

## **WITNESS OF DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH DELEGATES**

We, ministers and members of the Dutch Reformed Church, who attended the International Global Consultation on World Evangelism (GCOWE) in Pretoria, wish to give testimony concerning the light, commission and blessing which we have received from the Lord.

It was a great privilege for us to be part of a gathering where church leaders, missionaries, ministers, business leaders, artists, students and church members from all over the world gathered together. This conference had its origin in the AD2000 and Beyond Movement which has as aim to establish a church for every unreached people group in the world by the year 2000 in order for the gospel to be available to every person. The goal of this year's conference (GCOWE'97) was to develop strategies for mobilising local churches all over the world to reach out to the 1739 identified people groups who have not yet been effectively reached with the gospel. This is known as the Joshua Project 2000. The conference was attended by more than 4000 Christian leaders from over 130 countries.

### **1. We were pleasantly surprised by:**

- The infectious enthusiasm for missions which was evident throughout the conference.
- The presence of a large number of churches from different traditions
- The large number of members and ministers from the Dutch Reformed Church who were part of the preparations, organisation, discussions and intercession for the conference.
- The fact that differences did not stand in the way of co-operation across denominational boundaries in order to be obedient to the Biblical mandate.
- The evidence of huge steps which congregations of the Dutch Reformed Church have already taken in this respect.
- The genuine desire to proclaim the Kingdom of God in word and in deed and thereby make a difference to the suffering brought about by unbelief, poverty, violence, crime and injustice.
- The focus on the role of the local church in world evangelism.

### **2. We were moved by:**

- The enthralling way in which conference goers humbled themselves before the Lord and sought His will with unreserved sincerity.
- The way in which the Holy Spirit moved ministers and church leaders to confess before God and to one another attitudes which had been the cause of division and prejudice.

- The remarkable spirit of prayer and worship which undergirded and enriched the joint reflections throughout the conference.
- The desire to bring the whole gospel for the whole person to the whole world.

3. We have come to the conviction that the Lord is calling our congregations to:

- Witness through word and deed, together with other churches, nationally and internationally, concerning salvation, unity and justice;
- Hereby bring the light of the Gospel to the many situations of unbelief, hunger, illness, violence and discrimination which are in evidence locally as well as worldwide.
- Form networks with other churches in order to proclaim the Kingdom of God by word and deed to unreached people groups in our vicinity, in Southern Africa, the rest of Africa and worldwide. We believe that such outreaches should take place in a spirit of sensitivity for and co-operation with churches which may already be operating in the target areas in order to encourage, support and strengthen them in their task of witnessing and thus build up the Body of Christ in those regions.
- Confess before the Lord our sins and attitudes of prejudices, unforgiveness, self-justification and spiritual and cultural superiority.
- Harness the capabilities and gifts of young people, theologians, men and women graduating from pastoral training, business leaders and artists in order to strengthen the witness of the church in this regard.
- To be instrumental in the hands of the Holy Spirit to promote revival within His Church.

4. We wish to invite individual members, congregations, presbyteries and synods to become part of this amazing initiative which we sincerely believe the Holy Spirit is calling forth within the worldwide church.

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