

NEWSLETTER - APRIL 2023

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Graduation Day: 166 New Gospel Witnesses

Saturday 11 March 2023 was a remarkable day for Mukhanyo. A total of 166 students graduated this year, each one ready and equipped to boldly proclaim the gospel as witnesses of Christ in their communities. This marks the highest number of graduates in Mukhanyo's history.

Not all graduates were able to attend the event in person. But more than 120 graduates did attend, coming from all over the country, bringing with them their family members and friends. Mukhanyo's main hall in the KwaMhlanga Campus was overflowing, requiring many guests to sit outside where a large tent was erected for the occasion.

Of the total number of graduates, 83 completed the Higher Certificate in Bible Teaching, 21 the Higher Certificate in Church Ministry, 47 the Diploma in Theology, 11 the Bachelor of Theology (BTh) degree, and 4 the Bachelor of Theology Honours (BTh Hons) degree.

The graduates were congratulated for their hard work and the successful completion of their studies. The profound matter of utilizing these qualifications was addressed by three speakers.

The keynote speaker of the day, Rev Joshua Bolaji of the Welkom local learning site, spoke from Mark 5 about the growth of God's kingdom that occurs solely through the preaching of the Word, and by no other means. Our graduates are people of the Word; it is critical they remember that "God's Word never returns empty".

Mukhanyo's Principal, Dr Brian DeVries, spoke briefly from Luke 10:1-3: "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few." The graduates, now trained to be

witnesses and representatives of Christ, must go their separate ways. Christ sends them out as lambs among wolves. But they are given God's Word and empowered by Christ's Spirit to speak this Word with authority and compassion.

Finally, the Chairman of the Board, Rev Maarten van Helden, congratulated Mukhanyo on the achievement of having the largest number of graduates in its nearly 30-year history. This is a significant milestone, with more than a thousand active students across South Africa and beyond.

When the graduates were asked about their plans, it was noteworthy that many expressed their intention to continue their studies. Whereas several others are already involved in church activities such as preaching, catechism instruction, and visitations. However, for many, finances pose a significant challenge, making it nearly impossible to pay for further studies.

This year, we were happy to give the Principal's Award to Given Collen Ngoma who completed his Bachelor of Theology degree last year in June and immediately started in the BTh Honours programme.



Principal's Student of the Year

Student, Given Collen Ngoma was chosen for the annual Principal's Award during Mukhanyo's Graduation Ceremony on the 11th of March. He received recognition for his years of dedication, as well as for his perceived potential to continue spreading God's Word in the years to come.

Given completed his Bachelor of Theology degree in 2022. He started his studies in 2017 as a contact student from Kwaggafontein, north of KwaMhlanga. He first obtained a two-year Diploma in Theology at the KwaMhlanga Campus, which qualified him for study at the degree level. He is currently enrolled in the BTh Honours program at Mukhanyo's Pretoria Campus.

Over the years Given Ngoma has proved to be a reliable and dedicated student with a passion to equip people with the knowledge of the Word of God. He aspires to maintain this passion throughout his life and to equip himself as well as possible for service. His pastoral heart is reflected in his care for fellow students: "Many students have personal problems which they are not able to handle themselves. It would be a good thing if Mukhanyo would be able to do more to address their problems, and create an atmosphere where students can share the difficulties they face in life and ministry."

Over and above studying, Given Ngoma is a junior pastor at his evangelistic congregation, the Grace of God Church. He is also a facilitator of one of Mukhanyo's local learning centres, a group of eighteen Zulu-speaking men who are studying in Mukhanyo's Focus program. Most of them are already church leaders who desire to be better equipped with God's Word and biblical principles.

To earn some income, Given also has a part-time job moderating student assignments for Mukhanyo's Local Learning programme.

When asked about his thoughts about Mukhanyo, where he has studied for six years, Given highlighted its emphasis on the authority of God's Word (*sola Scriptura*), the cultivation of Christian character in students, and its mission to equip as many individuals as possible with a biblical worldview.



Registration Open: TEASA Consultation 2023

Register online to reserve your place at the annual TEASA Consultation on 13-15 June 2023. The theme this year is "God's Word for Bible Education in Africa: Rightly Handling the Word of Truth". This event is the best place for all Bible educators in southern Africa to fellowship and network.

Keynote speakers, topic and workshop themes, and most other details can be found at www.teasa.co.za. A better venue has been secured for this year, and the event fee is still low. As in previous years, free books will be given to each participant and to the first 20 schools to register.

A promotional graphic for the Bible College Consultation 2023. The background features a compass rose and several rolled-up scrolls. The text "BIBLE COLLEGE CONSULTATION 2023" is in the top left. "God's Word for Bible Education in Africa" is in a dark blue box. "13-15 JUNE" is in a light blue circle. The logos for Theological Education Association of Southern Africa and Mukhanyo Theological College are at the bottom.

Discipling Children with the Word of God

More Sunday school teachers must be trained. This is an urgent and compelling need. Most youth ministers and teachers follow their inclinations, often without a structure or lesson plans. Furthermore, they lack sufficient support from church leadership. Perhaps they were asked to volunteer as Sunday school teachers, but then they received no preparation or guidance.

This urgent need became apparent during the Children's Ministry Seminar, which took place on March 4th at Mukhanyo's Johannesburg Campus. Approximately 50 people, mostly Sunday school teachers, attended the seminar. The facilitator was the experienced Danielle Petzer from the Reformed Church Linden. She began by sharing the Bible's teachings about children. She also raised several questions to help understand youth ministry. Such as, what do research and statistics indicate regarding children brought up in church? What do we do with children at church? What practical steps can we take in our churches?

Practical suggestions included the following:

- Always carry a hard-copy of the Bible when ministering to children to indicate that the message is from God.
- Always present the message in an engaging manner.
- Keep the children's attention span in mind: don't waste words and alternate activities regularly to keep them attentive.

- Engage all their senses when teaching. They should not just be passive listeners, rather, they should smell, see, feel, and do hands-on activities.
- Men should also teach children, not just women.

There are various techniques to capture and maintain the interest and attention of children, as well as methods to ensure discipline and order.

Teachers need to prioritize building positive and secure relationships between themselves and the children, as well as between the children themselves, before the teenage years when children tend to close up.

During the seminar, the participants were presented with practical techniques for effectively communicating the gospel to children. These involved interactive activities, games, and affordable scientific experiments. The importance of adequate preparation by the teacher was also emphasised.



Nkanyiso Cele: Beyond Calling

Nkanyiso Cele is a second-year Bachelor of Theology (BTh) degree student at Mukhanyo's Durban Centre. He says his experience at Mukhanyo has helped him to grow in Biblical knowledge, becoming more equipped to understand the Bible in context: "It is a space where we as students grow, not only in relationships outside but specifically as a person in relationship with God in faith through Christ."

"There are values that I have learned through modules that teach me to deal with my relationship with my wife, kids, family members, or just people in general," says Nkanyiso. "Now I have experience on how to handle family affairs and also how to deal with conflict and how I deal with personal matters and church matters; while before I did not understand how to separate the two."

Nkanyiso continues, "Mukhanyo has helped me through my studies to understand the big part my family plays in supporting me as well as the church's role in my growth in ministry. My time at Mukhanyo has helped me in realising that it is not just about being called but is beyond that. By teaching that though one is called, you are still able to gain further knowledge in how to deal with passages in context. And this will also help me to give a defence for the faith or beliefs as the Apostle Peter calls us to do."

