

NEWSLETTER

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THE METHODIST CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE



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History in the Making: MCZ Officially Opens Sewing Factory



The Presiding Bishop Revd G.T Mawire officially opened and dedicated the sewing factory in Gweru at Ndhela Center for the uniform project on 17 November 2024. The event was attended by the church leadership as well as congregants from the host District, i.e. Gweru District. It was an event full of excitement as this was a milestone achievement for the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe.

Addressing the gathering, The Connexional Treasurer, Mr J. Shambare, informed the members present that the purpose of gathering was to witness and dedicate the greatest initiative of the church in fulfilling Pillar 3 of the church's Strategic Plan, i.e. of 'Resourcing the church for sustainability'. He further highlighted that the project was for the good health of ministers. The church celebrates this milestone in partnership with the Methodist Church in Britain mission grant capacity building plan. The greatest hope that the church has is that it shall be a big garment factory which caters for the uniforms. This initiative was made achievable after the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe had made good use of US\$182 000 which was received from the partners of the British Methodist Church to be ploughed in the church for sustainability.

The MCZ Youth Vice-President, Miss Patricia Matemera representing the Youth and Children's Ministry, expressed her deepest appreciation to the church leadership for choosing their facility, the Ndhela Centre, as the site for the factory. She said that the project will empower the community, youths and the church at large with hope that the vision of the 'Centre' will continue to grow for the benefit of the church and community.

Gwanda Circuit Manse Dedication

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is one of those leading church denominations which make sure that ministers have decent accommodation as they serve in the Lord's vineyard. On the 27th of October 2024, Presiding Bishop Rev G.T Mawire dedicated the Gwanda Circuit Manse.

History of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, Gwanda Circuit Manse.

Initially Gwanda Circuit was united with Insiza Circuit for quite a long time and had two Ministers, one resident in Gwanda and the other stationed at Silalatshani, all under rented accommodation. In 2015, the Circuit leadership proposed the division of two Circuits which would result in the creation of Gwanda and Insiza Circuits. This was attributed to geographical distance travelled by preachers and Ministers to reach all corners of the circuit.

During the 2015 Bulawayo District Synod, the Gwanda/Insiza delegation presented their proposal which was turned down after they had failed to convince the District Synod on their financial capacity to run autonomously and plans to build independent manse. By then, the Circuit Superintendent Rev Marima was residing in a rented house at number 1 Old Clinic, Jahunda, Gwanda while the Circuit Minister, Rev Baiton, was residing in a rented house in Silalatshani. After failing the test of dividing the Circuit at 2015 Synod, the Circuit Superintendent and the leadership came back to the drawing board and came up with a plan for Gwanda Manse as well as



that of new Church. A plan for Insiza Manse and the Church were already in existence and ground breaking had been done at Filabusi.

The following year, during the 2016 Bulawayo District Synod, the recommendation to divide the Circuit was adopted which resulted in the birth of Gwanda and Insiza Circuits headed by Revs Marima and Baiton respectively. Coincidentally, during the same year, Gwanda Circuit acquired ownership of number 1 Old Clinic, Jahunda house but its state remained worrisome. It did not take long before Rev Marima was transferred soon after the plan was approved and he was succeeded by Rev Mapfumo who took over the Gwanda Circuit Manse construction project. Rev Mapfumo initially sourced 200 bags of cement from Glow Petroleum and PPC Collen Bawn which triggered the Gwanda Manse construction. During that period, the Circuit had no motor vehicle and Rev. T. Mapfumo could use his private Granivia to tour the trailer ferrying building materials. The building project commenced and smoothly up to wall plate and Rev. T. Mapfumo was transferred.

Rev Mapfumo was succeeded by Rev Nkobi in the year 2020. The new Circuit Superintendent introduced several projects aimed at raising funds to complete the manse. However, during the infancy stages of projects he was transferred handing over the button stick to Rev Mtandabari.

