

I am
**SOUL
PRECIOUS**

Every Sunday at 6am on **e**
And simultaneously on

e|africa Channel 250
FOR NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

MY DECISION GAVE ME PEACE!

Thomonic's drinking and smoking disrupted her family. It took faith, trust in God and determination to change her life forever.

PG 3



UNIVERSAL NEWS

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ARE YOU READY?

**GOOD
FRIDAY**

14 APRIL 2017
@ 9AM



MAYIBUYE IMPILO YAMI

2017

ELLIS PARK AND JOHANNESBURG STADIUMS

Bishop Edir Macedo



“The chosen are like gold. They are more precious than the fine gold of Ophir.”

The chosen of the world

Many of those reading this message may be members of the Church for many years, but have not yet realised the great privilege of being chosen by the Lord Jesus. Have you stopped to think about this? Jesus said:

“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.” John 15.18

Why does the world hate Jesus? It's simple:

...the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. 1 John 5.19

The devil has dominated the human mind since Adam disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden. He received the authority that was given to man and established his kingdom here on earth, influencing the minds of all who practise sin in the world. His hatred comes from being cast out of heaven.

...Whoever therefore wants to

be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. James 4.4

We were chosen by the Lord Jesus. Assistant, do you know what this means? Our soul was once lost in the deep extremities of darkness and He looked for us in the darkness of this world and found us. Like a mineworker finds gold in the depths of the earth, you are the gold that the Lord Jesus found.

If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. John 15.19

The chosen are hated because the world (devil) envies them. Everything that the devil wants is to have an opportunity to dwell with the Most High in Glory, but this privilege was given only to those who hear

and practise the Word of God.

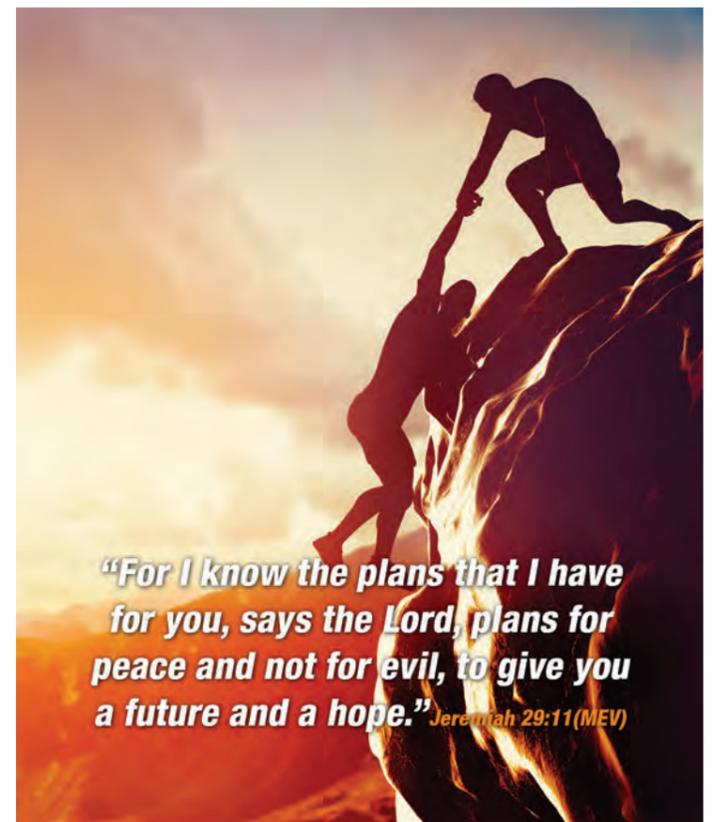
He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God. John 8.47

The chosen are like gold. They are more precious than the fine gold of Ophir. They are nothing more or nothing less than children of God, owners of all the wealth that exists. After all:

All things that the Father has are Mine... John 16.15

Therefore, assistants and anyone else reading this, walk righteously, in obedience to the Word of God. Turn away from sin, practices and thoughts of this world. And if you are being persecuted for being righteous, rejoice because it is a way the Lord shows us that we are on the right path.

May God bless you!



“For I know the plans that I have for you, says the Lord, plans for peace and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” *Jeremiah 29:11 (MEV)*

WORKER'S PRAYER

MON-FRI, 5:55AM-6AM ON e

Have a glass of water ready when the programme starts.

New Year Old Life

The New Year has just begun and things are already going badly for you. You have no place to stay, no job, you're sick and hopeless ... it feels like "New Year, old life".

You might be alone and lost, not knowing where to go to find help.

Jesus said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6 NKJV)

Trying to change your life on your own is likely to

be unsuccessful. You have tried before and it did not work, right?

He is the way and in Him you will find life. Therefore you should seek guidance in Jesus to resolve your situation.

Instead of wandering around and complaining about your situation, take part in one of our chains of prayers to uproot all evil from your life.

I can guarantee you that God does not want you to live the way you are now

living. Instead, He wants to give you peace and life—an abundant life, where you can finally find true happiness.

Although it may sound like a fairytale to you, what we are pointing out here is nothing more or less than the promises that God has made to you!

Such promises are available and can be yours, as long as you decide to put your faith into action.

Why wait any longer? Why do you sit there

thinking that there is no solution? Why give up?

Okay, I understand you have tried everything you could without success, but the fact is: The newspaper you are now reading has testimonies from people like you who once lived in hell, but today only feel joy. They have learned how to use faith and taken charge of their lives.

It can happen in your life as well! How? Go to the nearest Universal Church now or call our Helpline on 0861 330 320. Ask about

Marcelo Pires



the chain of prayer that can change your life.

Do not wait any longer! God is waiting to change your life.

God bless you all.

Contact Marcelo Pires on:
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MY DECISION GAVE ME PEACE

By Nikiwe Titus
uckg.org.za

Drinking and smoking when Thomonic was in primary school took the peace away from her family as her parents constantly fought over her behaviour. She also bunked classes to drink alcohol and smoke at a park with her friends. She sometimes arrived at home after midnight or the next morning.

"I always lied to my mother and told her I was going to study with friends. My father would blame my mother for failing to give me good guidance, and beat her up for my mistakes when he was drunk. When my father was sober, he was a different person who we could sit with in peace and have little chats. The situation was so bad at home that I caused my mother to live in constant fear of my father, not knowing what wrong I was going to commit that would provoke him to hit her. My mother was always sad and angry towards everyone in the house. She locked herself in her bedroom. As if dealing with my bad behaviour was not bad enough, my mother was diagnosed with tuberculosis and had to undergo six months' TB treatment. When that was over she became ill again and she was diagnosed with pneumonia. Her health continued to deteriorate and it was later discovered that she had cervical cancer, all in one year. This was the final blow for the family. It felt like we were cursed," she said.

