



New Church of Southern Africa Centenary Celebration

Presentation of copies of True Christian Religion during the
Sunday Centenary Service
(see page 6)

Lifeline

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new church

Lifeline



New Church of Southern Africa Centenary Celebration

The Choir singing in the Orlando New Church
(see page 6)

December 2009
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Our mission is to express, share and
experience with others in life an inclusive,
non-judgmental vision of God's kingdom.

Christmas Day

And the angel said the shepherds, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”
Luke 2:10-11

How much are we affected by that far-off event? It's light and darkness! Celebrations and joy, followed by mortal danger and weeping. But our life can be like that. So it is also our story : of the unexpected, of the ups and downs of life. We just do not know what might happen next. We are all living in biblical times!

Pause now for a brief prayer and meditation and think about your life during this year. Ask yourself if you were aware of the Lord's presence with you when the going was tough.

Now, if possible, read Luke 2:1-20

Divine Revelation:

Without a revelation from the Divine human beings could not know anything about everlasting life, or even anything about God, much less about love to and faith in Him. For they are born totally ignorant, and have to learn everything from things in the world, and to develop their intellect from them. They also have by birth and inheritance every kind of evil, which arises from self-love and love of the world. The pleasures these give are constantly

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Letter

Dear Editor,

Thank you for publishing the letter from Bristol New Church in the October Lifeline. Since it raises a number of important issues, I hope and expect your letters column may be rather livelier than usual – no bad thing!

Apart from making the obvious point that there are complex forces at play in these matters of how the Conference can employ its available resources, I wish to express my regret that the Notice of Motion submitted by Bristol to the recent annual meeting of Conference was not put. I think there was no malice intended. Rather, perhaps, a simple misjudgment, not helped by the absence of any Bristol members to support the motion.

The problem you face at Bristol is not new. I remember in the enthusiasm of my youth being very exercised because Conference seemed unable to supply ministerial leadership for my congregation, or to supply finance when it was needed for a major project. Happily, some years later we were fortunate to have a period when ministers served us. And the project went ahead because we were not to be deterred. Currently, these sorts of problems are writ large, and the room for manoeuvre is even more restricted.

There is a real sense, I believe, in which the centre cannot resolve all the issues and crises affecting its

constituent parts. Governments suffer from the same syndrome.

In the end, every group has to search within itself for the energy, motivation and conviction to promote the life of the Church and to continue its witness in whatever way it can. Resources from without may sometimes act as a catalyst, but in essence, whatever help may be available, it can only lead and build upon what is already present in local hearts and minds. It is palpably obvious to us all that the Conference and its member groups are experiencing a serious and acute shortage of personnel, both lay and ordained, together with the effects of the global financial crisis. We find it baffling and almost depressing to struggle on in these circumstances.

And, yet, of one thing we may be sure. The Lord's Providence is at work. It is over all things. And it works positively with men and women of goodwill who are receiving the Lord's light into their minds and allowing Him to change them. We must hope that one of the outcomes is a growing expression of heavenly love in every aspect of life, and most especially in our dealings with one another in the life of our beloved Church.

Yours sincerely,

Bruce Jarvis

once we realise this and accept it as a warning, we shall have a protection against them and not identify with them so readily – even if we can't always avoid them. Nor shall we be so arrogant as to claim any goodness and purity as our own. Such heavenly things can only come from the Lord and we are blessed by Him and ought to feel eternally thankful.

To summarise these two paragraphs: No thing really originates in us, but we can choose what we shall appropriate 'as our own' – and see the Lord as the source of everything pure and loving. Nor can we just sit and wait "to be blessed from on high". We have to go forward without fear, knowing that the Lord's strength is with us. A moving testimony of this is in Exodus 14:13-22. Read it and spend a few minutes meditating on this. This in fact is a parable of our everyday battles against hellish inclinations which are set on dominating our life. And indeed, without the Lord's help, we would remain slaves to them. We need to get up and go forward and turn our back on hell. The Lord waits for our decision. Even our thoughts to think positively and our desire for freedom come to us from the Lord. But still, we have to do this 'as of ourselves'. That is the miracle of being truly human and to have this all important choice. Self-examination is important. Not to condemn ourselves, but to get an insight into how our conscience works and urges us to be set free from slavery to the lowest in human nature.

