

# THE ONE WHO EQUIPPED THE SAINTS: A REFLECTION ON VUYANI GLADSTONE “VIDO” NYOBOLE

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## ABSTRACT

On the important occasion in the life of the Black Methodist Consultation (BMC) as it turns 40 years, it was indeed with great privilege and a single honour that I had to reflect on the life and work of Rev. Vuyani “Vido” Nyobole. This essay seeks to share the knowledge I gained, as well as the knowledge that others gained when interacting with “Vido”, both in Church and society, as I reflect on his personal profile, Ministry, leadership, gifts, and experiences.

**Keywords:** Black Methodist Consultation; Vuyani Nyobole

## INTRODUCTION

Writing a personal note to Ruel Khoza, President Mandela, on the flyleaf of his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, in his own handwriting, has this to say about Ruel Khoza (Mandela 1994, cf. Khoza 2005, 4):

Throughout the ages and in all Countries Men and Women come and go. Some leave nothing behind, not even their name. It is as if they never lived. Others do leave something behind: the haunting memory of the evil deeds they committed against their fellow men. Every time their names are mentioned, feelings of revulsion well up in our hearts. Still, others do leave something behind, the good works they do to improve the lives of all people

It was indeed with a deep sense of gratitude to the current leadership of the BMC, and I consider it also a great privilege and a single honour that on the important occasion in the life of the BMC in 2015, on its 40th birthday, I was given an opportunity to reflect on the life and work of Rev. Vuyani “Vido” Nyobole.



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The above quote by Nelson Mandela forms a firm foundation of this essay, as its last part is a fitting reference to Vido, the servant of God. In this essay I elaborate on how others benefited from the knowledge that Vido imparted while interacting with them (both the Church and society). I also reflect on his personal profile, Ministry, leadership, gifts, and experiences.

## WHO IS REV. NYOBOLE?

Vido, as he is affectionately called, is the only son to a Methodist Evangelist Zamani “Xovebhaka” and a domestic worker Nothembele Nyobole. He and his six (6) sisters were born in Barkley East in a Christian home, and were nurtured in the Christian faith, which influenced his growth as a person, and shaped not only his understanding of God but also his quest for a living relationship with God.

His parents demanded that together with his sisters, they live strictly in a manner that was pleasing to God. As children of an evangelist it was expected of them to be exemplary and to attend children-forming activities such as Sunday School, confirmation classes, Band of Hope, church choirs, as well as family prayers. They had to adhere to a pattern of life that was mainly undergird by the values of self-respect, respect for others, especially elderly people within and outside their family, sharing the little that the family had (being a poor family), and doing house chores.

As the only son he accompanied his father to revival services. He did not only attend these services just to oblige but was imbibed in them. It was when he was attending these services that he developed a sense of what it means to serve God and to make sacrifices for His Kingdom. This planted a seed into his spiritual DNA as his father was totally dedicated to the task of evangelising, regardless of the circumstances. His loving sisters Bolekwa (Gifita), Glen, Mantsa, Zola, Xoliswa, and Coceka have always been a source of his strength and support throughout his life and Ministry.

## EARLY YEARS

At an early age in the mid-1960s, Vido went to Freemantle Boys High School for his secondary education in Lady Frere in the Eastern Cape. On his arrival he met Phillip Sizwe Diko, a staunch Methodist (a Prefect), who later became a very close friend and an associate, especially during his early years in the Ministry. Phillip Diko recalls that on one particular Friday, while they were in a Prefects’ meeting with the boarding master, names of boys who infringed the rules of the school were read in the dining hall and from the list of offenders who were to appear before their meeting was a boy who had a roundish face, with his head slightly tilted sideways more on the left side, who wore a warm but timid smile, showing remorse for his actions. However, he portrayed a shared common aspect (with his friends)—a boyish, shy face accompanied by giggles. He was known as “Pester” and was very much appreciated by his friends (This young boy is

now grown up and is today known as Vido). These five young boys, including “Pester”, were following in the footsteps of their seniors, who were categorised as *Izixinani*. The charges levelled against them were:

- Seen out of bounds and found loitering and wandering around Lady Frere without permission, and
- Skipped school boundaries and were seen travelling on foot a distance of about 5 miles (10 km) towards Mt Arthur Girls High School, and later reported to have actually reached their destination (what they were doing there—only they could tell).