Thomonic's mother had to stop selling live chickens and focus on her health. They depended on her father's salary. Her frail health made her isolate herself from everyone.

Unable to handle the tension and constant fights she caused at home, Thomonic spent more time with friends drinking and smoking.

"I knew my bad behaviour created a sombre mood at home. There was no love or peace, and the atmosphere was always tense. One day my father pointed a gun at my mother, threatening to shoot her after I came home at midnight. We were all frantic, begging my father not to shoot her. He eventually put the gun away and stormed out of the house, very angry. I could not stop blaming myself for the pain I had put my parents through, especially my mother. I contemplated suicide but I was too scared to act on it. I realised that if I didn't change I

was going to lose my parents, because my mother was going to die and my father was going to be arrested. However I found it difficult to tear myself away from my friends. I also hated my father for not loving us," she said.

In 2005, Thomonic's father accepted an invitation to the Universal Church and he attended a service.

"He came back from work and told us about this church he went to and how he wanted us to go with him. I didn't buy into his story because I did not understand how a man who used to beat up his innocent wife could also go to church.

As weeks then months went by, I saw a change in my father. He became a loving husband towards my mother and stopped blaming her for my mistakes. He also rebuked me with love and told me how my lifestyle was going to destroy my future. My mother joined my father in the church and soon after that, her health improved," she said.

Desiring to maintain the atmosphere of love and peace in her home, Thomonic made a decision to change. She went with her parents to the church.

"Choosing my parents over my friends was not easy, but I knew I had to. At first I felt like the services were taking too long. I sometimes came to the church slightly drunk and sat at the back. However, the fact that there were no fights at home if I didn't go out and drink with my friends motivated me to continue coming to the church. I asked God to help me leave my wicked ways behind.

I started enjoying going to the church and the teachings I received helped me to understand the things my father told me about destroying my future. I understood that my father's concerns were those of a father who wanted to protect his daughter from destruction, not a man driven by hatred towards his family. I started loving and respecting him. I also appreciated my mother for all the blows she took on my behalf," she said.

Thomonic attended the chain of prayers on Wednesdays and Fridays. She was able to stop drinking and left the group of friends she had.

"I had a different outlook on life. Today I'm different from the person I was before and I have grown spiritually. The fear of the Lord makes me respect and obey my parents even when I'm alone and away from them. The decision I took to follow God brought the kind of inner peace I never thought was possible. Even when I am alone, I never feel lonely, because I have the Lord Jesus living inside of me." she said. ✨



ARRESTED for drinking alcohol!

By Nikiwe Titus
uckg.org.za

The physical abuse that Happy endured for over 15 years pushed her to abuse alcohol and dagga which eventually led to her being arrested.

"The father of my three boys, whom I started dating when I was 13 years old, cheated on me and physically abused me. He did not want me to question his lifestyle and beat me up in front of our children. I sought comfort in alcohol and dagga because I was able to forget my problems when I was drunk or high. He once almost stabbed me in the chest during a fight. To save me, our second-born son broke a beer bottle and stabbed him in his arm. The father of my children was so angry that he told us to take our belongings and leave his house. We left immediately because we feared for our lives. We stayed with my mother for days before he came back and begged us to come home and acknowledged that it was his fault that our son acted that way," said Happy.

Over the years, Happy held on to the hope that her partner was going to change and thought it was not good to leave him as he provided for her and her children. She later met someone at one of the taverns where she drank. "I cheated on the father of my children to get back at him for all the times he did that to me. I thought I was going to use the second man as my comforter when my partner was with his other girlfriends, but I grew to love him as we continued in the relationship. He gave me the love I did not get at home, even though he drank heavily," she said.

Happy recalled the day her partner beat her throughout the night after he found out about her affair. Her face was swollen and her body was badly bruised when she went to seek advice from a nearby social worker. "A session with a social worker made me realise that my children needed me more than anyone else. I decided to leave their father after 15 years of abuse. I also got a restraining order against him. He did not take the restraining order well. He convinced my children that my new man was not good for me and used me. He then ganged up with them and physically attacked my new partner. The following day my sons realised they had made a mistake and apologised to my partner. Their father eventually accepted that he had lost me forever," she said.

Happy found solace in the arms of her new partner and she was free from abuse, but she battled with alcohol. She stayed at taverns until late at night. "I also drank with my partner until we ran out of money. I was more free now that my children were adults. We went on drinking sprees because he always had money from his job of repairing electric appliances," she said.

They were invited to the Universal Church, but made excuses and did not go. "One Friday evening the tavern was raided and we were all arrested. The other people were released after they paid a fine, but I remained behind bars because I was too embarrassed to call my children and ask them to pay the fine for me.

The cells were smelly and dirty. I cried, feeling sorry for myself and I was embarrassed that a grown-up woman like me was behind bars for drinking at an illegal tavern. I was only released on the Monday. Spending a weekend in jail pushed me into seriously evaluating my life and I didn't like what I saw. I knew I needed to seek God's help. I located the nearest Universal Church and since then I never looked back. I attended services on Wednesdays and Fridays. I opened my heart to God and I was able to give up dagga and alcohol after two months. My partner didn't believe me when I told him I was no longer interested in alcohol. In less than a year I had stopped all my wayward habits. My children were happy with the change in me and they joined me in the church. My partner and I eventually married in the church. My life is now truly joyful and complete," she said. ✨

STOP SUFFERING

Join us every **Monday - Friday**
9am to 9.30am on **Soweto TV**

repeats 00:30 to 1am

IBUYILE IMPILO YAMI

I WAS ABLE TO PUT THE PAST BEHIND ME



Attending the Universal Church's Good Friday event at Ellis Park Stadium gave Elliot a new lease on life, enabling him to forgive his family who abandoned him after the death of his mother.

"I was 15 years old when my mother died while giving birth to my last-born sibling who also died. My father found another partner and he took me in with his new family, while my four siblings lived their own lives. Life became difficult for me as I had to collect water from the river with a big bucket which I did not do when my mother was still alive. I also went to the fields for planting and harvesting, something that was done by adults. I sometimes arrived late and tired for school as I had to do the house chores before I left home," he said.

Unable to cope with his step-mother's and his father's ill treatment, Elliot moved back to his mother's house where he lived alone.

"My father stopped providing for me. My siblings, who all led their own lives, neglected me. My one sister, who was unemployed, tried to share the little she had with me. I hardly had food to eat and I had to beg for scraps from the neighbours. I later found a part-time job at a nearby mine.

I asked God to give me a forgiving heart so I could put my past behind me...

I then missed school because I had to go to work. I became very bitter and angry about how my father treated me and how my siblings neglected me when I needed them. I thought about my mother every day because I

knew things would not have been that bad for me if she was still alive," he said.

When he was 18 years old, Elliot and some of his friends left their home country to start anew in South Africa.

"We got lifts and ended up in Rustenburg where we found a shack to rent for R100 a month. There were six of us in a one-room shack with no electricity or water. We did people's gardens and put together our rent. I started drinking alcohol and used most of my money on it because everybody drank in the house," he said.

That same year Elliot was invited to the Universal Church's event at Ellis Park Stadium.

"I learnt the importance of asking from God and understood there was nothing God cannot do for me. I started attending the services on Wednesdays for spiritual growth, Fridays for deliverance and Sundays for family.

I asked God to give me a forgiving heart so I could put my past behind me. I wanted to forgive my father, his partner and my siblings because I wanted God to bless me. I also understood that alcohol was only giving me temporary relief from my problem," he said.

After less than two months in the church, Elliot was able to give up alcohol. He continued attending services every Sunday and he was encouraged to rekindle his relationship with his family.

"God restored unity in my family. I forgave them all, and started calling them and the communication has continued.

I buried my past for good. God restored the joy of belonging to family, something that I always longed for," he said.

MY JOY WAS RESTORED

It was after he attended Amandla Ngawethu, the Universal Church's Good Friday event at Ellis Park Stadium last year, that Babalo was able to leave behind his life of lies and give up alcohol.

He attended services at the Universal Church with his mother when he was still young, but when he reached his teenage years, he abandoned his upbringing and made new friends who did not go to any church.

"I drank alcohol with my new friends and played in their soccer team. That introduced me to a language of telling lies as I always had to lie to my mother in order to get money for alcohol. The soccer became my excuse to skip Sunday services as we always had matches to play," he said.

I drank alcohol with my new friends and played in their soccer team. That introduced me to a language of telling lies...

Babalo only came to the church when he had nothing to do on Sundays. He continued drinking and would arrive home late at night because he did not want his mother to know that he was drinking or smell alcohol on his breath.

"I hardly opened my mouth to talk when I got home because I wanted my mother to still think I was the quiet, innocent boy she had raised. I continued drinking

and lying to my mother for a year, but my lifestyle no longer brought me any pleasure. One lie led to another as I always had to find ways of getting money from my mother. I also lived in fear that one day she would discover my hidden secrets of alcohol and all the lies I had told her. Whenever I was sober, I would miss the joy I had when I attended the TFteen meetings at church," he said.

On Good Friday last year, Babalo decided he would not join his friends, but would attend the Universal Church's event at Ellis Park Stadium with his mother.

"The bishop's message made me realise that I was living a deceitful life while I knew the truth. I understood that I was not lying to my mother but myself, because the life I lived brought no joy to me and it displeased God. The bishop said, 'You have power over every situation in your life' and it was like he was talking to me and I had to do something to regain the joy I lost when I lost my way," he said.

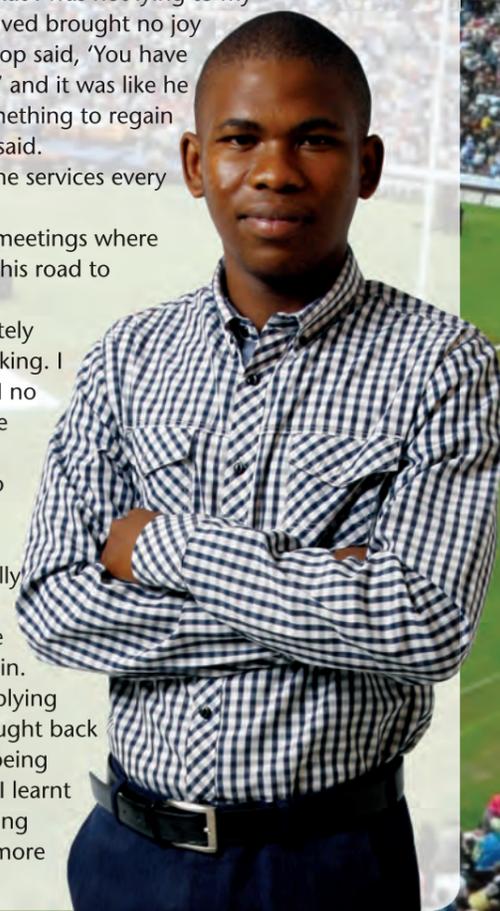
After that event, Babalo attended the services every Sunday without fail.

He also attended the youth group meetings where he received guidance and support on his road to recovery.

"It took me two months to completely leave my old life behind and stop drinking. I felt the joy coming back every day as I no longer bore the guilt of telling lies," he said.

Two months after the event, Babalo was baptised in water.

"I read the church's spiritual books and the Bible regularly. I grew spiritually and was later raised as an assistant. Today I am able to help those who are battling with the same situation I was in. I now live a clean and truthful life. Applying the principles of the word of God brought back my joy because I do not have fear of being exposed to my mother. In the church I learnt that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and I am wiser and much more mature now," he said.



MAYIBUYE
IMPILO YAMI



GOOD FRIDAY
14 APRIL @ 9AM
ELLIS PARK AND JOHANNESBURG STADIUMS

Embracing the spirit of EXCELLENCE!

Godllywood

By Maggie Sithole
uckg.org.za

Godllywood, a group for women within the Universal Church, set 2016 as "The Year of Excellence" to challenge and encourage women to go further every day and to do their best all the time.

Self-help meetings for those who are willing to learn without being members of the church, or of the Godllywood group, were launched in January, with meetings held every third Saturday of the month at the Universal Church in Plein Street, and streamed live to most provinces.

In March, Godllywood held a graduation ceremony for its 187 members who are girls aged between nine and 14 years. Special ceremonies were held in Johannesburg, Vaal Triangle, Cape Town,

Durban, Pretoria, Port Elizabeth and Rustenburg.

Godllywood celebrated its sixth anniversary in August in Johannesburg. The group also welcomed 227 new members from Johannesburg, Vaal triangle and Pretoria. In this year alone Godllywood in South Africa approved 418 women after its six months' rush season.

Godllywood also celebrated the first graduation of three honorary members in South Africa — Shirley Sithole who has been part of this journey since 2010 as well as Melida Ledile and Theresa Tshabalala since 2011. They were chosen to graduate from Godllywood because they were teachable, willing to learn and reached a level of maturity where they do not need Big Sisters to take care of them any more.