Rev Mtandabari then created the manse building committee whose sole mandate was to source, fundraise and direct manse completion. In addition to several fundraising activities, members agreed to contribute us\$10-00 each per month. The idea paid dividends as the Circuit managed to complete the roofing stage on 16 February 2024 with the help of other congregants who contributed a better part. However, the resource base seemed depleted and the project remained stagnant for some time. A well-wisher then chipped in and completed the beam filling, plastering

both inside and outside, rough flooring, tubing, ceiling, wiring, electricity lighting, tiling and tiling. Through church contributions, the church managed to do glazing on its own. The building of Gwanda Manse took close to 8 years and was finally dedicated by Presiding Bishop Rev G.T Mawire on the 27th of October 2024.

Mashonganyika Society Church Dedication



On the 3rd of November 2024 the Presiding Bishop Rev G.T Mawire officially opened and dedicated the Mashonganyika Society church building in Makwiro Circuit. Accompanying the Presiding Bishop was the Bishop of Kadoma District Rev P. Simango and the Superintendent Minister of Makwiro Circuit Rev E. Munkuli. Also present were the ministers Revd J. Mtemasango, J. Musiyiwa, M and G Hokonya.

The Presiding Bishop in his sermon emphasized the need for the house of the Lord to accommodate everyone who is in need and this is the reason why the building was constructed. The church should be a house of prayer and congregants should find comfort and healing which is the main purpose for constructing such a building. Mashonganyika is one of the societies in Makwiro Circuit under the pastoral oversight of Rev E. Munkuli.

Greendale Circuit Evangelism Outreach Program



Greendale Circuit participated in the Evangelism Outreach Program from September 18 to 2 October 2024. They hosted five evangelists from Kenya, who were accommodated in the homes of members for the entire duration. The church provided breakfast and lunch, while the hosts catered for their dinner and accommodation.

The outreach covered the following areas: Athlone, Kamfinsa, Letombo/Masasa, Mandara Shopping Center, Highland Park and Manresa

Biblical literature was distributed to those we spoke to, and pamphlets were left with many. During the outreach, we interacted with a total of 595 individuals. Of these, 209 gave their lives to God, and 72 rededicated themselves to Jesus. Follow-ups are currently in progress to encourage the new believers to join GMC or any other church of their choice.

The evangelists from Kenya who participated included: Moses Olukutukei, Rachel Miyano, Lucy Muthoni, Keziah Mangu, and Mercy Njuru

By Florence Mhango

Healing Sound Choir Graces Zimbabwe Republic Police End of Year Christmas Party

Healing Sound, a choir group from the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, Mvurwi Circuit, was invited to grace the year 2024 Zimbabwe Republic Police End of Year Christmas Party. This annual event gathers all the widows and orphans of deceased police officers in the district. Initially was scheduled to be held at Guruve Police Station, which houses the district offices, but the venue was changed to Guruve ZAOGA Chapel due to fears of Cyclone Chido.

The group delivered a masterpiece of entertainment that left the audience yelling for more. The event was attended by the DISPO and Officers in Charge of all police stations in the district.

By Bruce Muza (Mvurwi Circuit R & P Coordinator)

Makokoba Society Celebrates 121 Years of Spreading the Good News

Theme: Building on a legacy

On 29th of September 2024 Makokoba Methodist Church celebrated 121 years of existence as the oldest church in Bulawayo. A milestone that signifies more than a century of spiritual guidance and community service. Makokoba holds a special place in our hearts, having birthed all the churches in the region. To honor this legacy significant renovations are being made to ensure that Makokoba remains a welcoming and inspiring place of worship.

Today we celebrate 121 years of Makokoba Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, commonly known to some of us depending on what generation you are from as “Gogo Makokoba”. Ama 2000, lalalani lifunde (Listen and learn). It is through the grace of and mercies of God that, this building along with the people in this church have kept the legacy of winning souls to God.



History of Makokoba Society of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe

Early Beginnings

From 1891 to 1965, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (then known as Rhodesia) was led by Missionaries. It was during that time, that the Methodist Church established its first mission station in Bulawayo, which included the Makokoba area. The church's early work focused on evangelism, education and healthcare.

