



## Younger generation takes the lead

Exciting new developments are taking place at the offices of the NBI. Starting from January 2016 there will be a whole new team running the affairs of the NBI.

- The NBI Board appointed Rev Phaphile Celesi as new principal. He will take over from Dr Hennie van Deventer.
- There will also be a new registrar. Mrs Lenie Carstens will retire in December this year and Mr Nkululeko Pelem will step into her position in the new year.
- Ms Ria de Vos will reach retirement at the end of the year. Her duties as assessor will in future be fulfilled by a number of outside people on a part-time basis.
- We are busy appointing a manager for the Sokhanya program that will be added to the courses we offer. This person is also due to start in January.

**NBI**  
website  
www.  
nehemiah.co.za

## Phaphile Celesi becomes principal

The appointment of Rev Phaphile Celesi as principal is a move that shows that NBI is thinking about the future. It is all about serving students in the best possible way. It is a strategic move.

Dr Hennie van Deventer is due to retire in three years' time. Although he will hand over the management of NBI to Phaphile, he will remain involved in NBI as Head of the Ministries Department of Bible Media. NBI is part of the Ministries Department. The new principal will thus have a mentor close by.

### Phaphile's background

Phaphile was born and bred in the Eastern Cape (King William's Town). He got his degree in Education from the University of the Western Cape (UWC). He married Mbasakazi and they have three children (Yomelela, Mivuyo and Lunathi). He says: "My family is my treasure and joy and I bless God every day for them".

Phaphile is a teacher at heart, but has never really stood in front of a class. Soon after he completed his training as teacher, he started working for Radio Tygerberg as radio presenter. Later he became the head of their isiXhosa programs.

### Promotion and studies

Phaphile joined NBI in January 2010, after he was approached by the principal. He was appointed as manager of the NBI program in the Nguni languages. Two years ago (in 2013) he was promoted to vice-principal.

Since 2010 he has done a lot of work in helping to revise the course and to have the new course translated into isiZulu and isiXhosa.

In the meantime he has kept on studying. He completed his B Ed at UWC in 2013 with translation and editing as major subjects. In 2014 he continued with a Postgraduate Diploma in Theology at the University of Stellenbosch and graduated

in March 2015. He is due to be registered for a Masters in Theology in 2016.

### Passion and vision

Phaphile's passion is for children and young people. He is the national Sunday school organiser of his church. He also wrote a new learning guide for the NBI course about developing a children's ministry.

When he was asked about his vision for the NBI as new principal, Phaphile replied: "If something is not broken, it needs no fixing". He feels the institute was led with wisdom up to now. "Going forward as a team, we just have to build on that solid foundation", he added.

However, there are three areas that need special attention according to him:

- To use technology and the internet for presenting the course on a wider level;
- To make the course relevant for older people as well as young people;
- To market the course far and wide with vigour and enthusiasm.

It is with high expectations that we look forward to the leadership Phaphile will provide to the NBI with the special gifts that God has granted to him. It seems sure that he will lead us to new heights!

*Phaphile Celesi*



# NBI says thank you to Lenie and Ria

Lenie Carstens and Ria de Vos will both retire at the end of the year. They really deserve a big thank you from all of us who are connected to NBI. They are the two people in the office who have had the most direct contact with NBI students over so many years.

Ria was the NBI registrar from 1996 – 1999. After spending some years as pastoral counsellor (not only for NBI students), she again became more closely involved when the revision of the course was started (around 2008). Since then she did a great job in helping to edit the revised course and to translate the books into Afrikaans. In the last few years she was the one who marked most of the tests. Perhaps some of you were not so happy when you had to repeat the tests, but she did proper work!



Lenie has been the NBI registrar from the year 2000 to the present. Over all these years she has therefore been the one who spoke to you on the telephone, who helped you to enrol, who received your payments, who sent your learning guides, who organised the marking of your tests and who in the end made sure you received your certificates.

We will surely miss them both. We can only say: Thank you very, very much for the wonderful service you rendered to all of us. Baie dankie. Siyabonga. Enkosi kakhulu. Ke a leboga!



## We welcome Nkululeko Pelem, the new registrar

Join us as we welcome Nkululeko Pelem as our new NBI registrar in the place of Lenie Carstens. He will come to the office in January 2016.

He originally comes from Mthatha, but now lives in Wellington.

Currently Nkululeko works for the Foschini group and we trust that his administrative skills and experience will help NBI to keep on providing excellent service to our students and other stakeholders, such as the facilitators and Bible schools.

When you phone the office next year, it will no longer be Lenie's friendly greeting you hear, but the welcoming voice of a friendly young man! Let us pray for God's blessings on him, so that he will be able to serve all NBI stakeholders effectively and joyfully.

