

# From Sophiatown to Mofolo North

50 Years ago



Mofolo North Lutheran Church

**50** Anniversary

Praising, Praying & Preparing  
1959–2009

# Welcome



**Since 1892** Co-workers of the “Lutherische Kirchenmission”, LKM, (Mission of Lutheran Churches) sometimes better known as „Bleckmar Mission“, bring the hope that they have found themselves in Christ to people all around the world. Christian hope, that embraces body and soul.

**Celebrating 50 years** of the Mofolo Congregation causes one also to look back at some aspects of church history and

developments that lead to the starting of Lutheran churches in Gauteng, and more specifically in Soweto. A former missionary, Rev. Dr. Dierks pages through history and unveils the story of the Lutheran Church in Sophiatown which eventually ceased to be, but had “daughters” in different parts of the Goldfield. We hope you enjoy reading that part of history.

**30 years of History** after 1959 is lacking in this brochure. The tears that flowed because of oppression in the years of the former Apartheidregime, the unspoken words of sorrow because of political circumstances and our possible dealing (or even participation in that) have limited the spreading of the gospel in Soweto in those years, without doubt. These issues have not yet been faced by us as a Mission-Organisation. It has to be dealt with and my personal wish is, that once we start paging through our common history as Lutherans in southern Africa, be it as missionaries from Germany or migrants from the rural areas in those years, we shall discover above those issues our belief in Christ as the one that forgives us our sins, heals and reconciles us and gives us a chance to be his witnesses in a urbanised context.

**We want to especially** thank Bishop Dr. D.P. Tswaedi for his foreword in this brochure, which we as Mission want to present as a sign of friendship and fellowship to our brothers and sisters in Christ in the Lutheran Church in Southern Africa.

Sincerely

(Rev. Markus Nietzke, Pastor and Director of Mission)

Cover-page: Sophiatown church in the 1950s and Mofolo North church in 2009



Mission of Lutheran Churches at Bleckmar (Germany). Seminary and office buildings in the 1920s.



Today's view



The Bleckmar chapel was built almost the same year as Mofolo North church. Below: detail of one of the chapels' windows.



## Foreword of Rev. D.P. Tswaedi (Pastor)

March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2009.

The weekly verse for the Letare Sunday 2009 says, “*Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains a single seed. but if it dies, it produces many seeds*”, John 12:24.

Forced removals leave no pleasant memories in the minds of those who were directly and personally affected. Many years could go by, they will subconsciously “return” to the place of origin. Notwithstanding the fact that the number people who alive in the late 50’s when the founding members of the Mofolo North parish were relocated from both Sophiatown and later from “Roodepoort West”, the memories linger on in them. Soweto today is almost a modern city in comparison to Sophiatown and “Roodepoort West” but the memories of those two locations continue among our members still.

Though we do not have membership statistics from those years, we will not being boastful if we were to say, “from the seed that fell to the ground in the 50’s”, a few congregations with membership around the 200 figure have emerged. Yes, indeed, this Lenten text prefigured the death and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ through which justification would be procured, but also has a mission motif as in the words of our Lord, “*when I’m lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men (many people – ba bantsi – Setswana Bible) to myself*”, John 12:32.

The Mofolo Congregation has been blessed with growth in recent years. The surnames which were common from Ventersdorp, Botshabelo and Piet Retief areas, are gradually being balanced off by some Venda, Xhitshonga (Shangaan), Northern and Southern Sotho speaking families, e.g. the person who are organizing this event have these surnames: Tsatsimpe, Qambela and Molamu!

With this celebration we wish to thank the LORD for giving a good measure of grace to those missionaries (who served in Salem, Roodepoort and Botshabelo) pastors, evangelist, elders, helpers, teachers and leaders of other structures within the church who remained faithful in spite of the many challenges they faced, infrastructure, education, health, apartheid laws, etc.

Though their surnames may disappear in our books in a little while they have been transferred to the book of life. We remember them with deep gratitude knowing that their labour in the LORD was not in vain, “the kernel has brought out many fruit”! We are pledging ourselves to continue *praising* the LORD, and *praying* for the same grace and that we *prepare* to receive those still to come to Mofolo North Parish.

Rev. D.P. Tswaedi (*Pastor*).

Letare, 2009.



