

## Dean's Letter, 31 May 2020

Dear Cathedral family, Brothers and Sisters in Christ

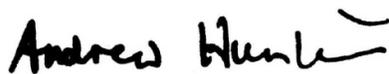
In a recent letter from our daughter Nicola, currently in the USA, describes the signs of spring. She writes: "As of literally yesterday, the leaves have popped on the trees! Vulnerable, unfolding, uncurling, fresh, bright, tentative, yellow-green leaves. The whole landscape looks completely different, turning green rather than grey. What a beautiful, unexpected sight." She is encountering new life and unexpected gifts, tiny miracles, wherever she looks.

The Day of Pentecost is such a time and season. Our first reading (Acts 2:1-12) tells of the experience of those first disciples: wind from heaven, tongues of fire and flame, the many languages, the exhilaration, the good news spreading like a fire. Things were never the same again. That first Pentecost was a new beginning. The church was born. Their lives were turned upside down. From having been a frightened and uncertain group of people, the disciples moved into the streets, out of hiding, to proclaim and live out the good news that they had found in Jesus. The living Lord, they knew, now lived in them. They had received power from God. From then on, they were able to demonstrate this new reality of the love of God, in works and words of power and life and healing. A springtime of new life and hope. The old grey world was a thing of the past. And with this springtime, relationships were transformed, a new community emerged, and old historic barriers of race and language began to melt away.

Pentecost is for us a time and a season of new life and power. We invite the Holy Spirit to fill us and make us new. Our prayer is that God will give us the power and courage and strength to do His will. "Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me. Melt me, mould me, fill me, use me, Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me."

As SA moves into Level 3 of lockdown, so much remains uncertain. We are feeling our way into an unknown future. We face tomorrow with mixed feelings. Things are getting more dangerous and riskier as the country opens up. There is also a great deal of discussion as to what the life of the church, and our society, should be like, in the time ahead. There is widespread longing for a new and more compassionate society to emerge from this time of lockdown. And, as I said on Sunday, the church has never closed – only our buildings. Our life of prayer and worship and pastoral care and witness has continued. In some ways I think we are the stronger for this period of lock down and restrictions. It has helped us – it certainly has helped me – to refocus on our essentials and to do what we are really called to do. I don't want to simply go back to how it was before. And yet the danger is that we do exactly that. So my prayer is that the Holy Spirit will empower and guide us as we look to the future: a church made new and a society transformed.

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.