

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR GENEROUS DONORS!

Our big news is that Covid-19 restrictions in South Africa were lifted on June 23 – no more masks, social distancing or sanitizing are required, though people are still encouraged to be careful in public spaces. This is a huge deal for us at Volmoed. Slowly, slowly, some groups are starting to return, events and trainings are taking place or being booked for the future, and it feels like we are emerging into a wider and more spacious place, we can breathe again!



Music took centre stage when the Ingoma choir from Imizamo Yethu informal settlement, Hout Bay, came for a weekend of singing and rehearsals, that included physical and spiritual wellness.



They enjoyed yoga, boxing, and sound meditation. Wilma Jakobsen, the Volmoed chaplain, welcomed them on the Friday night and told the Volmoed story, and offered questions for their personal reflection during their weekend in this beautiful place. She took them on a scenic hike with a view of two waterfalls, to the De Bos dam, where they stood on the wall and sang ‘Stand By Me’ for the bystanders. Everywhere they went, they sang! They offered two beautiful songs at the Sunday church service, what a joy. For many, it was the first time they ever went on a weekend camp and they loved it.

An American group, led by Michael Battle and Edwin Arrison, both connected to the Desmond and Leah Tutu Foundation, came to Volmoed as part of the Tutu Seminar. They were a group of Episcopal and Methodist clergy and lay leaders, learning about race and gender justice and the history and context of South Africa. They engaged about gender and racial justice in the church and society, about poverty and economic justice in South Africa. They met with Prof John de Gruchy, with Wilma the chaplain, and attended



community services. Our young leaders in the Volmoed Youth Leadership Training Program, took them on a tour through Zwelihle informal settlement, to experience the joys and the challenges of the disparity and inequity of life in South Africa. It was a profoundly meaningful time for them.

On the large, beautiful property, we are working on the never-ending task of clearing alien vegetation, taking our alien trees and planting new indigenous trees that people have donated in honor of a loved one. We hope to work more formally with Stellenbosch University and that the students will come on a regular basis to help us with this challenging task of caring for our property.



We also have new life – Grace, a young mother, gave birth to Hope! Our family of cows brings great joy to visitors and especially to children, and many people learn to milk cows for the first time, with Blazio Dilla, who cares lovingly for them.

A highlight this past month Volmoed was the ‘Healing of Memories’ workshop with Michael Lapsley and Fatima Swartz from the Institute for Healing of Memories. We had worked for many months to make this happen, as part of our vision and mission for reconciliation and healing. The workshop took place over two sets of two morning sessions and was profoundly meaningful for those who attended, with trilingual translation in English, Xhosa and Afrikaans.



Many of our staff and residents attended and expressed that it was ‘life changing.’ What a gift! Bonds of community and relationships were strengthened and deepened. Many have asked that the process continues, and we are working out how to do that.

Volmoed is a partner of the Community of the Cross of Nails, in Coventry, England, and participated in the 60th anniversary celebrations of Coventry Cathedral through an online presentation by the chaplain, Wilma Jakobsen, and Mpho Tutu, on the legacy of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, focused on reconciliation.

As always, thank you for your ongoing support throughout the year. We are enormously grateful.

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AND ALL YOUR DONATIONS!

WE APPRECIATE YOU!