Education

In 1903, Makokoba was established mainly as the Centre for Children's learning activities. The centre had 4 to 5 classes with different teachers taking combined classes at the Annex Churches. The Annex churches included Salvation Army, Church of Christ, Presbyterian and the Dutch Reformed Church. So, school Assembly was conducted at Makokoba, and the lessons would follow in the other churches as named above. The Head of the school then was the late Mr Gibbons, and among the dedicated teachers was Chief Frank Gambu Sithole, from this complex. Lobengula Primary, Mzilikazi Primary in Mzilikazi, Losikeyi Primary in Nguboyenja and Lotshe Primary in Makokoba were opened respectively. A few high schools also came from this establishment, namely Mzilikazi High School and Bulawayo Methodist High School, which is on these grounds. In 1925, the theological college was established to train local clergy. The church played a significant role in promoting education particularly for Africans, during the colonial era.

The church was then left as a place of worship. Makokoba church birthed the following societies of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe: Mzilikazi, Njube, Mpopoma, Pelandaba and Luveve. These churches have also given birth to many more Methodist churches in and around Bulawayo. During the liberation struggle of the 1960s and 1970s, Makokoba also provided support to refugees and displaced persons.

Today, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is a significant denomination with a strong presence in Makokoba and throughout the country. Makokoba continues to focus on spiritual growth, social justice and community development. We celebrate the legacy of Makokoba Church today. Long live Makokoba *omuhle*, the place where great man and women made a significant mark. The history of Makokoba, will not be complete without mentioning the following people, some of you will remember

List of Reverends, Evangelists, Deaconess - Missionaries & Local Preachers who served at Makokoba Methodist Society:

- 1.Revd. W. A. Hoskins (1966)
2. Revd. A Geoffrey Jones (1968)

3. Revd. Siamtinta
4. Revd. Samkange
5. Revd. Solomon Litshe Mbambo Zwana (most senior umdala)
6. Revd. Devilious Sitshela Ngwenya
7. Revd. Siqalaba Mpofu (umdala)
8. Revd. B.J.J. Ndebele (1978)
9. Revd. W.J. Ramushu
10. Revd. O. D. Ramushu (Ntabazinduna)
11. Revd. Canaan Sodindo Ncube Banana (President of Zimbabwe)
12. Revd. Mzungwane Ndlovu
13. Revd. Charles B. Nyambosi Manyoba
14. Revd. Benjamin B. Nunu
15. Revd. Farai J. Chirisa
16. Revd. Geoffery T. Mburuma
17. Revd. J.M. Ndlovu (staff United College of Education Bulawayo).
18. Revd. Stephen (SK) Mlilo Mangumi
19. Revd. Peter P. Nyamangara (Mbembesi)
20. Revd. Enoc Makalima Musa (umdala)
21. Revd. V. Wellington Gubudu
22. Revd. Ephram J. Mukasa
23. Revd. D.V. Ndlovu
24. Revd. Takawira Masimba (1995)
25. Revd. William S.P. Khiyaza Phakathi
26. Revd. Moffat Ncube
27. Revd. Osborn Madlezibabayo Mpofu
28. Revd. Claudus Matsikiti
29. Revd. Amon Chidongwe
30. Revd. Cephas Z. Mukandi

31. Revd. Joshua Mashiri
32. Revd. Josias Mudenda
33. Revd. Obert Shatai
34. Revd. Lastboy Hlomani
35. Revd Tapiwa Muleya
36. Revd. Tapiwa Marambi
37. Revd. Gladman Chauya
38. Revd. Bishop Dr. Greenwell Chigova

NB: Please note that the list is not following the chronological order.

Some of Makokoba Methodist Society lay leaders that we could remember:

Most of them have passed on: Perhaps only 3 are alive:

1. Mr. M. Madlenya Tshuma
2. Mr. T. Nyamadzawo
3. G. Vazhure
4. Mr. Thomas Ndlovu
5. Mr. E. Ngwenya
6. Mr. May Mpofu
7. Mrs. M. Ndaba
8. Mrs. D. Kwali
9. Mrs. M. Tyeza
10. Mrs. J. Mahota
11. Mr. Timoth Mashingaidze
12. Mrs. V. Dima
13. Mrs. E. Hikwa
14. Mrs. E. Mabhazo
15. Mrs. F. Mthezuka
16. Mrs. M. Majwabu
17. Mrs. E. Masendu

