

Dean's Letter, 15 July 2018

Dear Cathedral family

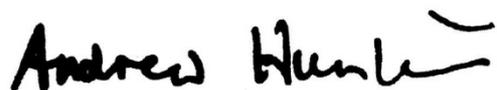
I spent some time, this past week, thinking and reflecting on Spiritfest and the National Arts Festival, and have also spoken with others about their experiences. Personally speaking, it has been a very happy Festival, with an excellent Spiritfest programme, wonderful acts of worship, and some outstanding shows and events in the context of the Festival. The weather played along, and we have been assured by the EC provincial government that the Festival is here to stay in Makhanda, in the years to come! Which is very good news.

The one big disappointment was the non-arrival of Cameron Luke, our Director-designate of Music, due to his visa application having been refused. We are at a loss for words; it has been immensely frustrating for us all, and for Cameron. Increasingly, it has felt that the Cathedral – and Cameron – are the soccer ball and the various government departments are the players. We have been sent from one department to another, given a series of answers by various people, who contradict one another, tell us different things, and refer us elsewhere. To summarise - and I am grateful to Maggy Clarke for her succinct outline of the process thus far - Cameron has got his SAQA. The post of Director of Music has been advertised and re-advertised, following the requirements from the Department of Labour, and it is established there are no SA applicants suitable and willing to fill it. Cameron then sent in his visa application to the SA High Commission in London. It was refused on the grounds that he did not include a certificate from the Department of Labour – which, we understand, should have been sent through to the High Commission by the Department. BUT Chantel has recently been informed by the Dept of Labour that they do not deal with such posts, as the post is arts-related, and should be dealt with by the Dept of Home Affairs. We have also approached the Dept of Home Affairs, both here in Makhanda and in East London. I should add that we, with Cameron, have been engaged in the visa application process for well over a year now.

I have now written to a contact in the office of the Premier, to ask for advice; we are engaging with Rhodes University to ask for help; and I have also written to the Ministers of Home Affairs, Labour, and International Relations and Cooperation, to request their assistance and intervention. We extend our sincere apologies to all who have been disappointed by Cameron's non-arrival, and we thank, very warmly indeed, our various musicians and music ministry team members for keeping the show going so wonderfully.

We begin today with a 7-part sermon series on the Letter to the Ephesians, which Fr Idowu will kick off this morning. As we spend time with the Letter, the big question that we are asking is what sort of church does God call us to be, at a time like this, in our community, our country, our society? I hope that this series will help to strengthen our shared life in Christ.

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.