

Dean's Letter, 18 June 2017

Dear Cathedral family

We are at last in the wonderful "green" season, the Sundays after Pentecost and Trinity, the season of life and growth and Christian discipleship. Our liturgical colour is green, a rich, strong colour of growing plants and trees and leaves. A big tree with its roots deep in the earth has taken years to reach maturity. Christian discipleship – our walk with Christ – is our daily walk, and it is also the journey of a lifetime. In the words of Psalm 1: "Happy are those ... whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law they meditate day and night. They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper." (Psalm 1:1-3, NRSV)

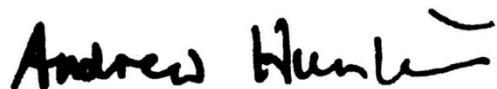
Today is Fathers' Day, and we congratulate all fathers, grandfathers, and great-grandfathers, and all god-fathers, as well as those who act as fathers or parents to young people around them. We thank God for our families. It is a sad reality of our society that many children grow up with absent fathers; many families have no men present; many children do not know what it is like to have the love and guidance and leadership and example of their father. Single parents, whether male or female, do their best under difficult circumstances, and succeed in raising wonderful children and young people. And where would we be without our grandparents, who often hold families together?

Today is also Youth Sunday, being the Sunday closest to Youth Day (June 16th). It is a weekend of energy and excitement – K-Day, involving St Andrew's, DSG and Kingswood; our Diocesan Youth Guild conference at Stutterheim, which is being attended by Revd Luthando Madiba; the St Bernard Mizeki Men's Guild celebrations and commemorations which are taking place at St Philip's, Grahamstown, and concluding today (Sunday), led by our Sub Dean in his capacity as Archdeacon of Grahamstown; the recent achievements of a large number of our junior choristers.

June 16th, 1976, was the start of what became known as the Soweto uprisings. Led very largely by high school pupils, they had a profound impact on the life of our country. We are a country with a very high percentage of our population under 25 years old. We invest a huge amount of our resources into the care and education of our youngsters – rightly so. Our young people are the future – and at the same time need nurturing and mentoring by wise, mature adults. Parents, teachers, others in the extended family and community, all have a vital role to play.

On a personal note, I give thanks for my godmother, Nola Houston, in Stellenbosch, who turned 102 earlier this year! Sadly, she is nearing her end. She has been such a key influence in my life over many years: a source of encouragement and love, a family friend, a wonderful example. I thank God for her.

My love to you all

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Hunter". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.