Prayers without words and Meditation

First of all read Genesis 15:1-6. Remember that this is not really about which child and heir Abram wanted. It is about our own individual development and the new states of spiritual life the Lord promises us. It may all seem like a dream, but impossible to achieve. The Arcana which deals with this passage explains: "If anyone is willing to be wise in his thinking he may know where all things originate, namely in the Lord." (1808:2) to dream about wonderful possibilities in our life is not really just wishful thinking, it is entirely in tune with the Lord's desire for us - hoping for a new life (child) in our life! Nothing, but nothing happens without the Lord's presence and life. Open your heart to the Lord so that He may fill it with goodness and love.

Read Psalms 8 and 148. In John's Gospel the word 'believe' appears 88 times! Read carefully and slowly the following passages: 1:1-14 (Word); 2:1-15 (Nicodemus); 5:39-47 (Scripture testifies of Me); 12:44-50 (Believing in Him who sent Him). How do these reflect your belief?

Christopher Hasler

diametrically opposed to the Divine. This is why human beings know nothing about everlasting life, and therefore there must be a revelation to enable them to know about it.

Since therefore people live after death and go on living forever, it follows that the Lord out of love towards the human race has revealed the means which lead to such a life and are of value to salvation. What the Lord has revealed to us is the Word.

Arcana Caelestia 10318, 10320

The Lord has given us His Word so that He can teach us about heaven and our eternal life. It is difficult to keep reminding ourselves of that when we read the inspired books of the Bible - **that it is actually the Lord speaking to us** - about His birth, the reason for His coming, and His constant presence with us. Yet this is something very important. But that is why the Lord spoke in parables, so that we can visualise our situation vis-à-vis the Lord. How is He present? What is He actually doing for us? Let one of His parables illustrate why He came on earth and how He is present with us today. He once said:

"If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles."

This comes from the Sermon on the Mount – Matthew 5:41 and it does not seem to have much to do with Christmas. However, the historical background is that while the Jews were part of the Roman Empire, they were not strictly slaves. But there were certain duties which they were obliged to do. If a Roman soldier was carrying a heavy pack, he could ask a Jew to carry it for him for one mile without payment. No doubt, this was resented bitterly by the young Jews, who would see it as a form of slavery. Jesus gives this obligation a strange twist: "When you reach the compulsory distance, offer to go another mile!" Immediately the situation changes! You are no longer an indentured labourer but a *free* person: "I am doing this because I want to!" But where does this leave the soldier? He is probably baffled: "What is he playing at?" I am suggesting that the Lord's incarnation, His taking upon Himself our human nature, is just as difficult for us to fathom as it might have been for the Roman Centurion. This is something outside our experience.

In one sense, the Lord came here on this earth to walk with us the second mile. To carry our heavy burden, because by assuming human nature, He is now more immediately present in humanity than He could ever be as the Divine Creator. He is now alongside us as well as invisibly within us. There is no doubt that we do have heavy burdens to carry. We are assaulted by evils and selfishness – and one of the clear indications is that like the centurion, we do want to shed our load of guilt and responsibilities on someone else. We are doing it all the time, from earliest childhood. It is part of our nature that we say,

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

"It wasn't me, it was her!" That is like saying, "You carry my pack of guilt on your shoulders!" (And it will not cost me anything, ha ha!)

The Lord comes along and says to all of us, "I'll carry it with you. I know the weight every one of you has to carry, but I am walking alongside you and we do not have to involve anyone else. Grow up! You are not a child who only wants to shed life's responsibilities on others – whether it is the government, your bank, next door neighbour, your parents, brother or sister. That will get you nowhere."

The Lord speaks even more directly in Isaiah as to how He wishes us to worship Him and to 'fast' not by some grand gestures, but by seeking to loosen the yokes of hostilities, blame and rejection:

**Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness,
to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
and bring the homeless into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover him,
and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?** Isaiah 58:6-7

And that is precisely what the Lord Himself did by His incarnation. He came to dwell in our condition, in our depraved and selfish nature. He says, "Together we can change the world so that heaven can begin to rule by means of love and truthfulness. No more lies, blame, robbery and killing, just forgiveness and love. That is all I ask of you." Perhaps we understand His help and presence most when we ourselves become parents and find it possible to love our children unselfishly and to forgive them and for many years we carry their burdens while they do not even realise it.

Let us not forget Him who makes it all possible and who came to be our Immanuel, *God with us*.

That is what we are celebrating at Christmas. Let us end by listening to the words of the pious Simeon who came in the Spirit into the temple when Mary and Joseph brought baby Jesus to be blessed:

**Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace,
according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation
that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and for glory to your people Israel.** Luke 2:29-33

Christopher Hasler

others are good and full of pure light and inner warmth. We need to learn to distinguish between these two streams of inner stimulations and above all recognise which come from hell and which from the Lord. As the Lord said, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32) But be warned, it is not going to be easy, nor will it happen quickly. Be prepared to be on your guard till the rest of your earthly life, and remember that without the Lord presence within you, you could never recognise or overcome temptations at all. But the decision is always of your own choosing.

Section 2 (312-319) This is really a marvellous treatise on the nature of atheism which today is certainly beginning to assert itself far more vigorously by ridiculing the belief in God. It is perhaps the best exposure of the attraction of atheism and it points out its inherent weaknesses. The first attraction is that a person believes that he is intelligent from himself and all the good and clever ideas he has are his own. But as we saw earlier, no person is intelligent or wise from himself. He can only be wise and intelligent because he receives inner stimulation from the spiritual world. This is either good or evil and true wisdom is to distinguish which is which. We must not fall into the delusion that we are clever or wise from ourselves – that is the attraction of the atheistic pride and love of self.

Atheism is dealt with very effectively in 318, so please read it carefully. Why, for example, does the atheistic arguments sound so matter of fact and convincing? It is because their arguments appeal to the senses. And falsity can be confirmed more easily than truth, because it is often quite superficial and not really intelligent – it is mere ingenuity. Rather like a market salesman who can talk you into buying some of his goods. And haven't we all been talked into buying some rubbish in just such a way? Truth, however, can be confirmed by reason, rather than by material 'proofs'. It does not base its argument in some superficial persuasions. And we are also reminded that everyone is able to confirm his own heresy – whether it is religious, political or scientific. Moreover, the person who is in falsities appears to himself as the only intelligent person on earth. All the others he regards as blind fools.

319 teaches us how we should understand and think about anything : from love and respect for the truths the Lord reveals to us. The reason being, that everything which goes on in our mind is formed from spiritually organic substances which are the building materials of our everlasting mind. Think therefore of a person who has filled his/her mind with lascivious crudities and delights. Let us stay clear of those many filthy programmes which now pass as amusement on TV. Mark well what is said in 319:3-4. We should have greater respect for the inner organs of our mind and personality which are constantly stimulated by good or evil. Remember you do have a choice!

Section 3 (320-321) Here is a lifeline offered to us: We do not have to assimilate evils or store them in our mind. So let us remember that they are hellish and

United Search for Divine Providence

Session 14



Divine Providence appropriates neither evil nor good to anyone; but one's own prudence appropriates both.

Divine Providence permits us to perceive that we think and will from ourselves, and yet this is not possible – since our life can only come from the Lord. (DP 308-321)

Section 1 (308-311) Sometimes we get a bit of grit inside our sock and there is nothing else for it: we have to take it off and shake it out. This Session is doing something very similar: it turns us inside out so that we can learn just what makes us tick. Is it our intelligence, our artistic talents, good nature or strong personality? We feel in a very real way that we live from ourselves : and take notice, we should feel that way! That is our daily experience: we feel free, we see, hear, touch, smell and taste and we can judge between these sensations and experience them as nice or unpleasant. But these sensations are not quite what they seem!

To begin with, they all reach us from the outside world. It is not our eye that looks out at the moon. It is the light from the moon that reaches our eye. When we see far off constellations light from those may have taken millions of years to reach us, and so it is with all our senses. They are mere receptors of sensations which reach and touch them from outside. Our senses are passive in themselves, and yet it the Lord's will that we should experience them as our own. And it is the same with our life. We do feel it as our very own, and we should feel that way, but still be aware and acknowledge that our life flows into us (like all the sensations we experience) from the Lord, our Creator.

What about our thoughts, our rationality? Are we not captains of our own ship? Well, again, we have to say "No". Our brain, like our other senses is stimulated by spiritual sensations of inner light (truth) and inner heat (love). What is however important is how we respond to these spiritual vibrations. If we analyse them, we shall realise that some of them are selfish and often quite hellish, but

The Historical Society Get Together

This was my first time attending the Historical Society Get Together. I was not sure what to expect. Would all sit around surrounded by dusty books, maps and artefacts, bemoaning the loss of a gentler age? On the contrary some twenty plus friends were treated to a stimulating, varied programme of presentations. On the first evening, after the meal, Patrick Johnson delivered the Annual Lecture. This highlighted the focal points in the history of Cross Street and Camden Road societies. It was fascinating to learn of the movement backwards and forwards of members during splits and breakaway groups.

The rest of our stay was a well organised programme of one and a half hour sessions delivered by eight different people. These were a feast of topics from railways and C. A. Tulk to the journey of wood from the Mauretania to Kensington, to a hair raising trip, from Rhodes to Latvia, of the organ and a timely warning about clearing the contents of a vestry cupboard when precious objects could be broken. There were profiles of New Church worthies including Rev Jonathan Bayley. Interspersed were snippets from old minute books. One such snippet told of a rule stating that no man wearing a hat indoors could be permitted to teach children in Sunday School. Failure to comply would lead to instant dismissal.



New Church Baptisms
The first page of the first register of baptisms starting 31st July 1787

As the presentations ended, words of thanks seemed inadequate as one contemplated the research and time spent in assembling these varied topics. However our thanks were heartfelt and the applause enthusiastic. Special thanks were given to the organisers, Mrs Maeve Hawkins and Mrs Pauline Grimshaw for their effort to ensure a memorable event for everyone present.

Never had I expected so much humour, laughter and warm fellowship as we experienced during those two days. I await with anticipation our next Get Together in October 2011. As our minds and spirits were sustained by this feast of presentations we could not forget how Anne and her team fed our creature comforts and filled us with delicious food. Their welcome was so warm and caring, ever willing to answer our every need.

Jean Chambers

The Centenary Celebrations of the New Church of Southern Africa

Friday October 2nd to Sunday October 4th 2009

It's a story that quite a few of us know or have heard about, how in December 1909 the Rev. David William Mooki of the African Catholic Church stopped to browse through a box of second hand books outside a shop in Krugersdorp, near Johannesburg, and found there a copy of *True Christian Religion* which he bought. His reading of it was life changing. After preaching and teaching the Doctrines he discovered in this book he left the African Catholic Church and gathered from amongst some of his former congregation there, and new people, a Group which, on January 25th 1911 founded what they named THE NEW CHURCH OF AFRICA. Profoundly committed to the Doctrines and tireless in his efforts to spread them Rev. Mooki purchased out of his own meagre resources a small printing press, teaching himself how to use it, and on which he printed hundreds of copies of tracts and pamphlets he translated into local languages. In that same year, 1911, he made contact with what is now The North of England New Church House, in Manchester, leading, in turn to the recognition of his movement by the General Conference of The New Church in Britain in 1917. The story is too long to re-tell here but between 1921 and 1968 a succession of European Missionaries was sent out to South Africa for terms of varying lengths. In 1970 The New Church of Southern Africa became fully independent, its first President being Rev. Obed S. D Mooki, the son of David William.

Eighteen months ago the present President, the Rev. Henry Kalo, and his governing Council announced plans to celebrate the Centenary of the founding of The New Church of Southern Africa, a weekend of special events to be held at Orlando (Soweto) in conjunction with the 2009 Women's' League Convention, traditionally held, as it is, during the last week of September. And so it was. Not even a hiccup over Government re-scheduling of School holidays got in the way of things. As usual, and whatever the challenges, our South African friends uncomplainingly deal with them. It's amazing, but they do.

What is also amazing is how they coped with the utterly daunting challenge of accommodating and feeding the huge numbers of people, first of all at the Women's League Convention (at which I was there for only a part) and then, over the weekend of the actual Centenary celebrations. I heard from Joy Moffat that there were 257 delegates, *plus visitors*, to the Women's League Convention, all of whom were found lodgings in Soweto, a substantial number in a local School and others in the homes of Church members and friends, though having their meals at the Church. These were joined by easily another 300 people for the weekend and for the Centenary celebrations. Mountains of food were prepared and we were in awe of hard working volunteer women from the Orlando Society, 20 to 30 of them, working away, some grating and mixing in

worked so hard in the kitchens, unable to get away to join in anything and some of whom stayed up all night: to the young people who enthralled and stunned us with their incredible singing: for the memory of the humming throughout the Church on the Sunday as for more than 45 minutes some 550 people came forward in waves for the Holy Supper: to Rev. Henry Kalo and Mrs. Heather Kalo, host and hostess; THANK YOU.

Wishing you well as your move forward into your second century and may the Lord bless you all.

Rev Ian A Arnold

P.S. Amongst those many good and inspiring memories there is also this sobering one and this is in reference to the Aids and HIV Victim support organized, mainly, by a group of volunteers, from the near derelict old school classrooms on our Orlando Church property. In addition to adults to whom, originally, it was giving assistance, it now reaches out to maybe 50 mostly orphan children who come onto the Church property around 10 each morning, knowing that they will given something, if not very much, in the way of food. (It all depends on what has been donated since the whole operation depends on donations). On the Friday of our visit these children, some as young as 4 or 5, were each given a see through plastic bag of coloured popcorn – belly filling, of course: but that's all. For all that, we were deeply moved by, *and full of admiration for*, what is being done though it be a small and humble response to this massive problem in South Africa.

Spiritual Wisdom - an update

If you had the means to present insights into life from a Swedenborgian perspective to around 50 new people a day would you - (a) leap at the chance or (b) largely ignore the possibilities offered?

The Spiritual Wisdom web site continues to receive on average about 125 new visitors a day who together view an average of 325 pages. Like most web sites the majority of visitors find that it is not what they were looking for and leave after looking at one page. On Spiritual Wisdom this amounts to 60% of the visitors, which leaves 50 new visitors a day who take a real interest and who look at a total of 250 pages.

So every day 50 new people each look at an average of 5 pages of insights into life from a Swedenborgian perspective. Do we have any other regular means of outreach that comes anywhere near achieving these results?

What is fascinating and struck me forcibly for the first time is that the New Church in Southern Africa is part of the culture of its members, young and old. They live it and breathe it. They sing about it and advertise it and are so proud to be part of it. They sacrifice for it (*really* sacrifice for it). They will travel hundreds of kilometres if need be to attend its major events, Conferences, Conventions and Services, knowing that in all likelihood they will sleep on the hard floor of a school classroom when they get there and that they need to bring their own plate, eating utensils and sleeping mat. In saying this, South Africa itself is a country where religion is still central in people's lives and where there is widespread respect for the work of the Church and its clergy.



