

THE Source

November 2018



- *Ten Top Tips for God's Messengers*

Peter Farrant

- *Being Heavenly Minded*

Craig Pidduck

St John the Baptist Community Church

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Please Join Us!

Men's Bush Breakfast
at 'Exciting Times' (Joan Baber's)
Shane: 074 430 2827

Wednesday Night Bible Study:
at Craig and Trish's, dinner at 18h00
Trish: 083 690 0061

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The Light of the World

Shane Dowinton



As we head rapidly towards the end of another year I thought it might be right to look forward into 2019 and to share with you a bold vision for St John's to engage with.

Earlier this year I happened to be listening to a talk by one of my favourite speakers in the US right now. He was telling an anecdote about how he was on his way to preach one Sunday morning and happened to pick up the local newspaper. An article in it was highlighting the worst cities to live in the US. Based on crime statistics, unemployment, child pregnancy, homelessness and poverty, it rated every city in the States. His own city featured at number 5! It rocked his boat!

He went on to change his preach and instead challenged his church, which is a highly effective and popular church known around the world – "How can we consider ourselves an effective church if outside of its walls the people are living in fear, hopelessness and poverty?" His preach prompted the beginning of a change in how they did "church".

They began by involving their local government in a dialogue – "What can we do to help?" was their opening gambit. Initially, they got involved with

litter and clean-up projects, then after a recent wildfire they helped with food and clothing distribution and even financial help to those who had lost homes. Their community grew in trust towards them and an interesting turn of events led to a much bigger project.

Their civic hall went bankrupt. Rather than see a community centre become derelict or worse they chose to buy it and run it as a meeting hub for the community. They didn't "spiritualise" it and thereby put walls of exclusion around it, they ran it as a social, entertainment and educational facility.

It has proved a success. They do run church services there and Christian conferences, but not exclusively. Their city is changing. Their church is being known for its positive impact on its community. It has stopped being seen as an exclusive spiritual hub, it is now seen as a community player with ideas, strategies and solutions for positive change and upliftment.

I personally think this story highlights an issue we have as "Church", we carry the light of Christ in us and our churches grow and are successful, but if our light remains solely in the church then we are not the light of the world.



In an Elders' meeting earlier in the year we discussed this story and decided that we too would look at taking the light of Christ to the community. Vaalwater has a community hub in the heart of the town which has also fallen on hard times. Once a vibrant centre for the town hosting weddings and dances, meetings and sports socials, it has lacked a bit of love and care for some time and looks a little forlorn. We decided that we would look into it as an opportunity to inject life and hope into our town and have been quietly going after this during the course of the year.

By the time you read this we will have taken over the management of the Farmers Hall and should be well on the way to giving it an uplift. Our vision is to restore it as a cultural, social and educational facility in the heart of Vaalwater that it might unite us all in our identity as people of the Waterberg.

The building was initially started in the 50's by the North Waterberg Farmers' Association with this same intention. Many of the names on the committee

are names known to us as spiritual elders in St John's and so, in some sense, we are restoring a legacy and expanding it.

The initial phase is repair and maintenance but our goal is to create attractive spaces for community events whether it be weddings and larger functions in the main hall to any number or type of meeting in the smaller conference rooms. We hope to spruce up the social area on the north side with café facilities and shaded seating areas and a terrace. Ultimately, we hope to landscape the grounds and improve the sports facilities.

St John's will be accountable for the administration of the Farmers Hall and we hope that within a short time frame there will be jobs for people there. The core of the vision is to draw the community together in various ways and with different events but as a church we will have a central facility to run many functions that will reach a broader platform than we are able to at 24 Rivers.

We are excited about this vision and hope that you will join us on this journey as a church to be the "light of the world". We would love to hear your ideas and we hope that you will support us as we grow our boundaries.

"Enlarge the site of your tent, stretch out the curtains of your dwellings, do not hold back. Lengthen your ropes and drive your stakes deep."

Isaiah 54:2

The graphic features the word "Armenia" in a white, cursive font, centered over three horizontal brushstrokes of red, blue, and orange. Below it, the phrase "Not just an outreach trip" is written in a smaller, blue, cursive font.

