



## Happy Easter!

We wish you a very happy Easter from a warm Germiston, knowing that many of you have been experiencing snow recently.

It was not our intention to take so long to write our first newsletter of 2018, but circumstances have been far from normal this year.

Many of you will know that Jane's Dad, Louis, died suddenly and unexpectedly on 31 December last year. Whilst he had suffered from a chronic lung condition for many years his death came unexpectedly and was a great shock to us. We found ourselves making a visit back to Halifax for Louis' funeral and clearing the family home with siblings. We were blessed by friends at New North Road Baptist Church, Huddersfield, who kindly made their recently vacated manse available to us, giving us a base for our time in the UK.

## Jane the Integral Life Coach



Immediately after returning to South Africa, Jane boarded a plane to Cape Town for a demanding week of coaching in front of a live panel and interviews. She has been working towards a professional coaching certificate (see left) for 18 months and was awarded the designation of Integral Coach with New Ventures West. Well done Jane!

## Holy Week and Easter in Germiston

Holy Week and Easter felt quite different this year than in previous years, mainly because Steve is now responsible for an additional three churches, Dukathole, Goodhope and Graceland. Whilst Germiston is an established city-centre church, Graceland is a church in a small social housing estate, Dukathole meets in a school classroom in an informal settlement, and Goodhope is a shack in an informal settlement. The four churches bring together people from very diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. We planned to have a shared programme for Holy Week and Easter without knowing whether it would work.

It has been a delight to see the way in which people from the various churches came together and especially embraced our Zimbabwean members by singing in Shona.

On Palm Sunday we met at Graceland and held a street revival, walking around the estate singing, preaching and praying with families. We then held a service based around “seven words” relating to Jesus Christ entering Jerusalem on a donkey as a godly king. The church was packed and many people had to sit outside in a tent; there was a wonderful atmosphere.



We then held services on each weekday evening, leading to the next big service on Good Friday. Jane led a time of reflection, which was followed by the service of Seven Words of Jesus Christ from the cross. The Seven Words service is one of the most important services in the year and the church was absolutely packed with 360 people! One person commented that he had never seen so many people in the church in the last 10 years. It was a beautiful and moving service which lasted about four hours.

On the Saturday we had a youth revival in which 80 children and youth from the various churches came together and had a great time. Already a

youth leader has shared a vision for uniting the youth, which is very encouraging.

On Saturday night we held a revival which lasted throughout the night with robing and blousing of new organisation members, preaching, testimonies, a memorial service and lots and lots of singing. The revival was attended by 200 people, more than any previous one. It finished with the lights of the church being



turned off and a group of women processing in with candles shouting 'Uvukile! Uvukile' – "He is risen!" The women shared with us the news that Jesus Christ had been raised from the dead and gave rise to songs of joy and praise. We then left the church to celebrate Holy Communion, with Jane leading, in the park beside the church, just as the sun rose.

It was a joy to see how well people came together this Easter and it gives a good foundation for uniting further. What is most significant is that our black South African members are now seeing Germiston as their church, whereas previously they have been on the periphery; however, there is still space for everyone to participate.

After the busyness of Holy Week and Easter, we are now going to spend the week resting in the Drakensberg Mountains

## Prayer points

- For Jane and our family as we grieve the death of Louis;
- For the development of Magnify as it falls under the Institute for Creative Conversation;
- For continuing progress in growing unity in Germiston and between the local churches;
- For wisdom and energy to grasp the opportunities before us.