



BRASS BAND ASSOCIATION OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA (N-T)

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Report to the Synod

It is with thanks that I submit my second report, on the work of the Brass Band Association, to the synod.

The Apostle Paul reminds us that we need not be ashamed of the Gospel because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes¹. This is true regardless of confession and for all Christian churches in South Africa and around the world.

This is why we **must** not restrain one of the most powerful elements that binds people of different persuasions and backgrounds together – music in praise and worship of our Lord.

It remains our calling to spread the Gospel, through our music, to every ear that will hear and into every heart that will open.

All Lutheran Service

Paul reminds us in Romans 15 that we must always work to the better of our neighbour, encourage them and build them up spiritually. We should not live for ourselves but, like Christ, live for others and accept others like Christ accepted us and so further the unity among Christians.

This is where we, who practice church music, have a unique opportunity to promote the spiritual unity between Christians through our praise of the Lord our God.

We witnessed this last year during the All Lutheran Service in Pretoria. We were able to praise God together with all Lutheran Churches in Southern Africa and celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. It was a wonderful service that was attended by over 2000 people from all walks of life.

We had the privilege to participate with a brass band of over 150 players and a choir of over 100 voices.

We pray that this not be a one-time event, but that we are allowed to repeat this experience again in the future.

¹ Romans 1-16

Brass Band Festival 2018 Johannesburg – New Elections

We celebrated our bi-annual brass band festival on the 3rd of June in Johannesburg under the theme “Faith, Love and Hope” with over 200 players from all areas of our church, including members from ELCSA, FELSISA and guests from the Moravian Brass Band Association of South Africa (BBSA).

During the elective representative meeting at the festival the following council changes took place:

Retiring Council Members

- Walter Lilje’s term as Regional Director – Central ended and he was not available for re-election.
- Arthur Hinze’s term as Deputy Regional Director – Central ended and he was not available for re-election.
- Louis Schröder’s term as Regional Director – South ended and he was not available for re-election.
- Udo Lütge’s term as Deputy Regional Director – South ended and he was not available for re-election.
- Dirk Köstlin’s term as Spiritual Counsellor and Chairman ended and he was not available for re-election.

Newly Elected Council Members

- Egmont Ottermann was elected as Director up to 2020, when regular director elections are scheduled, as well as Regional Director – North.
- Monika Springer was elected as Deputy Regional Director – North.
- Henning Reinstorf was elected as Regional Director – Central.
- Siegfried Prigge was elected as Regional Director – South, and Chairman.
- Manfred Kuhn was elected as Deputy Regional Director – South.
- Pastor Mark Meier was elected as Spiritual Counsellor.

We are thankful for all the hard work of the previous council and wish the newly elected members God’s grace and blessing in their work.

EBBASA

Our Association is a member of the Evangelical Brass Band Association of Southern Africa (EBBASA) along with associations from the FELSISA, Namibian Church, BBSA Western and Eastern Cape.

The Association aims are to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ by means of brass music. It is obliged to promote the members spiritually and musically, to strengthen their co-operation, to advise them and to fulfil common duties.

This mission was exemplified by the response from all the associations to the devastating fire that occurred shortly after Christmas last year in the small community of Wupperthal in the Cederberg Mountains and which destroyed all the instruments and sheet music of their brass band.

Our council immediately mobilised to find replacement instruments and donations and calls for assistance went out to all associations in South Africa as well as to our friends in Germany.

The response was tremendous so that all the instruments could be replaced and financial contributions continue to pour in, latest being a donation of Euro 6300 from collections at the Brass Band Festival in Baden. The solidarity between members of the brass band movement is a testament to the fact that music reaches across all denominations to bind all Christians together into one community.

Another valuable work that our association performs, under the EBBASA Banner, is the training of brass band leaders for all Lutheran Churches in South Africa. This initiative was started almost a decade ago and has developed into a two year course part-time programme that ends in a qualification aligned with the D-Prüfung of the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD).

During the latest course, which ended in April 2018, 12 newly trained brass band leaders from FELSISA, BBSA and ELKSA (N-T) completed their training.

The training of Brass Band Leaders, according to a regular and controlled training plan, is important for the development of brass music in all Lutheran Churches and our leadership of this initiative fits perfectly into our mission of reaching out to others through music.

ELCSA Work – Martin Schütte – Walter Johannes

After many years of tireless work in the development of the brass band movement in the ELCSA Church Martin Schütte decided to hand over the reins to someone else. This work will now be continued by the council under the leadership of the Director for Training, Walter Johannes, as well as the Director, Egmont Ottermann.

We thank Martin for his tireless work that is now bearing fruit with brass bands being formed from Akasia, Rustenburg, Thembisa, Polokwane and recently in Modimole.

Circuit Brass Band Festivals 2019

I had the privilege to again attend regional brass band festivals this year in Kroondal and Augsburg, with the last festival scheduled for September in Winterton.

I experienced the fellowship that springs from joint praise and worship of the Lord across multiple generations. We had players from 10 years old up to 80 participating. Indeed, playing a brass instrument is a life long career.

Unfortunately the core of players is still male and German speaking, although many brass bands are making tremendous headway in this area.

I would like to encourage all congregations to increase their efforts to recruit more English speaking and more Female players. Diversity really increases the depth of our work.

Kerstin Dikhoff Reise

A result from our good co-operation with the EPiD is that we have the opportunity of requesting teaching tours from brass music experts in Germany.

This year we were blessed with a 3 week tour by Kerstin Dikhoff, Landesposaunenwart from Bavaria. Kerstin toured all three regions and conducted workshops with us to improve our technique and playing styles.

The tour was well received in all areas of our church and everyone who attended the workshops and praise services spoke with appreciation of the time they spent.

The council has agreed to arrange these teaching tours annually for the next few years to continue the improvement in the quality of our music.

Looking forward

In the next two years we look forward to two exiting festivals, including the EBBASA 2020 Festival in Pretoria.

This festival, held every 5 years, brings all the choirs and associations from South Africa and Namibia together in a celebration in praise of the Lord.

The 2020 Festival will be held in the opera hall of the State Theatre on 26 & 27 September 2020.

As the arrangements progress we will communicate them to all congregations.

Conclusion

In conclusion we are thankful for the support of the synod in the work of the brass bands in our church.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Egmout Otterman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'E'.