowship Breakfast meetings for quite some time. We also joined and, together with other Team members, took turns to lead and host our Hillside Bible Study Group's weekly discussions, for some time, and until most of its active members left Lesotho, a section of the MUC Women's Fellowship also held prayer meetings with my wife in our home.

My wife has, since our arrival in Maseru, been an active member of the MUC Family Care Ministry, serving as its Chairperson for about three years. She also participated in the Soup Kitchen meal distribution activities sponsored by the

Material Aid Ministry. Specifically, she was regularly on the Roster of MUC women who took turns to cook for the Soup Kitchen. These meals are served once every week to homeless persons, orphaned street kids, and other vulnerable persons in Maseru and its vicinity.

On my part, for about two years and a half, until June 2006, I had the privilege of assuming the Chairpersonship of the MUC Management Committee (now called the Council of Elders and Deacons). These were difficult times for the MUC: I endured the pain of presiding over the resignation of Pastor Vera, who left with his family, most of whom were in the MUC Choir. We had an Interim Pastor (Dr Jeffrey Moore), who also left at the end of his contract about a year later (which position Dr. Prithi has graciously assumed). The Church has since been trying to fill the vacant position of full-time Pastor of MUC. I was also the leader of the Prayer and Counseling Ministry during this period. Under my leadership, the Church appointed a Vehicle Fundraising Committee, which mobilized resources for the purchase of the MUC Van.

Challenges and lessons learned during my Christian journey:

I have, since the end of my tenure as Chairperson, actively counseled both the Council of Elders and Deacons as well as the two Interim Pastors (both publicly, and, most of the time privately) on the course of events regarding the desired Constitutional amendments warranted by the inter-temporal dynamics in an inter-cultural, inter-denominational Congregation like the MUC. These counsels were intended to ensure our strict adherence to deep-rooted Christian principles of inclusiveness, unity, transparency and the need to hold ourselves in the MUC accountable to the Church's Vision and Mission. I am happy to put on record that the Interim Pastors as well as the Council of Elders and Deacons have always taken most of my constructive criticisms and advice in good faith, as they were offered in Christian love.

As a general lesson, I have learned in over 30 years of Christian growth, that one never reaches perfection at any point in time: that, as mortals, we are prone to failing occasionally because of our human frailties; that the hallmark of a successful Christian journey does not lie in not faltering, no matter how matured you get, but in how quickly you can pick yourself up by God's grace, brush off the dirt (literally and figuratively), and move ahead, keeping your eyes on the prize (which is eternal life through God's Grace in Christ Jesus). Another attribute of a successful Christian journey is to cultivate at all times an attitude of gratitude to God, no matter the circumstances facing us (easier said than done, but, believe me, with practice it is so we leave Lesotho and our MUC family

A final lesson worth mentioning is the need to develop a large heart (tolerance) in a multi-cultural organization which any Church (including the MUC) represents, and to be totally open-minded about various and often opposing viewpoints. In fact, it is a great attribute of leadership in any organizational set-up, sacred or secular; to be the first to show graciousness (but not

false humility) in contentious situations (while standing firmly for truth, justice and fair play, especially with a view to protecting the interests of the vulnerable and less fortunate); and, to seek out to do charity to the needy at all times (not only in a Christian environment, but naturally in the course of our living the faith we profess daily, wherever we are).

Therefore, as we leave Lesotho for Lusaka, Zambia, our new duty station, we wish to thank all the MUC members, friends and visitors, because you have touched and enriched our lives in more ways than you can imagine. You have provided the environment (through both positive and negative experiences in our interactions) for our growth along the Christian path. We know many of you have prayed for us without our knowing, and many of you have provided social networking opportunities for us, in times of loneliness, difficulties and during the celebration of happy occasions. Only the good Lord Himself can reward you adequately for all these.

We wish to pray that you will continue to strive to forge the bonds of true Christian fellowship, devoid of distinction or discrimination, in any form, shape or colour: let your watchword be "service to the people is the highest service to God"; and let the true love of Christ shine through you in everything you do, so that the world outside the MUC will know that you are the children of the God of our Saviour, Redeemer and Friend, Christ Jesus. Please pray for us as we continue in the "empty nest" stage along the marriage-life continuum, so that our love, affection and caring for Christ and for each other will grow even deeper during our retirement years. We shall not forget to keep you in our prayers. Goodbye for now, for we hope to see you again. May God bless us all. Amen.

Contributed by John Wayem (on behalf of Mahen and John Wayem).

DEVOTIONAL—The Importance of Right Relationship with God (A.W. Tozer)

Many men and women are seeking counselors to aid them with their confessed feelings of emptiness and inadequacy. Each seems to have a plea about becoming a "whole person."

The importance of coming back into right relationship with God cannot be overestimated as we seriously think and study and pray.

By the mysterious operation of the Spirit of God in the new birth, that which is called by Peter "the divine nature" enters the deep-in core of the believer's heart and establishes residence there. "If

any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," for "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Romans 8:9, 16).

Such a one is a true Christian, and only such. Baptism, confirmation, the receiving of the sacraments, church membership — these mean nothing unless the supreme act of God in regeneration also takes place!

Religious externals may have meaning for the God-inhabited soul; for any others they are not only useless but may

actually become snares, deceiving them into a false and perilous sense of security.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence" is more than a wise saying; it is a solemn charge laid upon us by the One who cares most about us!

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God." Romans 8:16

CLASSIFIED Ads

1. MUC Centennial Calendars are available at the back of the church following each service. Please ask an usher if you don't see them. They cost is M40 each, and the proceeds will go into the new capital campaign for church improvements. Thank you for supporting this fundraising effort.



2. Your Centennial Celebrations Committee is hard at work. Stay tuned for details regarding an upcoming

Easter Egg and Treasure Hunt, sponsored by our Youth, a Talent Show (where any and all are welcome to perform!), and hopefully, a fun walk with our historical partners in Ladybrand,

and a special Celebration Luncheon towards the end of the year. Proceeds from these activities will be used to buy new playground equipment, improve the hall and Sunday School rooms, build a fellowship gazebo, a palisade fence around the property, and other things. **Indeed, we are "celebrating 100 years of God's Faithfulness!"**

“Heart to Heart” — Reflections from the Interim Pastor

Something wonderful is happening these days at MUC. I am thrilled to see what God is doing in Men's; and women's ministries. More men and women are beginning to attend these breakfast meetings with a desire to grow in the Lord Jesus Christ. I am proud of those men who willingly remained after the Men's breakfast last Saturday to repair and clean the Pastor's house and the church building. Well done, my comrades in Christ!. I am certainly looking forward to the Men's retreat to be held from 13-15th of March at Moodsport. God has great things in store for our men!

I was also delighted to see the Sunday school ministry being adequately and meaningfully integrated into the life of Church. It gives me great joy to hear exciting news from various people in the church. I salute all those leaders who are giving solid godly leadership to ensure growth and stability in the spheres of their ministries. May God richly bless you and your families with all the resources he has in store for you. We also say fare well to Brother John Wayem and Mahen as they move from Lesotho to Zambia.. We as a church thank God for their faithful service within Maseru and outside the MUC walls. Brother John, as the chairman of the council, provided godly leadership in the church. John and Mahen, you both will be missed dearly. We will cherish memories of you in our hearts. We will remember you and your family in our prayers.

I also had the privilege of leading the workshop for the ministry teams on the 7th of February. We defined, clarified and understood the purposes of MUC based on the Great Commandment — “Love your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind... Love your neighbor as yourself. All the law and the prophets hang on these two command-

ments.” (Matt 22:37-40) —and the Great Commission—“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything, I have commanded you.” (Matt 28:19-20). I believe that God wants MUC to be driven by these special words of Jesus to his people. These two verses should summarize, enforce and validate everything we do at MUC. They clearly explain to us the “Core business” and the primary tasks of MUC. Rick Warren says that “A great commitment to the great commandment and great commission will grow a great church”. Let's find out if this is true!

Five purposes emerge out of these passages. **Purpose 1:** “Love the Lord with all your heart” – This is WORSHIP. MUC exists to worship God. I really thank all the worship teams for leading us to the throne of grace every Sunday. I know that takes time, commitment and dedication. As a Church we say a Big “THANK YOU” for all of you.

