

NEDERDUITSE GEREFORMEERDE KERK



OORKONDE aan emeritus-aartsbiskop **DESMOND MPIOLO TUTU**

Liewe aartsbiskop Tutu

Dit is vir ons, die Moderatuur van die Algemene Sinode van die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, 'n diepgevoelde behoefte en 'n baie groot voorreg om hierdie oorkonde namens die NG Kerk aan u te oorhandig. Saam met miljoene mense – in ons land en in die buiteland – dank ons die Here vir u persoon en vir u voorbeeld, oor soveel jare heen. Maar ons wil u óók persoonlik bedank – om ten minste drie redes:

We want to thank you, firstly, for your **prophetic witness** in our country over many years. We have come to recognise in your voice the voice of the Lord, warning against the sins of our society – injustice, selfishness, racism and corruption – calling us to repentance and to a new life of love and obedience to Christ and his commandments, helping us to understand the implications of the message of the Bible for our everyday lives. It is never easy to be a prophet. There is often a price to pay, as you had to experience during the apartheid years – but you were willing to stand up for the truth, in the past as well as the present. We are grateful that your voice is still heard, unwaveringly, in South Africa today, challenging all of us to live according to the Biblical mandates of justice, integrity, and love.

Secondly, we want to thank you for your efforts to guide our country on the road towards **forgiveness and reconciliation and to the healing of the wounds of the past**. You will probably be remembered best for your role as chairperson of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. We remember you, travelling from city to city, from hearing to hearing, embracing the victims, reaching out to the perpetrators and building bridges in a much fractured society. It had cost you dearly, also in terms of your own health, but you have taught us all by your example, what it means to be a wounded healer.

Derdens wil ons u uit ons harte bedank dat u **nooit moed opgegee het met die NG Kerk nie**. Tydens die apartheidjare het u rede gehad om dié kerk wat nie net met apartheid saamgeleef het nie maar ook 'n teologiese begroning daarvoor gegee het, tot besinning te roep. U het dit vreesloos gedoen – maar altyd met deernis en met liefde. Toe baie gereed was om hulle rug op hierdie kerk te draai, het u na ons uitgereik om ons op die weg van herstel te begelei. Toe die sinodes van die NG Kerk begin het om sy lidmate op 'n nuwe pad te lei, was u daar om ons aan te moedig. Toe professor Willie Jonker by Rustenburg namens die Kerk die sonde van apartheid bely en om vergifnis gepleit het, was u die eerste om hom te omhels. Toe die destydse moderator, dominee Freek Swanepoel, voor die WVK verskyn het om die verhaal van die NG Kerk te vertel, het u as voorsitter die Kerk se berou oor die verlede en vasbeslotenheid om aan die toekoms van ons land te help bou, sonder huiwering aanvaar.

Baie dankie dat u nie net die Anglikaanse aartsbiskop van Kaapstad was nie, maar die geliefde “Arch” vir ons almal – ook vir die NG Kerk.

May the Lord bless you and keep you in good health for years to come. And please convey our admiration and gratitude to **Mrs Leah Tutu**, your wife, not only for her testimony and example, but for taking such good care of you over so many years!

Namens die Moderatuur:

DR KOBUS GERBER

Algemene Sekretaris
Algemene Sinode van die NG Kerk

STELLENBOSCH

4 MEI 2011