Dear Colleague,

We are steadily approaching the end of 2018 and looking towards the new year with hope and fresh expectation. 2019 marks an important year for the South African nation because it is a general election year. We are seeing a strong drive in South Africa towards corporate or united prayer meetings and gatherings. Up4SA is also such an initiative with the aim to bring unity through prayer to our local communities. It is an action that can be taken by our local AFM assemblies that directly promotes the implementation of a missional church – as described on our One AFM Game Plan.

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My question to you is: Do you have a prayer point in your local community? I ask all our pastors and community leaders to prayerfully consider volunteering and co-ordinating a prayer point in your local community. Every leader or volunteer receives a resource pack and will be empowered to coordinate the prayer point. Let us cover our nation with prayer through the Up4SA prayer initiative in 2019 (22-24 February).

Information is available from:
http://afm-ags.org/category/media/
https://www.facebook.com/Up4SA/
Past. Robbie Black 082 462 1540

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January month is specifically set aside for prayer and fasting in the AFM of SA. (Download the AFM national calendar from: http://afm-ags.org/category/media/) Each local assembly leadership decides on the commencement, the manner and the duration of prayer and fasting. I call upon all AFM pastors and members to commit to prayer and fasting during the month of January in 2019. While each congregation will decide on the prayer focus, my request is that you include the following prayer items.

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South Africa’s general elections that will determine who will become the next President of the country. The date for the coming elections is yet to be pronounced by the State President. We need to pray for peaceful and successful elections.

The AFM International will be convening its Triennial Conference in Nairobi (Kenya) on 19-24 August 2019. This Conference will, among other things, deliberate on the status of the AFM churches in all countries in which it has a presence. AFM member countries are at different stages of growth on their way to self-sustenance, self-governing and self-propagation. In many of these member churches there is a need for leadership development and the establishment of governance structures. A few of them have teething internal challenges. My request is that you pray for the successful Triennial Conference in Kenya and growth in all of the member churches.

Most of you are aware that one of the global events that I have been promoting is the 25th World Pentecostal Conference which will be convened in Calgary (Canada) on 27-30 August 2019. The AFM is an active member of the World Pentecostal Fellowship which is convening this Conference. It will be attended by representatives from Pentecostal Churches from all over the world and presented under the theme: “Spirit Now!” Without prayer our plans may not succeed. I am calling on our pastors and members to pray for the 25th World Pentecostal Conference in Canada.

“Lastly but not least, let us pray for the great harvest of souls in 2019 and for the transformation of our communities through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.”
GAME PLAN IMPLEMENTATION: AN INSPIRING STORY
Past. Johan Brits - Fokus Deo Assembly (Modimolle Limpopo)

At the General Business Meeting (GBM) that was held in September, there was one presentation that focused on successful implementation of the One AFM Game Plan drivers. This presentation is now accessible in an article format to show how the Game Plan drivers can be implemented on a practical level. Past. Johan Brits of the Fokus Deo assembly tells their inspiring story:

ADAPTING TO CHANGE: ON A MISSION FOR A NEW ENGLISH SERVICE

“We are the AGS/AFM in Modimolle Limpopo (situated in the middle of the town) and are part of the Familia Dei Network. We saw that there were many families moving into town from the township, leaving us with the following question: Where would they go to church? We saw that they weren’t going back to the township church, and realised we could be a home for them!

This mind shift came after the leadership did the “Walk Thru the Bible: High Impact Church” course. There we realised that it doesn’t matter what the size of your church is, what does matter is the impact your church has in your community. The leadership made the decision to embark on an English service at the beginning of 2017 and adopted the principles below:

• We focus on the middle-class person in town. We do not focus on the township, because there is already an AFM there which is a spiritual home for many believers in the township.
• We don’t provide transport from far locations - our focus is on our immediate community.
• It is not a multi-cultural service. We see it as a modern English service where we have all colours and cultures attending (there are even Germans who drive far to attend).
• We are in a modern community and have a modern service with multi-media. Services last no longer than 1 hour and 15 minutes.
• We do not have a band yet, but that is not seen as an obstacle. We build our songs on video (and the people love it!)
• The pastors work intentionally to break any racial issues and talk about it openly with the congregation.
• Fellowship is very important. We connect and build relationships over coffee/tea/biscuits after and between the services.

Our church leadership decided: it is not ‘us’ and ‘them’, but just US, the same congregation, just another service like the others but in English. We preach the same message in this English service as we do in the Afrikaans services.