18. Mr. B. Nkala
19. Mr. Mazorodze
20. Mr. J. Bhebhe
21. Mr. Mkoteli
22. Mr. Mleya Tshuma (Mgebesi)
23. Mr Msumiwa Dube
24. Mr. Bigboy Khumalo

Evangelists:

1. Evg. Sihlola
2. Evg. Elijah Khumalo
3. Evg. Furusta
4. Evg. P. Ngazi
5. Evg. L. Shambira (Nyamandlovu)
6. B. Ncube (2003)

Deaconesses & Missionaries

1. Sister Celia Clemens
2. Sister Joan Stockley
3. Mr. John M. Cokett
4. Mr. Hencock

By Mqoqi Ncube

Trinity Society of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe Celebrates 132 years of Existence in Style

The Significance of Trinity Methodist Church: A Cause for Celebrations

Trinity Society of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, established in 1891, is a cornerstone of faith and community in Zimbabwe, celebrated for its rich legacy of spiritual guidance and social impact. As the epicentre of Methodism in the country, its influence extends beyond its congregation, playing a pivotal role in the nation's spiritual and social fabric.

The Momentous Celebrations: A Grand March of Unity and Faith

The celebrations were held on the 8th of December 2024. The proceedings began with a grand and symbolic march at 8:00 am, starting from the Harare City Town House and concluding at the historic Trinity Methodist Church at 7 Central Avenue, Harare. This procession set the tone for the day's festivities, embodying the spirit of unity and triumph that has defined Trinity Methodist Church for 132 years. Leading the march were an energetic group of bikers, a vibrant team of drum majorettes, and the rhythmic melodies of a police band. The lively procession captivated onlookers and brought a sense of reverence and joy to the streets of Harare.

Every organization within the Trinity Circuit participated in the March, proudly led by the Superintendent Minister, Reverend Matthew Ncube, accompanied by the Trinity Circuit Ministers. Members carried their respective organisational banners, each adorned with messages reflecting a unified theme: "Trinity Methodist Church – Celebrating 132 Years of Winning and Nurturing Souls for Christ."

The March was not only a public display of celebration but also a testament to the collective faith and dedication of the Trinity Methodist community. It was a momentous start to a day filled with gratitude, reflection, and joy, marking a legacy of unwavering service to God and humanity.

Events at the Celebration Venue -Trinity Methodist Church Grounds

The events were expertly orchestrated by two exceptional Masters of Ceremony: Madam Marcia Gore, affectionately known as "The Bolt Cutter," and Reverend Gift Chanakira, Superintendent Minister of Mt. Pleasant Circuit, who humorously introduced himself with the moniker, "*WeNjanja, ungamudii?*" Their dynamic and engaging presence kept the proceedings seamless and lively, ensuring the celebrations were both memorable and entertaining.

Procession of dignitaries and their Spouses

The procession of dignitaries and their spouses marked the official commencement of the program. The distinguished guests included:

- Presiding Bishop Rev. George T. Mawire
- Harare East District Bishop/Parliamentary Liaison Officer Rev. E Chiota
- Harare East District Lay President Mr. Farai Munyanyi
- The Guest of Honor Dr. Herbert Murerwa
- The then Acting Bishop Harare East Rev. Gift. Chanakira
- Acting Synod Secretary Rev. P. Mutandwa
- Zimbabwe Council of Churches General Secretary Rev. W. Dimingu
- Trinity Circuit Superintendent Minister Rev. M. Ncube
- Hatcliffe Superintendent Minister Rev. N. Zhira
- Marondera North Superintendent Minister Rev. E. Njawaya
- Rev Dr. L. Kadenge from Norton Circuit

- All Trinity Circuit ministers: Rev. T. Runo, Rev. M. Charidza, Rev. W. Timuri, Rev. H. Chimedza
- Ruwadzano/Manyano Presidents from Connexional, District and Circuits
- Invited guests

The procession triumphant entry into the celebration venue marked the beginning of an exciting programme. Entertainment for the event was a vibrant and memorable highlight, led by the award-winning Trinity Church Choir, which performed songs specially composed for the celebrations. The atmosphere was further enriched by uplifting praise and worship sessions delivered by renowned groups, including Varumbidzi vaJehovah, Boys of Thunder, and the Trinity Society Praise and Worship Team. Adding a reflective touch, several clips showcasing Trinity Church's historical and current activities were screened intermittently, offering attendees a glimpse into the church's rich legacy and ongoing contributions to the community.