Monthly Self-help meetings in the Universal Church, Johannesburg



A moment of prayer during a Self-help meeting



Godllywood Girls graduation



Godllywood Pledge Day

Honorary Godllywood members



Mothers in Prayer meetings

Godllywood does not only offer monthly meetings to teach and motivate women, but also encourages its members to take care of and give back to their communities by visiting old age homes and orphanages every month.

Since the beginning of last year, Godllywood members engaged in an initiative to make a difference for children who are mentally handicapped and disabled. They visited Time Home for the Mentally Handicapped and Ezibeleni School for physical disabled children where they spread love and care, spent time playing with children and provided entertainment as well as food and snacks.

The Mothers in Prayer group in Godllywood held monthly conferences with the aim of enlightening mothers on how to establish better rapport with their children.

In these conferences mothers learnt that coming to church and engaging in chains of prayer on behalf of their children would not ease the situation or make the child change, but they had to apply themselves and make the necessary changes in their own behaviour if they wanted to be involved in the lives of their children.

In the last Self-Help meeting of the year Mrs Marcia Pires encouraged women to have an excellent spirit and know their place and role.

She spoke about the different roles of a woman. The role of a daughter is to honour her parents while mothers were given the role of educating, taking care of their children and spending quality time with them. She reminded women that the role of mother should ideally not be transferred to someone else.

“ The role of a daughter is to honour her parents while mothers were given the role of educating, taking care of their children... ”

The role of a wife was to take care of all her husband's needs. Single women learned about their role of preserving their dignity, values and spiritual lives, while those who serve God were encouraged to serve with wholehearted devotion. Women were invited to surrender their year and their lives to God, asking for His guidance and help for them to fulfil their roles in a way that would reflect His glory in their lives. ✨

WiA

TOUCHING LIVES

Women in Action

By Maggie Sithole
uckg.org.za

Women in Action (WiA), pastors' wives in the UCKG, maintained a busy schedule of activities in 2016 – which also marked seven years of the group's existence.

WiA aims to empower, educate and offer spiritual and emotional support to those in need. On 9 August, Women's Day, WiA held a five km silent march from Maponya Mall to UCKG in Diepkloof, Soweto, to encourage women to listen to their inner voice and act on it.

Members visited Kgosi Mampuru II Female Correctional Facility in Pretoria during Women's Month to remind inmates that despite their past actions, they were valuable and not forgotten. After completing part two of a "Nothing to Lose" course, based on Bishop Edir Macedo's biography, 11 inmates received certificates. WiA also holds weekly services and counselling sessions in prison.

In October, members took part in the five km Avon Justine iThemba Walkathon at Marks Park in Emmarentia, Johannesburg. This was the 11th annual campaign themed 'Walk For A Purpose' to spread awareness of breast cancer. In Bloemfontein WiA members took part in the 10th Annual CANSA Breast Cancer Awareness Walk. In Welkom,

WiA members visited a school to offer an awareness programme.

WiA members in all provinces held a campaign called 'Go Pink - Dressed in Awareness' to spread their message. A Flea Market was held in Soweto on Saturday, 22 October, where WiA members sold a variety of crafts and food, with all the proceeds going to WiA's cancer awareness projects.

Trained counsellors from WiA offered counselling and shared information on how to detect possible symptoms of the disease. Women were also taught how to carry out breast self-examinations.

Every year Women in Action (WiA) pledges full support in the fight against the Abuse of Women and Children through a campaign that takes place in conjunction with the 16 Days of Activism against Women and Child abuse. The Campaign was launched at the Library Gardens, where WiA trauma counsellors offered support to those in need.

To teach women how to put traumatic experiences from their past behind them, Women in Action offered the "Inner Healing" course on the second Tuesday of every month countrywide. The first group of 150 women completed the course, graduating last month in Gauteng and several other provinces. The next course starts in January.

In 2016 WiA engaged in various activities throughout the year which



Women's Day March



Kgosi Mampuru II Female Correctional Facility in Pretoria



included weekly visits to oncology wards at several hospitals. Work done with CHOC included visits to paediatric oncology wards, and some CHOC houses to interact with children and their parents. Besides visiting oncology wards in hospitals nationally on a weekly basis, Women in Action runs a monthly support group in the

Universal Church in Soweto and Noord street in Johannesburg to focus on the emotional well-being of the individual who has been diagnosed with cancer and the impact these emotions have on the patient and their relatives. They also do house visits on call to those people who need support. ♡

National Hospital's oncology ward in Bloemfontein



WiA's CHOC group visited the children at the JHB Hospital Paediatric Oncology ward



Avon Justine iThemba Walkathon and 'Dressed in Awareness' campaign mannequin



16 Days of Activism counselling at the Library Gardens



Flea Market at the Universal Church in Soweto





Women gathered in their numbers at the Universal Church in Park Station for the Lord's Supper of Forgiveness

Letting go of the past

By Maggie Sithole
uckg.org.za

Women in Action held a special meeting during the 16 Days of Activism called the Lord's Supper of Forgiveness. The meeting took place on Sunday, 4 December 2016, at the main church in Johannesburg, for all women to learn about the benefit of forgiveness and how harmful an unforgiving heart is to oneself. The meeting was streamed live to all provinces around the country.

Mrs Marcia Pires explained that women are the ones who suffer the most in society when they face problems, because they are emotionally inclined by nature. Many women carry pain inside which becomes difficult to deal with over time, especially when it involves past experiences of rejection or abuse.

"With women, issues are easily taken to the extreme because we are emotional beings. Emotions serve a purpose in women's lives, because being caregivers and homemakers comes naturally to most ... They cannot take care of their families if they have a cold demeanour.

However, with the same God-given emotional capacity, these very emotions can work against them if they can't keep them under control. Women have been through different situations of abuse, rejection and betrayal. Without noticing it, they carry these feelings with them. This leads to even more suffering," said Mrs Pires.

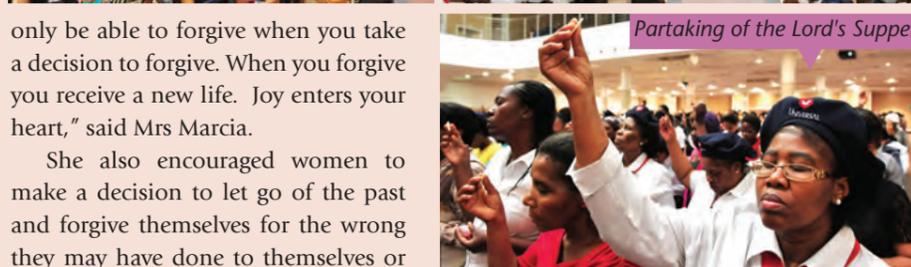
Quoting from the Book of Luke in the Bible, she spoke about the importance of forgiveness. She said that forgiving is not an easy task, especially for women, because it is not easy for them to let go.

