

DECEMBER 1989

SERVING THE CHURCH IN AFRICA

AFRICA

ENTERPRISE

## UPDATE

**NEXT** year, the start to the final decade before we move into the year 2000, promises to be yet another 12 months of carrying out the Great Commission in every way we at Africa Enterprise can.

Our final planning is not yet complete, with the major meeting taking place only after the deadline for UPDATE's December copy.

However, we have mapped out a rough picture of what is in store for us and this shows — with more expected to be scheduled — that we are going to need both prayer, that we should do His will, and the financial support of our many friends.

In the meantime we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, and the peace He brought for us to share with everyone.

And AE team leader Michael Cassidy will continue with his on-going ministry in the written word, preparing another book.

Then, virtually from January, teams from AE will travel many thousands of kilometres throughout the continent, taking the Gospel to the cities and towns of Africa.

Our major 1990 Pan-African mission will be to Freetown, Sierra Leone (April 12 to 22), with two regional missions in the planning stages to Mbabane, Swaziland (March), and Gaborone, Botswana (November). We also hope to undertake a leadership mission to Nairobi, Kenya (October).

## Looking to a Blessed 1990



*Michael Cassidy and the entire AE team wish you a blessed Christmas and a New Year of God's Peace and Love.*

So far we have two of the popular ERA (Evangelism, Reconciliation, Action) missions set for 1990 — to Dundee in March and to Kloof in September — and others are being considered.

On the Lay Witness Mission front, we will open the year at the centre, with a Retreat for Lay Witnesses from February 16 to 18.

Missions to follow so far include those at Woodlands, Pietermaritzburg, March 16 to 18 (Methodist); Winterton, April 27 to 29 (Methodist/Anglican); St Barnabas, Durban, May 11 to 13 (Anglican); Colenso, May 18 to

20 (Methodist/Anglican); and Bergville, September 21 to 23 (Anglican/Methodist).

AE evangelists will also be moving out even more in a new thrust into evangelistic weekends at the invitation of congregations.

As far as informal training at the AE Centre is concerned we have several courses planned at this stage.

These include "Activating and Renewing your Church Council" and "Mobilising your Congregation for Mission" (see Page 6), "Counselling Skills for Lay People", "Spiritual Warfare", "The Spirituality of Change", "Improving your Preaching Skills and Effectiveness", "Word and Spirit

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All gifts and correspondence to:

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BOX 647

PIETERMARITZBURG 3200  
TELEPHONE 471911

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## From where I sit . . . by Michael Cassidy

Our Very Dear Friends,

### Christmas

As Christmas hoves into view, we marvel yet again at the mighty and matchless moment which brought the Saviour. Till then the world was befogged as to who God really was. To the Greeks He was the passionless Logos, beyond all joy and pain — calm, detached but keeping both planet and cosmos ticking. To the Hebrews He was the demanding Lord of Law and desert wanderings — an awesome Judge, much to be feared. Then Jesus came — O Blessed intervention. And the veil pulled back. In staggered wonder the world saw the Distant Come Near. It was Heaven stopping in unimaginable humility. And hope exploded on humankind as we found a God who loved us — much more: a friend of sinners, the answer to all, the opener by outpoured blood of the Way to Heaven.

Beloved friends, it is all really too much to take in. But let's try again this Christmas time as we register afresh that this is no "once-upon-a-time" bedtime tale but the very stuff of history and of fact. And that same Lord of history has said: "Go now into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" — which is what AE is all about.

### A warning

Last month I said that out of my journeying overseas I had a word of encouragement that the mounting volume of prayer there for South Africa told me God was still keeping open a slender corridor of time for repentance and radical change in this land. I also said that out of my Eastern Cape trip I had a word of warning. This came from Bishop Ernest Baartman, of the Methodist Church, and it heads our enclosed article on "Standing on Kingdom Ground". Please read and reflect on these thoughts.

### Missions Ministry

November and early December has been largely a time of local ministries to business people and to those on farms, in prisons, at a number of school prize-givings, at the Centre and in the townships. Amid the dreadful ongoing violence in local townships, we are proud of the initiative taken by Mbulelo Hina, Graeme Swan, Udo Krueger and Charles Pitchers to form the **Imbali Support Group** which has organised a number of whites to stay in black homes where people are at risk or under threat. Such a white presence seemingly discourages violence and we salute this courageous and costly initiative. Other endeavours have taken team members to Gaborone, Freetown and Mbabane in preparation for next year's evangelistic missions. Nairobi is shaping up, too. But **Mbabane** is our focus now and comes off in March. Please pray for these key capitals.

### 1990 — "Lengthen and Strengthen"

A mighty year is upon us. I believe that in 1990 the Lord may well be leading us to some significant expansion. One of our prayer partners last year gave what seemed to be a prophetic word that "1988 will be for AE a year of pruning, 1989 a year of consolidation and 1990 a year of major blossoming". Another wrote in today saying: "I believe the Lord wants AE to expand its ministry. As you step out in faith, He will increase your financial support." In token, she gave a wonderfully generous gift. This ties in with Is. 54: 2-3 which has come to us recently: "Enlarge the place of your tent and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out: hold not back, lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes."

Such words from prayer partners from the Word need to be taken and tested before the Lord. Please join us in this. To be sure, we could not face such challenges without you.

**Also please stand with us as we face the year-end with a long way to go to end in the black.** We hold to Phil. 4:91! And then pray with us as to all that is meant by "enlarge — stretch out — lengthen — strengthen".

### A Christmas Prayer

Let me leave you, beloved friends, with this Christmas prayer by Joyce Huggett:

*"Father, as I think of John the Baptist and his  
mission to herald your coming and to urge  
people to prepare their hearts to receive you,  
new longings stir within my heart:*

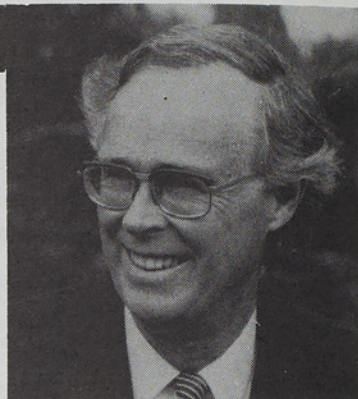
*make me watchful  
keep me faithful  
bring me to repentance  
give me love*

*that in love and with joy I may encounter you  
anew and welcome you afresh when  
Christmas Day dawns once more."*

All of us in AE send you warmest Christmas greetings and thank you for all you've meant to us in '89.

Yours sincerely in Christ

Michael





## FROM OUR TAPE LIBRARY

THE recent conference on "Christian Caring for the Sick, Dying and Grieving" proved to be a full-house gathering, with 120 people, some from as far away as Cape Town and Kenton-on-Sea in the Eastern Cape, indicating just how important the conference theme was considered.

We were inspired by the talks given by Rev Don Narraway, Dr Gerrit Ter Haar, Rev Quentin Smith and Dr David Walker — four Christians accustomed to dealing with the subject on an intimate basis.

The tapes of their addresses are now available.

Individual tapes R5 (R4 + 52c GST + 48c Postage and Packing).

### CHRISTIAN CARING FOR THE SICK, DYING AND GRIEVING

Cat No.	Title
2611	"The Role of the Church in the Hospital" — Dr David Walker.
2612	"A Perspective on Medical Care and Humanisation" — Dr Gerrit Ter Haar.
2613	"Healing the Dying" — Rev Don Narraway.
2614	"The Theology and Practice of Funerals" — Rev Quentin Smith.
2615	"Spiritual Gifts and Human Dilemmas in the Ministry of Healing" — Rev Quentin Smith.
2616	"Grief" — Rev Don Narraway.
2617	"The Good Samaritan" — Rev Kingsley Dale.
	"Listening and Needs" — Dr Gerrit Ter Haar.

### OTHER:

Cat No.	Title
2618 (A)	Mzuzu mission business lunch: "Cornelius", Acts 10 — Abiel Thipanyane.
2618 (B)	"The Drama of Evangelism" — Philemon and Onesimus" — Dr Ray Bakke (morning devotion).

PLEASE NOTE: As from January, 1990, the price of tapes will be R6 (R5 + 65c GST + 35c packaging and postage). We regret that this price hike is necessary because of a 22% increase in the price of blank tapes.

### ORDER FORM — CASH WITH ORDER PLEASE

QTY	CAT No.	COST
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Name .....		
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## AE LOOKS TO A BLESSED 1990 . . .

### • From page 1

Conference: Confronting Political Injustice", "Training the Black Evangelist" and "Grace and Faith".

The 1990 formal training schedule sees three courses towards the Diploma in Theology being offered at the AE Centre — "Doctrine II" (April 17 to 30), "Mission and Evangelistic Methods in Practice" (May 21 to June 22) and "New Testament III" (August 20 to September 5).

Our extension courses, of course, will continue to be taken to congregations anywhere who want training in a ministry like evangelism, activating and renewing a church council, small group ministries, discipleship and church growth.

The vital Bridge Building Encounters, through which young people of all races learn to live and work and have fellowship together, will be held from April 5 to 12, June 21 to 27 and September 22 to 28, with a cross-cultural camp being run from December 10 to 16.

We are also looking at extending our Bonginkosi programme, aimed at enriching the lives of disadvantaged children, throughout South Africa.

Another of the popular Christian Arts Weekend series will be held at the AE Centre from July 27 to 29.

During the year, too, AE leaders will be standing by, if needed, to help the Church in its preparation work towards a major conference on "The Local Church as Agent for Change", scheduled for December 4 to 8.

So, even from the preliminary schedule, it seems 1990 will be a busy year for Africa Enterprise.

### NEW LIFE PROGRAMME

Our half-hour magazine programme presented by Jack Garratt is on the air twice weekly on Trans World Radio, 1170 khz medium wave. Tune in at:

9.00 p.m. on Fridays —	focus on Pan-African Missions
9.30 p.m. on Sundays —	focus on ERA Missions

## SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT COURSE BEING CONSIDERED FOR 1991

AFRICA ENTERPRISE is working in collaboration with World Vision, local congregations and other Christian organisations towards the offering in 1991 of a Diploma in Social Empowerment and Development.

This diploma will equip local church leaders and personnel in Christian relief and development organisations in the transformation of poverty-dominated environments to social and economic wholeness.

### EVANGELISM, SOCIAL ACTION COSTLY, SAYS STOTT

BOTH evangelism and social action are costly, mainly because both the Gospel of Christ and moral standards of Christ are unpopular and unfashionable. We have to be willing, like Jesus, to identify with those whom society rejects — the misfits and the dropouts, the disadvantaged and the oppressed — and share their pain and their sense of rejection. This is part of what it means to walk the way of the Cross: to be willing to suffer with the people we seek to serve.

— JOHN STOTT

### ZAMBIAN PM "ENCOURAGED" BY CHRISTIAN MESSAGE

THE Prime Minister of Zambia, General M.N. Masheke, has written to Africa Enterprise team leader Michael Cassidy expressing his gratitude for Michael's encouragement for his leadership of the people of Zambia.

In his letter, Gen Masheke said he found the information about the Christian faith, sent to him by Michael, "very helpful and a great blessing to myself".

"May God bless you and your colleagues and give you guidance and strength to expand your religious mission in Africa," he said.

Africa Enterprise, working with local churches, conducted the major 1989 Pan-African "Lusaka Back to God" mission in the Zambian capital in June.



# COURSES ON CHRISTIAN ACTIVATION OPEN INFORMAL TRAINING YEAR

TWO courses aimed at inspiring the local church council and congregation to mission share the first course weekend at the AE Centre, from February 9 to 11, next year.

These are:

- "Activating and Renewing your Church Council".
- "Mobilising your Congregation for Mission".

The first asks and helps supply the answers to questions like: Who am I? (understanding your own qualities). Who are we? (an analysis of your congregation's ministries, environment and opportunities). What is the minister's role? What is the church? (its role and purpose). What is leadership? What is ministry?

It then offers models of ministry, gifting, mobilising laity, structure, goals and planning.

The second course — offered as an option at the centre on the same day — looks at motivating and understanding of the role of the church and mission.

It also presents models of how this can be achieved.

The cost of each course will be R65,20, which includes dormitory accommodation, meals and teas.

For further information, phone Maria at the AE Centre, 0331-471911. To book, please complete the registration form below and post, including a registration fee of R10 per person, to Africa Enterprise, Box 647, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

February 9 to 11: (1) "Activating and Renewing your Church Council".  
(2) "Mobilising your Congregation for Mission".  
April 27 to 30: "Counselling Skills for Lay People".  
May 28 to June 1: "Spiritual Warfare", by Ed Murphy.

## REGISTRATION FOR COURSES

A REGISTRATION FEE OF R10 PER PERSON MUST ACCOMPANY FORM:

- ☐ "Activating and Renewing your Church Council".
- ☐ "Mobilising your Congregation for Mission".

Total

Name

Address

Code

Telephone

Do you need accommodation? YES ☐ NO ☐  
A place on a course cannot be guaranteed and all registrations have to be made in advance.

THE IDEAL GIFT  
FOR ANYONE YOU REALLY CARE ABOUT

## A MICHAEL CASSIDY BOOK

### "THE PASSING SUMMER"

a South African pilgrimage in the politics of love  
Michael Cassidy's very latest success  
(R40, including Study Guide, GST, postage and packing)

### "BURSTING THE WINESKINS"

Michael Cassidy's own testimony  
(R14, including GST, postage and packing)

### "CHASING THE WIND"

for those seeking a living faith  
(R14, including GST, postage and packing)

Available direct from Africa Enterprise, Box 647, Pietermaritzburg, 3200

## GIFTS TO AFRICA ENTERPRISE

ALL AE friends are requested to address donations and gifts to Africa Enterprise and not to individuals. However, if you wish your donation to go towards the financial support of an individual at AE this should be clearly stated.

## SUPPORT THE AFRICA ENTERPRISE MINISTRY WITH YOUR PRAYERS AND GIFTS

Dear A.E. Team,

Yes, I would like to support your ministry of evangelism and reconciliation through prayer and the enclosed gift of:

From:

Rev Dr Mr Mrs Miss

Address

Postal Code

Make use of our Freepost system for sending donations to us. This takes the place of the old "reply paid" envelopes and saves AE many thousands of rands annually. Post your donation, in an UNSTAMPED envelope, to:

AFRICA ENTERPRISE,  
FREEPOST SERVICE NTL 22  
3200 PIETERMARITZBURG

However, a supply of reply-paid envelopes will be made available on request.





# STANDING ON KINGDOM GROUND



A call to the South African Church by **MICHAEL CASSIDY**

While in the Eastern Cape recently I spent time with several Church leaders including Methodist Bishop Ernest Baartman. Bishop Baartman, who ministers in Mdantsane and who is deep in the South African struggle, issued this warning and it is one with which I deeply concur: "We know what happened when the Dutch Reformed Church became the National Party at Prayer and theology was tied to a political movement and the legitimising of everything it did. Likewise now, as we labour for liberation, we dare not let the Church become uncritically identified with any political movement. We must be the conscience of the nation and stand for God's justice. We dare not become so awe-struck with political leaders, black or white, that we don't challenge them with the Gospel."

I agree. Heartily. While we need as believers to be deeply caught up in the processes of working for a new day of **freedom, justice and equity for all**, we dare not fall prey to the danger of having the Church co-opted uncritically into any political movements, though clearly the Church should be engaged in the cause of justice and supportive where conscience and creed allow for liberation movements. What we can do without in this country — and should actively resist — is a left-wing carbon copy political theology which is the flip side of a right-wing apartheid theology and, therefore, as much a political lackey as apartheid theology ever was.

## Cleaving to the Faith

In all the intoxication of some first glimpses of change on the horizon, the Christian Church of this land must maintain its spiritual equilibrium, cleave to "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude vs. 3) and resist marriage to the spirits of this generation lest we find ourselves widowed in the next.

The point is that while the biblical commitment to justice must put the Church on the side of those who are the victims at this time of injustice and oppression, we dare not allow any absolute endorsement of the whole agenda or methodology of any political grouping. The Church is not co-optable or recruitable by anyone because it is meant already to have been co-opted and recruited by Jesus Christ, who is Lord (Greek: Kyrios) and supreme authority in the universe. However much we fail to heed this word, and we do, thereby falling into ideological or political captivity, God is clear and unequivocal: "**You shall have no other gods beside me.**" (Ex. 20:3). Says the Lord: "I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine."

The New Testament is equally plain: "You are not your own: You were bought with a price." (1 Cor. 6:19). "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people." (1 Pet. 2:9).

Belonging to the Lord and being His, we in the Church recognise neither our own ultimate autonomy nor that of any political movements. Rather are we required to face Scripture's call to both ourselves and all secular political movements on left, right or centre to bow the knee to the One who is King and Lord over all, even Jesus.

## Church Leaders

It is such instincts which produced Bishop Baartman's warning at the beginning of this article and were well embraced when Archbishop Hurley and Bishop Michael Nuttall refused recently to march behind or under the Communist flag.

Said Bishop Nuttall: "Political organisations (in the Durban march) discovered once again that they cannot assume uncritical support from the Church even when in principle their cause may be just." Thus, while Christians can and should wholeheartedly and with integrity embrace every just cause, they will always seek to do so in a manner compatible with the Gospel and under a primary allegiance to Jesus Christ.

Church leader Peter Storey observed earlier this year that "the people in the struggle in South Africa look to the Church to be the Church and not an appendage to some political movement".

In the words of Presiding Bishop Mmutlanyane Mogoba at the recent Methodist Conference: "Let the Church be the conscience of the nation."

In a sense, all we are doing is facing the absoluteness of Jesus' claims as verbalised once by the great Dutch theologian, Abraham Kuyper: "There is not an inch of any sphere of life over which Christ the Lord does not say 'Mine'." Not one corner of human endeavour — not personal, not social, not political — is exempted from the Crown rights and rule of our King.

## Obedience to the Total Task of Mission

The absolute and Kingdom claims of Jesus also require of the Church full obedience to the total task of mission. That means we may not withdraw into an apolitical spirituality (which leaves the public arena to the powers of darkness), nor may we go to the other extreme of so politicising the Gospel and reinterpreting the Church's total task of mission in political categories that we end up propagating "Another Gospel" (cf. Gal. 1:6).

Therefore, as the Kingly claims of Jesus pull us from impractical, abstract and cerebral theologising — such as the liberation theologians so justifiably denounce — so they also pull us into practical obedience on all fronts of Christian mission, not just political engagement. While we may and should campaign for justice and human rights — and we should work out our faith in acts of compassion, care, or even protest — we will nevertheless challenge the false autonomy of both political or even religious man, if or when they resist Jesus' Kingdom call to repent, bow the knee and believe.

The tragedy in South Africa on the white side is that the valid fear of an overpoliticised Gospel has all too often been used as an invalid pretext to avoid political engagement and foster apathy, paralysis, cop-outs and the aiding and abetting of ongoing white oppression and domination. However, standing on Kingdom Ground will have none of that and will commit us assuredly to the struggle for a new day. In fact, Kingdom concerns would call us into supportive identification with the best and noblest in political movements for change while facing us with the uncomfortable call to prophetic challenge of whatever is unworthy or ungodly.

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## The Kingdom Way not a Middle Way

This underlines that the Kingdom Way is not a wishy-washy middle position of neutrality. Anathema on that! When Jesus called left-wing Simon, the revolutionary zealot, and Matthew, the right-wing government department man, into his apostolic band, he wasn't calling them to middle ground and a Third Way, but to **Kingdom ground** and the **ONLY WAY**, where the Kingdom is the shalom way of "God-ordered relationship". But Kingdom ground transcends all earthly allegiances and patterns of relating. It is what led the early believers to be called Christians because they did not fit the Jew/Gentile categories of their day.

The thing is that **God's Kingdom ground is spiritually, socially and politically different** from man's right, left or middle political ground. This is because the Kingdom's rules are the Bible's. Therefore, in their commitments, Kingdom people will feel free to embrace from left, right or centre whatever social truths are compatible with Scripture. At Point A, therefore, the Kingdom will make us radical and at Point B conservative. This will confuse the secular mind. No matter.

Thus, for example, our "Kingdom Ground" posture in South Africa might affirm the importance of releasing political detainees, unbanning liberation movements, working for majority rule, embracing a mixed or partially socialised economy, participating in protest marches, etc. etc., all of which is viewed by South African categories as leftist. Yet it is in agreement with Scripture's concerns for justice, equity and the cause of the poor and oppressed. On the other hand, holding to the spirit of reasonableness ("Come, now, let us reason together") or reconciliation ("Go, first be reconciled") are currently seen as **centrist** in nature. But the Bible affirms the spirit of reconciliation and reason and so endorses that item of so-called centrist creed. Alternatively, if a Kingdom person's pessimism about human nature ("The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked") pushes him or her to reject liberal utopianism and embrace the view that massive power, with all its corrupting potential, should be decentralised away from the centre, that might seem to some to belong to the vocabulary and conviction of the political conservative.

## Polar Truth

In a sense, with political as with theological truth, our inclinations are to inhabit one or the other of the polar regions of truth when, in fact, a true commitment to truth requires straddling not the middle ground but both poles simultaneously.

Said the great Charles Simeon of Cambridge: "The truth is not on the middle and not in one extreme but in both extremes."

Thus Martin Luther King's Gospel commitments made him struggle in Montgomery in December, 1955, with being both "militant and moderate" at the same time. "I decided", he wrote, "to face the challenge head on and attempt to combine two apparent irreconcilables." The way through, he said, lay in actions "balanced with a strong affirmation of the Christian doctrine of love".

## Distinctives

All of which bring us to something vital. While the Church may endorse and embrace Truth wherever it is found in the spectrum of political postures, nevertheless it should also be manifest that our Kingdom posture will call for things which neither the left, right nor centre of man's politics would dream of. Not left, right or centre preaches the priority of prayer, the place of forgiveness or the primacy of love for all, as Martin Luther King affirmed — regardless of where they are in the political spectrum. And including one's enemy!

Such Kingdom commitments, as we said, condemn an uninvolved complacency and land one not in a safe, unengaged, neutral place between the poles but on a path of engagement which cuts diagonally across left, centre and right, thereby putting the believer actively, compassionately and prophetically into the danger zones of each grouping. This may result in the Christian getting the worst of all worlds. If so, the Cross — for which both oppressor and oppressed, both rich and poor were responsible — will remind us we face no new thing.

In short, the Kingdom, and those who have been apprehended by its King, have certain distinctive ways which, by and large, are anathema to the political world. So be it. We must seek to stick to St Paul's exhortation: "Do not allow the world to squeeze you into its mould." (Rom. 12:2, J.B. Phillips).

## Captivity

That said, we dare not deny that most of us with such concerns have, in fact, succumbed to being squeezed in some measure or other into the world's mould and have fallen prey to the clutches of various political ideologies, whether left, right or centre. As I wrote in **The Passing Summer** (p. 248): "We all read the Bible as coloured by our own personal and historical presuppositions . . . Those influences make each of us come to the biblical text with our own, sometimes massive, distortions." In Australia in 1986, in the annual Bible Society Lecture there, I put it this way: "Clearly most people will read their Bibles from where they stand in the economic structure." I noted how we all function almost unavoidably with some measure of ideological enslavement, usually due to "vested self-interest", and are accordingly "all living with some measure of self-deception".

However, this awareness should drive us to seek deliverance from that enslavement by reading the whole Word of God in the context of the whole Body of Christ and thereby allowing not only Word and Spirit but other believers of different postures to help us to greater freedom, relevance and Kingdom engagement.

## Righteousness

We will also call ourselves and all others, wherever they are in the spectrum, to Kingdom righteousness. Says Carl Ellis, a black American activist: "Liberation is insufficient if it is not accompanied by a quest for godliness in every area of life. Liberation alone will lead to self-oppression because a liberated ungodliness will always do its own thing and that thing is sure to bring death." By contrast, says the Scriptures: "Righteousness exalts a nation." (Prov. 14:34).

This is part of the distinctive message which South African Christians must keep declaring to all as we move agonisingly, and midst struggle, towards a new day.

## Kingdom Commitments

To conclude. Standing on Kingdom Ground commits us to Jesus as Lord and supreme authority. It commits us to His Word and Way in all actions. It commits us to worship, prayer and fasting. It commits us to evangelism and witness that sinners might receive forgiveness, the gift of the Spirit and eternal life. It commits us to justice, practical care and agape love. It commits us, under Christ's Lordship, to the cause of the poor and oppressed and forbids neutrality at that point. Standing on Kingdom Ground commits us socio-politically to bringing down unjust structures. It commits us to labour in the power of the Spirit (Luke 4:18) that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

One final thing. Standing on Kingdom Ground reminds us that man's kingdoms, whether white, black or brown, whether UP, NP, DP, ANC or PAC, will rise, be shaken and fall. But the Word and Kingdom of our God and of His Christ "cannot be shaken" (Heb. 12:28) and will abide for ever.