This “Pester” name, he claims, was given to him by *Amajita*; however, no one knows how and when it disappeared. After matriculating the young Vido (should I say Pester?) arrived in Cape Town in May 1971 to seek for greener pastures. The first thing he did on arrival was to look for a Methodist Church, and accordingly, he found a place of worship at the Nonzwakazi Society in the old Cape Town African circuit.

His first job was as a petrol attendant at a garage owned by a certain Mr Petersen at Klipfontein Road in Athlone. This job once more laid a firm foundation for his future Ministry—as it was to prepare him to become an Attendant later in the House of the Lord. He had to learn, through being a petrol attendant, to attend to the needs of the poor and the vulnerable—by preaching the Good News to the poor, binding the broken hearted, to proclaim freedom to the captives, to release prisoners from darkness, and to comfort all who mourn (cf. Isaiah 61:1–2).

Sensing God’s calling, Vido was privileged to attend, in January 1972, the National Youth Leadership Training Programme (NYLTP) in Durban. According to Rev. Otto Mbangula (one of the Directors of this programme), this youth programme offered training to young people from all backgrounds throughout South Africa (and beyond), mainly on Basic Human Relations, Design of Educational Events (DEE) and Spiritual Development, which was called Soul-Force. This programme also practically exposed the young people to a number of different life challenges, contexts and situations in South Africa.

Vido recalls that it was mainly the NYLTP that opened his eyes to the injustices that were prevalent in the South African society, and prepared him for a prophetic Ministry and the Wesleyan understanding that there is no inner holiness without social holiness.

## Family Man

Rev. Nyobole was married to the late Ntombomzi (affectionately known as Zomzi), and they are blessed with four children—Andiswa, Ayanda, Sizwe, and Abongile. Speaking on behalf of his siblings, his wife Nokwanda and all the grandchildren, Ayanda Nyobole (who is also an ordained Minister) states the following, among other comments about his father:

He is the one who loves us enough to let us make mistakes and continue to love us unconditionally. He accepts us for who we are and cares enough to say “no” at times even if that makes us to dislike him for a moment ... He always try to do the right thing, not the easy thing. He loves, support, guides, inspires and encourages us! We have watched him evolve into a Great Man, Father and Friend.

Ayanda refers to his Father as their hero; their role model, a star and the shining armour who has always provided for his family. His Father has always held the family name in honour and dignity, and for this reason, the family name is held in esteem by many. Many people look upon him as a man of stature and integrity, who is multi-talented. He is their Hero of Faith, as he trusts God and teaches them to trust God in everything—he is a living testimony that “God is able.”

Vido later married Nomalizo, who the Nyobole family named Nonkazimlo, (affectionately known as Nkazi). Nkazi concedes that she does not have enough words to fully describe her husband, she however, registers the following attributes that her husband possesses, among others:

- A Man of very few words who does not engage in anything that is senseless, he usually does not respond to such things.
- A deep thinker—he would sometimes appear as if he is not listening, but when he finally responds he will give you the best solution.
- Vido is a disciplinarian and yet a loving parent who believes in empowering people rather than spoon-feeding them.
- A person who hates conflict with a passion, he is always looking for an amicable way to resolve, especially family problems.
- A family man who would sacrifice all to avoid seeing his family suffer. He has a strong character, and stands his ground, as long as he believes he is right.
- He loves his space very much and enjoys reading and being on his own.
- Nkazi says, “I am very blessed to have him as my husband.”

## The Ministry of Rev. Nyobole

After completing the NYLTP programme Vido returned to Cape Town to work in the African circuit as a volunteer youth worker under the superintendence of Rev. Johannes Tshabalala, a fine Administrator, a soft-spoken man but a very strict disciplinarian—who nurtured his basic administration skills and later roped him in the Young Men’s Guilds (YMG). It was under the leadership of Rev. Tshabalala that Vido did his first year of Local Preacher Examination. Soon after that he was endorsed out of Cape Town, in accordance with the apartheid policy that was known as *Uphumaphele*. He landed in King Williamstown and was welcomed by Rev. Abednego Jafta, who then was the Superintendent. It is under his leadership and guidance that Vido was received as a fully-

accredited local preacher and a candidate for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament. One of the Giants of Methodism, Rev. Ntshinga mentored him and gave him guidance while he was trying to figure out his calling; especially during the year of his candidature.

Phillip Diko, who is currently a local preacher in the East London African circuit, under the superintendence of Rev. Ezra Mthembu, claims that he was instrumental in having Vido stationed in the East London circuit. Vido affirms that indeed Rev. Mthembu was his first Superintendent for the first two years that he had been on probation, and that indeed Phillip Diko has been instrumental in having him stationed in the East London circuit. Rev. Mthembu was also a fine Administrator, disciplinarian, and an “Excellent Father”.

Vido is grateful that he was groomed by these Faith Fathers, Rev. Nkatanzo Baartman, and Rev. Solomon Thusi. Without any shadow of doubt, these Faith Fathers influenced him in so many good ways; including in Ministry. It is from these two gentlemen that he learnt what it means to be “called” and to “serve.”

Phillip Diko, who now refers to Vido as “The Cultivator”, recorded in the Memoirs he wrote during Vido’s early years in Ministry in East London that the political situation in South Africa and under apartheid rule spread its tentacles and even encroached into the Holy perimeters of the Church. According to Diko, Vido perceived that this situation was abnormal, and consequently formulated a way to counter the situation. Firstly, he revolutionised the Wesley Guild by introducing stage drama to convey powerful messages to the authorities about atrocities of apartheid. The first play to be performed was *Ngaba Ndim Na Lo*, followed by *Ibhunguza*, which landed him and Diko in jail in Ciskei, under the provision of the 90 Days Detention Act, an act that provides for any person to be detained without trial, for 90 days (<https://www.sahistoryonline>).

Vido introduced other programmes such as the “The Dialog Preaching.” This programme was and is still special to Vido. The programme was a powerful, penetrating and innovative way of sharing the message of the Gospel, which sometimes gets emulated in the BMC services, and even practiced by some young people in some circuits.

## Formation of the Ministry

Vido was one of the very few probationers who were given a rare opportunity of receiving training at the Federal Theological Seminary of Southern Africa (FEDSEM)—an institution that prepared many of our Ministers well for the black context, through practical formation programmes, as well as at Rhodes University, an institution that responded in the main to the white context, but actually academic in approach.

Vido recalls that when he enrolled at the Federal Theological College, he was among the first cohort of Seminarians, who were supposed to do courses offered by Rhodes University at the Seminary. This trial did not work out well, as only four out of a class of 16 qualified to proceed to the second year. The cohort therefore, demanded to

be transferred to Rhodes, a move that nearly cost them their Ministry as FEDSEM was resistant to such a change.

Adjusting to life at Rhodes was difficult for this cohort, as the institution made every lecture period a “site of struggle.” This cohort challenged the white (western) worldview of the lecturers and fellow students. Vido and his companions were discriminated against, as initially, they did not share residences with fellow white students. They had their own “homeland” residence known as the “Hospital House” (an old dilapidated Nurses’ Home).

The treatment they endured at Rhodes strengthened the position of Vido and his fellow black colleagues, especially their resolve to stand by their conviction that most white people (if not all), who grew up under apartheid rule, generally undermined black leadership—a tendency that still prevails to this day—as white colleagues always wanted to speak on their behalf. “You become an enemy once you take the microphone from them and speak for yourself.” This is a pandemic, which regrettably, still gnaws the Soul of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA).

## Unique Kind of Ministry

It is interesting to note that throughout the 38 years that Vido spent in Ministry, he only spent three years in full-time Circuit Ministry, and two years in part-time Ministry.

Conversely, one notes that Vido’s Ministry was more focused in other very important social cohesive, educative and administrative work—thus moving towards being a Social and Contextual Theology, a broader approach for the people called the Methodists. To this end, he served in the following appointments:

- Assistant and later, General Secretary of the Christian Education and Youth Department
- Head of Ncambedlana Community and Development Centre
- He worked at the Institute for Pastoral Education as Regional Manager
- He was involved with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- He worked as HR Manager at Spoornet and Freight Dynamics

His conviction is that the contribution he made to the Church has mainly been in “equipping the saints” through formation training and educating others, as well use the gifts and talents to the benefit of others, which he uses as his forte. His contribution has borne living testimony, as many in the Church would testify today. Such living testimonies would come from people such as Rev. Dr Edwin Jones, Bishop Michel Hansrod, Revs. Jenny Samdaan, Sethulego Mosiako, Nompithizelo Sibidla, Madika Sibeko, Zodwa Kutu, Selby Madwe and Mandla Gamede, and many others. Vido was ordained as Minister in 1981 during the Conference presided by his Gamaliel Reverend Dr Simon Gqubule. His contribution to equip the saints is informed and undergird by his

theological, sociological and philosophical critical consciousness bias that is rooted in his BLACKNESS. Therefore, his major contribution in the life of the Church has been in “equipping” the saints and offering his skills as an Administrator, which are both in his blood.