## Sokhanya is merging with NBI

**The merging of the Sokhanya Bible School with NBI will happen at the beginning of 2016. This is also an exciting new development for the NBI.**

The merging was already announced in last year's NBI News, but is now becoming a reality. By way of this newsletter we therefore welcome all the Sokhanya students into the NBI fold. We are really happy to embrace all of you as part of NBI.

We have heard that almost all the Sokhanya students voted in favour of becoming a part of NBI. It means they are very positive about the merging.

From NBI's side we assure them that the identity of the Sokhanya course will be honoured. It will not lose its own identity under the NBI. It will be presented as the **Sokhanya Bible Program** of the NBI. The learning material will remain the same, although it will be put together in 15 booklets. A new staff member will start working at the NBI offices in January 2016 with the specific task of serving all the Sokhanya students. From January to June 2016 this person will also be supported and trained by Dr Danie van Zyl, the current head of the Sokhanya Bible School. It will be a period of handover

and of establishing the *Sokhanya Bible Program* under the NBI.

It has been agreed that the classes which Dr van Zyl used to present in certain areas will not continue. However, groups of students can still meet every week with their own facilitator. This is the system the NBI is also using and it is working very well.

NBI has already shown how much the Sokhanya course is valued by appointing a Board member to represent the Sokhanya constituency. Archbishop Gagayi, chairman of the Sokhanya Management Committee, was welcomed as member of the NBI Board of Directors in August 2015.



One of the founders and first chairman of Sokhanya, the wise old man Archbishop Sinani, had a vision recently. In the vision he was standing outside on a clear night with the milky way stretching from horizon to horizon just above his head. After thinking deeply about it for quite some time, his interpretation is the following: it is a vision of the future of Sokhanya ...

# Hope for accreditation is growing

Miracles do indeed still happen!

This is what many people say when they see what is now happening in the process of registering a qualification for "Christian Religious Practitioners" (we just call them "church leaders") with QCTO (Quality Council for Trades and Occupations) and SAQA (South African Qualifications Authority). Previously it seemed to be impossible to get accreditation for the training of church leaders on pre-tertiary level. In other words, any training of pastors that was not done by a university, was not recognised. Training institutions such as NBI had no chance to be accredited.

But, in the past year we have seen a miracle! The QCTO asked the Association of Ministry Training Practitioners (AMTP) to help them develop a qualification for church leaders. Together they asked the churches to draw up a profile of a church leader. The churches had to say what church leaders do and what kind of people they must be. The next step was to work out what kind of training would be needed for such

leaders. What knowledge, skills and experience do they need to do the work properly?

In the end the Health and Welfare Seta paid all the expenses to bring people together for this whole process. In other words, the government was sponsoring the process. Some NBI staff members were fully involved and had the chance to help design the framework for the training of pastors (the curriculum) together with all the other role players.

The plan is to present this qualification to QCTO and SAQA in February 2016 for registration. As soon as it is registered, NBI will start the work of bringing our course in line with the framework (curriculum) that is required. Then we can apply for SAQA accreditation.

This is why we say: The hope for accreditation is growing! In the past year we often said to each other: "We can really see the hand of God in this whole process". But if we want to succeed in the end, all of us will have to keep on praying ...

## Meeting stakeholders in KZN

Stakeholder meetings in various provinces are always very special and refreshing occasions. For us at the office it is a time to go and meet people face to face and get in touch with their realities. It is time to reflect together with the leaders on the challenges they face as they do the course. However, the meetings are not only about challenges, but about testimonies and praise items as well.

In June 2015 Dr Van Deventer and Rev Celesi visited KZN. It was indeed a fruitful week.

- It started with Tree of Life Bible School at Skogheim in Port Shepstone. We celebrate this group because they are the first learning centre to finish the whole revised NBI course. Well done!
- In Ladysmith we met Dr Lourens Schoeman and his group from URCSA. Our hearts were moved when we listened to testimonies of how a caring church can change people's lives and win them for Christ. In August Dr Schoeman was appointed by the NBI Board as NBI's regional coordinator in KZN. We are excited about his involvement and the progress of the work in Ladysmith.
- At Tugela Ferry we met Pastor Barney Mabaso of Rock of Life Church. Pastor Sibusiso Kunene arranged the meeting and the hospitality of the leaders was overwhelming. We pray that our partnership with this church will grow and that many students will be enrolled for the NBI course.
- Our next stop was at the In-Service Bible Training College led by Rev Sithembiso Dlamini in Mbazwana. We praise the



Meeting of stakeholders at Bhambanana

Lord for our valued partnership with this learning centre. Their first group completed the old course and the current group is doing the new course.

