

THE AFM OF SOUTH AFRICA

Pastoral Letter

• 2nd QUARTER 2019 •

THE APOSTOLIC FAITH MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA NATIONAL OFFICE

Building no. 14, Central Office Park, 257 Jean Avenue, Centurion,

Gauteng, South Africa

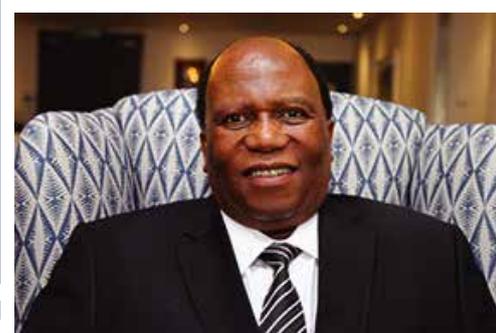
P.O. Box 9450, Centurion 0046

Tel: 27 12 644-0490

Fax: 27 12 644-0732/4

www.afm-ags.org

www.facebook.com/AFMOFSA/



IN THIS EDITION:

Pg 1-2 - GREETINGS

Pg 2-4 - PENTECOSTAL ROOTS: AS AT THE
BEGINNING

Pg 5-6 - LEADING FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Pg 6-8 - PROPOSED POLICY ON FOREIGN
MISSIONS

Pg 8 - CONCLUSION

Dear Colleague,

We are gearing up for our annual AFM National Conference – this year hosted in the beautiful city of Cape Town. The conference theme is: “Rooted in Christ” and the main text is Colossians 2:6-7:

Spiritual Fullness in Christ

⁶So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, ⁷rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

The theme is aimed at the empowerment of our members and pastors on how to deepen our relationship with Christ, in such a way that we remain strong in the face of many challenges that come our way. In Psalm 1:3, the Psalmist likens a blessed person to a fruitful tree planted by the stream of water. It is expected that children of God should be firmly anchored in Christ, that they should continually feed from God’s word, share Christ with others and keep their faith intact.

Apart from the inspirational evening services, there will also be PCD (Pastoral Continuous Development) sessions that will focus on those issues that are necessary for spiritual growth. Pastors as well as members are welcome to attend. It will cover “Prayer” presented by Suzette Hattingh, “Succession” by Dr. Anthony Jacobs and “Church Planting” by Danie Vermeulen. It will also include a session focused on the needs of Pastor’s wives.



To register online please visit the AFM website by using the following links:

https://afm.easychurch.co.za/?page_id=365

<http://afm-ags.org/category/events/>

I trust that this Pastoral Letter will bless you! We take a deeper look at our Pentecostal roots and what it truly means to be an Apostolic Church. We consider the issue of leading from the inside-out and present you with a reflection on one of Pastor Sam Adeyemi's teachings. Lastly, we share a discussion on the AFM's proposed Foreign Missions Policy.



“...rooted and built up in Him...” Col 2:6-7

ROOTED IN CHRIST
CAPE TOWN 2019

LOVING GOD SHARING CHRIST SERVING OTHERS GROWING TOGETHER

2019 AFM NATIONAL CONFERENCE
15 - 18 SEPTEMBER

Lighthouse Ministries,
275 Voortrekker Road,
Parow, Cape Town



Registration Fee: R350 (Registrations Close: 31 July) | Late Registration Fee: R400

For more information: <http://afm-ags.org/category/events/>

PENTECOSTAL ROOTS: AS AT THE BEGINNING

Dr. I.S. Burger – Former President of the AFM of SA - isakburger@icloud.com

Beginnings are important, especially as far as the church is concerned. The Bible often refers to beginnings. On Israel's journey to the Promised Land, they were cautioned never to forget their beginnings, how God brought them out of Egypt. When Peter had to explain to the leaders in Jerusalem why he baptized the household of Cornelius, he justified it by referring them to the beginning: "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning." (Acts 11:15). In other words, if God reckoned them

worthy and gave them the Holy Spirit in the same way as to us in the beginning, who am I to discriminate. On the other hand, when the Pharisees tried to justify divorce and even quoted Moses in this regard, Jesus went beyond Moses to "the beginning". He said: "From the beginning it was not so." (Mt. 19:8.)

"A visionary church will never lose hold of its origin. Roots are important."



PENTECOSTAL ROOTS: AS AT THE BEGINNING cont.

I am more and more aware of the healthy and wholesome tension between “where we come from” and “where we are going.” People often want to know from a leader (and rightly so): What is your vision, where do you see us in future? It is important to cast a vision, but it is equally important to remind those you are leading where they come from. A visionary church will never lose hold of its origin. Roots are important. It may be disastrous to continue building and then to forget about the foundations and the plan. Like in the Bible, how it was “at the beginning”, will indicate when one deviates from the God-given plan.