## The Second Black General Secretary of MCSA Conference after 123 Years of Autonomy from the British Conference (1882–2005)

Vido was elected second Black General Secretary since the MCSA was given autonomy by the British Conference in 1882 during the 2005 Conference meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa. He took over from the first Black Secretary of Conference Rev. Dr Stanley Mogoba. This 120th Conference was presided over by Vido’s longstanding friend and varsity *ntsara* (friend), Ivan Abrahams. In remembering the historic moments when he first saw Vido, Ivan Abrahams states the following:

When Vido arrived at College not only was his BRIGHT RED DATSUN SSS the envy of all the other Seminarians, but also his neat dress styles especially his penchant for shoes. As a student Vido was convinced that Methodism called for a personal decision, social involvement and missionary action ... In a strange way, the many challenges we faced in our formative years prepared us to give leadership during the Apartheid and post-Apartheid era. As African Sons of Wesley, we both held the firm conviction that evil will be overcome as we put our Trust in God.

During my journey with Vido, (Abrahams continues) he taught him that the battle for freedom and justice is never complete. He always held the view that in all situations we need to be vigilant and ready to take responsibility for what was happening around us.

The 2005 election for the office of General Secretary was marked by much disinformation and personal attacks. When Vido took office he hardly had a blank computer to work with, but he still managed to foster a climate of trust, integrity, and optimism. He applied the skills he acquired when he served at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), as well as the corporate sector to rebuild the office of the General Secretary.

More than any other General Secretary, Vido understood that Connexionalism means being in shared Ministry, and living in a Covenant relationship with the saints, and with all one seeks to serve. He saw the need to monitor, evaluate, measure, plan and compare policy and practice, as well as their impact on Methodist life. He paid particular attention to the organisation and the administration of services to the disadvantaged segments of society, with the aim of proposing measures for the efficient and effective performance of Ministers to meet the needs of the people.

His reports to Conference brought a new perspective to the witness of the Methodist Church. He re-organised Conference to have time for accounting by those who are entrusted with leading the Church, for Conference to discuss matters of its business robustly, and to make informed decisions through a consensus decision-making style.



He travelled extensively within the African continent and overseas to strengthen relationships with the broad Methodist and Ecumenical family. While change is often messy, a transformational leader like Vido values logic and is prepared to engage in robust and rigorous debate to test new ideas. He has never been afraid to get his hands dirty in a quest to reshape the culture of the MCSA, in order to meet the challenges of the day. His theological and theoretical insights informed the missiological thinking and perspective of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

As the General Secretary, Vido always held together a holiness that knows no distinction from “social holiness.” He has a burning desire for justice in the tradition of Mr Wesley. God has blessed him with some extraordinary gifts, which he has used generously to nurture the Clergy, strengthen the Methodists, Institutions, Units, and Organisations of the Church.

He is an activist, dynamic preacher, organiser and administrator. He is able to discern wisely, minister tenderly, speak unambiguously and lead courageously. The Presiding Bishop, Ziphozihle Siwa contends that Vido loves people deeply and believes in their growth and that he always gives himself fully to this ideal. He cherishes the value of giving people their dignity, and that his deep love is evident when a Minister is left without a Station—he would worry endlessly, even if the Minister is the victim of his own doing.

The two Presiding Bishops, under whose leadership he served, Bishops Abrahams and Siwa, share the same sentiments regarding Vido—that he is a visionary who is always thinking of better ways of doing things. They will always respect him as the “thinker” and a keen “researcher”, a “library” of Life. A courageous, kind and generous servant of the Church and God.

Reflecting on the three terms (nine years) as the General Secretary of the Church, Vido is forever thankful to God for considering him worthy to lead His Church in that office—the “Nerve Centre” of the MCSA. Serving in this office was the climax of his active Ministry. Vido, the servant leader, made his contribution diligently and with great dedication as dictated by the situation, and at the right time he moved on. As he was serving in this office, he never consciously wanted to leave a legacy but held the view that posterity and future generations will be the best judges of his contribution.

Upper-most in his mind was Wesley’s “Rule of Life” which says, “Do good, do no harm and stay in love with God” (MCSA 2014, 26). Charles Wesley’s Hymn was his driving force all the time:

A Charge to keep I have,  
A God to glorify,  
A never-dying soul to save,  
And fit it for the sky.