The Launch of the Trinity Society History Book

A cornerstone of the celebration was the launch of a remarkable book chronicling the history of Trinity Methodist Church. Titled *Trinity Society Methodist Church: A Historical Account of Winning and Nurturing Souls for Christ, 1892-2024*, the book was authored by Dr. Sheillah Matinhure and officially launched by the District Bishop, Reverend Edmore Chiota.

In his address, Reverend Chiota shared the vision behind the book, detailing its meticulous conception and expert compilation. He highlighted key themes and content, including Trinity Church's pivotal role in expanding Methodism in Zimbabwe, the contributions of its trailblazers, the succession of superintendents and ministers who served at Trinity, and the church's enduring commitment to Christian social responsibility.

The Book also celebrates the men and women whose dedicated efforts ensured that the legacy of Trinity Church continues to shine brightly. It explores the church's ongoing infrastructural development, its vibrant organizations, including youth ministries and fellowships, as well as personal testimonies that bring the church's rich history to life. Among the Book's many lessons are profound insights into love, resilience, unity of purpose, and the seamless continuation of a Christian legacy from generation to generation—a legacy that remains a beacon of faith and hope for all. The book was eventually auctioned and available copies were sold-out.

Unveiling of the Celebration Stone

The unveiling of the Celebration Stone was a moment of great significance, conducted by the Presiding Bishop, Reverend George T. Mawire, and the Guest of Honor, Dr. Herbert Murerwa. The event was marked with grandeur and joyful celebration, creating a memorable moment for all in attendance.

Cutting of the Cake

The cutting of the celebration cake was led by Mrs. L. Chiota, the Ruwadzano/Manyano Connexional Deputy President and District President, alongside Mrs. S. Ncube, the Ruwadzano/Manyano Trinity Circuit President. In her remarks, Mrs. Chiota likened the cake's ingredients—the sour, bitter, and sweet—to the diverse experiences faced by the church and its

members throughout their journey. She emphasized that despite the challenges, all experiences, whether good or difficult, ultimately culminate in outcomes that glorify God's name and purpose.

Fundraising Activities

The celebrations also featured successful fundraising initiatives, including individual donations, the auctioning of the Trinity Society History Book, and the sale of celebration logo materials. These efforts not only contributed to the event's financial support but also fostered a sense of unity and shared purpose among the congregants.

By Dr S. Matinhure

Masvingo South Circuit Bids Farewell to Rev Manyangadze After Thirty-Six Years of Service

It was a momentous occasion when Masvingo South Circuit bade farewell to Reverend Manyangadze and family at a colourful ceremony held at Runyararo Society. The ceremony was graced by the District Bishop Rev P. Nyabonda and other members of the clergy from the District and outside the District. Reverend Manyangadze served the church for thirty-six years as a minister of religion in different Circuits and retired in Masvingo South Circuit. He worked for three years in this Circuit where he cultivated unity and togetherness in the execution of God's work.

During his tenure as the Superintendent Minister of the Circuit, significant milestones were witnessed which includes the construction of a manse which is at roof level. There was significant increase in membership in the Men's Christian Union and other groups within the church. A man described as quiet but effective leader who could calm storms and cultivate teamwork among his sheep. In celebrating the man of cloth it is important not to forget that beside this successful men of cloth were his beloved wife and supportive children who partnered him well in the Lord's vineyard. Together as a team they spurred the Lord's work to greater heights. Blessed with children who were equally eager to participate in church activities, the family left an indelible mark of what a Christian family should look like and behave.

