Dear AFM Colleagues,

The year 2019 is slowly but surely drawing to a close. It is a privilege and blessing for me to address you in this last Pastoral Letter for the year. We take a look at the strategic direction and the way forward for 2020, we consider the most important results of the pastoral wellness survey, we take note of the AFM Welfare’s intent to serve and enable AFM Assemblies to practically implement Community Involvement and lastly we celebrate Rev. Frank Chikane’s contribution to leadership in the AFM.
AFM’S STRATEGIC DIRECTION – ONE AFM GAME PLAN

Past. M.G. Mahlobo (President of the AFM of SA) - mmahlobo@afm-ags.org

The strategy or plan is to align all church structures with the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 18-20). Ultimately, we would like to see our members becoming disciples discipling others and our church buildings becoming Missional equipping centres. Our pastors and members are critical in transitioning the AFM from being a traditional church into becoming a missional movement.

“...we would like to see our members becoming disciples discipling others and our church buildings becoming Missional equipping centres.”

Importance of having Goals

A lot of energy and resources have been spent in developing and conceptualizing our understanding of our missional calling. We have reached an implementation phase. **Without goals we risk:** (i) staying at a level of information, (ii) providing training in our regions that are not relevant or bringing us any closer to being more missional and (iii) we stay unaccountable for our progress. There is a reputational risk if we don’t actively pursue our mission or calling – which we claim to be our calling. Trust in the church to do what they say they are doing, is vital.

We requested the National Leadership Forum (NLF) to propose implementation goals for each of the five Game Plan drivers. The feedback received from the NLF helped us in mapping future focus and direction. The following focus goals have been identified:

**Discipleship:** We need practical models to guide local assemblies on discipleship. Such a model must enable believers to grow through the different stages of spiritual development. It must also help them understand that they are missionaries with the responsibility to share the gospel. We would like to see every member measuring up to a Christ-like lifestyle. For 2020 the goal is that our assemblies and departments must come up with a good and effective model for discipleship training.

**Empowerment:** The most prevalent goal, hereof, is to teach, equip and train members to embrace their Great Commission calling. In most cases teaching, equipping and training focus too much on the “what” do to with insufficient emphasis on the practical question of “how to” do it. Regional, Network and Departmental Committees would like to know which training programs are currently being used by local assemblies and departments.

**Governance:** At an assembly level the main goal is to see excellence in administration and full compliance with the church’ constitution. Among leaders the goal is to see more accountability and
AFM’S STRATEGIC DIRECTION – ONE AFM GAME PLAN cont.

stronger communication of the vision. This should result in less uncontrollable debts and more trustworthiness. We would like to see our members becoming good stewards on all resources that God has entrusted in their personal care (finances, marriage & children).

**Community Involvement:** We need 2-3 models that are effective in dealing with needs of communities. Poverty & unemployment are major concerns. We would like to see AFM Assemblies becoming agents of change in their communities. We would like to see our members becoming the salt of the earth and the light of the world (as described in Matthew 5: 13-14) by getting involved in their communities’ structures to make transformation possible. The AFM Welfare’s intent is to serve, enable and equip AFM Assemblies with practical knowledge, tools and programmes to implement social development actions that will have a positive impact on the lives of people in local communities. (Also refer to the AFM Welfare’s article in this letter.)

**Ecumenical Involvement:** It is necessary that we build relationships with other Christian institutions to demonstrate our unity. Our ecumenical involvement goal is to see our pastors initiating or getting involved in Pastors’ Forums in their communities. We would like to see our assemblies initiating or becoming involved in ecumenical activities such as prayers for rain or making a public demonstration of Christian churches in confronting social ills. At a national level the AFM of SA is part of ecumenical bodies such as the South African Council of Churches (with Provincial sub-structures) and the Evangelical Alliance of South Africa.

**The Importance of Accountability**
Accountability is becoming increasingly important today. When an AFM member or any member of the public sees the AFM of SA logo, they should agree that it stands for something – a church that is passionate about winning souls for Jesus, a church where the members are active Kingdom workers, a church that is passionate about local communities and always visible in their local communities. We cannot afford to carry the name and logo of the AFM when we are not one hundred percent devoted and committed to this missional calling.

PASTORAL WELLNESS SURVEY: RESULTS
*Past. M.G. Mahlobo (President of the AFM of SA) - mmahlobo@afm-ags.org*

Traditionally “wellness” has been used to mean the opposite of illness and the absence of disease and disability. More recently it is widely used to describe living the best possible life that one can regardless of his/her medical condition. Wellness is not only related to physical health, but it includes spiritual wellness, social wellness, mental wellness and emotional wellness.