To serve the present age,  
My calling to fulfill;



O, may it all my powers engage,  
To do my Master's will

The summary of Vido's contribution during his tenure is captured in his last Report to the 2014 Conference under the heading *Gracious Moments* (MCSA 2015, 16)<sup>1</sup>.

## THE LEADER OF THE BLACK METHODIST CONSULTATION

Rev. Vido Nyobole declares that it will forever count as a special privilege that he was part of the first gathering of Ministers who met in Bloemfontein in 1975 to launch what is now the Black Methodist Consultation (BMC)—thus, he is regarded as one of the founders of the BMC.

Vido attests to the fact that the NYLTP had already sharpened his social analytic skills and awakened his consciousness to socio-political challenges facing the Church and society. For him, the formation of the BMC was a welcomed move as he already had an appetite for the issues at hand. By the time he was called into Ministry, he was already involved in Black Consciousness and issues of black theology.

Daryl Balia in his book, *Black Methodist and White Supremacy in South Africa*, writing about Ernest Baartman records that (Balia 1991):

He, (Baartman), summoned a Consultation of Black Methodist Ministers, to meet at St Johns Methodist Church in Bloemfontein, in May 1975 to reflect on the ministry of the Church from a Black perspective, and more particularly, to access the role and contribution of Black people in the Leadership Structures of the Church.

What seems to have inspired Vido, the young Probationer in 1975, were the words spoken by the newly elected Chairman, Ernest Baartman, in his first address during the 1976 BMC consultation (as in the 1975 Consultation, the BMC was just launched)—part of Baartman's address says (BMC 1976, 1) :

...the aim of the Consultation was not to devise means of giving birth to a Black Methodist Church, but that its main objective was to examine the Methodist Church as a whole in its present structure and to see if there is any important role played by a Black Man in the Church. These are the sentiments that gave rise to the current BMC slogan that says '*Ilifa Labazali Bethu; Lefa Labatswadi Barona*.

Prior to being elected Chairperson of the BMC, when the latter was facing a major challenge with regards to its financial administration, the same body elected him as Treasurer to assist in stabilising its financial position, as it was preparing for its 10th anniversary. Vido performed this task with precision and full accountability, and the

<sup>1</sup> See MCSA (2015, 16), especially paragraph 3, "Along the Way" and specifically paragraphs 3.1 to 3.10 sub-paragraphs.

said anniversary took place.<sup>2</sup> Vido became Chairperson of the BMC from 1994 to 1996. He regards this appointment as a great privilege as it coincided with the dawn of the new dispensation.

The insights contained in the words of Ernest Baartman, when addressing the 1972 Conference were instructive to Vido, as he assumed this leadership position, especially the following sentiments:

The Church must affirm the Black man... we need help in changing attitudes... the Church must help its Members change their attitudes... We know that in this Country for too long now Blacks have been treated as things without feelings.

As espoused in the words of Baartman above, the Church must be an agent of reconciliation at every point. This is where the tenets of Black Consciousness come in; that there must be a definite effort towards unity. Black consciousness advocates for reconciliation—reconciliation between persons. We recognise that reconciliation has its roots in the being of God. He is Love and Love seeks to be one with Love, because there is only one Love. For a White man in power to speak reconciliation to the Black man in a position of powerlessness is to show a complete misunderstanding of the term. The terms of reconciliation are those set by God. The Church must act now. The Gospel is in the now:

- Now is the time to respond to Christ’s call of taking up the Cross.
- Now is the time to obey God.
- Now is the time to act for God.
- Now is the time to join Jesus in His struggle for the poor, the hungry and the oppressed.
- Now is the time to make the sufferings of Christ complete.

We shall claim to be obedient when we have helped the Black man shout with meaning and in truth, “I am Black and I am proud. I am Black but I am beautiful.” In taking up the reigns to lead the BMC at this time, these are the prophetic words that made Vido to be determined to launch the BMC to a new trajectory. When he became the Chairperson from 1994 to 1996, this was the transition period and a moment (*kairos*) when:

- The Apartheid legacy was at its eschatological point.
- The dark shadows of oppression and deprivation of many in the country were evaporating into the annals of unpleasant history.
- When the dark yesterdays’ many who died, exiled, jailed and suffered were being replaced by the bright tomorrows of new hope for all, as the old heaven and old

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<sup>2</sup> See minutes of the BMC held at Thabong Methodist Church, Welkom, 30 May–2 June 1985.

earth for the minority rule was passing away, and the new earth and new heaven was evolving, “I am making everything new.” (Rev 21:5).