“We preach the same message in this English service as we do in the Afrikaans services.”
To get this new English service started in our community we planned multiple actions and strategies. We started by printing flyers and giving them out everywhere – at schools and on the streets. We even asked our current members to take these flyers to their workplaces. We hosted a street braai in the main street of town and gave away 1,000 wors rolls for free! We told people about the new service, gave them flyers and prayed for them. I often went (and still go) to the main streets on a Saturday morning with my Bible. I talk to people, pray with them and invite them to church – through this I have led people to Christ, gained new members and baptised them! We do Church Campaigns (from Walk Thru the Bible) in our services – this grows the congregation through attendance and cell groups. You can go to their website: www.bible.org.za. We do projects that reach out to schools and businesses – with the intent to introduce them to the church.

With the help of a good friend, Pastor Elvis Mvulane we started the English service with 20 people. We now average 120 people per Sunday. It has now evolved to such an extent that we have a pastor (who lives in Alberton) that travels 180 km every Sunday to help with the preaching and house visitations. Four months after starting the English service we saw the need for an English Sunday School - and currently minister to 60 children on a Sunday. We now also employ someone who takes charge of our Sunday School. Our dream is to have 5,000 people in our English service! With 80 000 in the area we believe that this is a realistic target.”

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If you are looking for the direct connections between the story and the One AFM Game Plan drivers, I trust that the GBM presentation will clearly show and demonstrate these links: http://afm-agos.org/category/publications/pastoral-letters/
God calls and empowers people with the Holy Spirit, to be part of the extension and continuation of the ministry of His Son, Jesus Christ’s ministry on earth. As much as it is an honour to be called by God, it also implies a personal responsibility - to maintain the zeal of the original calling without falling short thereof because of burnout. God’s calling is never at the expense of anything within the totality of any one’s human existence.

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Although great progress has been made in attempts to understand the total existence of human beings, these efforts have only scratched the surface. Every person is created by Him in a unique way when He knitted them together for His glory and purpose (Psalm 139:13-14). In a sense, it is a challenge for human beings to understand exactly how wonderfully and complex God made them.

The wellness of a person is determined by not only one, but a combination of different areas and facets of life. Considering the wellness of pastors, at least 7 areas that are integrated and interwoven with one another is applicable and need to be focussed on in working towards pastoral wellness.

1. **Spiritual:** At the centre of any human’s wellness is their personal relationship with God. Living in a right relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ, and being led by His Spirit. From such a relationship one will experience a deep sense of purpose (calling) and meaning in life. The values, principles and behaviour of individuals are determined by their personal relationship with God. Growing stronger in your relationship with God is essential to any pastor’s wellness.

2. **Emotional:** Every human being has the inherent ability to experience a variety of emotions, e.g. happiness, sadness, joy, hope, stress, fear, anger, etc. Many feelings are attached to opposites causing variance in mood, effectiveness, productivity, perspectives, behaviour and coping with challenges. Growing in emotional intelligence (the ability to understand ourselves) and coping with life’s challenges, is vital to pastoral wellness.

3. **Intellectual:** Every person has been created with intellectual ability that needs to be developed through a lifelong process of acquiring...
knowledge and skills. This is a never-ending process as the world, knowledge and life itself change constantly. New ideas and problem-solving abilities are required to stay relevant and live well. Pastors need to be life-long learners in order to contribute to their own wellness.

4. Physical: God gives a human being one body that serves as a vehicle through which He displays the masterpiece He has created in that person. The body is like any vehicle, the better it is looked after, the longer it will serve one with excellence. Pastoral wellness can be enhanced in growing, adopting and maintaining healthy habits (e.g. routine medical check-ups, a balanced diet, exercise, rest, etc.). Destructive lifestyle patterns must be avoided at all costs.

5. Social: God created every individual to be interdependent with other human beings. Relationships with spouses, children, other family, etc. is very crucial with regard to a pastor’s wellness. Growing in the creation and maintenance of positive relationships enhances pastoral wellness. This includes occupational and institutional relationships too, e.g. with colleagues, volunteers, assembly members, the governing board, regional forum, national leadership and office.

6. Occupational: God created us for a specific purpose (calling). The wellness of pastors are influenced by the level of personal fulfilment they experience in what they are doing, what they are allowed to do and what they are empowered to do. Pastoral wellness can be enhanced by engagement in ministry according to the individual’s God-given talents and gifts, matched by a suitable working environment.

7. Financial: Our relationship to earthly possessions, money and the management of resources is a major topic addressed in the Bible. The Bible explains the effect thereof on the wellness of humans. Growing in the Biblical understanding of God’s provision, our relationship to it, as well as our responsibility towards managing God’s provision, will enhance pastoral wellness.

Pastoral wellness is complex and there is not a ‘quick fix’, one key or secret, that will cause a pastor’s wellness. Every pastor must consciously be aware of the fact that he/she is multifaceted. All areas require attention and determine wellness.

The prayer of John for Gaius emphasises that pastors should not only be well spiritually, but also in every other area of their lives (3 John 1:2). In Proverbs 4:23 Solomon emphasises that we have to take care of all areas of our life, as the totality and quality of our lives and ministry, is affected by it. It is only then, and then alone that pastors will be able to fulfil God’s calling for their lives through sustainable fruitfulness, season after season.

“...pastors will be able to fulfil God’s calling for their lives through sustainable fruitfulness, season after season.”
LEADING FROM THE HEART: HELENA JACKSON

Past. M.G. Mahlobo - President of the AFM of SA

The AFM Welfare Department has been a shining example of the AFM's Social Responsibility and Community Involvement since the unification of the AFM in 1996. Helena Jackson succeeded Past. Eben Muller as the Director of this Department. This is one of the Departments that requires prudence and a high degree of stewardship. Helena steered this Welfare ship until it hit the financial “ice berg”. She didn’t abandon the ship. She continued to do her best to keep it afloat. In the meantime, the National Leadership intervened with the aim of rescuing and turning the Department around. Helena remained optimistic that this ministry will continue. She has since resigned as the Director of the AFM Welfare Department. We will surely miss her passion and commitment to minister to the needy. I am, however, convinced that she will not sit back and fold her arms in the face of many social challenges that our country is facing. She will find a way of expressing her desire to care for people that are hurting.

On behalf of the AFM of SA, I would like to thank her for her valuable input in the Church’s Welfare Department. I pray that God will continue to shine His face upon her. Thank you very much Helena.

What prompted you to initially get involved with the work of the AFM Welfare Council?
I come from a Dutch Reformed Church background. Whilst studying my Social Work degree in Wellington in the Western Cape, I started attending services at the AFM Church - where I came to conversion in 1977, was baptized and baptized in the Holy Spirit. I met my husband during the same time and he was a member of the AFM Church. I graduated as a Registered Social Worker in 1978 and as all students applied for as many vacant posts as possible. Amongst other successful applications was the AFM Executive Welfare application - which I took as I knew my future with my husband would be in the AFM Church.

Looking back, what was the most exciting development you will never forget?
The decentralization of the Children's Division since 1999, which was once again groundbreaking progress in Child Care. It was this development which added the most value to the lives of our children, as well as to the standing of the AFM Executive Welfare Council in the Welfare Sector.

What will you miss about your role?
The opportunity to make a difference in the lives of the beneficiaries which I had worked with for 39 years and 6 months, as well as the opportunity to empower the staff - over the whole spectrum of the work of the AFM Executive Welfare Council.

What do you believe is the critical success factors for the future of the AFM Welfare Council?
Two very important factors WERE the driving force over especially the last 20 years. The one was for sure the buy-in from the AFM Assemblies who took co-responsibility for projects since the decentralization process. As well as the passion, faithfulness and hard work of the staff.
LEADING FROM THE HEART: HELENA JACKSON cont.

What is your final wish for the AFM Welfare Council?
That it would survive the current uncertainty in terms of its direction and fulfil its mission and vision as was intended from the beginning.

What do you plan to do after retirement?
I would like to remain involved in community projects and have already engaged in it. I am a “people’s person” and want to be of value for those in need. Other than that I want to travel, do gardening and spend as much time as possible with my family.

Any final advice to AFM assemblies regarding Community Involvement?
It is our responsibility as church to care of our communities as we are taught in the book of Acts. We have no choice and I would encourage assemblies to find the needs in your community and fill it, find the hurt and heal it. Become involved and serve those who cannot fend for themselves.

“...find the needs in your community and fill it, find the hurt and heal it. Become involved and serve those who cannot fend for themselves.”

CONCLUSION
We are nearing the end of 2018. It will be remembered as the year in which the AFM celebrated its 110th Anniversary. We are grateful to God for His providence. We also had a watershed 2018 General Business Meeting which took important resolutions regarding succession planning for the Office Bearers at the National level. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all, for your ministry inputs this year. Your ministry has contributed to the growth of the church. May you all have a blessed Christmas and a prosperous 2019.

Past. M.G. Mahlobo

Have a blessed Christmas and a prosperous 2019