

Dean's Letter, 29 September 2019

Dear Cathedral family, Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Today is the start of our annual Dedication & Stewardship month. Our Patronal Festival and Dedication Sunday is 27th October.

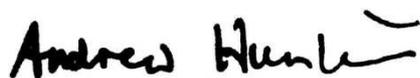
This time last year Claire and I had a few days walking along the Wild Coast. A place of great beauty, incredible views, beaches and trees and grasslands. But I remember walking down a path to the beach, all was lovely – until there in a donga was a great big pile of plastic bottles, Kimbies, plastic bags, tins, rubbish. Dumped and left there. Rubbish which pollutes and destroys and degrades. We all have our stories to tell of rubbish and the environment – so beautiful, yet so vulnerable. Walking down High Street on a windy day, and seeing the rubbish blowing all over the street. Or driving past the rubbish dump out on the Cradock Road, and seeing plastic bags lining the fences and filling the ditches. Our waste fills the earth. Linked to the growing concerns about the environment is growing rage and fury and resentment and despair over things that don't change, but must: poverty, unemployment, communities ruled by gangs, the horrifically high levels of gender-based violence, poor governance, bankrupt and failing municipalities. These past weeks have seen lament, weeping, anger, outrage, horror at the dreadful spate of rapes, murders, the attacks on foreigners. The cries of the poor and vulnerable. Indeed, it is not only the earth that is crying, or the poor – it is each one of us.

We cannot escape from the reality of our degraded earth, our struggling environment, the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. In larger cities, there is often very little sense of connection with one another, little awareness of what is happening on the other side of the tracks, in other neighbourhoods, over the hill. But not here. Here in Grahamstown (Makhanda) we are all too aware of what is going on. Our neighbours are not only those next door to us; they are those down the street in Fingo Village and Joza and Tyantyi, in Sunnyside and Hill 60. We share the pains and sorrows together. And I think that we are all aware that if one suffers, we all suffer. There is no way that one part of the community can live in peace when others are struggling. Anger spills over. We are deeply, profoundly connected. It is one of the gifts of a small town. I leave you with two quotes:

“The test of our progress is not whether we add to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little” (Franklin D Roosevelt, US President).

“Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are Anger and Courage. Anger at the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain the way they are.” St Augustine.

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.