Armenia

Not just an outreach trip

Tayla-Kae Nicholson

The outreach to Armenia in August was everything I had hoped it would be and, of course, more. From the moment we set out to OR Tambo airport it felt as though I had stepped into a space of joy and love. That bubble followed us around for the rest of the trip, and looking back that was definitely one of the things that defined our journey.

Hylton and his team are wonderful people, and I'm sure the connections we made will be life-long. What was especially significant about meeting them at the airport was that it seemed as though we had already known each other for years. The friendships made there felt God-orchestrated. In fact, the whole outreach felt God-orchestrated.

The insufferable heat in Armenia and the fact that having running water was never a certainty were made bearable by the welcoming nature of the Armenian people. They are incredibly hospitable and their kindness radiates from them in smiles, sweets and surch (what they call coffee).

I don't suppose any of this is the point though. The point is that everywhere we looked and everything we did seemed to be coated in God's presence. He seemed to be everywhere; in what we said, in

how we acted and where we went. It wasn't that we talked about Him all the time – that's not what it was about. We weren't sent to Armenia to talk about God, or about Jesus or the Holy Spirit. I realise now that we went there to express Them.

We spent our weekends in the town of Artashat. When we weren't ministering in the churches there, we were walking the streets in search of ice-cream or food and then, by some coincidence (or shall I say, God's intervention) we'd be praying with people on the street, in their shops and, once, even in a restaurant.

It must have looked strange to the people around us – in fact, two policemen came in when the girls were praying around a woman in the restaurant and they looked quite concerned – but it didn't feel strange. It felt like the most natural thing in the world. In the end we hugged the policemen, and they did smile a little bit so I consider it a victory.

During the week we took a bus and headed over to Lake Sevan for a youth camp. I guess the Armenians define 'youth' as any age between 16 and fifties because there were some 'older' people on the camp too. Not that it stopped them from having a blast, I might add.

The camp was amazing. We spent our mornings and evenings in a sort of church service/ message that then flowed into a time of worship and prayer. It was incredible how we were able to gently approach these people and then let God take control of the conversation. It was sometimes difficult, because we often needed translators to translate from English to Armenian or vice-versa, but we did it. There are few things more rewarding than watching people touched by the Holy Spirit.

It was particularly special for me, because I've never seen myself as someone very influential in the 'Christian world'. But my definition of influential was warped, because influence doesn't have to be something big and bold like writing books or speaking at conferences (these are good things, don't get me wrong).

Influence can be something as small as giving the right word to someone at the right moment and letting God take that and let it grow.

And God's moments weren't just in 'church'. They were all over the show – at meal times, chatting as a group of friends at the lake, walking in the street, in someone's home or late night conversations on the porch of the chalets we stayed in.

I don't have a favourite moment, but two things really stood out for me. The first was my baptism in Lake Sevan. I don't think I need to explain how breathtaking that was – I don't have the words to do so anyway. Needless to say, we washed away the old TK in the 'sweet' waters of Lake Sevan and the new TK is alive and well and ready for action.

A second highlight was probably when Tondi (one of the guys with us on the team) arranged an altar-call. There was a brief moment, after he'd called anyone up who wanted to give their lives to the Lord, when it felt like Heaven was holding its breath as we waited. And then one by one people started coming forward.

Now that was amazing! In the end I think there were thirteen people that came forward, maybe more. Isn't that incredible? Thirteen more people that were giving their lives to God. Thirteen more souls on our side. It was a beautiful, intense moment and I know that Jesus was celebrating that victory right along with us.



TK being baptised in Armenia





I could honestly go on and on about our trip. I think everyone in our team grew so much in our understanding of the spiritual gifts we've been blessed with and our understanding of God, but also what it means to just love people. It doesn't take much, and God makes it so easy.

In the end it's not about what we say to try and convince someone that God is real, it's about how we express Him – through love and through joy. That's what this trip showed me, anyway.



Armenia Outreach Team

BEING HEAVENLY MINDED

Craig Pidduck



What is it that makes you happy? More particularly, what brings you joy?