# God's People in the Cities of South Africa

## Fifty Years Anniversary of the Dedication of the Church in Mofolo North - Soweto

by Friedrich Dierks

At the entrance to a church in Mofolo, a suburb of the city of SOWETO in South Africa, a foundation stone greets the worshippers. Engraved on this slab is the day on which this foundation stone was laid by Pastor Willi Reusch, fifty years ago this year (2009). Two similar memorial stones close by also remind the worshippers of a previous church and - connected with the former church – a school. They had been erected by the Mission of Lutheran Churches in Sophiatown and were dedicated in 1934 and in 1942. Sophiatown, from where the two foundation stones originate, was a former so called "Township" west of Johannesburg. In 1959 the inhabitants of Sophiatown were resettled to the Soweto settlement and both buildings (church and school) were demolished. The said two foundation stones were inserted into the new church in Mofolo as a reminder of the original places of worship and of the school of that congregation.

Pastor David Tswaedi, the bishop of the Lutheran Church (LCSA) which was founded by the above mentioned Mission, has his office in Mofolo. Bishop Tswaedi and the Lutheran congregation of Mofolo are planning to commemorate and to celebrate the fifty year's anniversary of the dedication of their churchbuilding. This will take place this year (2009) on 1 Sunday after Trinity.

Pastor Friedrich Dierks is now aged eighty and lives in retirement in Germany, his country of birth. For many years he served as a missionary in South Africa. He is one of the witnesses to the dedication of the church in Mofolo. As a missionary, he dedicated himself to the task of Mission work of the Lutheran church on the Goldfields of Johannesburg. The church in Mofolo stands for and symbolises the fruit of the work of the Mission in the Johannesburg area after World War II.

In this article Reverend Dierks tells the story of the erection of the church and its dedication. He also introduces us into the broader circumstances of mission work and pastoral care in the great industrial development of Johannesburg.

### From the Past to the Present - a Picture Gallery



Church at Sophiatown.  
Photo dated 1942



Altar of Sophiatown church



The teachers of Sophiatown school in the late 1950's.

Three foundation stones:



## DEDICATION OF THE CHURCH IN SOWETO IN 1959

In 1959 - fifty years ago - the congregation in Mofolo was not yet part of the LUTHERAN CHURCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA (LCSA) but was still administrated by the Mission. It was this MISSION which at that time erected the church and parsonage. - Mofolo is a central suburb of the large African settlement of SOWETO. After World war II the Mission was able to consolidate and extend its mission work in the large industrial area of the Goldfields by sending missionary Dierks to Johannesburg. His work was supported and intensified by a number of dedicated African laymen. A number of them later became Pastors and Evangelists. The erection of a Church in Soweto and its dedication became the main undertaking in the Goldfield project of the Mission.

After World War II the large industrial area around Johannesburg extended immensely. A growing number of members of the rural congregations of the Lutheran Mission migrated into the towns and settled permanently there with their families. For these members of the church who were scattered across the large industrial area the day of dedication of a newly built church became a day of joy and thanksgiving. For this day they had waited a long time with tension and expectation. The Christians in the Goldfields undertook much strain and did a lot of physical work in connection with the erection of the new church building.

On May, 31<sup>st</sup> 1957 the initial phase of the church building was finished so far that a foundation stone could be laid. But at this time the head of the Mission, Mission-Superintendent *Christoph Johannes*, was away from South Africa in Germany. Therefore the 'great Pastor' could not perform the ritual of laying the foundation stone. The head of a sister Church, president Wilhelm Reusch of the Free Lutheran Church in South Africa (FELSISA), was therefore asked to perform this ritual. Therefore we find his name on the slab. It actually commemorates not the dedication of the church at Mofolo, but the laying of its foundation stone. The real date of dedication of the church building and of the parsonage at Mofolo is June, 12<sup>th</sup> 1959. The dedication was then performed by Missionary Christoph Johannes.

At the beginning of the dedication festival the people gathered at the entrance of the new-built church. There the 'great pastor' now celebrated the ritual. Then a very long and extended church service followed, in which the Superintendent preached in the IsiZulu language and the Goldfield missionary Dierks preached in the SeTswana language. The service was conducted in three languages, in IsiZulu, SeTswana and English and lasted for several hours. It was accompanied by many words of greetings. During that day nobody of the congregations as well the guests was in hurry. The local congregation had prepared a festival meal for all participants. It was almost dark when the assembly finally dispersed.



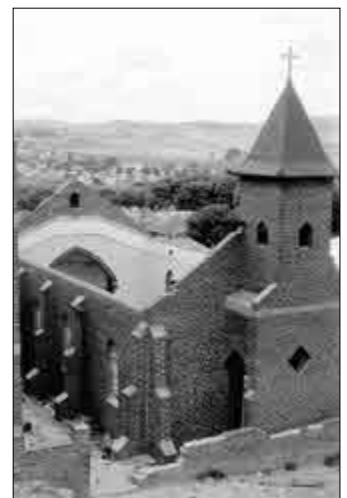
Sophiatown Congregation in front of church and school.



Sophiatown school



Missionary Christoph Johannes



Soweto, late 1950s

## CONDITIONS IN THE GOLDFIELD MISSION IN THE 1950s

**Mofolo**, a suburb in the middle of the enormous city of Soweto, lies approximately 25 km south west of Johannesburg. Fifty years ago when the Mission built its church in Mofolo, Soweto was already a large settlement. In the meantime another smaller Church was built in southern Soweto.

**The church in Mofolo** did however not only serve the purpose of providing the members of the church with a new place of worship. It had another more symbolical function. It transferred the centre of the Goldfield mission from the demolished Sophiatown to Soweto. However at that time nobody expressed it so literally. Later the church became the centre of the Diocese Gauteng of the independent LCSA. Up to then the church and school at Sophiatown, built 1934 and 1942 by Missionary Johannes Schnell respectively had served as the centre of the urban Mission work.

**Sophiatwon** was an overcrowded African suburb immediately west of Johannesburg. The constant influx of people into urban areas resulted in a growing demand for more living space, but there was no more land available for the many newcomers. Each small piece of land was beset with unpleasant shanties. The supply of water and the installation of sanitary systems was already lacking for a long time and did not more meet the ever growing demand. At that time the authorities made the plan to resettle the people of Sophiatown by force to Meadowlands, Soweto and to demolish the buildings.

**The authorities** bought some of the private property in Sophiatown and demolished the existing buildings. The Lutheran church and school also met this fate. The congregation was deeply shocked when it lost its church centre in this way. The compensation paid by the government was however not nearly sufficient to meet the great expenditures which the Mission had in connection with the new start on the Goldfields. The Mission therefore called for a 'special collection' for the building of Goldfield churches in its home-congregations in Germany. Besides the erection of the new church building in Soweto the Mission wanted to buy a site and to build a house for the new Goldfield missionary at Homestead Park. It also planned for the erection of smaller churches and parsonages in several other townships of the Goldfield.

**Members of the local church** also tried to collect money. They themselves were resettled by force and therefore had own expenditures. They could contribute only little to the needed sum. Another problem for them was the demolition of the visible tokens of the activities of their church in the Goldfield. As congregation they had lost their "home" in the urban area. Just at this moment the Mission was able to send a missionary especially for the urban areas. It was disappointing that this missionary first was sent to Botshabelo, which also was vacant for a long time. But after his arrival the missionary received the order to serve the congregations on the Goldfield as well. And



Missionary Friedrich Dierks and two young men in front of Sophiatown church, its roof already demolished.



Street view late 1950s



A missionaries and white pastors conference in 1955:  
Schroeder, Weinert, (2 unidentified)  
Weber, Schwacke, Reusch, Johannes, Wiesinger, Henning,  
Sitting: Dierks, Schwacke jun., Stallmann

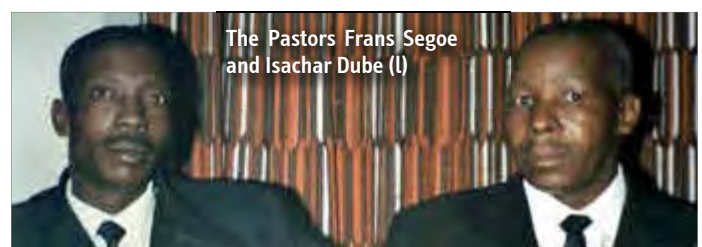
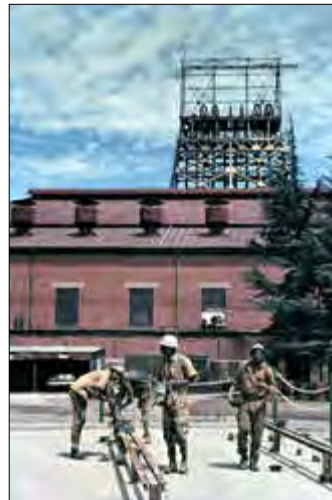
as soon as he had settled at Botshabelo he made a monthly trip to the congregations of the urban area with Pastor Paul Melatwe, the ordained teacher in Botshabelo. They thus brought services to four congregations of the Johannesburg area on a weekend. That was a real improvement in serving the urban church members. In the time before church services in the Goldfields were usually conducted by laypeople. Missionary Schnell had advanced to the age of 80 years. He managed to conduct one single service with sacraments every three months. Of course Superintendent Johannes and also missionary Weber (senior) irregularly came to Sophiatown for church services in IsiZulu.

**The start of Mission activities** on the Goldfields in 1958 was an important step forward. A site was bought and the house for missionary Dierks and his family built at Homestead Park near Langlaagte station. Then another church was erected for IsiZulu speaking members in Benoni on the eastern Goldfield. Soon afterwards the big church was built in Soweto in 1959. The church site which was allocated to the congregation in Mofolo was situated near the central railway- and bus station. Many church members already dwelt in Soweto who had previously attended church in Sophiatown. But the church also served many other members who were scattered over the wide Goldfields. Those who lived far away could reach the new church because it was situated so well. Indeed many could reach it easier than formerly the church in Sophiatown. The missionary engaged himself especially with the aim to build a string of smaller churches and parsonages in the urban area. That then was realised firstly in the towns of Carletonville, Krugersdorp and Germiston. In a later building period churches were built in Mabopane near Pretoria, Thembisa, Randfontein, Daveyton and a second one in the South of Soweto.

### THE GOLDFIELD BECOMES A DIOCESE OF LCSA

**In the time after World war II** the Mission began again to train African men for the ministry. The congregation should be cared for not only by overseas missionaries on the mission stations. Far away congregations should be served by local ministers.

**This new approach** was tackled now in all parts of the Mission Church. The responsibility for the church was transferred from the missionaries to the African congregations and their ministers. The Mission undertook to transfer step by step all church activities not only in the congregations, but also in whole areas and in the church as a whole. The begin of this action was done on the Goldfield. In this area the Christians from the Zulu area and also from the Tswana area lived together. Together they were to form a common diocese of the church. It was to be called by the name it already had among inhabitants of the area: DIOCESE OF GAUTENG.



*Continued on page 10*

# A Map from 1963 Showing the Mission-Work in the Goldfield-Area

(Map from Bleckmar Missionsblatt (=Journal) February/March 1963)



