

*Achterberg 2006*  
**TAKING HANDS IN SERVICE AND WITNESS (*Diensgetuienis*) ON  
NATIONAL LEVEL**

The dates 17 & 18 October 2006 are special in the lives of the DRC family in the RSA. We are convinced the outcome of the meetings we as delegates from Service and Witness held during these two days changed the direction of the service and witness ministries of the DRC family of churches within the RSA and Namibia for good.

The unification process of the S&W ministries of the family comes a long way. The United Witness ministries of three members of this family for example was found in 2001. However it was only during this year 2006, after the miracles which our Lord worked since June amongst our church leadership, that it became possible for all of us to join hands as full members of the United Service and Witness Ministry of the DRC Family within the RSA and Namibia. And indeed, during our joint meeting we declared to gladly identify ourselves with the process of covenanting for re-unification that was initiated by the leadership of the DRC Family of churches.

First we met separately for a few hours as synodical ministries of the different family churches, to deal with matters on our respective agendas and we also did so because we had to strike a balance between the slower movers and those pressing for the fast lane in our different contexts. However, when we met together we were consoled, the slower movers and the fast trackers, because amongst others we assembled at a retreat center called Good Shepherd, next to the Hartbeespoort Dam. We somehow all sensed, and had good faith that our Good Shepherd Himself indeed walked this road before us. We together realized Christ is clearly calling us to follow Him, leading us to *walk together* in His own steps.

Although the RCA could unfortunately not attend our joint meeting, due to a misunderstanding about the logistics, we assembled as 30 delegates with the support of from all four of our DRC Family churches. Incidentally the strategic planning for our Good Shepherd meeting was done during September here at Achterberg, by delegates from all four our family churches.

Together at Good Shepherd we firstly looked back and shared the story of our own journey with each other. We discerned the historical process and reminded one another of its joys and its shortcomings. In the light of Paul's remarkable teachings to Philemon and Onesimus to accept each other as brothers in Christ, we took time to really get to know one another better.

Eventually we could find enough common understanding and will to adopt a memorandum of agreement as well as a theological preamble for it. We decided to allow time for our brothers and sisters from the RCA, who could not attend, to also assess the products of our deliberations. The concept documents are now to be tested, edited and to then become the constitution for our United Ministry for Service and Witness in unity.

The elected management group comprises of Jimmy de Wet and Piet Meiring (alternating chairpersons), Willie van der Merwe (Scribe), Dineo Seloana, Andries Hoffman and Victor Pillay. Secundi members are Botha van Aarde, Tshidiso Molaolwa, Gideon van Aarde, Johan Botha.