The Youth Organisation Centenary Polo Shirt

What I noticed, too, is an increasing Africanisation of our Church, commendably and appropriately so. And whilst there were lovely tributes to the late Rev. Obed and Mrs. Eulalia Mooki for their leadership, initiatives and influence over so many years, the Church is noticeably moving on as I feel sure Obed and Eulalia would wish it to do.

Of course the Church – our Church – has its problem. All organizations have. For instance, and somewhat perennial as this has been, it remains rich in members, commitment, enthusiasm and love for the Doctrines, but poor in material resources. (I repeat just how warm and deep is the appreciation there for monies received from overseas in support of its Centenary Appeal) .So many new Churches could be built and so many Churches that already exist are in dire need of upgrade and refurbishment. Then there is the challenge of devising effective training of new candidates for ordained ministry when, if they have a job, students cannot just leave for weeks or months on end, to attend the Mooki Memorial College, not like they used to be able to. I know, too, of robust, healthy debate before decisions are made and in connection with future directions. Reports are closely scrutinized and questions asked. Accountability and transparency are so much more the order of the day, and are demanded. Much, indeed, is asked and expected of the Rev Kalo and his Council and the leaders of the Church more generally.

To those “big guns” as they affectionately refer to them and to all the other wonderful people who led, supported and made possible the Centenary celebrations; who also welcomed us so warmly and so often: to the ladies who

enamel bowls as much as a metre wide or cooking in massive pots on the stoves.

Both Joy *and* Trevor Moffat had arrived some 5 days before me, Joy being able to accept Rev. Henry Kalo's invitation to attend the Women's League Convention he extended when he visited Perth in April of this year. Nevertheless, even for the shorter time I was able to attend sessions, on the Thursday and the Friday, I easily picked up on – and quickly became caught up in – the focus, the energy, and the enthusiasm of the women, their camaraderie and their obvious pride in their Church. Led by Mrs. Heather Kalo, the lovely, supportive and gentle wife of the President, the Women's League is just so manifestly a powerhouse of The New Church of Southern Africa, if not *the* main one. It does a remarkable job fund raising and there is a happy rivalry between Societies as to which will be amongst the top 10, most of all which will be No.1! And what is so remarkable and beautiful is the way they weave together business and singing, rhythm and dancing, so spontaneous, so joyful, so warm and enthusiastic, so moving to listen to.



Rev Henry Kalo and Mrs Heather Kalo

The Convention being closed early Friday afternoon the actual Centenary celebrations began that evening in the Orlando Church, Rev. N.W. Mthembu, Assistant General Secretary, being the Master of Ceremonies. During the course of the evening Joy gave a hugely appreciated talk she had titled, “Take Time to smell The Roses”, preceded as this was by Welcomes and some roof raising items from the Orlando Church Choir.

In terms of celebration Saturday was to be – and superbly proved to be – the “big” day. Obviously urged weeks if not months beforehand to wear traditional African costumes the women - hundreds of them! – were a pageant of the most amazing colours and fabulous costumes and head dresses. First off on that Saturday were outdoor Services, one being a ground breaking ceremony where the new College and Church Administration block is about to be built and the

other the dedication of the new extension to the Orlando Church. Then it was into the Church itself for a short Service and powerful sermon by the Rev. Henry Kalo on the subject of the Cornerstone, Psalm 118, and verse 22.