"When Jesus spoke to the apostles about forgiveness, they immediately asked Him to increase their faith. In other words, they were asking for the strength to carry this out because when you think about forgiving someone who has wronged you many times in a day, you really need to have that strength.

You don't forgive someone for the good of that person, but you set yourself free of the hurt and burden. Forgiveness is for your own benefit, because while you carry that pain inside of you, you can't live your life properly. You can



Special women's meeting



Partaking of the Lord's Supper

only be able to forgive when you take a decision to forgive. When you forgive you receive a new life. Joy enters your heart," said Mrs Marcia.

She also encouraged women to make a decision to let go of the past and forgive themselves for the wrong they may have done to themselves or others.

Women were invited to participate in the Lord's Supper to receive strength and forgiveness for their sins from the Lord Jesus.

WiA members were also available for one-to-one counselling. ♦



Forgiveness set me free!

By Maggie Sithole
uckg.org.za

Growing up, Adorable battled with anger, bitterness and hatred after she was sexually abused.

She did not believe that it was possible to forgive herself and the man who hurt her.

When she was five years old, she lived with her grandmother because her mother could not take care of her and her younger sister.

"We were 10 children who lived with my grandmother in the same house. Some of the children were my cousins and others were adopted from her church. I only enjoyed my first year

living with her. In my second year, one of my grandmother's adopted sons sexually abused me. He used to come at night where I slept and drag me to his room then force himself on me. I never cried or told anyone, because he told me that no one cared about me and he did that because he loved me.

"I believed what he said because my parents were not there for me. I felt rejected and unloved by my mother. I found a way to live with what he did to me and even thought it was something normal. I did not believe it was possible to let go of the past. I blamed myself for everything," she said.

This situation lasted for three years until her mother took her back.

"She only believed me when she came to visit and saw the scars on my body then she decided to take me back. I did not visit my grandmother because I was angry at her too," she said.

When Adorable came to the Universal

Church, she was introduced to WiA's Inner Healing meetings where she was taught how to deal with her traumatic past experiences and put them behind her.

"I then decided to speak to one of the WiA members about my past experience. I learned that it was important to forgive in order to let go of the past. It took me two years to forgive because it was not easy to let go of what happened. I first understood the real reason my mother left me with my grandmother. I then forgave her and I started to open up to her.

"I decided to forgive the man who raped me, not to let him off the hook, but to set myself free from him once and for all. I also forgave myself and let go of the past because I needed to have peace and joy and embrace a new life," said Adorable. ♦

Living in the fullness of **SALVATION!**

By Maggie Sithole
uckg.org.za

Growing up in a poor family who survived on a backyard vegetable garden exposed Samuel to the adult world when he was only 13 years old.

His parents were unemployed and depended on their vegetable garden to put food on the table for their children.

"My parents sold fruit and vegetables from door to door. The money they made was too little to provide for our family and school needs. We ate pap every day and only had a change with different vegetables from our garden. We never had proper school uniforms or other basic needs," said Samuel.

When he was 13 years old, Samuel left school to look for a job to help his parents.

"I found a job at a motor spares shop. I was able to buy food for our home and clothes for my siblings. Being a provider at home made me feel like an adult and gave me a sense of independence. I then met friends who introduced me to alcohol, smoking cigarettes and nightclubs. I did everything my friends did, from drinking and smoking to soliciting prostitutes because I was working and had money to provide for my lifestyle. I made sure I gave my parents money to take care of the family needs before I went out with my friends," said Samuel.

When he was 18 years old, Samuel moved to Johannesburg where he lived with a friend.

"I wanted a better job that was going to pay me more than what I earned because my lifestyle was becoming expensive. Things however did not go as planned and I depended on my friend for financial support until I decided to sell crisps at the taxi rank. I sent the little money I made to my family because I did not want them to know that I was unemployed," said Samuel.

Samuel found a job as a barman at a nightclub and was paid R1,200 a week.

"That was a lot of money for me. I became

wasteful because I was left with a lot of money after sending a portion to my parents. I found my own place to stay and drank uncontrollably. I also solicited prostitutes who frequently visited my workplace. I made sure I took one home every day when I knocked off from work. This made me feel like a real man. I later moved in with one woman with whom I was a regular customer. I supported her and made sure she had everything she needed, even though she did not stop working as a prostitute.

I saved money and started a tuck shop where I lived. My girlfriend ran it while I continued with my job. The tuck shop did so well that our finances improved. I took some money to the bank while I kept some in the house," he said.

Samuel had the shock of his life when he got home one morning to find his house empty with no trace of his girlfriend.

"She vanished into thin air and took everything that was in the house. She took all the furniture and even took the R17,000 I kept in the house. I could not understand why she left with everything in the house because we never fought and we were happy together," said Samuel.

That incident left Samuel angry and bitter. All he wanted was to find his girlfriend and make her pay for what she did.

"I bought a gun that I carried with me wherever I went. I was bent on revenge. I searched for her in all the places I thought she



“Praying and reading the Bible often made me understand that acquiring material things without salvation was vanity.”

would go, but she was nowhere to be found," he said.

A friend invited Samuel to the Universal Church in 2015 and he started attending services.

"When I came to the church, I was angry and bitter. All I wanted was to ask God to help me find the woman who had left with my money and possessions. I took part in the chains of prayer on Mondays and my focus was on recovering every material possession I had lost. This lasted for two months until I learned about salvation and its importance. Praying and reading the Bible often made me understand that acquiring material things without salvation was vanity. I realised that I needed to seek first the Kingdom of God because all else would be added to me. I attended Sunday services and asked God to save me from the destruction of living in sin," said Samuel.

After four months in the church Samuel stopped drinking and sleeping with prostitutes.

"I chose to live a life that was pleasing to God. I quit my job as a barman because I did not want to expose myself to the life of alcohol and prostitutes. I forgave the lady who stole my possessions because what I found in God was worth more than what I lost. I continued building my relationship with God. That same year I found a job. I now hate the life I lived before and do not even desire to go back. My priorities changed as the word of God became so real in my life that I decided to focus on my salvation, knowing that I have the true treasure inside me - the Spirit of God," said Samuel. ✦

THE CHAIN OF PRAYER

WHAT IS A CHAIN OF PRAYER?

It is a series of weekly prayers -- seven weeks in a row -- without interruption for the purpose of achieving a blessing through faith. Whether it is a healing, a financial breakthrough or spiritual deliverance, a Chain of Prayer will help you develop your faith and determination to overcome your problem.