Purpose 2: “Love your neighbor as yourself”- This is MINISTRY. Church exists to minister to people by demonstrating the Love of God through words and deeds – reaching out to people, meeting their needs (Spiritual/ emotional/ social/ relational/ physical), offering forgiveness, healing in the name of Jesus. God is calling us to be his agents of grace, healing, reconciliation in a hurting world. I think of all the ministry teams – Material aid, hall clerk, soup kitchen ministries, family care ministry, Evangelism and discipleship ministries, Prayer and counseling, Sunday school and men and women's and youth ministries. Praise God for these faithful ones who sacrificially serve our wonderful Savior. Council of Elders and deacons along with Edith and Nancy continue to pour out their gifts and talents to keep our focus on Jesus. I was

truly encouraged last Sunday, to see the response to our invitation to help and strengthen the church in the areas of finance, partnerships and constitutional amendments and reforms. I was humbled to see all those men and women with expertise and skills who were willing to be part of the task force teams who will serve the church on an advisory capacity. We praise God for releasing these gifts within the church. Indeed “Every member is a minister” in the body of Christ and every member is equipped with gifts to edify and build the church. This is the season for us to discover our gifts and release them in the service of God and his people.

Purpose 3: “Go and make disciples”- This is EVANGELISM. MUC exists to Evangelize-To share the Good news of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Context of the bad news of Man's “lostness”- To go and tell the world that Jesus is the Savior. It is a great privilege to be part of God's plan and work in bringing people into God's family. MUC, by being so diverse, truly reflects the nature and the beauty of that family. Evangelism must be a part of all of our ministries. God wants people saved. Let us not forget this “core business” as we are involved in various ministries.

Purpose 4: “Baptizing them”- This is FELLOWSHIP. MUC exists to facilitate and provide fellowship. Remember, we are called not just to believe but also to belong to the family of God. - To identify with the joys and sorrows of our brothers and sisters. I thank the Family Care Ministry, which facilitates an environment for fellowship. And the Discipleship and Nurturing Ministry, which prepares people to become Covenant Members. Being a covenant member doesn't mean that you have to give up your membership in your church back at home. It simply provides a spiritual home for those who have left their countries to come and work in

Lesotho for various reasons. So please consider becoming a covenant member of MUC. You will have a say in shaping, strengthening and redefining the vision, mission and core values of the church. Don't delay. MUC needs you. If you are not convinced, you are still most welcome to be a "friend of MUC" by supporting, participating and encouraging the life of the church. You can attend all our meetings including the AGM and quarterly meetings. The only limitation you will have is that, you will not be able to vote during such meetings.

Purpose 5: "Teaching them to obey everything Jesus commanded"- This is to "EDUCATE, EDIFY, DISCIPLE" members into maturity. As MUC, we are called to share the Gospel AND to teach, educate and disciple believers into maturity. The church should not be filled with spiritual babies who refuse to grow and mature. May God strengthen the pulpit and home cell ministries in the church. These ministries should be structured towards providing "solid meat" rather than feeding with "milk" only. Please remember those who minister the word of God from the pulpit, who teach Sunday school, who lead home cell groups. They, need our constant prayers to remain faithful to the teaching of the Scriptures. May God release more people with the gift of teaching the word of God among us.

The need of the hour is for MUC to be not only **internally organized and focused** in her relationship with her Lord Jesus Christ and rally around the five purpose I have listed above, but also to be **externally focused** in reaching out to the communities around us. The success of MUC should not be measured in the regular attendance or its' **seating capacity**. but rather on her **sending capacity** - the **impact** the mem-

bers make in the name of Christ outside the four walls of the church. The challenge is to maintain the balance between internally strong and focused and externally impacting our communities which are hurting and confused.. Let us not forget that our impact outside will be determined by how rooted and established we are in Christ Jesus internally. That will be the challenge for all ministries to concentrate on getting people into the church and generating activities, powerful worship experiences, teaching, and thriving Sunday school, youth programs, and home cells. Let's not miss out on our unique opportunity to impact and influence our community by balancing our inward and outward focuses. The Council of Elders and Deacons, together with the interim Pastor, need wisdom, insight and discernment to provide the leadership, which avoids extremes and imbalance within the church.

Will you commit yourselves to pray daily for the Council of Elders and Deacons and all the leaders of the ministry teams this month? May the Lord continue to teach us, equip us and burden us to be on our knees before Him.

Do not hesitate to spur and challenge one another into the good works which God has prepared for each of us. May God encourage you and equip you to be the "Salt and the Light" of our communities. Let us cultivate the art of giving sacrificially, selflessly and lavishly. I think, Winston Churchill was right when he said " We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give". Let us ponder and reflect on his thought provoking words.

