

Western Cape Baptist Network Report for the 2021 Assembly Handbook

The past 18 months was certainly an extra-ordinary period to say the least. A period of extreme challenge, sadness and tragedy. We are now faced with a process of “rebooting” ourselves in order that we face the new realities of the day and prepare for the change which is to come. We do however report on the highlights among our Network of churches.

WPBA Executive:

It was a special moment as we witnessed the end of a ministry era for Mr Eric Le Roux, our Strategy Director who served the Association for 16 years. We also bade farewell to Mike Trollip as he steps off the Executive.

At our August AGM the meeting elected the following to positions on the Executive of the Western Cape Baptist Network: Rev Grant Scheepers (Chairperson) Revs Benjamin Dreyer, Nathan Seale, Thembelani Maqhajana and Ps. Edwin Joshua (Vice-Chairpersons), Mr Darryl Petersen (Operations and Admin Director)

Ministerial movements – 2020 and 2021 saw the following movements:

- Rev Gary Barros – To Belhar Extension (January 2020)
- Rev Dave Birkholtz – To Table View Baptist Church (January 2020)
- Rev Shaun Aspeling – To Woodstock Baptist Church (October 2019)
- Rev Rheza Vaughn – To Emanuel Baptist Church (Iterim)
- Ps August Wentzel – To Blackheath Baptist Church (January 2020)
- Rev Sandi Sonteya – Northside Khayalitsha (February 2020)
- Gareth Caroll -Blomvlei Baptist Church – (Associate)
- Bernadette White-Phillips – Capricorn Park (March 2020)
- Ntsizi Phumlani – Masiphumelele (April 2021)

Several our churches observed various celebrations of God’s faithfulness over the years.

- Maranatha Baptist Church celebrated 40 years October 2019
- Parow ABK celebrated 80 years December 2019

Key Ministry Highlights for this year 2020/2021:

We will not be able to build perspective if we do not honour our pastors who worked tirelessly at great personal risk to continue ministry to their congregations. It was during this time that

the Association was able to support 15 pastors at struggling congregations, with food vouchers throughout 2020. R48000.00 was spent in this benevolent effort.

The Executive continued its monthly meetings via Zoom to ensure that the business of the Association continues, and it was in this respect, that we successfully held our first two Council meetings and our AGM via Zoom.

Our 3 Ministry Facilitators did sterling work in supporting pastors, helping churches in conflict, and seeing to it that our missions program continued to be effective.

Broader Associational Ministry

The WPBA Executive actively engaged with our Black Pastor's Fellowship after many questions were raised about the relational concerns shown by those who felt that they were marginalized in the Association's support of the pastors and church planters in the township areas.

2021 saw several pastors join the Executive meetings on an ad hoc basis over a period of time to gain insights into its functioning as well as giving much more 'exposure' to discuss their concerns at fraternal levels.

The past year highlighted the following:

- The launching of the new brand identity at our AGM, as the WPBA changed its name to the WCBN (Western Cape Baptist Network). The Western Province Baptist Association continues to 'trade' at a legal level.
- We have witnessed the resilient spirit and work of care and compassion through food kitchens, Covid Mask making projects, drop off meals to affected families, sponsorship of data and airtime to families and individuals forced into isolation and prayer circles formed for health and emergency workers – to name a few.
- A big thank you to the CTBS for the webinars that they arranged to help our pastor's cope with the challenges of lockdown.
- Tim groups have met regularly either by zoom or in person and judging by the WhatsApp group chatter, relationships are getting stronger, and we are beginning to realise the slogan "Together in Ministry."

Let me end with a quote inserted in his report by one of our ministry facilitators:



“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair.” - ***Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities***

2020 and 2021 was certainly all of that.