One of the things that brings me joy is being out on the farm, in the wilderness appreciating the natural beauty of this beautiful place where we are privileged to live. Another thing is dinner time with my family. We sit and chat about the day and each of us gives the highlight and lowlight of their day. Thankfully there are usually more highs than lows.

But then consider: how blessed are we, who have accepted the Lord Jesus as our saviour, to have the knowledge that our names are written in the book of life? When we die it's simply the beginning of a new chapter, the longest and best chapter in fact, that we'll enter into. And we didn't even earn it or deserve it. It is God's will for us to spend eternity in heaven with Him.

2 Cor. 5:1 "For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands."

I've learnt that there are many satisfactions in this world that can bring happiness and a temporary sense of euphoria - but they don't seem to last. The visitors leave, work resumes, holidays end, life continues... That's not to say that life is all work or doom and gloom - but when we take stock of the things to come later, we realise just how fickle and fleeting the pleasures of this world are.

However, God intended for us to be joyful in everything we do and we are told in 1 Thessalonians 5:16 to "Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus."

If you look out for it, the Lord daily gives you glimpses of the wonderful things to come. Things that bring you happiness and enjoyment: a new born calf, a beautiful sunset over the ocean, watching your kid win at her sports event. These are small suggestions of the perfection that is yet to come.

Knowing God intimately, spending time in His presence, doing His will, bringing Him glory, experiencing His great love for us - these things bring real joy into our hearts and an inner sense of satisfaction and peace that surpasses all understanding.

Nothing, not even the threat of death, can bring us down when we are filled with the joy of the Lord Jesus. Paul said for him to die would be gain, but to live is Christ. In other words death would simply be the official entry into the destiny we were created for.

But if we live it should be to glorify Christ and further his kingdom. It's a win-win situation for the believer.

The crux of the matter is this: we need to start thinking outside the box and look past all that we physically see and can touch. Everything you see here is important yes, but it is also temporary. So don't let your mind be narrowed to the point where you believe that this is all there is. This life is going to be a camera flash compared to eternity spent in glory with the Lord.

Some of us have blinkers on and can't see beyond here and now. Many put way too much importance on this life - studies, careers, investments, relationships, school, money, vehicles, etc. There's absolutely nothing wrong with any of these. The Lord wants us to live a full, busy, and productive life. But it's not everything.

We need to have a heavenly minded perspective on the bigger, grander picture. Why? Because focusing on the reward to come makes it all the more worthwhile striving to please Him in this lifetime. It's like working towards our eternal retirement fund.

Paul raises this in Colossians 3: "Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honour at God's right hand."

In his letter to the Philippians in chapter 3:20 Paul writes: "But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for Him to return as our Saviour. He will take our weak, mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like

His own, using the same power with which he will bring everything under his control."

Knowing 100% where we are going when we leave this life is probably the most powerful, satisfying and exciting thing we could ever wish for. We cling to those words in John's gospel in chapter 14:1 : "Do not let your hearts be troubled, in my father's house are many rooms. I am going there to prepare a place for you."

This changes the way we see things. The threats that we face now are not so serious, knowing we have been promised a place in paradise. It just puts our thoughts into perspective and resets our priorities.

Are you always in search of the next experience or possession to make you feel good? Think of eternity and perhaps you might start to consider using your time and resources to help and uplift others. Invest something for eternity where we will live in a constant state of joy and happiness.

And for those who are in a trench with no hope seemingly in sight, take comfort in the fact that God gives us the strength for each day. He is the Creator, so we can ask Him for something new and exciting to happen each day.

So no matter what you look like right now, no matter if you are healthy or sick, rich or poor, young or old - take stock of what you have and be grateful for it. Trust God; Praise Him for your blessings! Thank Jesus for his amazing grace and always keep your mind on the glorious reward of heaven to come.



When all the news ...is bad news

Barend Pretorius

*What do you do when you pray but the situation does not change or gets worse?
What if God's answer is not what you want to hear?*

This is what happened to the prophet Habakkuk. The book Habakkuk offers us an amazing model of a healthy, balanced response to what had to be about the worst news he could have received from God.

Habakkuk lived at the end of the seventh century BC, at a time when the Babylonians were in power. He was deeply disturbed by the violence of these cruel people who invaded Israel's land. He pleaded to the Lord to intervene.

Habakkuk's Complaint:

"How long, Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, "Violence!" but you do not save? Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. Therefore the law is paralysed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted."
Hab 1:2-4

The Lord's Answer:

"I am raising up the Babylonians, Oh that ruthless and impetuous people, who sweep across the whole earth to seize dwelling-places not their own. They are a feared

and dreaded people; they are a law to themselves and promote their own honour."
Hab 1:6-7

The Lord's answer, that He is allowing the Babylonians to invade the land, was not what Habakkuk wanted to hear. Yet, even as his body reacted negatively, he realized that he had a choice about what he was going to believe. He could trust his emotions. He could trust his current view of the situation. Or he could trust that God could somehow bring good out of a bad situation.

In our lives, it may feel like the Babylonians have already ravaged the landscape of our hearts. We may be grieving losses that occurred years ago. But even in the middle of all that pain, if we choose to trust God despite all kinds of evidence to the contrary, then we will break through to a new level of intimacy with Him.

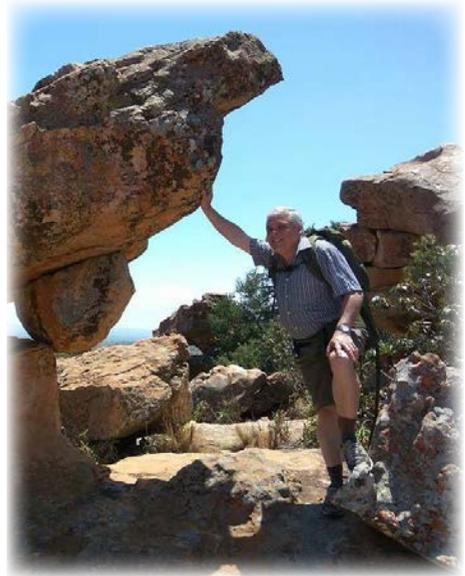
We will know his presence in the middle of our hurting. We will trust his character when we don't understand our circumstances. Then, no matter what happens, no matter how painfully your heart is pierced, you can continue to take one more step for one more day.

Read Habakkuk's prayer as he submits to God's will in this terrible situation:

Hab 2:16-17

Though the fig-tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Saviour. The Sovereign Lord is my strength; He makes my feet like the feet of a deer, He enables me to go on the heights.

As with Habakkuk, our prayer becomes honest about what we've lost or will lose, even as we realise that we still have God.



"Even though my spouse said till death do us part and didn't live up to their word, I will still rejoice in the Lord my God."

"Even though I raised my kids to know better and they're making very scary decisions right now, yet will I trust in the Lord my God."

"Even though we've prayed for someone's health to get better and they've gotten worse, yet I will trust in the Lord my God."

"Even though our house or farm will not sell and we are on the line, I will yet trust in the Lord my God."

"Even though finances are tough and it's going to cost thousands of rands to repair my car, yet I will trust in the Lord my God."

"Even though I don't like it, even though I don't understand it, even though I know He could and He should but He's not, yet will I trust in the Lord my God."

Pray: Even though ...

I will trust you.

You are my God.

Like Habakkuk, in every

difficult circumstance,

choose to trust God.



At Billy Graham's funeral his own pre-recorded message was played reminding everyone that there is life beyond the grave and calling them to put their faith in Jesus. Ever since God called him to be His messenger in 1934 at the age of 16 years, Billy was a faithful messenger of the gospel.

He spoke to more than 200 million people in person about Jesus. He was a friend and adviser to ten American Presidents. His

lifetime audience, including radio and TV broadcasts topped 2.2 billion people. He was determined to make the most of every opportunity, including his own funeral, to pass on God's message to the world.

Our task is to hear the gospel of Jesus and to declare it to others and especially to the next generation! So how do we best do this?

