

Bishops' Post February/March 2025

Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:22-23 (NIV))

As we move into this new year, we pause to give thanks to God for His faithfulness in the past and His promises for the future. God's Word reminds us continually of His steadfast love and guiding hand.

Each new year is a fresh opportunity to reflect on God's grace and renew our commitment to living as His people. No matter what challenges or joys lie ahead, we can trust in the unchanging truth that we belong to the Lord.

The apostle Paul offers these encouraging words: *Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.* (Philippians 3:13-14 (NIV))

As we navigate the year ahead, we remain mindful of the challenges faced globally and within our country. In times of uncertainty, hardship, or trials, our faith in God will anchor and sustain us. Let us hold firmly to His promises, knowing He walks with us in every circumstance, bringing hope, peace, and courage.

In 2025, let us press on together, strengthened by faith and united in love. As we support one another in prayer, service, and witness, we grow closer to Christ and to each other.

I encourage you to embrace this year with hope, trusting that God is at work in our world, our country, and within each of us. His Spirit equips us to shine as lights in our communities, sharing His love with those around us.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all throughout this new year.

Yours in Christ, Theo Jäckel

News from NELCSA

With deep sadness, we announce the passing of **Ernst-August Lüdemann**, former director of the Evangelical-Lutheran Mission (ELM) in Hermannsburg, on December 28, 2024. Ernst-August left a profound and lasting impact on the people and churches he worked with. We thank God for his life and the way he shaped the mission of ELM with vision and purpose. Our thoughts and prayers are with those mourning his passing.

Pastor Dr. Gertrud Tönsing has been elected as pastor of the Vanderbijlpark congregation. Her induction into office is scheduled for **February 9th**, and we invite your prayers as she begins her new ministry.

Pastor Elke Carrihill has been elected by the Michaelis congregation in Vryheid and will commence her service on **March 9th**. With her election, the Winterton congregation becomes vacant. We pray for God's blessings as she enters this new phase of ministry.

We extend heartfelt thanks to **Pastor Werner Harms** and **Pastor Georg Scriba**, who, in their retirement, have graciously stepped in to serve the Winterton congregation during this time of vacancy. Their service exemplifies their dedication to the church and its members.

Two new students will begin their theological studies at Stellenbosch University this year: **Sven Voges** from the Kroondal congregation and **Erika Spangenberg** from the Northrand congregation. We wish them every blessing as they embark on this exciting journey of faith and learning.

From **March 13th to 15th**, **Rutendo Gora** and **Pascal Pienaar** will take their first oral theological examination, while **Hermann Düvel** will complete his second theological examination. Our prayers are with them for calmness and peace, trusting in God's presence during this important time.

