

Dean's Letter, 24 September 2017

Dear Cathedral family

Today marks the 25th anniversary of the ordination of women to the priesthood, within the Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA). Some will remember that it was Grahamstown that led the way, with the ordination to the priesthood of Nancy Charton, Bride Dickson and Sue Groves, all those years ago. What a moment it was! Since then, the ministry of women in the sanctuary and in the pulpit is part of life. We would be the poorer without the ministry of our women clergy and bishops.

Obviously I have a personal stake in all this! Claire and I got married in the same year (1992) that Provincial Synod gave its approval to the ordination of women to the priesthood. At that time I was rector of Kaya Mandi, and she joined me in Mbekweni (near Paarl), where the rectory was situated. We moved to the Church of the Resurrection, Bonteheuwel, at the start of 1994; Claire was eventually made deacon in March 1994 and ordained priest in December of that year (while pregnant with Rachel!) We ministered in Bonteheuwel as a clergy couple for over eight years, before moving to Hout Bay, and thence to Grahamstown. It has been an exciting, deeply enriching and fulfilling journey together, as we have shared life, marriage, children, and ministry. I thank God for her! Our prayer and hope is that we shall be able to continue in shared ministry in the years to come. We are deeply appreciative to the Cathedral community, for our life here with you all. You are our family and our "home away from home", and you have embraced us and our children, so wonderfully. Thank you.

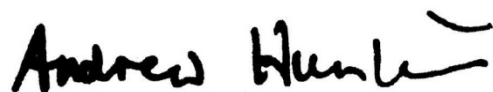
Over the years, artists, poets and musicians have provided a rich and vital dimension to our shared life as community, and our witness as the church. We are blessed to live in a place such as Grahamstown, with its emphasis on the arts, music, drama, creativity. In particular, here at the Cathedral, PCC wishes to recognise the work and witness of Chris Mann and Julia Skeen, by designating them as "Honorary Artists in Residence, Cathedral of St Michael & St George, Grahamstown". In so doing, we affirm them and thank God for their gifts and all that they offer, and the window they open for us into the love and light of God.

As Chris noted, this designation will help them enormously when they offer their work to other churches, and will perhaps encourage their parish councils to appoint their own artists in residence, in particular younger ones, and thereby enlist further energy and creativity in the work of spreading the gospel.

We shall mark their designation at the service of Choral Evensong today. Please join us for this service.

Please hold the diocese of Mthatha in prayer, this week, as the Bishops of our Province meet to elect a new bishop for that diocese.

My love to you all

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