MONDAY Finances, debts and business strains.	WEDNESDAY Bible Study	FRIDAY Spiritual cleansing to remove curses, negativity	SUNDAY Build up your spiritual life
TUESDAY Spiritual healing, sickness, pain, incurable diseases.	THURSDAY Relationship guidance and prayers to resolve conflicts	SATURDAY Prosperity - Learning how to be prosperous	SERVICE TIMES 6am, 7H30, 10H00, 12H00, 15H00, 17H00; unless otherwise stated.

Notes: The Universal Church does not claim to heal people but believes that God can through faith.

I CHOSE TO GROW SPIRITUALLY

By Nikiwe Titus
uckg.org.za

For over two years Boitumelo battled with feelings of emptiness and worthlessness which she couldn't understand. She gradually changed from being a top achiever to an underperforming scholar.

"This started when I was doing grade nine. I felt sad and lonely when I was by myself at night. I pretended to be fine at home because I did not know how to explain how I felt to anyone. I didn't know where that sadness came from because I had a family that supported and loved each other. We always spent time together as a family, but I still felt lonely. To distract myself from the emotions that weighed me down, I spent time with my friends away from home," she said.

Failing one of the exams worsened Boitumelo's situation as she was known to be the top achiever in her class.

"Everyone in my class was shocked that I failed because they knew me as the top achiever. I felt like such a loser, and the shame was dreadful, but with

my family's support I was able to keep going. I became so forgetful that I sometimes lost important belongings such as cell phones, bags and jewellery which I left wherever I was. I did not know what was going on in my life. I became irritable at home and I sometimes didn't talk to my mother for days," she said.

Boitumelo came to the Universal Church to seek help when she was in grade 12.

"I decided to come to the church to seek God's help. I learned that the church had services every day and that gave me joy because I knew I had found a spiritual home. If I had not humbled myself and sought God's help, the void would have pushed me into drugs or suicide.

"I attended every Wednesday and asked God to strengthen my spirit. I also joined the Youth Power Group at the church, where I attended the "Let's Talk" services, also on Wednesdays. I associated myself with people who were willing to walk with me on my new journey of salvation. I read the Bible and church books more

“**I asked God to strengthen my spirit. The loneliness and sadness was replaced by what I found in the Bible.**”

regularly to feed myself spiritually. The loneliness and sadness was replaced by what I found in the Bible. I remembered one of the Ten Commandments about respecting your parents and I apologised to my mother for disrespecting her. We now have a very healthy mother-daughter relationship. After seeing the positive changes in me, she joined me in the church. I now live a void-free life and I am maturing in spirit each time I attend the Wednesday service," she said. ❖



LUST AND PROMISCUITY were my weaknesses!

By Nikiwe Titus
uckg.org.za

Trying to fit in with a group of his friends, Jod dated and slept with many women just as his friends did. His lust for women almost landed him in jail.

Jod lived alone in a rural area while his parents lived and worked in Johannesburg.

"I had no parental guidance so I joined a group of friends known for exchanging women. We competed over the number of women we slept with. We visited different local schools to look for beautiful girls whom we took home. We found some of them in the taverns and also took them home. We did not believe in love, but we sweet-talked girls to get them to sleep with us. I turned my parents' house into a brothel because my friends also slept with their women at my home.

I would date one girl for only two weeks, because we had set a target of sleeping with as many girls as we could in the shortest time," said Jod. His lifestyle made him underperform at school. He didn't concentrate on his studies, did not do his homework and eventually failed grade 10.

"A day would not go by without me sleeping with someone. I became moody and felt something was missing. I remember an

incident that almost landed me in jail after I grabbed a girl who was passing by my house to school and locked her in the house. Her parents saw me as I dragged her into the house and rushed to her rescue. They arrived just as I was about to force myself on her. They broke down the door and threatened to call the police. I begged them not to and apologised for the wrong I had done. The girl assured her parents that I did not sleep with her, and that was how they were able to let it go. It left me thinking about the horrible kind of young man I was," he said.

“**I would date one girl for only two weeks, because we had set a target of sleeping with as many girls as we could...**”

That incident prompted neighbours to report Jod's behaviour to his parents.

"At the end of the year my mother moved me to Johannesburg, where I repeated the class

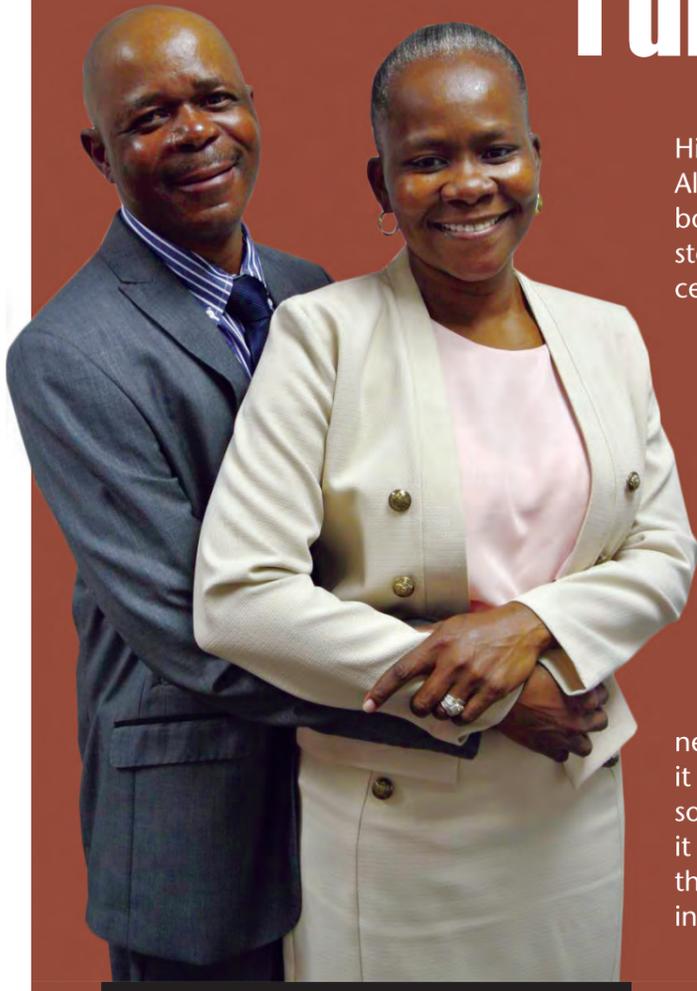
I failed in a new school. She also introduced me to the Universal Church where she was a member. I attended the Youth Power Group meetings. For two years I battled to outgrow my bad habits. I continued sleeping with many girls even though I was in the church because I thought such behaviour was normal," he said. At the Addiction Cleansing Therapy (ACT) service, Jod understood that he had an addiction that he was not aware of.