Most of the testimonies on the day showed how much Rev Manyangadze and Amai contributed immensely to the spiritual growth and sustenance of the church membership. A befitting farewell sermon was preached by Rev Chengovo of the Baptist Church. It was a moving sermon which left

both the laity and clergy reflecting deeply on their Christian journeys. The sermon was an icing on the cake backed by the Rev Manyangadze over the thirty-six years of his ministry.

In appreciation of his wonderful work, Masvingo South Circuit drilled a borehole for him at his rural home. The borehole was equipped with a solar pump and five thousand litres tank. All installed by the circuit. Three water tapes were installed; first at the homestead, the second in the fields and the third one for the members of the community to benefit from the borehole water. This on its own shows how benevolent Rev Manyangadze and family are. They did not only consider themselves but also their community in their blessing by the church. What a lesson to all of us! It was also a gift galore as different church groups and members brought in different gifts in celebration of this couple's service in his vineyard.

“As Masvingo South Circuit we say to Rev Manyangadze and family we shall continue to cherish your times with us and wish you a happy retirement!!”

16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence (16 Nov – 10 Dec)



The world commemorated 16 Days of activism against gender based violence (GBV) from 16 November to 10 December 2024 running under the theme: “Every 10 minutes, a woman is killed. #No Excuse. Unite to End Violence Against Women.” (UN-WOMEN)

The theme highlighted by UN WOMEN calls for everyone's attention. At the heart of every family is a woman. Thus, it is the business of every family and every community to rise and say no to gender-based violence. It is scary to imagine the continued trajectory of the killing of women every 10 minutes. What is more heartbreaking is that 60% of female homicides were committed

by partners or family members. Hence, it is evident that this crisis is imminent and needs family members to unite and reflect on the perpetrated attitudes and cultural practices that lead to the demise of many women and girls.

As the commemorations were done, it should be acknowledged that women and girls are not the only victims. Men and boys are suffering too. If peace and harmony is desired in our communities, there is need to break the silence and bring these discussions home and think seriously about how to end gender-based violence. We all have a role to play.

On 28 November 2024, MeDRA Zimbabwe participated in the National Launch of the Commemorations of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence at Mawabeni Primary School in Umzingwane, Matabeleland South Province. The theme was: Towards 30 years of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: UNITE to end violence against women and girls.

By Revd G. Nyabonda

A Spirit-Filled Advent Season

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe with all its fellowships dotted across the globe had a spirit filled ‘Advent’ season. This is an important season on the Christian calendar. ‘**Advent**’ marks the beginning of the Christian Calendar or Liturgical Year or, Ecclesiastical Calendar. It is the first season. The word ‘Advent’ (from Latin ‘*Adventus*’) means ‘arrival’, ‘coming’ or ‘a time when something first comes or appears’. (Toon: 1984.15). This is a period when we anticipate the coming (birth) of Christ. In this anticipation we start to prepare. Advent begins four weeks before Christmas – the celebration of the birth of the Messiah, and this is normally around 30 November or 1 December every year, and ending on the 24th of December. In 2024 it began on the 1st of December.

Throughout this Advent period our focus as Methodists was on preparation for the coming of the Messiah. Of course, many people talk of self-introspection and penitence during this time as they argue that the One who is coming should find us pure, which is not bad at all, however the main focus during the ‘Advent’ season is on preparation as we expect the coming of the One in whom we have the conviction that His coming has got the full package of our salvation and wellbeing. This is the One whom we sing, “*Dai asauya ...*” – Hymn 14:3 (Shona) - “*Nxa ebengezanga ...*” – Hymn 45:3 (Ndebele). We did prepare for His coming in prayers and meditation. We also did express our conviction with outward symbols such as decorating our churches with colours which are symbolic of the event. In this case two colours did dominate our décor in our churches across the Connexion, i.e. purple and dark blue. Purple is a colour symbolizing kingship, royalty, wealth,

priesthood, etc. and all these do apply to Jesus Christ. However, blue is also appropriate for the season as it symbolizes hope, expectation, confidence and anticipation.

Furthermore, ‘Advent’ period coincides with the festive season and in most cases the mood of the festive season end up threatening to overshadow it. However, in the midst of those misinterpretations of the same event by the secular world the meaning and inspirations that we draw from the same period are totally different from those of the external world. In as much as the secular world interprets that as a moment of blooming their businesses, to us who are being saved it is a moment of focusing on our redemption which comes through *Chipo chakakomba* (Hymn 136 [Shona]); *Sipho esikhulu* (Hymn 56) [Ndebele].