“Wellness is not only related to physical health, but it includes spiritual wellness, social wellness, mental wellness and emotional wellness.”

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PASTORAL WELLNESS SURVEY: RESULTS cont.

Pastors’ wellness is also a Biblical mandate. In the first part of Acts 20:28 church leaders are instructed “to keep watch over themselves.” During this year’s NOB Empowerment Visits, we conducted a survey on AFM pastors’ wellness. The most important results are:

- In terms of the wellness of assemblies, results indicate that they are focusing more on “having” church than “being” church outside the walls of the church building. Currently there are areas that do not receive the same attention as others, including: (i) collaborating with other AFM churches, (ii) collaborating with other non-AFM churches, (iii) helping the local community with its specific problems, (iv) members as soul winners and full-time Kingdom workers and (v) training and equipping courses for members. All these areas are not receiving the attention it should in AFM Assemblies.
- When it comes to the functioning between the Pastor and his/her Governing Body, there is no clear understanding of roles.
- Pastors show hesitation in their understanding of how the ministry impacts their children, as well as the ways in which an assembly can support these children.

The full report can be downloaded from the AFM website: [http://afm-ags.org/category/media/](http://afm-ags.org/category/media/). All of the above take-outs will be addressed during the 2020 NOB Regional Visits – either through a live presentation or a pre-recorded video. We encourage our Pastors to join us at these meetings:

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<td>7-8 February</td>
<td>Cape Town</td>
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For more information about the 2020 NOB Empowerments and to download the programme kindly visit the following link: [http://afm-ags.org/category/events/](http://afm-ags.org/category/events/).
AFM WELFARE: WITH AND THROUGH ASSEMBLIES FOR IMPROVED COMMUNITY IMPACT

Ashley Theron (Acting CEO of the Executive Welfare Council of the AFM of SA) - ashleyt@afmwelfare.co.za

The Executive Welfare Council of the AFM of SA

In the beginning years, the church was involved with the Welfare. At some point in history the AFM Welfare systematically started to “drift” away from being an integral part the church - to such an extent that some AFM Assemblies today are not even aware of welfare projects in their geographic area. Somewhat isolated from the church and experiencing financial challenges, the AFM Welfare was left in a vulnerable position. Fortunately, the NLF (National Leadership Forum) intervened and through the visionary leadership of the present Executive Welfare Board a new strategic plan was presented to ensure the future sustainability of the Welfare: Moving towards full integration of the Welfare with the AFM of SA.

“There is a great synergy to be realised through the full integration of the AFM Welfare and the church.”

Moving towards Full Integration
The Executive Welfare Council of the AFM of SA (also known as EWC or AFM Welfare) is the Welfare Department of the church – The Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa. For most of the past 81 years, the AFM Welfare focused mainly on the provision of institutional care of vulnerable Children and Older Persons. More recently Community Development was added as an additional focus area where the AFM Welfare works with and through assemblies to implement social development actions to the benefit of local communities.

Currently AFM Assemblies are challenged with the practical implementation of the One AFM Game Plan of which Community Involvement is one of the drivers. There is a great synergy to be realised through the full integration of the AFM Welfare and the church. While AFM Assemblies are focused on implementing Community Involvement - the AFM Welfare can serve, enable and equip AFM Assemblies with the practical tools and programmes to implement social development actions in their local communities. The AFM Welfare then works with and through AFM Assemblies to reach communities, assisting
AFM WELFARE: WITH AND THROUGH ASSEMBLIES FOR IMPROVED COMMUNITY IMPACT cont.

Assemblies to become service points and later service centres in the community.

Social Development Questionnaire
The AFM Welfare has recently started circulating a Questionnaire to ascertain what type of social development services or projects are currently being rendered or planned by the various Assemblies. We therefore encourage every AFM Assembly to complete the questionnaire and send it back to us. The questionnaire can be downloaded from the following link: http://afm-ag.org/leading-the-afm/one-afm-game-plan/ We are also planning a follow-up questionnaire to measure the impact of the church in addressing social challenges.

Main Categories of Community Services
The AFM Welfare sees social development in its broadest sense and can serve, enable and equip AFM Assemblies to implement Community Involvement through the following strategies.

