

A BIG THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS!



Volmoed is beautiful! It is always a privilege to welcome and host many interesting people and groups from local areas, South Africa, and international visitors, and support their work and activities of reconciliation, healing, peace and justice. The Volmoed retreat centre is unique and beautifully able to provide the creative and peaceful space that these very different groups are looking for.



Over the past few months, Volmoed has hosted a high school brass band; leaders and trainers for an NGO that works with young people from South Africa and different African countries; and an annual Stellenbosch University Colloquium that brings students and faculty of various universities together along with academics and others who are interested in the topic for the weekend. It's an intergenerational event that sparks many debates and discussions, and an annual highlight for many. We

hope for more groups from South Africa and around the world to come and discover this place for themselves.

The winter months can be slow with visitors and groups, like this year which has been cold, windy and rainy, but this also means that all the dams are thankfully full. And we still get a few blue-sky sunny, cold days in between that cheer us up. Deluges of rain in July caused all sorts of chaos due to flooded roads in the area. Unfortunately a blocked drain caused flooding in the offices and had to be mopped up and cleaned up with the help of the carpet cleaners. Despite the cold and wet weather a group of women managed to arrive that weekend, and had a good retreat. They kept the meeting room warm with a fire and themselves with hot water bottles. The rain stopped on the Saturday afternoon giving them a chance to get out and explore a little.

An American group are currently here for part of the Tutu Travel Seminar, who bring a group twice a year. Desmond Tutu was the first patron of Volmoed, lived in the area in his last years, and was a regular visitor. While the group is here, they focus on learning about Tutu's legacy of reconciliation and justice in South Africa and more globally. August is Women's Month in South Africa, and they include a session on Tutu and Gender, which was a large focus for his time as Archbishop of the Anglican Church in Southern Africa. It was one of his primary goals to see women ordained as priests, and it happened six years into his ten year tenure as Archbishop. They also enjoy the incredible natural beauty of this Overstrand area and the Valley of Heaven and Earth, where Volmoed is situated. The Volmoed youth drummers welcomed them to Volmoed when they arrived.



As always, we are grateful for so much. We also face some challenges as Volmoed heads towards its 40th anniversary in 2026. As the infrastructure gets older, the water pipes, tools, vehicles, and more, break or need replacing, including a couple of roofs of the houses. We have had a lot of capital expenses this year, even as our finances and income has been slowly improving. We will also have to get a new pickup truck as there are no longer spare parts available to keep the current one on the road. This also happens in the natural world. The beloved very tall bluegum and oak

trees are getting older and some are diseased, and have had to be cut down. A useful path that connects residents to the lower areas, has had to be re-done. There are always many things on the task list!

As ever, we are more than grateful for our staff. We had to say a couple of goodbyes, to Yohane who kept our gardens beautiful, and Anna on the housekeeping team, and welcomed Verosa onto our staff, into the housekeeping team. The past year has had an important focus on Health and Safety, and ensuring everyone is properly trained for the work they do and the tools they use, and learning new skills for their jobs.



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS
THAT HELP US DO THIS WORK!**