Furthermore, Methodist worship is characterized by combination of preaching of the ‘Word’ and music. As God speaks to us through the preaching of the Word, we respond and express our faith in song. In other words, just as the ancient Israelites had the culture of responding to what God would have done to them, as individuals or entire nation, in psalms so it is with us. Our Hymn Book is a collection of psalms (songs) of what God has done to us, is doing and will do. We do not just sing for the sake of singing or as routine, or to decorate our ‘order of service’. Our music is full of theology. In this case, besides the selection of texts and themes that are in line with the ‘Advent’ period, the hymns that did dominate our worship services during the ‘Advent’ period are also in line with this special event. This is the time where we saw hymns such as 27 (Shona), 14 (Shona), 45 (Ndebele), 46 (Ndebele), etc. featuring regularly as they helped us prepare our hearts for the coming of this ‘King of holiness’ who was to come.

‘Advent’ season led us into Christmas, on the 25th of December. The One whom we have been preparing for His coming finally came. On His coming, He did not fall down from heaven like a stone. He was born, and we celebrated His birth. As Methodists we were kept on focus and inspired by the Christmas message which came from the Presiding Bishop, Revd. G.T. Mawire, as the chief shepherd of all people called Methodists in Zimbabwe.

To God be the glory.

By Revd. O. Chagudhuma (*Connexional R&P Coordinator*)

Bidding Farewell to 2024

The year 2024 could be described as a mixed or an assorted bag, i.e. both joyous and sad moments all packed in the same bag. However, what kept us going in the face of all these different episodes that did characterize our lives as a church and individual Christians as we sought to represent Christ as His ambassadors in this world (2Corinthians 5:20) are John Wesley’s departing words, i.e. “The Greatest of all is God is with us”. Indeed God was with us in 2024, and we have the strong

conviction that He will continue to be with us in 2025 as we ‘Trust Him in all circumstances’ (Habakkuk 3:17-18).

Winding up the year, Methodists across the whole Connexion organized ‘Crossover Prayer Vigils’ which were held either at Circuit or Society levels as was applicable to each set up. Those who could not meet physically due to various reasons held their ‘Crossover Vigils’ using ‘online’ platforms. What was uniform on all these events was that they all served as moments of thanksgiving, i.e. thanking God (Emmanuel) for all the graces of 2024. Although we were troubled in one way or the other as ‘Ambassadors for Christ’, we were not destroyed (2Corinthians 4:8-10), and we are not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ whom we represent for it is the power of God (Romans 1:15-17). As individual Christians and the whole church we boldly shout, “Like a mighty army, moves the church of God!” [“Inoenda sehondo chechi yaMwari!”]. Crossover Prayer Vigils that were held across the Connexion were also used as moments of laying out the foundations of how the New Year will look like. In other words, they were also moments of making New Year resolutions. Where can we go if God does not go with us? Hence we needed to end the old and start the new with Him.

By Revd. O. Chagudhuma (*Connexional R&P Coordinator*).

National Music Convention 2024

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe’s national music convention was held in Gweru from 15th to 17th of November 2024. It was a hype of activity as numerous choirs and musical groups from the whole connexion were gathering to compete in singing as they worship and praise the Lord as well. Methodism was founded on the basis of spreading the gospel through preaching and singing by Charles Wesley thus singing is a central part of the Methodist tradition. All the eight Districts were represented by choirs in various categories that include: Apex, Classic B, traditional, youth band, Premier and freestyle. Winners in each category walked away with a trophy and cash so as to motivate everyone to do even better in the next competition.

The MCZ leadership comprising of the Presiding Bishop Revd G.T Mawire, Lay President Mr G. Hanyane, the Acting Mission Director Revd Dr. D. Muzenda and the District Bishops were among the dignitaries that graced this momentous occasion. The Presiding Bishop also took the opportunity to dedicate the vehicle that was bought by the Connexional Music Committee.

