



# **NORTHERN SYNOD**

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## **Moderamen**

Moderator: Dr. Eskia RE Moraka, (083 645 4424)

Assessor: Rev MH Moima, (074 453 0727)

Scribe: Dr WM Moime, (082 200 5938)

Actuarius: Prof C Landman, (082 377 2574)

08 January 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters

## **PASTORAL LETTER TO CONGREGATIONS OF THE NORTHERN SYNOD**

Greetings in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ

### **1. Introduction**

#### **1.1 The Year 2014**

The year 2014 with all its activities is done and dusted. However, what remains of critical importance, is to reflect on our 2014 successes and failures as ministers of religion, church councils, congregational ministries, congregations, presbyteries, synodical ministries, and the Northern Synod of our Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa.

The following major activities successfully took place in the Northern Synod during the year 2014:

- Empowerment of ministers of religion, and Sunday School and Catechumen class teachers;
- Workshops on church order and financials;
- Presbytery conferences of various ministries;
- Development of strategic plans by some church councils;
- Presbytery, regional and Northern Synod music competitions;
- Church councils and presbytery meetings;

- Compliance with the payment of our Synodical levies.

All these activities reflected above, culminated into the 6<sup>th</sup> Northern Synod Sitting which was held during 6 – 10 October 2014, successfully hosted by the Presbytery of Saulspoort at Orion Hotel in Rustenburg. Regardless of the humongous size of the Northern Synod, which has nineteen (19) presbyteries with 135 congregations, the attendance of the Northern Synod meeting was excellent.

Through an election process, the 6<sup>th</sup> Northern Synod Sitting generated the following leadership which constitutes the Moderamen of the Northern Synod:

- Moderator : Dr R E Moraka
- Assessor : Rev H M Moima
- Scribe : Dr W Moime
- Actuaris : Prof C Landman

Brothers and sisters, all these activities above and many other remarkable happenings in our Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa, the Northern Synod, have been possible through God's mercy. God empowered the following brothers and sisters to make outstanding contributions towards the development of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa through the spreading of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ during 2014:

- The former Moderator, Prof Thias Kgatla, and his team,
- Honourable ministers of religion, diligently serving our congregations,
- The Chief Executive Administrator,
- Leaders of all presbyteries,
- Elders and deacons,
- Leaders and members of all ministries,
- Members of music committees at all levels namely, congregations, presbyteries, regions and Northern Synod,
- Congregants of all our congregations.

Brothers and sisters, on behalf of the Moderamen, I wish to heartily express a word of gratitude to you all, for your continued focus on the promotion of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ and thereby growing our Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa during the year 2014.

## **1.2 The Year 2015**

This is yet the beginning of another new year which presents a golden opportunity to all of us as the children of God through our faith in Jesus Christ to:

- Come to our senses – Lk 15:17,
- Return to our Father, God the All-Mighty – Lk 15:18,
- Reconcile to our Father, God the All-Mighty - Lk 15:20,
- Pray to our Father, God the All-Mighty - Lk 15:21,
- Confess our sins to our Father, God the All-Mighty – Lk 15:21,
- Live as new creations – Lk 15:24,
- Celebrate our renewed relationship with our God the All-Mighty – Lk 15:23 – 24.

For you to ultimately celebrate 2015, you have to ensure that your plan for 2015 is God's plan. As reflected unambiguously in Jeremiah 29:11, God's plans for you are not to harm you but to prosper you, and to give you hope and a future.

## **2. Moving Strategically into the Future**

To all our ministers of religion, congregations and presbyteries in our Northern Synod, there cannot be the URCSA without your existence and your commitment to growing our Church. The leadership of the Northern Synod as well as our Church office cannot succeed without your loyalty to URCSA and your continued hard work.

It is of paramount importance to position the URCSA in terms of growth and relevance to the broader South African society through addressing the following

strategic aspects:

- Development of a strategic plan with particular strategic objectives to be achieved during the next four year period,
- Development of a communication and marketing plan,
- The growing of the church in terms of human capital and resources,
- Improvement of the work conditions of our ministers,
- The building of a conference centre for our synod,
- Follow-up and implementation of the decisions taken by the Northern Synod in 2014.

It is our responsibility as the URCSA Northern Synod leadership collective (Congregations, Presbyteries, all Ministries, The Synodical Executive, the Synodical Commission and the Moderaman) to grow the URCSA. There is a need for complete commitment by the leadership and all members to make a huge difference in terms of growing the URCSA and making impact on the broader South African society. In actual fact the philosophy that you as a leader, should seriously consider to drive and regulate your involvement is, *I am here, and I care*. If you do not feel your presence and you do not care, you are not in a position to contribute towards the growth of the URCSA”.

It is within this particular context for the following aspects to be urgently addressed during 2015:

- Auditing of the URCSA Northern Synod’s state of affairs,
- Development of a strategic plan for the URCSA Northern Synod,
- Development of a communication strategy,
- Development of a fund-raising strategy for URCSA Northern Synod.

### 3. Conclusion

In conclusion brothers and sisters

- We need every congregant to become an active ambassador of Christ through the URCSA,
- We need to be advisers to one another, in the best interest of spreading the Gospel of Christ, and the growing of the URCSA,
- The growth of the URCSA cannot be realized without every member, in all our congregations, committed to giving in order to grow our congregations, presbyteries and our Northern Synod Church office.

As we, as members of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa, optimistically start the year 2015, I wish you all, God's richest blessings.

Yours in Christ Jesus



**Dr Eskia Moraka**

**Moderator: Northern Synod**

**Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa**