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PASTORAL LETTER ON THE FIRE AT CLARKSON

Dear Sisters and Brothers and Children,

A blessed day to you! We greet you with the Word from Job 19:25a **"I know that my Redeemer lives"**.

It is with great sadness that we heard of, and experienced in real-time (because of the power and reach of social media) the destruction of the church building at Clarkson by fire on 25 November 2025. In a very short time, the house of the Lord, where locals worshipped God since 1839, was tragically gutted by flames. The experience of the fires at Wupperthal and Wittewater is still fresh in our memories as Moravians; now our grief is compounded by this new tragedy!

Our heartfelt sympathy goes to the congregation and community of Clarkson. We shall envelop you in our prayers and be assured that your whole church stands in support of you. You are not alone in your hour of need! Already there are various initiatives taking shape to support you: a fund is launched by the church, MOCUSA is arranging a musical event on Saturday, 13 December 2025 at Bloemendal in support of the restoration of the Clarkson church building, prayers and support are offered by local community members, the fire brigade, farmers in the area and the whole of the Moravian Church. As Bishops, we also call on all our communities to be extra vigilant and alert during this summer season.

In spite of its focus on challenges and suffering, the book of Job contains a message of great hope for the world. This hope is grounded in the Sovereign God who is good, whose love endures forever, and whose faithfulness continues through all generations (Psalm 100:5). Let us, despite the trials and tribulations we find ourselves in presently, declare like Job of old: **"I know that my Redeemer lives."** Let us stay faithful to God, like Job, and know that God will fulfil His good purposes and is indeed compassionate and merciful towards His people.

Because He lives, Clarkson and the whole Moravian Church can face tomorrow! God understands our pain and suffering, and the very same God will come to our rescue to provide relief for our suffering. God is faithful!

A blessed Advent season and Christmas to you all!

Yours in Christ,

Bishop S Ngqakayi
Bishop R Petrus
Bishop J Slamet
Bishop R Ruiters

Bishop A Joemath
Bishop L Mcubusi
Bishop E Moos
Bishop E Ndabambi

29 November 2025

*In essentials: **Unity**; In non-essentials: **Liberty**; And in all things: **Love***

Bishops' Fellowship: A. Joemath, L. Mcubusi, E. Moos, E. Ndabambi, S. Ngqakayi (Convenor),
R. Petrus, R. Ruiters, J. Slamet (Secretary)