Strategy 1: Child Protection and Family Strengthening

• Family Support
Examples of Services/Projects: Parenting Skills Training, Victim Empowerment Centres, Parents Support Groups and Marriage Enrichment Programmes.

• Services or Support to Vulnerable Children
Examples of Services/Projects: Raising awareness of the importance of child protection and child safety, Shelters children living on the streets, Child & Youth Care Centres, Foster Homes and Drop-in Centres.

Strategy 2: Care and protection of Older Persons and Persons with Disabilities

• Care and Protection Services to Older Persons
Examples of Services/Projects: Home-based Care, Old Age Homes or Service Centres.

• Care and Protection Services to Persons with Disabilities
Examples of Services/Projects: Home-based Care, Residential Care Facilities or Day-care Centres.

Strategy 3: Socio-Health Services

• Services to Persons Affected or Infected with AIDS
Examples of Services/Projects: Prevention/raising awareness or supporting patients through long-term care programmes.

• Services or any Projects related to Substance/Drug Abuse
Examples of Services/Projects: Support Groups, School Outreach Programmes and Rehab or Outpatient Services (Day-Treatment Programme).

Strategy 4: Socio-Education services

Examples of Services/Projects: Schools, Early Childhood Development (ECD), Literacy Projects, After-school Centres.

Strategy 5: Socio-Economic Services

• Poverty Alleviation Services
Examples of Services/Projects: Soup Kitchens, Social Relief, Food Parcels, Clothing Distribution, Small Scale Farming.
AFM WELFARE: WITH AND THROUGH ASSEMBLIES FOR IMPROVED COMMUNITY IMPACT cont.

- **Services Related to Job Creation or Employability Preparation**
  Examples of Services/Projects: Upskilling, assisting with CVs or preparing for job interviews.

- **Empowerment Programmes to address Inequality**
  Examples of Services/Projects: Women Empowerment, Youth Development.

The AFM Welfare is looking forward to connecting with Pastors, Governing Body Members and other leaders in the church during the 2020 NOB Empowerment Visits. I want to encourage you to join us for the Welfare session that is scheduled for the Saturday afternoon 14:00-16:00. During this session we will elaborate more on different strategies through which Community Involvement can be implemented and how the AFM Welfare can serve, enable and equip Assemblies in this regard.

REV FRANK CHIKANE: THE RARE BREED IN AFRICAN LEADERSHIP

*With acknowledgement to the AFM International Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/AFMIntl/

In a time in Africa where many leaders want to continue to hold on to power long after their strength is gone, we want to honour our former AFM International President who decided to step down when he still had the strength to go on. Pastor Frank Chikane announced during the August 2019 AFM International Conference held in Nairobi (Kenya) that he was not going to stand again for election after being at the helm of AFMI for 23 years.

In his Presidential report he stated that he wanted to retire in 2016 but the AFM International prevailed on him to give them another three years. "I do not want to cause people to think that no one else can lead the church besides me. I also don't want a scenario where the church crumbles because of my overstaying on the leadership position," he said. Past. Chikane has led AFM International as a servant leader who sacrificed a lot of himself and his family for the sake of the church.

He had a powerful vision for AFM. It was under his leadership that AFM grew worldwide. Today we have the AFM’s presence in more than 35 countries of the world and in all continents. It was him who pushed that the church must be visible online in the different platforms and for the establishment of the *AFM International Business Forum* which is intended to link AFM businesses across the globe. It is worth noting that he has not only retired as President of the AFM International, but he has also retired as Presiding Pastor of the AFM of SA Naledi Assembly (Soweto) in South Africa.
REV FRANK CHIKANE: THE RARE BREED IN AFRICAN LEADERSHIP cont.

We also know that he had worked for the South African Government as the Director General in the Office of the Presidency for many years and that he took retirement after he felt that he had played his part. This is a good example to follow for all leaders whose time to retire has come.

May God Bless Rev. Chikane, his spouse Mme Chikane and their Children.

CONCLUSION

We are almost at the end of 2019. Some of the memorable events in 2019 include the SA National elections and the Springbok Rugby Team becoming the World Champions for the third time since the dawn of the democracy in SA. We will also remind ourselves about the resurgence of the Gender-based violence, xenophobic attacks, electricity load shedding and the increase of the unemployment rate in the country. As we reflect on these moments and many other challenges let us not give up hope. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:13). Allow me to wish you a peaceful and blessed Christmas. May 2020 renew your vigour and passion to continue to serve our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ with sincerity.

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Blessings! Past. M.G. Mahlolo