

MEDIA RELEASE

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THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA PREPARES TO WELCOME THE MOST REVEREND MICHAEL B CURRY PRESIDING BISHOP OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Bishop Michael Curry, the primate of the Episcopal Church will visit the Province of Southern Africa (ACSA) in February to meet with Diocesan Bishops at their Synod, and to give the fourth Bishop David Beetge Memorial Lecture.

The three day visit will include Sunday morning worship in Johannesburg, visiting Kwasa College primary school in Springs, the Trevor Huddleston CR Memorial Centre in Sophiatown, participating in Synod reflections, meeting young Christians in Highveld, and those working to raise funds for anti-poverty programmes in the Province of ACSA.

"The heart of the visit," said Archbishop Thabo Makgoba, "is to meet the Anglican bishops of Southern Africa at a regular meeting of their Synod, and to give the fourth Memorial Lecture in honour of the late Bishop David Beetge of the Highveld. Bishop Beetge was a leading cleric in our church and an international advocate who raised funds for the poorest of the poor before his sudden death in 2008.

"In marking the 10th anniversary of David's passing, we celebrate his life with a lecture on the theme of peacemaking. I am delighted that Bishop Curry has agreed to deliver the lecture on his first visit as the head of our sister church."

For more information: Lulu Letlape 082 881 5554

Public Event information:

The Fourth Memorial Lecture commemorating the late Bishop David Beetge: Sunday 17th February 2019 at 15h00 at Wits University Great Hall.

Tickets: R200 per person direct from 083 415 0128 or Quicket (R5 booking fee):

<https://www.quicket.co.za/events/65744-bishop-michael-curry-talks-in-johannesburg-peace...>

Notes for Editors:

About ACSA: <https://anglicanchurchsa.org/>

About Presiding Bishop Michael Curry: <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/biography-most-rev-michael-curry>

About Bishop David Beetge – Archbishop Thabo Makgoba, primate of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, described Bishop Beetge as “an outstanding and exemplary leader of our church, a man of deep spirituality and prayer.” He noted that Bishop Beetge, who was the second most senior bishop in their province, also served the Anglican Communion “with great distinction” as co-chair of the International Anglican/Roman Catholic Commission on Unity and Mission (IARCCUM).”

More below © Anglican Journal

About the Trevor Huddleston Memorial Centre: <https://trevorhuddleston.org>

David Beetge, bishop of the diocese of Highveld, South Africa, speaks to media at the 2008 Lambeth Conference.

Many Anglican leaders today paid tribute to Bishop Beetge, who led a diocese that faced many pressing issues, including the scourge of HIV/AIDS, massive poverty, and the influx of immigrants from war-torn African nations like Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

“The Anglican Church worldwide has lost an exceptional man – warm, intelligent, utterly dedicated, imaginative; and many of us have lost a deeply valued friend,” said Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams in a statement. “David gave selflessly of his gifts in the service of the Communion, its internal business and its ecumenical relations, and carried great responsibility with calm, humour and good sense.”

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Canon Kenneth Kearon, secretary general of the Anglican Communion, recalled that “on visits to his diocese it was clear that he was not only a beloved bishop and pastor to his clergy and people, but a bishop whose ministry reflected the heart of the gospel message in his widely diverse, vast and strong diocese.”

Bishop Beetge was “a very special friend of all of us in the London office,” said Mr. Kearon, adding, “he will be sorely missed in the workings of the Anglican Communion but his legacy is one that I am sure will inspire many of us in the days ahead.”

At July’s Lambeth Conference, Bishop Beetge passionately talked about the importance of the bishops’ march to London to pressure governments to fulfill their promise to address poverty and other issues outlined in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). “The march will say to governments that people matter. That people matter more than arms, that people matter more than huge bureaucracies and that people must come first,” he said.

Bishop Beetge also said that the walk is going to be “a symbolic act for whoever sees it.” For the poor, it is a message “that the church cares about them.”

Bishop Beetge, who had been involved in HIV-AIDS work for the last 18 years, said the mission of the church is “the mission of Christ,” which is to minister to those “living on the edge.” He also said that his diocese is situated in an area that is struggling with 40-45 per cent unemployment and with an HIV-AIDS rate of 40 per cent. “We’ve trained 1,100 home-based workers (for HIV-AIDS) because hospitals can’t cope,” he said.

His church is also involved in other social justice initiatives, including literacy training and care for 10,000 orphans in the area.

Born in 1948 in Witbank, South Africa, Bishop Beetge received his theological education at St. Paul's Theological College in Grahamstown. He later received both his bachelor and honour degrees in theology at the University of South Africa, and his master's degree in theology from the University of Natal.

Ordained a priest in 1981, he served in various churches before becoming vicar general, and later the first bishop, of the diocese of South Eastern Transvaal in 1990. In 1998, the name of the diocese was changed to the diocese of the Highveld.

Bishop Beetge also served his church in many capacities at the provincial level, including as dean of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa, and as liaison bishop and chair of the Anglican HIV/AIDS programs for Southern Africa.

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