<p>Stay Close to God</p>	<p>If you want to hear God's message you need to: "Wait passionately for God, don't leave the path..." Psalm 37:34 The Message. Make time for God in your day. Spending time in His presence is the most important act in your life. We need God's presence in our lives more than anything else!</p>
<p>Seek Peace</p>	<p>God's messengers must be messengers of peace. "Consider the blameless, observe the upright; a future awaits those who seek peace," Psalm 37:37. God's messengers should not be stirrers or seek to bring unnecessary division.</p>
<p>Do Not Judge</p>	<p>Jesus says: "Do not judge," and "Do not condemn," Luke 6:37. In The Message translation: "Don't pick on people, jump on their failures, criticise their faith." Jesus' famous story about trying to take a speck of dust out of someone else's eye, when you have a plank in your own eye is a challenging one. I need to pay more attention to my own faults and the areas where I need to grow. Only then can I help reconcile others to God in their struggles.</p>
<p>Forgive Others</p>	<p>Jesus said: "Forgive and you will be forgiven," Luke 6: 37 (b). You need to forgive people even if they are not sorry. In forgiving others you do not condone or agree with their behaviour. If you remember how great God's forgiveness is towards you it becomes easier to forgive others. Forgiven people forgive!</p>

<p>Give Away Your Life</p>	<p>Generosity is at the heart of Christianity. Jesus reiterates that message: "Give away your life, you'll find life given back, but not merely given back- given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting is the way. Generosity begets generosity!" Luke 6: 38 The Message.</p>
<p>Hitch Your Wagon to a Star</p>	<p>Jesus says: "The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher," Luke 6:40. Look for a worthy role model in your field and use him or her as a mentor or trainer. Read biographies of Christians like William Wilberforce, Pope John Paul II, Billy Graham, Selwyn Hughes, Mother Theresa – and countless others. Their examples enrich us and inspire us to aim higher. Of course Jesus is the ultimate star – hitch your wagon to Him.</p>
<p>Guard Your Heart</p>	<p>Jesus says, "A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of," Luke 6:45. If you want to be God's messenger, you have to fill your heart with His message, His presence and His Love. Billy Graham used to say that he liked to speak 'out of the overflow'.</p>
<p>Obey God's Word</p>	<p>"If you work the words into your life, you are like a smart carpenter who dug deep and laid the foundation of his house on bedrock. When the river burst its banks and crashed against the house, nothing could shake it; it was built to last. But if you just use my words in Bible studies and don't work them into your life, you are like a dumb carpenter who built a house but skipped the foundation. When the swollen river came crashing in, it collapsed like a house of cards. It was a total loss," Luke 6:48 -49 The Message. Superficially the two houses looked the same but the one that collapsed had no foundation. Knowing God's Word and obeying it should be the foundation of your life.</p>
<p>Be Under Authority</p>	<p>All authority comes from being under authority. In Luke 7 the Roman centurion recognised that Jesus' authority came from being under God's authority, just as his own authority to give commands came from being under the authority of his leader. Your message will have authority if you are under God's authority and are led by the Holy Spirit.</p>
<p>Finish Well</p>	<p>"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith," Heb 12:1. Paul writes: No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize. 1 Cor 9:27.</p>



In contrast King Solomon's life presents us with a warning - 1 Kings 11: 1-13. In spite of all his success and all God's blessing he did not finish well. He was led astray. His heart was not fully devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David, his father had been. His heart turned away from the Lord (1 Kings 11:4, 9).

It started with promiscuity. King Solomon had 700 royal wives and 300 concubines. He acted against the explicit command that: "The king must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray. He must not accumulate large amounts of silver or gold," Deut 17:17. His wives beguiled him to worship their gods.

Solomon's father king David also sinned from time to time, but he always repented and turned back to the Lord and followed Him whole heartedly. Solomon shows us something different. 700 wives and 300 concubines do not happen overnight. Solomon allowed himself to fall into deep sin and he allowed it to continue until in the end it ruined him.

