

## REPORT ON MISSION PROJECT CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER, HILLCREST 2013



We start this report by expressing our gratitude towards all of you for your continued prayers and financial support. Knowing that we are always part of a bigger body who journey together to build the

Kingdom of God in the area into which the Lord has placed us, to be His light and the salt of the earth, gives us strength to continue.

Another year has flown past with another year of blessings, changes, love and learnings to look forward to.

### MEMBERSHIP

Our membership during 2013 fluctuated between 160 and 180 members. Our current membership sits at 160. The constant changes in our membership over the year was due to members either leaving to go overseas or moving to a different province within South Africa. Our children's ministry continues to have a strong core of young adults who are actively involved. During the last year we continued to have baptisms within our own congregation. We lost our long term secretary, Gisela Rohwer, who returned to Germany during the year, and Rita Heilgendorff has stepped in, and is doing a fantastic job of taking over the reins.

### SERVICES

The current average attendance for the English service on a Sunday morning is above 40. The German service continues to dwindle and has a current average of fewer than 15. We continue to serve these dedicated members. Gilbert Filter, our Pastor for the last 10 years in Assagay, moved to Cape Town as Bishop. This left a huge gap in our leadership. After much prayer and soul searching Manfred Müller-Nedebock has accepted the role from January 2015. In the meantime we have a wonderful shepherd to lead our sheep in Werner Harms. Werner will be with us for the full year.



*Werner Harms and wife Ilse*

### MINISTRY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG FAMILIES

The growth of our congregation lies in young families. They, and their children, are the future of the Christian church in our area. It is encouraging to see that more young families come regularly. We have a regular Sunday school teaching program and dedicated co-workers, as well as a monthly family service. These have contributed towards growing this ministry. Between 7 and 15 children attend on a Sunday morning. At special services we had more than 25 children present. Christmas time sees the children taking part in the service and singing at the altar whilst dressed as part of the Christmas theme, e.g. shepherds, angels and even sheep. This ministry has outgrown our little hall. The focus is now on building more and efficient facilities that will serve this and other ministries. Building plans have been submitted for our "multi-purpose" building. This will enable us to split age groups and give better attention to each of their spiritual learning. We are currently assessing the financial status of this project.



*Children's church*

## **MUSIC**

During 2013 we lost our long term music leader Egmont Rohwer, who left us to return to Germany. Anita Freese has now taken over the role of leading this group. Whilst she faces many challenges the music group continue to provide both wonderful contemporary songs and old hymns during our services. This dedicated group meet weekly to prepare for the Sunday service.

## **SOCIAL AND DIACONICAL WORK**

The ministry to the chronic sick, frail and needy patients at the Hillcrest Hospital is continuing to be a great blessing to both patients and those visiting. A weekly Bible study is offered over and above the visiting and caring. Our ladies pray with them, share gifts or some delicacies, mend clothes or distribute donated clothes. For many of these patients this visit is the only contact that they have outside of the hospital staff. Werner has continued the work of Pastor Gilbert in visiting the sick members of our congregation in hospital. This is truly a blessing to them.

## **HOME GROUPS**

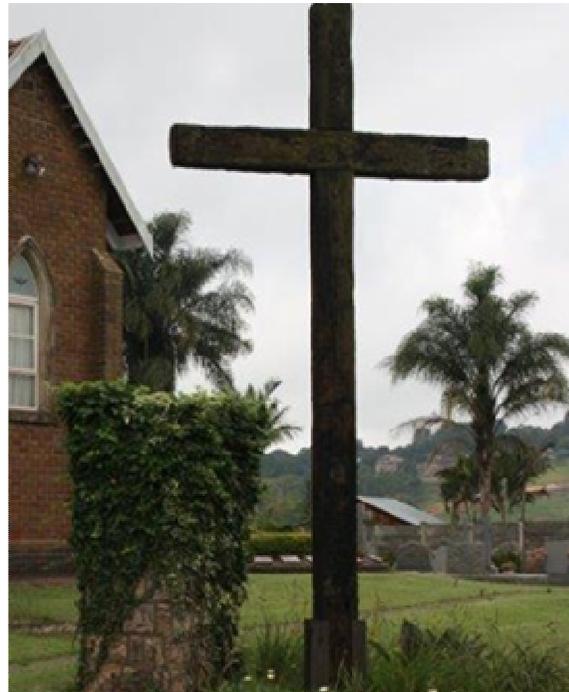
Five home groups meet weekly for Bible Study and fellowship. It is wonderful to see and experience the spiritual growth that takes place in these groups.

## **FINANCIAL SITUATION**

With the movement of congregational members, pledging is lower than in 2012. The challenge remains in the new building project to create facilities for the children's and young families' ministry, and other needs in congregational life. As a form of fundraising our beautiful church is hired out for weddings. Weddings may only be performed by ordained ministers.



*Our beautiful church ready for a wedding*



## **CEMETERY**

During 2013 our cemetery was given a "new look". The graves were cleaned and the stones replaced. The writing on the headstones was once again engraved and it is easy to read who lies in rest in our cemetery. A new cross was erected at the entrance to the cemetery and is lit up at night. It is truly a place of peace and remembrance. The cemetery committee meet twice a year and include a representative from the Durban congregation.