

NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2024

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Mukhanyo Graduation Day: Another Joyous Occasion

Mukhanyo's recent graduation ceremony, held on March 8th at Kwamhlanga, gathered 86 out of the 116 successful students from all across South Africa and beyond, accompanied by their families, to commemorate their achievements. Paul Khumalo (BTh), the Student Representative, received the principal's BTh award, while the Higher Certificate Award was given to Vusimuzi Goodman Mazibuko, and the Local Learning Student Award to Parampil Christopher Thomas.

Several students were asked at random what they were going to do with their qualifications. Most of them were hoping to be able to continue their studies, especially at Mukhanyo which they found very well organised, and of a high academic standard, also as far as the lecturers were concerned.

All, along with their spouses and children, responded that they were involved in different

church activities and some were already preaching part-time, while their present occupations varied from mineworker (underground), to police officer, teacher, and pensioner. They unanimously expressed their intent or current practice of recommending potential students to Mukhanyo for their theological studies.

Below are remarks from some of the graduates:

- Zolithini Isaac Bolale from the African Presbyterian Church, Kutlwanong, Odendaalsrus, Free State: "Now I can distinguish between God's word and African traditions, etc... I can now distinguish between the false teacher and the right teacher."
- Ononofile Ephraim Leepile of the Tswelelopele Dutch Reformed Church in Africa, Tlakgameng, Vryburg, North West Province: "Doing theology is not like doing Bible study and is very difficult. Mukhanyo has structured the modules in a

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CONGRATULATIONS



Class of 2023

highly comprehensible manner.

- Thembani Gonyora of the Church on the Rock Ministries, Msholozhi, KwaMhlanga: As Christians, we learned that we are not supposed to see ourselves as better than others.
- Mthokoziseni Ntokozo Mzimela of the Ongoye Parish, Khandisa Congregation, Empangeni, KwaZulu-Natal: "I am intending to help my church in preaching the word of God and am planning to continue with my studies in order to grow in Christ. The most interesting part of my studies was about farming God's way. The most interesting aspect is the quality of study material, abundant with information to spread the Word of God."
- Tebogo Keliumetse Letta Ramakone, Soshanguve, Gauteng: "Worship is not about us but about God; it is not a feel-good service but glorifying our Maker. It is through our worship that people will get to know our God and repent. I am a steward of God, I only say what God says. No verse exists outside the passage, the book, etc."

- Hlanyana Andries Tshehla of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa, Ekangala, Bronkhorstspuit, Mpumalanga: "I hope to use my background (as a teacher) and this qualification to teach and guide to especially the church leadership. Mukhanyo is a great hope for local church leaders across doctrines and affiliations. The development and growth of local learning centres have the great potential of strengthening church leadership and stabilising local churches."

Was there any criticism? Yes, there were remarks such as "very challenging", the study "gave us a hard time to get it right", "too much information", "I struggled somewhat with the online system..."



Shaping Future Leaders with Faith and Knowledge

Celebrating the success of its students, Mukhanyo Theological College hosted a graduation ceremony on March 8th, where 84 out of 116 graduates gathered at the KwaMhlanga campus to receive their well-deserved qualifications. The 2023 graduating class of Mukhanyo Theological College boasts 56 Higher Certificates in Bible Training, 24 Higher Certificates in Church Ministry, 23 Diplomas in Theology, 11 Bachelor of Theology Degrees, and 2 Bachelor of Theology Honours.



The event was a resounding success, marking the culmination of years of hard work, dedication, and scholarly pursuit for the graduating class.

With a steadfast commitment to academic excellence and a missional heart, Mukhanyo Theological College has prepared its graduates to become leaders, scholars, and catalysts for positive change in their communities and beyond.

The graduation ceremony was a memorable occasion, filled with reflection, celebration, and anticipation for the bright futures that lie ahead for each graduate. Attendees had the opportunity to honour the achievements of the graduates, acknowledge the support of family and friends, and embrace the exciting opportunities that await them.

Rev. Neil Henry, lecturer and Regional Coordinator for the Western Cape, left the students with a

mindful thought during his Keynote Address: “It is possible to enjoy serving by serving others well,” highlighting the essence of Mukhanyo Theological College, which is to prepare its students to make a positive change in their communities and beyond by conveying the message of God.