May the Lord give us more insight into what he wants MUC to **be** and **do**, in this, the 100th year of her journey with her Lord Jesus.

QUARTERLY MEETING OF THE COVENANT MEMBERS ON SUNDAY 22ND MARCH, 2009

There will be a meeting of the covenant members on the above mentioned date for election into the two vacant positions in the council. The audit report will be made available.

MEN'S RETREAT

13th-15th March, 2009

Men's retreat for 2009 will take place at Moederpoort on 13-15th March, 2009. The registration is now on. The fee is M300.00. Please contact any of the following people: the Secretary, Henry Ababio, John Matlosa and Jonathan Moyo for registration enquiry.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

There will be a meeting of all Sunday School teachers and assistants following the service on March 8.

There will be a Sunday School Picnic for all Sunday School children following the service on March 15.

A Sunday School Workshop, which will be of help to all teachers and parents, will be held on either April 4 or May 9. More details to follow.

Plans are underway for a Vacation Bible School in July. Stay tuned!

PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE :

There are three candidates being considered for the position of full-time Pastor at MUC. Please be in prayer for God's wisdom, discernment and clarity in the making the choice.



MUC Calendar—MARCH 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Sermon: "What on earth am I here for?" — Purpose Communion	2	3 1:00 Lunchtime fasting + prayer in the Hall = "Focus on the Family" theme 5:30 AA/AIAnon 6:00 Joint Elders Deacons Mtg.	4 4:30 Soup Kitchen—Emilia Sikaundi	5	6	7 1:00 AA/AIAnon
8 Sermon: "God is seeking Worshipers" — Worship SS Meeting after church	9 5-6 p.m. MUC prayer meeting to pray for MUC families	10 1:00 Lunchtime fasting + prayer in the Hall: focus on the Family 5:30 AA/AIAnon	11 4:30 Soup Kitchen—Mabakuena Makhele	12	13 MEN's RETREAT in Mooderpoort Friday evening—Sunday morning	14 1:00 AA/AIAnon
15 Sermon: "I am Shaped for Serving God" - Ministry Sunday School PICNIC after church	16	17 1:00 Lunchtime fasting + prayer in the Hall: focus on the family 5:30 AA/AIAnon 6:00 Council Mtg.	18 4:30 Soup Kitchen—R. Le-kooana 6-7 p.m. Sweet hour of Prayer	19	20	21 1:00 AA/AIAnon
22 Sermon: "Intimacy with God" - Lessons from Paul's life	23	24 1:00 Lunchtime fasting + prayer in the Hall: focus on the family. 5:30 AA/AIAnon	25 4:30 Soup Kitchen—Mapule Mundoma 5:30 Material Aid committee mtg. at church	26	27	28 1:00 AA/AIAnon 5:00 p.m. Meet at church following day of Prayer and Fasting.
29 Sermon: "I am Formed for God's Family"-- Fellowship	30	31 1:00 Lunchtime fasting + prayer in the Hall. 5:30 AA/AIAnon	April 1 4:30 Soup Kitchen — N. Maisa	2	3	4

SUNDAY SCHOOL NOTES:

On behalf of all the Sunday School teachers, I want to thank you for entrusting your kids to us. It really is a privilege to spend time in prayer, in song and in discussion with your children. This past month, we have been learning the stories of Jesus as a 12 year old in the Temple of Jerusalem, Jesus being baptized by John the Baptist and Jesus beginning his ministry of teaching and healing as the Son of God. Although we have been given the responsibility of teaching your children on Sunday morning, we hope that you are re-enforcing these lessons by asking your children what they learned and going over the hand-outs that they bring home. You can also help us by praying with your children for:

- Your child's Sunday School classmates
- Other friends of your child who don't attend a church
- The Sunday School picnic on March 8th
- The Sunday School workshop for teachers
- The planning for the Vacation Bible School in July
- The weekly prayer requests made during the church service

One last note, **please mark your calendars for the 15th of March**. We will be having a **Sunday School picnic** and taking the children from church to a nearby house for lunch and games and then asking you to come pick up your child a little later in the afternoon. More details will follow during the Sunday morning worship announcements.

CALLING ALL MEN — to Retreat to Mooderpoort — March 13-15.