The Apostolic Faith Mission must never forget its origins. As part of the Pentecostal movement, Pentecostals constantly need to be reminded that Pentecost is a restoration of the church in Apostolic times (c. 100 AD). That is the New Testament Church, the Church at the beginning. Where almost the whole Pentecostal movement was called the “Apostolic Faith Mission” at the beginning of the 20th century. Our denomination is about the only one which retained the original name. And this name links us unequivocally to the church in Biblical times. Are we worthy of that name?

A true “Apostolic church” like the church “at the beginning”, is a church where the characteristic doctrines, religious experiences and basic practices will resemble the patterns of the early church and “the faith which was one delivered unto the saints.” (Jude 1:3) What are some of the most important characteristics?

(With acknowledgement to David A. Womack, “The Wellsprings of the Pentecostal Movement”):

1 – You will find it in the way they view the Scriptures. They will believe that the Old Testament prepares the way for the coming of the Messiah and they will interpret the Old Testament in the light of the teachings of the Apostles. They will believe in the New Testament as the only valid source of Christian doctrine, religious experience and principles of practice. They will interpret the Scriptures in a literal sense wherever the context is not obviously figurative or poetic, for the Bible is essentially a practical book – the divinely inspired Word of God to men.

2 – A true “Apostolic church” will believe every doctrine taught by the apostles and will reject any religious teaching not included in the New Testament. There can be no major doctrine today that was not also major for the Christians of the first century.

3 – A true “Apostolic church” will teach and actively seek to preserve amongst its members and adherents the religious experiences of the first-century church. First, salvation as a definite experience in which a person is convicted of sin, repents of that sin to God, accepts Jesus Christ as the Son of God, be cleansed through the atoning blood of Jesus and begins a life of holiness before God. Secondly, daily prayer and meditation on the Word of God will be at the order of the day. Believers will be baptized in water and will regularly participate in the Lord’s Supper. All believers will actively seek to receive the baptism in the Holy



PENTECOSTAL ROOTS: AS AT THE BEGINNING cont.

Spirit with its distinctive sign and spiritual experience of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives them utterance.

“All believers will actively seek to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit with its distinctive sign and spiritual experience of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives them utterance.”

4 – An “Apostolic church” will be characterized by the continuing manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit.

5 – Such a church will be intensely missional in concept and in action.

6 – The priesthood of all believers will be a daily reality as each one realizes that he/she has a ministry within the body of Christ.

7 – An “Apostolic church” transcends racial, cultural and language differences. This characteristic was obvious on the Day of Pentecost, in Azusa Street as well as with the start of the AFM in Doornfontein in 1908. Thank God, in April 1996 this characteristic again became evident with our unification!

8 – The Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ was a burning reality in the Early Church. It was the same with the start of the modern-day Pentecostal Movement. It was the theme of many songs and sermons. It was an urge to holy living. I doubt

whether this is still the case. We need to be reminded that Pentecostal people are people to whom the Second Coming is an every-day reality.

“The Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ was a burning reality in the Early Church.”

We, as Pentecostal pastors and members, need to constantly evaluate and test ourselves, our ministries, our church services and our local churches. The only way in which we can assure ourselves of our own apostolicity, is to measure and compare ourselves with the Christianity of the first century.

Does our theology match that of the New Testament, or have other ideas been added that cannot be found in the apostolic teaching? Do the doctrines of our church stand out obviously in the New Testament, or must they hang on slender little phrases removed from their context in Scripture? Do our religious experiences correspond to those of the early Christians, or is there only mental assent to the spiritual happenings of the first century? Have we, as Pentecostals in our claimed return to apostolic theology, reproduced the dedicated, evangelistic spirit of the early church? Has it produced a missions’ outreach with any possibility of carrying out the Great Commission of Christ?

God help us to be worthy of the name “Apostolic Faith Mission!”

LEADING FROM THE INSIDE OUT cont.

As leaders we should also model the transformation we are talking and preaching about. We can talk a lot about how people should live and what they should do and not do: But do we live it ourselves? Are we modelling our own teaching? Do we in fact walk our talk? In this context Adeyemi pointed to the example of Jesus and also to His example in leadership when it comes to how we want people to react to and treat us as leaders. He talked about a culture in his own country where leaders are respected and honoured to such an extent that people will make way for them to walk and would even be pushed aside so that they can enter a venue without restraint. Then he said: "This should not be so, if anyone should be pushed out of the way, push me. Do not push people on my behalf." Our leadership should be a servant leadership. Our attitude should not be to reign over, or command people, but rather to serve them through our leadership abilities.

"Our leadership should be a servant leadership."

Adeyemi ended his talk by reminding us that we should be reinventing ourselves over and over again. That we should continuously grow and develop. In character, personality and ability, we should not be the same person that we were a year ago.

We should "die" at one level to evolve to another. On a daily basis we as leaders create the organisational and general operational culture in our organisations and churches. How we see ourselves. How we speak and carry ourselves. Our attitude, lifestyle and behaviour. All these things that comes from the inside of a person, determines how we lead and how we influence those around us.

"All these things that comes from the inside of a person, determines how we lead and how we influence those around us."

[This article was not an attempt to summarise the session by Sam Adeyemi, but rather a reflection on what he said. - Henri Weideman]

PROPOSED POLICY ON FOREIGN MISSIONS

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

In its March 2019 meeting, the National Leadership Forum (NLF) accepted the AFM of SA's draft policy on Foreign Missions - which was drafted and presented by the AFM President. This policy will now be circularized to all church structures in terms of Clause 12.2 of the church's constitution for final approval by the NLF. The link to the policy is

included here for ease of reference:
<http://afm-ags.org/category/media/>

Historical Background

This was for the first time, since its unity in 1996, that the AFM accepted a policy on Foreign Missions. Prior to 1996 the former church leadership had a

PROPOSED POLICY ON FOREIGN MISSIONS cont.

department which catered for missions in South Africa and beyond. This department was closed down (mainly as a result of the decentralization of our church structures). Subsequent to this closure various foreign missions' projects run by local AFM assemblies and individual pastors emerged. In 2006 the NLF realized that there was no national, coordinating and representative missionary body in our church. After serious consideration of this lack, the NLF established a Missions Advisory Committee (MAC) which was led by the church's President at that time (Dr. Isak Burger). One of the key areas on which MAC focused was the development of a missions' strategic policy.

In 2011 MAC presented a more comprehensive and all-inclusive missions' strategy. The main objective of this strategy was to transform the AFM into an Apostolic movement or into a Missional movement. MAC's vision was named Vision 2020 and *Qalakabusha* (New beginning). It envisioned AFM as the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world, saturating our communities with the presence and principles of the Kingdom of God. This gave birth to the AFM's slogan: *"Wherever you find people you will find the AFM."*

Vision 2020 (*Qalakabusha*) eventually became part of the AFM's vision and the strategic implementation plan known as the "One AFM Game Plan." The church is currently at the implementation phase of the One AFM Game Plan. Foreign perspective is the missing part in the One AFM Game Plan. The focus is primarily internal. This necessitated the development of a policy on Foreign Missions for the AFM.



This policy includes the following five critical elements:

1. Coordination of the work currently done by the AFM of SA missions' agencies and local assemblies across the world;
2. Establishment of AFM churches in countries where it does not exist, especially in countries where there is no presence of any Evangelical or Pentecostal churches;
3. Involvement or the role of our local assemblies and our members in the diaspora;
4. Strengthening of church structures (policies), and
5. The development of church leadership.

Coordination of the work currently done

All missions' activities beyond our country need to be well coordinated. The office of the General Secretary will be responsible for this coordination.

Missions' activities where AFM does not exist

The policy urges the establishment of AFM churches where it has no presence at all. Due compliance with laws of the relevant countries should be adhered to. We must always bear in mind that the scope of the Great Commission in Matthew

PROPOSED POLICY ON FOREIGN MISSIONS cont.

28:18-20, goes beyond South Africa and covers the entire global community. The National Leadership Forum (NLF) must identify countries that are the least reached in terms of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. One indicator in this regard should be where there is no presence of Evangelical or Pentecostal churches.

“We must always bear in mind that the scope of the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20, goes beyond South Africa and covers the entire global community.”

Missions’ activities in countries where AFM already exist

The policy makes a plea that all agencies and individuals of the AFM of SA who are doing foreign missions in countries where the AFM church exists, need to take their existence into cognizance with a view of taking hands with them. This will avoid unnecessary duplication of AFM churches or competition of AFM churches in foreign countries.

The role of our local assemblies and members

There are many South African AFM members in the diaspora. Some have kept their membership with the AFM local assemblies here in South Africa. Local assemblies should make our members aware of their missional calling wherever they are deployed. They should be encouraged to live up to it.

Development of structures and church leadership

In many countries where the AFM has been established issues of governance have been neglected. Our missions’ agencies and local assemblies involved in foreign missions are requested to prioritize the issue of the development of church structures and leadership (governance).

NLF’s role

The NLF must mobilize and coordinate missional activities to reach out to countries that have not been reached with the Gospel of Jesus.

CONCLUSION

We are approaching our National Conference with an expecting heart! I really hope to see many of our Pastors, members and leaders there. May we always stay “Rooted in Christ” – loving God, sharing Christ, serving others and growing together.

God bless!

Past. M.G. Mahlobo
(President of the AFM of SA)