To avoid ending up like Solomon, we need to stay close to Jesus and listen to Him, to keep short accounts with Him, to repent when we fall and to be obedient to His commands and to His way.

It is all about perseverance and obedience. Be faithful and finish well.



Testimonies

Shane Dowinton

Francina - Gout Healing

As I arrived at Alan and Denise's home for a worship practice Denise asked if I would pray for Francina. She had been suffering with gout and swelling of her knee, even the anti-inflammatory drugs were having no effect. I prayed that all pain would go and inflammation be relieved in Jesus name. I asked her how the pain was and she reported that there was none, she had been healed of the pain immediately.

I checked up that evening and the following day and she has had no reoccurrence of the gout. Even three weeks afterwards she has had no incidence of gout.

Tom Thumb - August 2018

Whilst in Armenia I received a WhatsApp from Laura regarding a horse, Tom Thumb, that she was treating. He had a large fungal growth on his abdomen that was bleeding and uncomfortable for the horse. He had had this twice previously and no treatment had managed to shrink it and on both occasions we had had it removed surgically. It had returned a third time. We decided against surgery and were trying various treatments which were having no effect.

When we received the photo in Armenia we (Kat, TK and I) laid hands on the phone and commanded that the growth go in Jesus' name. Laura kept me posted and in a couple of days reported that the growth had shrunk considerably. Now, October, the growth is gone completely. Thank you, Jesus!

We had a few groups of people from Son Safaris helping with projects on the farm. A new larger playground fence, lots of painting, relocating laundry lines and enlarging the bike rack (just to name a few of the many things they accomplished). The children had an amazing trip to Polokwane for Nelson Mandela's birthday celebration. It included lunch, carnival rides, and learning how to bowl and play video games.



Paul and Mickey returned from their fundraising trip in July. Lots of good contacts were made, with hopes of having more volunteers in the future.

We've had lots of visitors the last few months who came to see what we are doing who brought lots of donations with them. Thanks to some generous donors we installed three solar geysers. We also had a company sponsor some renovation work in one of our homes.

The most exciting news is that four of our teenagers were baptised in September. What a celebration!



Nedbank Lephale
Current account # 1445126591
Branch # 144547



Happy Kids, 300 to 700 running to get their peanut butter and jam sandwiches and fresh farm milk, singing their songs, dancing and a joyful story told or acted out with questions answered by the kids, - then "Thank You Father" and time to eat! What's it all about? It's about coming to know Jesus as One who loves and cares for each one.

FNB Modimolle
Branch # 260 249
The Kholofelo Association Acc. # 626 55988 0374
St Johns Soup Kitchen (Kids Club) Acc. # 620 999 298 15

Kholofelo

Giving Hope to Youth! We have 5 who are in colleges now studying and another 4 who are doing distance learning, using our computer room in Vaalwater. Two others are looking for places to do their practicals so they can get their diplomas. This is a big project for us, and intended to help these youth qualify themselves to be able to get jobs, work and eventually have Christian homes and families.

We're very proud of these youth who are studying hard and getting top marks. They have come a long way in this journey.

Family News

At our recent Church meeting we announced that Wendy Godfrey would be stepping down as secretary for St John's church. Wendy has been an absolute dynamo for the church during her time as secretary. The role gave her a tremendous platform and opportunity to create positive events and programmes into our church life.

"Over the last few years we have had both Ladies and Men's retreats, a marriage enrichment seminar, a dance weekend and prayer initiatives on a regular basis in our annual calendar. Wends is gifted at putting great teams together and driving an idea with passion. I for one will miss her organisational and administration abilities," said head elder Shane Dowinton.

Moving forward we have soaked up the administrative tasks amongst a number of members of St Johns and we do hope that Wends will continue to inspire great ideas to build up and encourage us all. Wends, thank you for all of your hard work and investment on our behalf.

Thanks, Wendy!



Congratulations!



Livingstone Banda recieved Limpopo Colours for Mountain Biking. Well done!



Lindani Lodge won in the Game Reserve Ungraded category at the Sanlam Top Destination Awards.

Well done **Sam and Peggy van Coller** and the staff at Lindani.