

Dean's Letter, 13 August 2017

Dear Cathedral family

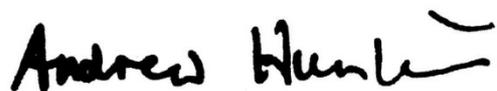
All going well, Revd Claire and I should be returning from Cape Town tomorrow (Monday), after a series of engagements there, both personal and work/church-related, over these past few days. I am sorry to be missing the Sunday when two of our COTT students are preaching! We thank God for their ministry and their time amongst us as part of their formation and training. And my sincere thanks to our Sub Dean, Archdeacon Mzinzi Dyantyi, for leading three out of the four Cathedral services today, in our absence.

At the most recent meeting of the Cathedral PCC, the churchwardens were asked to address the Cathedral congregations on our financial picture. We are trying to do this each month, so that people are aware of the situation. As you will hear, July & March have been the only months this year when the amount of money given has met (and exceeded) the amount pledged (promised). In all our other months, the amount given has been well below the amount promised. Our expenses as the Cathedral are well in hand. We are watching carefully what is spent and are under budget in a number of areas. The problem is that our income is down. We have been eating into Cathedral reserves in order to pay salaries, keep up with monthly financial commitments, and do essential maintenance. This is not sustainable. I think that this is part of the economic downturn that our town, and SA, is facing. But to what extent is our giving also a sign of the life of the church? A barometer or indicator of our spiritual health? I look around at the life of the Cathedral and see and experience a wonderful, happy, energised community. But the finances, and drop in financial support, are both worrying and puzzling. What is going on?

A couple of years ago, PCC decided to acknowledge, at every Annual Vestry, all bequests received in the past year. We did this in 2017 and we shall do so again in 2018. Nevertheless, we wish at this time to thank and acknowledge very generous bequests received from the estates of the late Desmond Eve, Eleanor Barker, Beth Dickerson, and David Hodgson. Their generosity has enabled us to tackle some big projects in recent weeks. Thank you to them, and their families. And we ask all Cathedral parishioners to consider leaving a bequest to the Cathedral, in your will. It can make a tremendous difference.

The annual Diocesan Family Day is being held at the end of August. This is a time when the diocese comes together for worship, celebration, and fundraising. Given the financial crunch that many parishes are experiencing, and the consequent gap in monthly giving to the diocese, this annual fundraising is an essential part of the life of this diocese, and a number of others in the Province. Let's hold Archdeacon Mzinzi in our love and prayers as he carries the major load in the planning of the weekend.

My love to you all

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Andrew Hunt". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.