Dr Brian DeVries, the Principal of Mukhanyo Theological College, shared words from 2 Timothy 2:1-7 during his principal’s address. From the scripture, he gave the graduates three key messages for their road ahead: “Be strengthened by the Grace that is in Christ, be committed to the word, and be empowered by the Holy Spirit.”

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the graduates and express our gratitude to all who contributed to the success of this milestone event.



TEASA Registration Now Open

Authenticity and integrity (AI) is the theme of this year’s Bible College Consultation which will take place on 11-13 June at the eMseni Christian Centre, about 8km from the OR Tambo airport (<https://emsenichristiancentre.co.za/>).

The Theological Education Association of Southern Africa (TEASA), in conjunction with Mukhanyo, expects to have a list of prominent speakers to address the conference on a very topical theme since artificial intelligence (also AI) could become another threat to honest and God-willing Bible studies.



Despite economic challenges and poverty in Southern Africa and beyond, TEASA expects to draw representatives from some hundred colleges, seminaries, Bible schools and universities. This marks the 13th consultation, with the inaugural event held in 2011.

Previous annual consultations have covered themes like God’s work, serving the church, standing firm for truth, promoting the quality of Bible education, Christian ethics, spiritual formation, Christian leadership, technology and tradition, developing of teachers and facilitators, and curricula development – all aspects to promote Bible education.

TEASA is an association of Bible colleges and seminaries that find synergy and fellowship to promote their common visions of theological education in Africa. The association includes institutions such as the Bible Institute of South Africa, George Whitefield College and the International College of Bible and Missions, with Mukhanyo acting as the organiser.

Registration to attend the consultation is now open and includes overnight accommodation and meals. Visit www.teasa.co.za for more details, fees, and to register.

Bible Teaching Behind the Holiday Curtains

The south coast of KwaZulu Natal is known for a long string of holiday resorts, but not for the far more important Bible study training by the Kind Christian Outreach Trust which at present has seven local learning sites with 40 students, facilitated by six tutors.

This trust, known as KCOT, is an initiative of the late Ed Coetsee and the retired Reformed pastor, the Rev. Hermanus Schutte. They started the work in 2011 and decided that the Mukhanyo programmes were best suited for the purpose. By 2023, more than 100 students had already completed one of these programmes.

Why the Mukhanyo courses? Schutte says that he and the other trust members gave careful consideration and researched several programmes and found that Mukhanyo did fulfil their requirements best, teaching the Reformed doctrine. The programmes are affordable, the training is good quality theology and has been developed with distance training in mind.

In the regions, there is a deep need for proper Bible knowledge. The in-depth training is therefore especially to enable lay preachers to grow their ministries, but is also aimed at other pastors, evangelists, teachers, nurses and others. Through this, the trust wants to contribute to uplift communities in need of Bible knowledge, Biblical values and the love of God.

Poverty and unemployment in this region are very serious and it is estimated that only some 26% of

the employable population have work. The trust believes that people should be assisted to develop their God-given potential through theological training. This should benefit the students and also their communities. The trust also gives continuous support to its alumni.

At present the sites are located at:

- Cedarville (Kokstad) offers the Higher Certificate in Church Ministry (HCCM) and the Focus programme in Zulu.
- Gamalakhe (Margate): Higher Certificate in Bible Teaching (HCBT) and Focus in Zulu.
- Hibberdene: HCCM and Focus in Zulu
- Munster: The Focus programme in English
- Port Shepstone: HCCM and HCBT
- Port St Johns: HCBT
- Scottburgh: HCCM

This year the trust aims to raise enough funds to be able to continue their activities to enlarge the groups, and also to increase the scope of their continued support of the alumni.



Examination Results

The results of the examinations at the end of 2024 at Mukhanyo's five campuses/centres were somewhat better than in previous years. The overall pass rate was 84% for the 75 active Bachelor of Theology (BTh) students and 80% for the Higher Certificate programme.



The average course marks of the BTh students was 61%, while in the Higher Certificate programme the average course marks were 65%.

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