

Evangelical-Lutheran Congregation KROONDAL

Location:

Kroondal is situated some eight kilometers outside Rustenburg on the old Pretoria Road.

The church is to be found in the centre of Kroondal on the old Main / Pretoria Road.

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The “new” church in Kroondal

Origins

The Kroondal congregation was founded by a group of German speaking farmers, artisans and entrepreneurs living in and around the village of Kroondal, on 2 August 1896. By that time a church had already been built in Kroondal and was consecrated on 24 June 1896. Prior to this, from about 1891, regular services were held in the dining room of the Ottermann house. From its beginnings, missionary Christian Müller saw to the spiritual needs of the congregation.

Among the various building projects that characterize the history of this congregation, a special mention needs to be made of the new church that was built in 1962, as well as the new congregation hall built in 1977.

Developments:

When the first minister passed away in 1916, the congregation had 206 members - 114 adults and 92 children. Today there are approximately 420 members, a number which has stayed relatively constant over the past 10 years. Approximately 75% of congregation members have German as their mother tongue. The other 25% are mostly Afrikaans speaking. All age groups are relatively well represented and active in the congregation.

Over the years the congregation has developed, from a largely rural congregation, where most of its members were farmers, to the present where only a few farmers are left. This has mainly been as a result of the mining activities in the area which have contributed to a vast amount of economic growth in the Rustenburg area and therefore also to the wellbeing of the congregation.

Congregational life

The congregation wants to proclaim the liberating gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed – relying on the grace and love of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Sunday services start at 9h30 and are mostly held in German. An Afrikaans service is held once a month. When the services are conducted in German, a written Afrikaans translation of the sermon, as well as other parts of the service, is available. The average number of participants at



Children and helpers at a family service

the services on a normal Sunday is approximately 130. There are various groups that meet on a regularly basis. These groups include the youth, senior citizens, a prayer fellowship group and five home-based bible study groups. A Women’s Auxiliary, the “Frauenhilfe” plays

The church choir and brass ensemble regularly participate in the church services, especially at the festivals of the church year. There is also a children’s service every

Sunday. The children participate in the first part of the main service after which they go to the “KiGo” building on the premises to continue with their service. The children’s church is divided into three different age groups.

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an active part in catering for congregational activities as well as organizing meetings with various topics for the women. The congregational Newsletter “Kroondaler Gemeindebrief”, published bi-monthly, informs members about the various activities as well as other newsworthy items.

A highlight of the congregational calendar is the annual bazaar which is held in conjunction with the school in order to raise funds for the school and the congregation. About 2000 kg of beef and 6000 kg of pork is processed into delicacies such as Mettwurst, Leberwurst, Bratwurst, Rotwurst, Knackwurst, Biltong and Schinken.



Members of the brass ensemble playing at the bazaar

Outreach and social involvement:

Two Tswana schools have been built with the help of local mining companies, on land set aside for this purpose by the congregation. Congregation members assist in the management of these facilities. Fruit is distributed once a month to one of the schools, and an evangelist is supported to conduct devotions once a week, at the other school.

Although the “Deutsche Schule Kroondal” is legally a separate entity, the congregation is actively involved in the school. In 2008, this German medium school established an Afrikaans parallel medium. However, all the children are required to learn German. This education already starts in the Spatzennest (Pre-Primary). Devotions are held and religious instruction is taught at the school. Some members of the school family have joined the congregation and others participate regularly in the Sunday services.

Altkroondal Old Age Home and frail care was established in 1990. There are approximately 30 residents living in two and one bedroom cottages. In the frail care unit there are some 40 beds available. The congregational involvement at Altkroondal ranges from financial support and management to visiting and supporting residents. Weekly devotions, bible studies and communion services are held in Altkroondal.

Apart from that, the congregation is also involved in an ecumenical soup kitchen project, “Nagskuiling” (shelter for homeless people) and a home for orphans.

Present challenges:

Although the mining activity in the area is to a large extent responsible for the economic growth and wellbeing of the area, it also poses some challenges to residents. These challenges range from environmental damage, insufficient housing for workers and other illegal activities. An environmental forum has thus been established about 10 years ago to address environmental issues on various levels.

One of our other challenges is the transition from a purely German speaking congregation to one that caters for the needs of its Afrikaans speaking members as well. It is not always easy to find the correct balance between the different languages in order for everybody to feel at home in the congregation.

Another challenge is the more traditional understanding of congregational life. A way has to be found to incorporate newer forms of worship services and other activities.

Finally, it is always endeavored to let congregational members actively participate in congregational life and live out the priesthood of all believers. Visitors, as well as members who have recently joined the congregation, have commented on the caring atmosphere, the close fellowship and the working together of congregation members. This is truly valued in the congregation!

May God guide and bless this congregation so that it may proclaim and share His love and mercy!