- The prayers made for many centuries to God for freedom and democracy were being answered for the peaceful co-existence for all in the country of our forebearers.
- The ideals of many of our Leaders including that of Mandela were about to be achieved:

I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities ... an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be... an ideal for which I am prepared to die (<https://www.anc.org.za>).

It is against this background that Vido developed the National Consultation themes of his tenure, those of “Drinking from our own Wells’ and “Beyond Lamentation.” As informed by these historic moments, Vido submits that for the BMC to remain relevant and effective as the Formation within the MCSA for the next 10 years, it has to be the transformation agent that will address the following:

### Transformation of the People in Terms of:

1. Mindset change, especially of Ministers
2. Awareness raising on issues that affect people in Church and society
3. Equipping the people to be active agents of change
4. Empowering them in the processes of the Church-Polity, structures, official responsibilities etc.

### Transformation of the Church (Institution) in Terms of:

1. Being authentically African (not colonial) in terms of its ethos and practices
2. Meaningful integration and breakdown of racial, cultural and ethnic barriers.
3. An all-inclusive and embracing Church that reflects our demographics (e.g. youth, women, child friendly, vulnerable groups and minorities)
4. Missional (intentionally move away from only concentrating on maintenance), and be prophetic (speaking truth to power)
5. The equitable and just sharing of resources (enough for everyone) and cross-cultural stationing
6. Every local church becoming the Centre of Healing and Transformation

7. The continuous exploration of innovative transformative ways of “Being” and “Doing” church
8. Encouraging appraisal and recognition of black leaders/stalwarts/heroes and heroines, etc.

### Transformation of the Society in Terms of:

1. Cultivating the spirit of active responsible citizenship/citizenry
2. Promoting social cohesion
3. Promoting socio-economic and political justice for all.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I now invite the BMC to note what must be the affirmations of this Son of the Soil by those former black leaders, who now form part of the Church Triumphant, as they in faith, are part of the Cloud of Witnesses that surrounds us, and those still living legends of our faith. Surely:

- Seth Mokitimi must be pleased about the contribution of Vido as he has held high the Bright flag of Black Connexional leadership at his time.
- JC Mvusi must be rejoicing for yet another Star that came from the East; a young boy from the dusty streets of a klein dorpie—Barkley East, who provided dynamic and sound administrative leadership of our Church
- Andrew Losaba exalts in the rise of yet another giant of Evangelism, who has emulated his Father with distinction.
- Khoza Mgojo must be marvelling at how Vido has observed and enforced the discipline of the Church with excellence.
- Ernest Baartman, who must be smiling with a silly face on one of his products who preaches the Gospel with humility and prowess, convicted by his own sermons.
- While Simon Gqubule continues to appreciate the scholastic approach with which Vido discharged his Ministry and duties.
- Stanley Mogoba, simply saying, “you have not disappointed the black segment of the Church as you soundly picked up the spear from me, and you become the BEST for the Kingdom of God in serving all the People called Methodists”.
- Mvume Dandala is about to join Vido as one of the Fathers of our Faith. He remains excited and very appreciative of how Vido has conducted himself in discharging his responsibilities as the General Secretary, and is very proud of his professionalism.

The Church and society will forever be grateful to God for the 38 years that He has given to this world, the Gift and Talent, in the person of Vido, who has contributed

immensely to changing the lives of so many for the better, during his tenure at the BMC. The BMC remains inspired and will always remember Vido by his favourite Methodist Xhosa hymn – 90:

*Uyesu lithemba lam,*

*Ndotscho ndinyanise;*

*Ndiya kholwa kuye nami,*

*Ndotscho ndizingise.*

*Ndifumenu buntu ngaye,*

*Ndizuze ubomi;*

*Ongunthombo wabo nguye,*

*Umthandi wabooni.*

*Ndamnxanelwa ngako konke,*

*Ndalila ndimfuna;*

*Ndalahla izinto zonke,*

*Ndada ndamfumana.*

*Kant'uyesu uya ndibona,*

*xandilila njalo;*

*wandibiza wathi 'yiza';*

*Ndasabela njalo.*

*Ngoku ndiphumle kuYesu,*

*Ngokofefe lwakhe;*

*Ndinethemba elikhulu,*

*Ngay'inceba yakhe. Amen*

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