Theme: “Living with God’s Kingdom Purpose”

Retreat Leader: Brian Helsby of Heartlines

Bio sketch of Brian Helsby

Brian has been working fulltime for Heartlines in Church Mobilisation as well as involvement in other projects. Heartlines is a mass media project designed to challenge the nation to live out godly values. Brian has previously been a director of The EDGE, a Christian organization committed to providing training and resources for Churches and Christian youth organizations. Brian was on the staff of Youth for Christ SA for 31 years and served as their National Director for 7 years. He also served on the International Board of YFC. He is an active member of Rosebank Union Church in Johannesburg. He is married to Megan, a Christian Children’s work specialist and they have 2 grown up sons.



<p><u>Integrate around the Purpose of MUC</u></p> <p>We are all encouraged to participate in one or more of MUC’s Ministries and to join hands in integrating the Ministries around the Mission and Purpose of our congregation. Here are some of the ways we can accomplish this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participate in fellowship activities that follow after Family Services which will be held four times a year• Young adult males, youth and boys are invited to join in Men’s Breakfast’s activities and fellowship. Young adult females, youth and girls are likewise encouraged to join in Ladies’ Breakfast fellowship and activities. This will help you to identify and connect with adults who can mentor you on various issues.	<p><u>Expert Advisory Task Force Committees</u></p> <p>The Council of Elders and Deacons agreed to seek professional and expert advice on issues pertaining to: Finance, MUC Partnership Policies and on Constitutional Amendment. The following MUC members, Church Attendees and Friends volunteered to serve the Lord on these Task Force Committees:</p> <p>Finance: Mr Uche Onuoha; Mr Antony Higgins; Mrs Linda Tembo; Mr Patrick Chirwa; Mr Michael Wasswa; Mr Henry Ababio</p> <p>Partnership Policies: Mr Brad Westom; Mr John Shumlansky; Mr Ababio; Mr Vipya Harawa; Mr Antony Kawa; Mr Eric Tsekpo; Dr Givans Ateka; Interim Pastor Dr Prithiviraj</p> <p>Constitutional Amendment: Mr Antony Higgins; Vipya Harawa; Mr Uche Onuoha; Interim Pastor Dr Prithiviraj</p> <p>These Committees will review issues in a professional manner and report to the Council of Elders and Deacons through the Chairperson of the respective section Task Force and MUC Treasurer. May the Lord have His way in MUC and have His full glory in every way.</p>
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Maseru United Church

Palace Road
P.O. Box 365
Maseru, 100
LESOTHO
Phone: +266-63097068
E-mail: prithidel@gmail.com

To God be the Glory, great
things He has done!

Our vision at Maseru United Church is to grow into a vibrant interdenominational church with a holistic response to the Great Commission (Matt. 28) focusing on transforming the local and expatriate populations in Lesotho and its environs into a Godly, compassionate and caring community, to the glory of God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our mission at Maseru United Church is to seek to glorify God and further the expansion of His kingdom by providing facilities and a caring environment for pursuing religious activities aimed at discipling people of all walks of life and bringing many to a deeper knowledge of the saving grace of His Son, in conformity with our vision.

From the Word — Deuteronomy 5

Moses summoned all Israel and said: Hear, O Israel, the decrees and laws I declare in your hearing today. Learn them and be sure to follow them. The Lord our God made a covenant with us... And he said: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers of the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name. Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy... Honor your father and mother, so

that you will live long and it may go well with you in the land the Lord Your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor (i.e. you shall not lie). You shall not covet your neighbor's wife or set your desire on anything that belongs to your neighbor." . . . So be careful to do what the Lord your God has commanded you; do not turn aside to the right or to the left. Walk in all the way that the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess. (NIV)

INSIGHT

David writes that the Law of the Lord is perfect, and in keeping it, there is great reward. Part of that great reward is spelled out in Deuteronomy chapter 5. Moses says that if the children of Israel will keep God's commandments, it will go

well with them and with their sons forever! In addition, the Lord promises that they will live and that they may prolong their days in the land. Holiness is not expensive. In fact, all the deepest longings of a child of God are met only in holiness. Could we consistently believe this, our lives would be more holy. Like the Israelites, we think that we are missing something by serving God. We are missing no more than the Israelites missed of Egypt!

PRAYER

Praise the Lord!

Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good!

For His mercy endures forever.

Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord?

Who can declare all His praise? (Psalm 106:1-2).