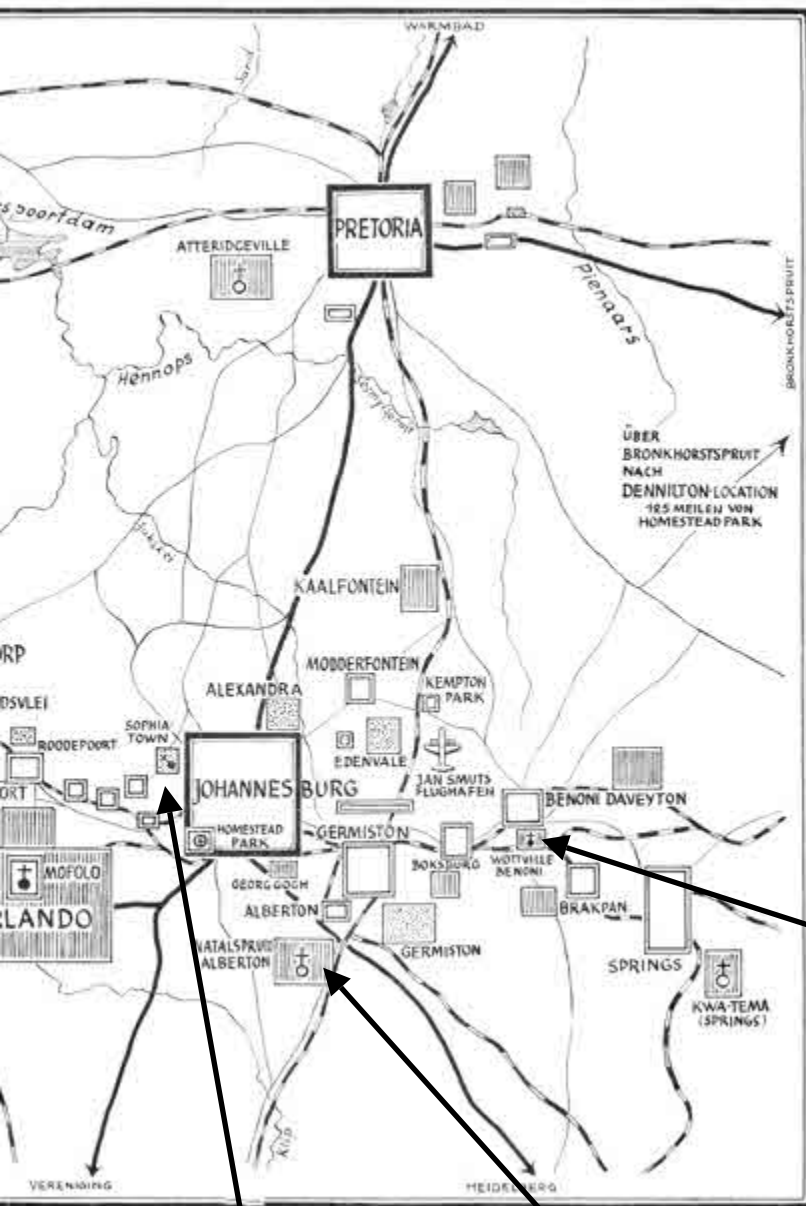
Luipaardsvlei / Kagiso 1961



Mofolo North 1959



Oberholzer



Benoni



Sophiatown 1934 - 1958



Natalspruit / Germiston, December 1962

It was here in the Diocese of Gauteng where the first African Dean was elected: *Pastor Frans Segoe* became this first dean of Gauteng. Pastor Segoe was Pastor in the congregation of Mofolo as well as dean of the Diocese Gauteng. So it became a standing tradition that Mofolo was to be the centre of the Gauteng diocese. This tradition began fifty years ago at the dedication of the church in Mofolo in 1959.

#### IMPORTANT PERSONS OF GOLDFIELD MISSION WORK

It is appropriate to mention the founders of the Goldfield mission: Missionary *Johannes Schnell* started the mission work in Sophiatown in the late 1920s. He maintained to care for it until the late 1950s. It was due to his ingenuity that he succeeded in settling an African tribe on a farm which he bought. He so founded the settlement and congregation of Botshabelo. He led both into flowering communities. Before retiring, missionary Schnell devoted himself intensively in mission work in the urban areas of Johannesburg. The immediate motive for this enterprise was his stepson *Nun Mokone*, who worked as inspector of schools in the urban area since 1929. In the 1930s Schnell built a church and started a congregation school at Sophiatown. There was still money left from his diamond enterprise. Financially he also was supported by congregations in Germany. So missionary Schnell could lay the basis of the Goldfield Mission of our church. - He died in 1958 at a high age just before the demolishment of church and school in Sophiatown.

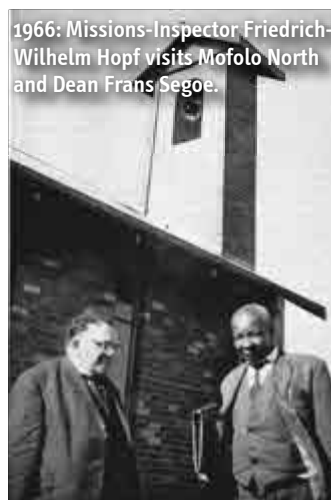
Together with Missionary Schnell one has to remember the merits of Schoolinspector *Nun Mokone* and his Wife, *Priscilla*. He was born in 1899 and was the fifth child of Piet Mokone, the first African pastor in Botshabelo. Nun's mother died at child-birth. He grew up in the house of Missionary Schnell and his first wife who did not have children. They sent Nun to school and to the teachers training college. There he excelled and became teacher at the college and later Inspector of schools. His wife Priscilla became headmistress of the church school at Sophiatown. Using her contacts for mission activities she motivated pupils and their families to join the congregation. She also appointed *Lucas Lefete*, an evangelist of the church, as a teacher. He taught religion and also taught baptism- and confirmation classes in the school. Lucas Lefete later was called to the Mission seminary at Enhlanhleni to help the students to increase their qualifications. Services were started in the home of the Mokones and eventually at the church in Sophiatown. 1960 Nun Mokone was invited to visit Germany and the churches supporting Lutheran Missions in South Africa.

Missionary *Friedrich Dierks* worked at Botshabelo for four years, before being transferred to Johannesburg where he worked for almost a quarter of a century (1958 – 1980). Missionary Dierks organised and led the consolidation and expansion of the Goldfield mission until Dean Segoe took over as dean. In the urban area Dierks needed to become acquainted also with

The newly built church of Mofolo North in 1960



1966: Missions-Inspector Friedrich-Wilhelm Hopf visits Mofolo North and Dean Frans Segoe.



The Missionaries Georg Schulz (left) and Friedrich Dierks with co-workers from Mofolo-North.