- In Makhathini we met groups of students at Kwangwanase (Manguzi) and Bhambanana together with Rev Dalisu Kunene and Rev Louwrens van der Westhuizen. We are happy about the commitment of the current students, but also hope that we encouraged more people to enrol. Their main challenge is to meet regularly because they live very far apart.
- At Hluhluwe we stayed with Rev Arno Louw. We participated in the monthly meeting of their learning group who came over long distances from different areas in the congregation. On the Sunday we were blessed to fellowship with the URCSA church at Chayinkosi high up in the mountains. Two of the leaders were NBI students and it was good to see how well they perform.

### Meet Baba Jameson Mayeza Mthembu

After listening to the testimony of Mr Mthembu at the In-Service Bible Training College in Mbazwana, we could not help but think that this is worth sharing. He has never been to school all his life. He taught himself how to read and write, and currently he is doing the NBI course! He testifies that it is changing his life.

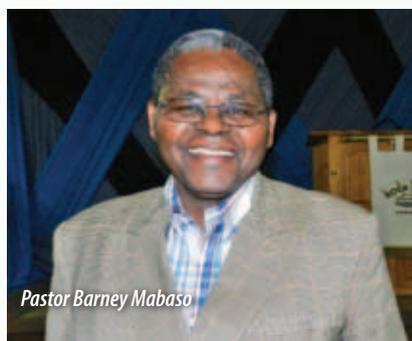
Baba Mthembu works as a member of a traditional council (Ilunga lomkhandlu wobuKhosi), advising the chief on matters of human settlement. He claims that the NBI course has not only helped him to grow spiritually and as a church leader, but also made him a better leader in the community. He says: "Because of the NBI course I am a better leader now when it comes to taking fair decisions on issues relating to protecting poor people".



Baba Jameson Mayeza Mthembu



Lourens and Hannelie Schoeman



Pastor Barney Mabaso

# Facilitators will receive better training

The majority of NBI students are part of our system of learning centres. A learning centre is established where 10 or more people do the NBI course under the guidance of a facilitator. The role of the facilitators is not to teach all the lessons, but rather to help the students when they meet as a group, to understand and apply the lessons they study on their own.

This system is very crucial for the success of the NBI course and needs more attention. At the office we produced Facilitators Guides for the whole course, but we believe that more intensive training is required. Therefore we are busy developing a facilitators' course that will run over three or four days. And we are working on the plans for the training in different provinces in 2016. Those who are involved will be directly informed about the details of the training schedules, the places of meeting and other requirements.



Trevor and Denise Shrikes

## Thank you, Denise Pingo

Denise and her late husband Coenie Pingo were missionaries who used the Jesus Film in their ministry. In 2001 they became involved with NBI and enrolled pastors from Kwa-Ndebele and Zambia. The Lord is still working in a mighty way in Zambia through one of those pastors, Pastor Finnis.

After Coenie passed away Denise became involved in the Mooiplaas Informal Settlement close to where she lives in Wierdapark, Centurion. Once again the need for the training of spiritual leaders came forward. And so the Mooiplaas Harvest Bible School opened its doors in May 2011. A second campus of the Bible School started in the nearby Olievenhoutsbos.

Unfortunately Denise has to give over the baton because of her health situation. Fortunately the Lord provided Trevor Shrikes as a partner to be with her in difficult times ahead.

Denise, thanks for your dedication to NBI over many years. May the Lord bless you and Trevor.

## AICs represented on NBI Board



In August 2015 the NBI Board welcomed two AIC leaders as new directors.

Rev Bishop Senamo Molisiwa is from the Zion Christian Church (ZCC). He also serves on the Council of African Instituted Churches (CAIC) and represent them at the South African Council of Churches.

Archbishop Black Elmet Gagayi is from the Jerusalem Church in Zion of South Africa. He represents the Sokhanya constituency as already explained.

Many NBI students are from *African Instituted Churches* (AICs). In fact, one of the main reasons for the existence of NBI is to help these so-called *independent churches* to provide training to their leaders who have never had that opportunity in the past. Since we want to make sure that we serve the needs of these churches properly, we are very happy to welcome these brothers on our Board.



## Tsonga translation is on the way

More good news! We are glad to announce that there is good progress with the work on a Tsonga translation of the revised NBI course. So far eight of the learning guides have been translated – the whole of CLDP Module 1 and three books of Module 2.

Some people refer to the language as Shangaan. It is used in the northern parts of South Africa and in Mozambique. Please spread the news if you know people who might be interested.

**PAMPHLET**  
The NBI pamphlet and enrolment form are included in this newsletter. Please give these to anybody who might be interested in the course. And tell the person what the course has meant to you!

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The office will be closed from 11 December 2014 – 11 January 2015