"After I realised that I was addicted, I opened my heart to God and sincerely asked for Him to deliver me. I took part in the chain of prayers every Friday and applied the teachings of the church in my life. I read my Bible often and took part in the youth activities in the church. That left me with no time to chase after girls. My spiritual life was strengthened, enabling me to resist the temptation of lust. Days and weeks went by without sleeping with a girl. I did not go back to seeing my old friends again," he said.

Jod met Esther in the youth group and they dated for five years before they were married. "I'm faithful to my wife. I respect myself and my target is no longer the number of girls I sleep with, but the number of souls I win for the Kingdom of God," he said. ❖



I didn't believe in marriage



By Maggie Sithole
uckg.org.za

Throughout her growing years, Agnes believed that marriage was not meant for her since no one in her family was married.

When she started dating, all her relationships lasted less than a year and that confirmed her belief about marriage.

"Most of my female family members were not married. Some died before they married.

History repeated itself when I started dating. All my relationships lasted a few months. My boyfriends left me without a reason. Some stopped communicating and changed their cell numbers to cut me out of their lives.

“ I got so used to sudden breakups that I expected it each time a relationship lasted more than three months. ”

"I was disappointed, but never saw the need to fight for a relationship because I knew it was not going to end in marriage. I got so used to sudden breakups that I expected it each time a relationship lasted more than three months. The longest relationship I had in 20 years lasted for six months," she said.

The disappointments she went through affected Agnes's wellbeing and later caused her to be suicidal.

"I had pains in my feet and after some time could not walk properly. The pain kept me up all night. I relied heavily on pain medication to ease the pain every day. The agonising pain made securing a job impossible. I was under a lot of stress and had sleepless nights. Being disappointed in my relationships and going through health problems was so unbearable that I ended up thinking of killing myself. I kept pain killers I was given by different doctors because I was planning

to take them all at once, but fear held me back," said Agnes.

In 2015 she walked past the Universal Church in Johannesburg where a pastor gave her a church newspaper.

"He invited me to attend the service. He prayed for me after the service and encouraged me to trust that God would take away my problems. I then located the nearest branch in Pretoria and attended services. That same day I was able to stand and walk without feeling pain. I found a permanent job after two days in the church," said Agnes.

She attended the Love Therapy services on Thursdays because she was ready to start a relationship, but feared being disappointed again.

"My mentality towards marriage changed completely as I believed that God had good plans for me. I started picturing my own husband and family, something I did not bother to do before. I was delivered from suicidal thoughts. Instead, I prayed for a new life in God's presence. I understood it was not God's will for me to live with disappointment.

After six months in the church, I met Stark and we were married after we dated for a year. The love of God gave me a life free from physical and emotional pain. I am now happily married and at peace. My life is overflowing with joy," said Agnes. ✨

Wedding ceremonies at Universal Church

Universal Church conducts a traditional ceremony on a Saturday where the couple can have a "white wedding", with a formal dress, decorations, music and other such arrangements of their choice*.

The second option is a simpler ceremony. It is a blessing at the Altar on a Thursday, during the Therapy of Love meetings. The couple is blessed at the altar and exchange rings. In both cases, the couple and witnesses will sign the documents provided by the Universal Church. The couple will then receive their marriage certificate from the church's Marriage Department.

How do you go about it?

The following documents must be submitted to a pastor 40 days before the intended date of the wedding.

- ID copies of the couple
- ID copies of both couples who will be witnesses (they need to be older than 18 years of age)
- Proof of the marriage appointment or marriage certificate from Home Affairs
- *Letter from your pastor, if you are a UCKG member
- Authorisation form from the Regional Pastor

Things to take into consideration

- The Universal Church does not perform official civil marriages, which are conducted at Home Affairs.
- The civil marriage at Home Affairs has to be conducted at least 48 hours prior to the wedding at the Universal Church. The couple must email a copy of the marriage certificate to the Marriage Department.
- It is not advisable to distribute invitations for the wedding ceremony before confirming the date at the Universal Church.
- *To preserve the holiness of the altar, decoration will be kept minimal and are subject to prior authorization being obtained

Marriage Department
 122 Eloff Street, Johannesburg, 2001
 Telephone: 011 224 3445
 Email: marriagedept@uckg.org.za





Teaching Christian values at an early age

By Nikiwe Titus
uckg.org.za

On Thursday, 1 December 2016, Ikhaya Lezingelosi, the Universal Church's Institute of Education held its sixth annual graduation ceremony.

“Our vision is to start with the foundation phase and grow into a high school or even as far as a college”

The 27 Grade R learners who graduated are now the second class in grade one in the institution. Learners entertained parents, teachers and visitors with performances of dance and music.

Ikhaya Lezingelosi was started in 2009 with

only three children, one of whom graduated in 2010. Today the institution has over 100 children who are divided into six classes, according to their ages. Ikhaya Lezingelosi is a registered educational institution.

“Our vision is to start with the foundation phase and grow into a high school or even as far as a college. The school has seven qualified Early Development Childhood educators and one who specialises in after care. Children are taught the importance of knowing God from an early age,” said the pastor who oversees the operations of the school.

They have an after-care service during the week from 4-5pm. The centre also opens on Saturdays,

Sundays and school holidays for parents who are working.

Ikhaya Lezingelosi is open to the public, not only Universal Church members. Children aged from six months are admitted. The institution is set to start its grade two class this year.



1. Opening prayer 2. Children dancing
 3. Children performing 4. Trophies for the children
 5. Teachers from Ikhaya Lezingelosi

THERAPY OF LOVE

Every Thursday,
5PM. AT 25 Plein Street JHB



CONGRESS OF SUCCESS

EVERY MONDAY AT 5PM

Learn the true meaning of prosperity and how you can be successful in your finances.

25 PLEIN STREET, JHB



DISCLAIMERS: The contents of this publication reflect the opinions of the interviewees. This publication is for information purposes only. Opinions and advice expressed do not necessarily represent the views of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God. The Universal Church does not claim to heal anyone, but believes that through the power of faith in the name of Jesus, a person can receive healing. Those under medical treatment are advised to continue taking prescribed medication and following their doctors' instructions.



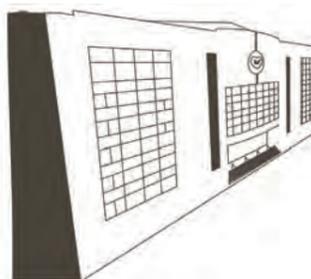
UNIVERSAL ADDRESSES

For more addresses - HELPLINE: 0861 330 320 | WEBSITE: uckg.org.za

GAUTENG

- Alexandra 1:** 740 Pretoria Main Road, Cnr Link Road
- Benoni:** 70 Cranbourne Avenue (Next to ABSA)
- Daveyton 1:** 9397 Eislen Street (Next to Engen garage)
- Dobsonville:** 4337 Main Road, Dobsonville
- Duduza 1:** 4B18 Mphuti Street, Extension 3
- Eldorado:** Sirkel Road, Ext. 5 (White tent, Next to Shoprite 7 and Shell Garage)
- Evaton:** 348 Bodea Road, (Next to Mmali's Shop) Evaton
- Fine Town:** 9 Fonteine, Golden Highway, Grasmere
- Germiston:** Cnr Voortrekker Street and Railway Road, (Opp. Total Garage)
- Hillbrow:** 60 Pretoria Street, Highpoint
- Kagiso:** Cnr Ngalonkulu Street & Thulani Drive, Hillsideview
- Kempton Park:** 9 Pretoria Road (Next to Caltex Garage)
- Kwathema 1:** 6993, Shabangu Street, Emajudeni (Next to Boxer Supermarket)
- La Rochelle:** 18 Geranium Street, Cnr Prairie Street
- Lenasia 1:** 1 Station Place, Ext 1, Former Apsara Cinema
- Meadowlands:** 21332 Isigwe Street, Zone 6, Meadowlands West
- Merafe:** 2231 Moletsane Moliwa Street, Soweto (Behind Pick 'n Pay)

- Orange Farm 1:** Orange Farm 1: Falcon Road, EXT 6A, (Near Spar)
- Protea Glen:** 806 Isicibillili Street, Cnr Igwayigwayi Street
- Rabie Ridge:** 706 Rietduiker Street (Opp. BP Garage)
- Randburg 1:** 4 Dover & Bram Fischer, (Opp. Garden Mall)
- Randfontein:** Roma Building, 17 Sixth Street (Opp. Midas)
- Roodepoort:** 37 Mooi Street
- Sebokeng:** 392 Moshoeshoe Street, Zone 10 (Formerly Freddie's supermarket)
- Springs:** First Floor, Erf 977, Geduld, Springs
- Spruitview:** 23 Cnr Brickfield & Moagi Road
- Thembisa 1:** 87 Kestrel Street, Mathole, Difateng
- Thokoza 1:** 1838 Rakoma Street (Opp Shell Garage)
- Vanderbijlpark:** Shop No. 4, C R Swart Street (Next to OK Furniture)
- Vereeniging:** Shop 1, 8 Kruger Avenue (Opp Sassa)
- Vosloorus:** 8384 Heidelberg Road, Cnr Motsile Street (Next to Ratanda Multipurpose Hall)
- Pretoria:** 175 Nana Sita Street (old Skinner Street), Pretoria Central
- Mabopane:** 2733 Block B (Next to Tlamelong Clinic)
- Mamelodi:** No 1 Dobilwane street, Cnr Tsamaya Road, Mamelodi West (Next to Denneboom station)
- Hamanskraal:** 4411 Unit 01 Temba, Kudube



Park Station: 25 Plein Street, Johannesburg

- Standard Bank & KFC)**
- Khayelitsha:** 54 Ntsikizi Street, Ilitha Park
- Nyanga Airport:** 10 Montreal Drive, Airport Industrial
- Nyanga Junction:** Complex shop 45, 46, 47 Manenburg, 1st floor, Duinefontein Road
- Mitchell's Plain:** 7th Avenue. 13 Polka Square, Town Centre
- Phillipi:** 427 Landsdowne Road (Next to Tesco)
- George:** 44 Sandkraal Road, Conville

KWA-ZULU NATAL

- Durban:** 465 Anton Lembede (Smith) Street (Opp. Durdoc Centre)
- Pinetown:** 28 Mdoni Centre, Crompton Street
- Isipingo:** 115 - 122 Old Main Road (Opp. Sasol Garage)
- Kwa Mashu:** P50 Bhejane Road
- Phoenix:** Shop No 7 Gem City, 80 Parthenon Street
- Empangeni:** 7 Chrome Crescent Street
- Pietermaritzburg:** 399 Church Street, (Opp. Capital Centre)
- Newcastle:** 25 Allen Street (Next to Allen Motors)

EASTERN CAPE

- East London:** 5 Gladstone Street
- Mdantsane:** Stand number: 108063 Shai Road (Opp. Sisa Dukashe Stadium)
- King William's Town:** 13a, b Market Street
- Mthatha:** 36 Owen St (Next to Botha Sigcau Building)
- New Brighton, PE:** 45 Norongo Road & Cnr Sopazi Street
- Njoli, PE:** 382 Booi Street, Zwide, KwaZakhele
- Motherwell, PE:** 78 Makhangiso Street, NU6 Swatkops Valley
- Grahamstown:** 33 Beaufort Street (Opposite the Police Station)

FREE STATE

- Bloemfontein:** 60 Church Street (Next to Hoffman Square)
- Thaba Nchu:** 11 Market Street
- Phelindaba:** 9374 Mathebula Street (Next to Motherwell ground)
- Qwa-Qwa:** Midtown Shopping Complex, 2 Phuthaditjhaba
- Welkom:** Marios Shopping Complex, 4 Kort Street

NORTHERN CAPE

- Kimberley:** 18 Currey Street (Behind Home Affairs)
- Upington:** 2104 Nick Ossewa Street (Next to Labella)

MPUMALANGA

- Nelspruit:** 6c Samora Machel, Cnr Petroleum Street (Behind Buscor Terminus)
- Witbank:** 8 Arras Street, Witbank CBD
- Secunda:** Ingwe Drive, Embalenhle

LIMPOPO

- Polokwane:** 101 General Joubert, Cnr Rissik Street, (Next to Kwik Fit)
- Turloop:** Shop 6A, Zone A, University Street, Turloop Shopping Centre
- Tzaneen:** Gratia Building, 9 Koedoe Street

NORTH WEST

- Rustenburg 1:** 134 Klopper Street
- Brits:** Shop Number 10 Pienaar Street
- Jouberton:** 150 Emangweni Street
- Potchefstroom:** 3680 Lekhele Street, Ikageng (Next to Post Office)
- Mahikeng:** 35 Main Street



Soweto: Cnr Immink & Kokwane Drive Zone 6, Diepkloof

WESTERN CAPE

- Cape Town:** 9 Buitenkant Street (near the Grand Parade)
- Belville:** 16 Kruskal Ave (opposite to)



Your nearest UCKG: