

Dean's Letter, 19 November 2017

Dear Cathedral family

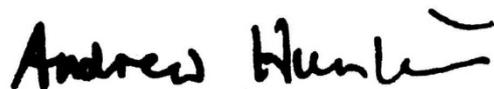
History was made this past Tuesday, at a meeting of the Cathedral Chapter, when Bishop Ebenezer licensed our own Revd Claire as Cathedral Chancellor. We congratulate her very warmly indeed, and hold her in our prayers as she undertakes this new area of ministry and responsibility. To my knowledge, she is the first woman Chancellor in the history of our Province, and certainly the first woman Chancellor here at our Cathedral. As Cathedral Chancellor, she is now a member of Chapter, the advisory body that meets with the Bishop. She continues at the Cathedral as our Senior Assistant Priest (her unofficial title is "minister of home affairs"!) And her other cathedral ministries will continue as before. This new role gives her added responsibilities at diocesan level, particularly in the area of ongoing clergy formation and training, something very close to her heart.

There are two Chancellors in any diocese. The Diocesan Chancellor is an advocate, normally a lay person, with the responsibility of advising the Bishop in all matters of law. Our current Diocesan Chancellor is Advocate Kerry Watt; she was preceded by Advocate (now Judge) Richard Brooks. The Cathedral Chancellor is usually (but not always) a priest, with the responsibility of theological study and training in the diocese, as well as to encourage the efficient teaching of the Church's faith in schools and colleges of our diocese. Revd Claire's immediate predecessor was Dr Bill Domeris. And I think that Professor Guy Butler was Cathedral Chancellor at one time. Can anyone verify that for me?

I know that I am biased, and not objective, when I speak or write about Claire! Nevertheless, I want to personally and publicly affirm her in her outstanding ministry here at the Cathedral, as well as in the parishes where she and I have served together over the years since her ordination, viz., Bonteheuwel and Hout Bay, in the diocese of Cape Town. This year, 2017, is the 25th anniversary of the first ordination of women to the priesthood here in South Africa, in 1992. Claire was made deacon in March 1994 and ordained priest in December 1994. She was thus one of the very early "batches" of women who were priested, and is one of our senior women clergy in the Province and in this diocese. This new office and appointment is a wonderful affirmation and recognition of her immense ministry gifts, and her deep love for the Lord and for God's people. For personal and family reasons, she has always been an assistant priest, and, until recently, part-time at that, which has prevented her from "rising up the ranks" over the years. Now is the time!

We thank God for our new Cathedral Chancellor, and for her gifts and ministries amongst us and in the life of the wider diocese and Province.

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.