Paul Mogale



Abraham Nakedi

the IsiZulu language. Together with lay preachers he was active in Sunday services, held meetings and classes for his co-workers, organised the buildings and the setting up of worship plans for the entire area. This area stretched from Carltonville in the West to Standerton and Bethal in the East, Mabopane, Pretoria and Dennilton in the North. He was mainly assisted two men who properly can be called founders and fathers of the Goldfield Mission. These two men were *Frans Segoe* and *Samuel Mkhwanazi*. Both men had been foremen of firms in the industrial enterprise. Before they were employed by the church, they had already intensively searched for and gathered members of their church in the Goldfield. In 1958 both were called to the seminary at Salem Mission for a short intensive course in theology. In 1960 they were ordained as ministers.

*Samuel Mkhwanazi* came from the IsiZulu speaking congregation of Superintendent Johannes at Salem Mission near Piet Retief. At Benoni he gathered Zulu speaking members of the Mission. *Frans Segoe* (1909 – 1978) a Tswana from the Roodepoort area near Ventersdorp had learned IsiZulu during his work in Johannesburg and was active in that region. There he conducted services in both languages. After the foundation of the LCSA he became the first dean of the Gauteng diocese. The first generation of co-workers also included the evangelist *Jeremia Ndlovu* and *Gideon Qwabe* who previously had joined the Swedish Lutheran Mission as IsiZulu speaking Evangelists. When our Mission took up work also in IsiZulu in the Goldfields they both returned to our church together with other church members. In the meantime the first students of the eNhlanhleni seminary were also sent into the congregations. *Paul Mogale* and *Abram Nakedi* were the first two to be sent to the Goldfield. Paul Mogale became pastor in Carletonville and Abram Nakedi served as an Evangelist in Krugersdorp. As time went by, many others followed them later as ministers and church elders who served in the Goldfield work with great zeal and eagerness.

**But we would omit** an important part of the work in the Goldfields in former times if we forget the great part which was done by the women's league. The women were especially active at the dedication of a church as happened at the great festival at Mofolo 50 years ago. There the women's league carried the responsibility for the festival dinner. The women's league also showed great zeal in visiting sick and old members of the congregation who could not attend the church services. First leaders of the league were Mrs. Mokone, Mrs. Segoe and Mrs Mkhwanazi.

## REMEMBER THE DAYS OF OLD

**50 years since dedication** means a jubilee to remember the past of our church. The Bible also tells us 'to remember the days of old': Deuteronomy 32, verse 7. Really it is right to



Pastor Samuel Mkhwanazi and his family



Building the church at Benoni.



To the left: Wilhelm Schnell, master builder, at work at Benoni church



Lukas Lefete



Nun Mokone

remember how God let the Mission build churches in the urban area 50 years ago and that congregations and even a diocese developed here in the urban area. God has helped us here in the places where we live and work. Now we can hear the gospel here and can receive the sacraments.

**We are thankful** that since that days of old missionaries, pastors and church elders care for members of our church and also preach the gospel to other neighbouring people nearby. That is what mission work means: The gospel must be brought to other people.

**At such a big jubilee** as we celebrate this year we may however not only direct our eyes to the past. We may not only look backwards to remember past events and faithful people who served our congregations in bygone times. Christian believers also direct their eyes always forward! Christians have jobs to do, just as the missionaries did 50 years ago, or even 100 years ago. But there are still problems and difficulties ahead in our church which must be overcome. Christians therefore first direct their eyes to the Lord Jesus Christ. He has promised to be with us every day and to help us. - An important part of mission work is prayer. Mission work is especially done by mutual intercession. We must pray for one another and also help each other in this task. We, the Mission congregations of yesterday now became independent partners of the churches who sent the missionaries to them. We must hold each others hands by consulting and helping each other in missionary work.

**Half a century is passed** since the church in Mofolo was dedicated in 1959. Let us always realise that we are always united in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Let's trust in him and listen to what Hebrews 13, verse 8 says:

**JESUS CHRIST  
THE SAME YESTERDAY AND TODAY  
AND FOREVER**

Dedication day at the Benoni Church



# Today's Pictures. Impressions from Pentecost 2009



# A not-so-successfull-story: Urbanisation and Lutheran Missions in South Africa - Unfinished Business

by Markus Nietzke

**When in 1892** Lutheran Missions by the Hannoverian Ev.-Luth. Free Church and its Mission, which is also called the “Bleckmar Mission”, started, already people from the rural areas in South Africa started migrating to cities like Durban, Cape Town, Kimberley and last but not least to the cities of Gauteng, because of the discovery of Gold . The economic and administrative politics had great effect on the urbanisation of the Witwatersrand, the Goldfield, Egoli, Gauteng resp. The need for workforce grew rapidly. Completely new cities were especially developed for the copper zone or where diamonds or gold were found to house mining workers. Close to Johannesburg the main lines of transportation grew, while the rural areas sometimes did not have access to these on a large scale. As a consequence also SeTswana and IsiZulu-speaking Lutherans from rural areas in North-West and Mpumalanga (former Western and Eastern Transvaal) and Kwa-Zulu Natal started settling in sub-urban areas of Johannesburg, looking for work and making a worthwhile living.

**This challenge for missions** was not tackled by the missionaries immediately. Some reasons can be named: The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902, later World War I 1914-1918, the Depression in the 1930s and World War II 1939-1945. Some Missionaries of the Bleckmar Mission in the early days were either detained or kept as Prisoners of War (Wrogemann, Henning) or lived far of (Stielau, Schnell, Ehlers, Johannes and others) or were of to old age to travel and to start missionary-work in the larger cities. Sometimes the cities were considered evil places and missionaries did not like their congregants to associate themselves with life in an urbanised set-up, including the freedom of choice (and speech) on the one hand or – and this was the main concern – the use of alcohol and drugs, prostitution and the negligence of Christian virtues and values alongside with that. This is documented in the “Missionsblatt” (= Journal) of the Bleckmar Mission and in Letters of the Missionaries back home. During the World Wars no money (or mail, for that fact) could be transferred to South Africa, also between 1939 and 1950 no German missionaries were sent out for more than ten years, since there were none available. The Training-centre in Bleckmar was closed (due to the influences of World War II) until a new batch was sent to Africa in the late **Fifties and early Sixties** of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. And, not to forget this issue: Also the political system in place at that time had a major, if not dominant influence on the work of the Mission-society locally, maybe even hindering the growth and flourishing of the churches of the “Goldfield-Mission” as it was called lovingly by mission-minded people.

**The Problems** that urbanisation brought with it were made aware to the German supporters of the mission-work in South Africa at the latest by 1918, when many schools on Mission-



Johannesburg, early 1960's



Mofolo North Church and panel, early 1960's



Stations had to be closed, since the missionaries were not able to upkeep them according to the desire of the people, to teach skills in reading, writing, maths, biblical history and catechism in English, and not necessarily in SeTswana or Isi-Zulu, as the Missionaries wanted to, with the help of local teachers. It has not been researched in depth yet if this had any importance for donors in Germany or for the strategic approach of the Missionwork. In some rural areas schools were kept until the late 1950`s and 1960`s. Eventually the Missionschools were run by the government, since the mission did not have the funding to upkeep most of the farm schools. In the same manner the two hospitals in Itsheljuba and Botshabelo were turned into government hospitals.

**Nevertheless** a Church and another School were started in Sophiatown in the 1930ies. 1934 the Lutheran Church in Sophiatown was dedicated. The need for professional co-workers of the Missionaries led to the starting of a school for catechists 1925 at Goede Hoop, close to Etshondo and later Pastors were trained at Salem and Enhlanhleri. Today the Lutheran Theological Seminary is situated in Tshwane (Pretoria), also part of the Gauteng-Diocese of the Lutheran Church in southern Africa. This implies that the focus of training in the context of the urbanised cities is on the Agenda day by day, since the students there live in an urbanised context. The means of Grace are not bound to urban or rural areas, but the people receiving them, live as people with high expectations on what urbanised life implies. People in need and living in poverty are therefore a challenge to the government and the church as well.

**Urbanisation** caused the colonial governments in sub-saharan Africa to separate Europeans, Asians and Africans and establish influx control laws from as early as 1910. Especially in South Africa with the rise of Apartheid this concept was used to regulate the influx of people. This created a major challenge for the Mission, since this meant also reaching out to families living both in a rural and urban context. It is recorded in the history books of the Mission as “Hinein in die Städte!” (Move on to the cities!) In the years around 1930 therefore subsequently work was started by Rev. Schnell in Sophiatown, Rev. Henning in Potchefstroom, Rev. Johannes in Piet Retief and Paulpietersburg. The Area around Durban was not yet in focus. Especially in the late 1950ies the Mission work in Gauteng increased. The gathering of Lutherans in Gauteng laid in the hand of active Members of the Lutheran congregations and was stimulated by the work of Rev. Friedrich Dierks and several local Pastors, starting 1959. After starting a Church in Benoni, plans were made to build in Mofolo. Churchservices in Schools in Meadowlands, Dobsonville, Oberholzer (later Khutsong) were established on a regular basis. Worship was led in Roodepoort (West-Rand), Krügersdorp, Randfontein (Kagiso) by sharing facilities of the Hermannsburg Mission, while in White City, Kwa Tema, Alberton, Germiston, Thembisa, Edenvale, Alexandra and Pretoria (meaning Atteridgeville, Mamelodi

and Mabopane), Brakpan and Boksburg private homes had to serve as churches until over the years churches eventually were erected in some of these towns. After the “break-through” to reach out towards the cities, the congregations in the urban areas of the Gauteng-Diocese started to flourish. It is therefore appropriate to at least name those that helped in several ways to build and strengthen the church:

Oberholzer (Blyvooruitzicht):	Andreas Makokwe
Khutsong:	Gustav Matladi, Joseph Boikanyo
Venterspost:	Jeremiah Seyagodimo
Randfontein:	Stephans Ramusa, with Rev. Dierks (served from Luipaardsvlei)
Krügersdorp / Luipaardsvlei, Kagiso:	Stephans Ramusa.
Roodepoort (West-Rand):	Stephans Molefe
Martindale, Newclare, Vrededorp:	Israel Thlakanye
Mofolo-North, Orlando:	Frans Segoe, Ebson Rantlase Mogale, Solomon Modisakeng, Isaak Ramaleba, Lukas Lefete, Ramanas Sekokope, Ephraim Modisakeng, Titus Ratsefola, Lot Mkalipi, Asariel Ngwenya.
Alexandra:	Michael Lefakane
Natalspruit, Alberton:	Kephas Dlamini
Edenvale:	...
Benoni:	Samuel Mkwanzazi, Isaschar Dube
Daveyton:	Esau Nkosi, Abisai Kule
Springs, Kwa Tema:	Samuel Mkwanzazi
Pretoria:	...
Dennilton	Jonas Shabango

**This list** was mentioned in the Missionsblatt 1960 and several editions of that Newsletter dealt with the work on the Goldfield-Mission in the following months and years.

**Living in politically difficult times** meant for the Lutheran churches in urban areas being close to the people who probably suffered most of an oppressive system. The timeframe from 1959 to 1989 is not mentioned in this brochure (except for some of the pictures), due to lack of time for proper research for the

time being. But: Some unrest in 1960, again 1976 in Soweto and other towns was commented on, both by Missionaries, by members of local churches and by the leading German Mission-Inspector. Friedrich W. Hopf wrote for instance: "The time has come that all Christians [in South Africa] come to witness with boldness and without fear or doubt, independent of all their [political] programmes, even in turmoil, what the true way of the church is" (1960). Discussion of what language to use in government schools sparked a movement 1976 which finally led to the collapse of an outdated system several years later. It is highly unfortunate, due to time-limitations to produce this overview, to record stories about how those days influenced the work of the church right in the midst of a changing South Africa. Some of such have been mentioned in the

Missionsblatt (=Journal) of the Mission-society, but these have never been shared in English or any other language spoken in South Africa as a means to any research yet. .

**Urban growth** and suburban sprawl has been steady since 1950. By now, just less than 60% of the South African population lives in an urban set-up. South Africa is one of the most urbanised countries in Africa. Although the population growth and development is unpredictable, it will stay a challenge for church work. Missionaries, with whatever cultural background, will have to realize that the city, urban life and the challenges coming with that are here to stay as an entry-point for any outreach. A speciality in the context of Africa will be the rural-urban migration.



**'LUTHERAN CHURCH'**  
**MOFOLO NORTH**  
 THE CHURCH WHICH THE SPIRIT BLESSES WITH STABILITY

SUNDAY SERVICE 10:00  
 THURSDAY 10:00  
 WOMEN'S LEAGUE 10:00  
 OTHER SERVICES  
 COUNSELLING  
 PRE - POST MARRIAGE, CRISIS AND  
 ADULT + YOUTH SUICIDE

SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:00  
 SATURDAY  
 YOUTH MEETING 10:00

FOR MORE INFO  
 988-8227  
 989-1953

Phone 011 27, Tlokoeng  
 072 040 1494

**Mofolo North Lutheran Parish**  
**865 Matime Street**  
**1852 MOFOLO NORTH**

*From Sophiatown to Mofolo North.* A brochure for the 50th anniversary of Mofolo North Lutheran Church. Published by Mission of Lutheran Churches (Bleckmar Mission, Germany) for Mofolo North Lutheran Church. Photos: Archive of Bleckmar Mission; Page 1, 3 and 13: KPP Wilhelm Weber. Print: Druckhaus Harms, Gr. Oesingen; Printed in Germany 2009