

## Dean's Letter, 29 July 2018

Dear Cathedral family

Today the Cathedral is hosting the annual Archdeacons Family Day service, in the context of our 9.30 a.m. act of worship. We extend a very warm welcome to our sister parishes, and we thank all who have worked extremely hard for this occasion. It is part of the build-up to the Diocesan Family Day and weekend, which takes place at the end of August.

Claire and I had a very interesting discussion, during the week, on how best to grow vegetables. Horse manure to prepare the ground, creating a worm farm which uses kitchen waste and produces (we are told) yummy "juice" which plants love and thrive on; taking care with seedlings; and also using the worm "juice" to keep bugs away! Quite a list! The result, we are assured – and believe – will be wonderful, tasty vegetables!

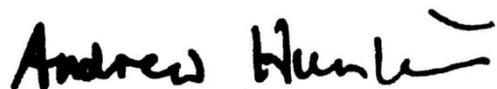
What do you and I need to thrive, to grow? In times of great hardship and opposition? How do we keep on going when we are overwhelmed with very difficulties? What do we do in the face of anguish and pain? A friend and I were talking about it, thinking of some of the issues that people are facing. The overwhelming feeling was one of despair, hopelessness, rage, and fear. This is the ground, the soil, in which the church as the body of Christ, exists – the soil or ground of our lives, our community.

What a contrast, then, with the 2nd reading for today, Ephesians 3:14-21. It is part of St Paul's letter to the Ephesians; as we know, we are reading and preaching through Ephesians at the moment. These verses are a prayer, his prayer for the church at Ephesus. We can use these words as our prayer for the church, our parishes and archdeaconry and diocese; the church in Grahamstown with all its different denominations.

There are three parts to the prayer: that we may be strengthened in our inner being with power through God's Spirit (3:16); that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith (3:17); and that we may comprehend and know the love of Christ (3:18-19). And then there is the conclusion, or doxology: "Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen." (3:20-21).

The church – any church, our church, other churches – are both divine and human. Consisting of sinners like you and me, so deeply imperfect, fractured, flawed; yet at the same time we are the creation of God, brought together into fellowship by the work of God in Jesus and the power of the Spirit. So here we expect the best of one another; we challenge one another when we fall short; we are called to the highest standards of integrity and honesty and faithfulness; we are the first also to forgive and reconcile and heal. We are people open to God's power and love. Can we ask for anything better?

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.