

Let's Communicate



INTERNAL NOTICE TO ALL STAFF

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Deputy Minister Makwetla enjoys a dance with religious leaders during a praise song welcoming him at the Saulsville Methodist Church in Atteridgeville, Pretoria.

Churches to take centre stage in social reintegration

By Neliswa Mzimba

Deputy Minister Thabang Makwetla addressed the Young Men's Guild (YMG) Triennial Convention of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa on Friday, 3 June 2016 in Atteridgeville, Pretoria.

He said the previous government kept prison life secretive and offenders were isolated from society. He said the department is no longer hiding the faces behind bars because they are also part of the community.

Mr Makwetla said the department needed the churches as partners to bring healing and transformation in society. "As a humane society we must have the capacity to forgive and help people to heal, not to perpetuate anger and hostility," he said.

He said if spiritual leaders can be seen next to ex-offenders campaigning against crime and at the forefront of social reintegration, it would be easier for communities to follow the lead.

Although the church leaders were eager to strengthen their partnership with DCS, concerns were raised about the department's bad reputation. Corrupt officials inside correctional centres, reoffending and 'exaggerated privileges' given to certain offenders were some of the issues raised.

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- Reverend Samson Nhlapho, General President of the YMG,

They also requested that the department equip the church in the role of orientating ex-offenders back to society.

The Methodist church proposed that their relationship with the department be officiated by a Memorandum of Understanding. It has plans to manage a halfway house as their contribution to restoring the morals of the youth and assisting with social reintegration.

Mr Abner Mathabe who leads the social responsibility arm of the Methodist church said they are already involved in a number of interventions in correctional centres. The invitation to Deputy Minister Makwetla was an attempt by the church to expand its role in restoring moral values in communities.



Members of the Young Men's Guild at the Methodist Church's Triennial Convention who are not all youth but young at heart enjoy a dance during a moment of praise as they welcome Deputy Minister Makwetla in the house of worship.

The General President of the YMG, Reverend Samson Nhlapho said the church looks forward to responding to the needs of the department. "Spirituality is central to humankind and it touches the core where the physical cannot reach," he said.

The YMG Convention is held every three years and combines 12 districts in Southern Africa, including Namibia, Mozambique, Lesotho and Botswana.



correctional services

Department:
Correctional Services
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA