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## Church News, Antipas Church Vereeniging

(Received on 17 April 2011)



Antipas Vereeniging was founded in July 1984 with Nico van der Walt as the first pastor. When he left for Pretoria in 1999, Johannes de Koning was pastor until 2003. In January 2005 Kobus van der Walt and his wife Jeanne joined our congregation.

Doctrines of Grace – he had to look for people to preach to!! Kobus thanks the Lord that he is a NON-dispensationalist and a firm believer in the Doctrines of Grace even though the road is tough!



Kobus & Jeanne van der Walt

The 'remnant' that stayed behind in Antipas Vereeniging, experienced trauma on various levels but the Lord is faithful and He carried us through with His grace and patience. He forgave us for what we did wrong during the whole process and blessed us with healing. We realize that we are now experiencing a season of restoration and we are careful not to become complacent about our situation for that might cause us to become stagnant. How blessed we are to experience joint responsibility and accountability towards one another on a completely new level! We are one of the few – if not only – congregations that sees ALL brothers and sisters when we spend precious time in prayer and with God's Word every Sunday and even on Wednesday evenings. There is the odd day when job responsibilities and holidays prevent a 100% attendance.

Three years after Kobus was ordained as pastor, the congregation experienced a painful and traumatic split. Within the following two years a lot of the congregation left. Currently our congregation consists of only 14 members of whom the oldest is 'Tannie Freda', almost 83 and the youngest is 25. Our pianist, 'Tannie Louie' turns 82 in June. There are 4 children in the congregation: 2 toddlers and two are in primary school.

It is however not always easy to be such a small congregation. There are a few disadvantages:

- People who are searching for a new congregation, find attending such a small one quite intimidating.
- It is definitely not easy for Kobus to preach to so few Sunday after Sunday. He is however convinced that this is where God wants him at present and he does it conscientiously and with joy each week.
- Being such a small congregation places enormous financial pressure on the members to meet their obligations regarding Kobus and Jeanne as well as our social responsibilities both in the church and outside the congregation.

What is astounding is that this congregation reaches people, especially Afrikaans speaking people, not only in South Africa but throughout the world!



Tannie Fréda Schnetler

You might be gasping for air and wonder if such a small band of believers has any right to exist as a congregation. We can assure you, that we do! God has taught us that He is not all that interested in vast numbers but He is interested in the hearts of His disciples! (Matthew 18: 12-13). On looking back at the last few years, we only want to thank and praise our Heavenly Father for keeping us safe through our trauma and trials. We actually thank Him for enabling us to suffer because we would not have learnt otherwise.

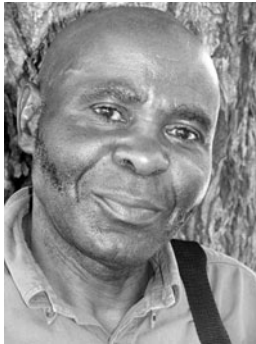


Lindi & Sonja Oosthuizen, Tannie Louie Oosthuizen and Jeanne van der Walt

When A.W. Pink was an Armenian and Dispensationalist, he preached to 3000 people every Sunday. After becoming convinced of the Doctrines of Grace, yet remaining a Dispensationalist, the attendance of his services dropped to 300 people. As soon as he became a NON-dispensationalist – remaining a firm believer in the

Activities:

- Kobus is busy with the course "Growing Kids God's Way" which he is going to present as ministry tool in our community. Churches that are located near Vereeniging can contact him as he is willing to present this 18 week course for their church.
- The sermon is translated for Hassam Abdul – as well as English speaking guests – every Sunday. Witnessing the spiritual growth in this Malawian resident's life is truly wonderful! He soaks up the Word of God like a sponge. Isn't God awesome!!!
- Before each sermon a Bible lesson is given to the children.
- Bible Studies:
  - The Way of Purity by Mike Cleveland is held for the men on Tuesday mornings.
  - A Quest for More by Paul Tripp; The Excellent Wife by Martha Peace and Relationships – A Mess Worth Making by Timothy Lane & Paul Tripp are the three books that are discussed in Bible Studies held for the women of the congregation. All three Bible Studies are well attended by women from outside the congregation.
- Promises in the book of John are identified and discussed on Wednesday evenings when the congregation comes together.



Hassam Abdul



Johan & Euaenie Jacobs

The prayer meetings and the Bible Study for the congregation are attended by all except for Tannie Freda for whom it is a little too difficult.

- We also have a blog (diewaarheidmaakvry.blogspot.com) and it is well worth visiting

this blog where you will be able to find weekly Afrikaans sermons. Interesting information: there are many regular weekly readers from countries such as: South Africa, Namibia, Taiwan, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the Russian Federation, Australia, Iceland, the Netherlands, Japan, United Arab Emirates, Finland, Canada, Norway, Germany, Taiwan, Oman, Zambia, Suriname, India, Haiti and France! Isn't it mind boggling that you find Afrikaans speaking people in all these places? And they all hunger for the TRUTH!



"The Du Toit's"  
Marius, Jonathan, Cherise, Charlene, Arlene & Shi-Anne

We are constantly waiting on the Lord about the road that the congregation has to follow. One of the things that we are currently praying about is changing the name of the congregation. We are also praying for guidance regarding the start of English services on Sunday evenings.

Each member was asked to summarize the way they see the congregation. This is what each person came up with:

- Trudie and Riaan: "Practical preaching and unity"
- Tannie Louie: "Stickability"
- Charlene: "Dedication"
- Tannie Freda: "I learn so much!"
- Ruth (one of our regular guests): "Nurture. It's like when you replant small plants. These plants need soil that has been prepared as well as nurture. This is what happens in this congregation".
- Sonja: "A spiritual home".
- Eugenie: "A safe haven".
- Johan and Marius: "Unity".
- Hugo: "Truth".
- Wendy-Leigh: "Family".
- Kobus: "Willing to serve and accountability".

Prayer requests:

- Financial burden
- New members
- Blessing on outreach and preaching
- Spiritual maintenance of members
- Possible English services
- Possible name change
- Direction the congregation and Kobus must follow



Hugo & Wendy-leigh van der Walt



Riaan & Trudie Bothma