We took a break then for – believe it or not – breakfast! After which we were joined by mini bus loads of people and choirs from other New Churches in a massive marquee which had been erected the previous evening, all magnificently decorated, every detail attended to, for a programme of items and recollections, potted histories of the various organizations of the Church, send ups and skits; for the unbelievable, energetic, dancing and singing of the various choirs and groups; for more Welcomes and presentations; for the warm acknowledgement of overseas friends and friendship and for financial support recently received, a Bequest from the late Bill and Isabel Hall of the Sydney Society being specially mentioned in this regard, as were the proceeds of the Appeal for South Africa from Australia and a significant donation from The Homelands Trust in the U.K. This Saturday programme of celebration was presided over by the General Secretary, Rev Eddie Gologolo and even as darkness rolled in the Chairman of the Council, Rev. David Mkhize, with the help of a tiny torch, read his excellent, short, honest, overview of the more painful years of the mid 1990's on through to 2004. Had you been there you could never forget the youthful exuberance and so obviously practiced singing; the songs weaving in the theme of the New Church, the gorgeous children, their light and their joy. I won't, that's for sure!

What also stands out for me from those Saturday celebrations was a short exhortation by a 95 year old local, Orlando, member, a Mrs. Motingoe, too frail to stand, but her mind razor sharp, recalling for us memories of Rev David William Mooki who had been her minister when she had been a girl, and of the leaders of the Church since then. I had had no idea that there was anyone still alive who could virtually span the history of the Church, putting us in touch with practically the whole 100 years. (With Rev Henry Kalo, Joy, Trevor and I visited this lady 2 days later and made notes on the history she was able to recall).

Bearing in mind the distance people would be traveling afterwards The Centenary Service the following morning would begin, it was announced, at 8.30 a.m. and it near enough did do, at 9. Led by Rev. Henry Kalo there were in addition some 20 robed ministers, (the majority of these, at one point or another, taking part in the Service), and an overflowing congregation of somewhere in the region of 550 to 600 people, all of the adults (as far as we could tell) coming forward for the Holy Supper which was held near the end. The Service, 5 hours in all, included items from the Choir, greetings received for the Centenary, Announcements more generally; an excellent and at the same time candid review of the Women's League Convention (including minor problems encountered); thanks to the visitors; the sermon which I delivered (based on Genesis 28, verses 16 & 17); the blessing of all children and young people

(members of the Junior League) present; a prayer for the victims of the floods in the Philippines and the presentation to all of the ministers present and to wives of ministers not able to attend, of a copy of *True Christian Religion* in which appropriate labels had been placed along with a photocopy of David William Mooki's handwritten notation on the frontispiece of his own 1909 discovered copy.



**The 2009 Women's League Convention
in session in the Orlando Church**

A total of 70 copies had been donated by the Basil Lazer Trust, Sydney, so appropriately and so greatly appreciated as these were.

The impressions taken away, the highlights and the memories of the events of these few days are endless. The rich pride in their Church and love for it, the songs they sang about it, the ready and quite natural reference to – and acknowledgement of – the distinctive Teachings of the New Church; so many young people, the incredible atmosphere in Services of worship, the timelessness of being there, even that 5 hours can fly by like it did! These are just some of them. And then there was this tiny girl, (5 years old?) dancing with a troupe of older children from our Church in Steynsburg from the Cape Province, so unaffected, so confident, so exact in her movements! Or what about the beaded Zulu girls from Pietermaritzburg, kicking amazingly over their heads? Or the gallant little boy who ribbed the leaders of the Church via a story he read about *Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody?* Then there was the skit about "Coming days" (putting aside money for 'Coming Days' who, in fact, turned up to ask for it!). I was intrigued by Trevor's sermon at the Women's League Memorial Service (which I arrived just in time to attend) when he skillfully talked about known qualities of elephants (The members of the Women's League are known as elephants for all the good reasons Trevor highlighted). And this was unexpected that Joseph Sibanda, the President of The Sons of The New Church (The Young Men's Movement) should lead a group of ballroom dancers at the Saturday celebration.

We had our serious times, too. Solemn times, when we were unusually privileged to be present, none more so than when we visited – again with Rev. Henry Kalo - the grieving family of the late Mr. Sam Maitlaila, national Treasurer, who had passed away a few short weeks earlier and who had so looked forward to the celebrations coming on.