TOKAI COMMUNITY CHURCH HISTORY

THE HISTORIC ANGLICAN CONNECTION TO THE MOTHER CHURCH IN ENGLAND

2017023

CH102: REACH-SA History

Assignment 2

CONTENTS

TOKAI COMMUNITY CHURCH HISTORY

AND THE HISTORIC ANGLICAN CONNECTION TO THE MOTHER CHURCH IN ENGLAND

INTRODUCTION

Tokai Community Church is a REACH-SA church and has an interesting heritage in its link to the mother church in England.

The Constitution of Tokai Community Church in point 1 clearly states its constituency with the Church of England in South Africa: "It is hereby declared that the congregation of Tokai Community Church, Tokai, is a constituent Church of the Church of England in South Africa, and has subscribed to the constitution of, and has been declared a Constituent Church by, the said Church of England in South Africa" (Tokai Community Church, 2013).

Tracing back the history of Tokai Community Church reveals not only how the Church of England started in South Africa, but also how God has preserved its reformed evangelical faith.

The story starts with the Cape Province being granted colonial status in 1814.

EARLY DAYS

SIMONS TOWN

St. George's Simon's Town was the first Church of England church in South Africa and opened in 1814 in Simon's Town. Rev. George Hough was its first minister. In 1819 St. George's suffered irreparable damage from a storm after which Rev. George Hough was moved to Cape Town.

CAPE TOWN

The congregation in Cape Town had no building of their own, but met in the Groote Kerk of the Dutch Reformed Church for 27 years until 1834 when St. George's Cape Town was built and opened for church services.

TRACTARIAN DIVISION

In 1833 the Church of England, which had become reformed and evangelical, was faced with a divisive movement known as Tractarianism, an Anglo-Catholic movement which rejected the Reformation teachings and reverted back to Roman Catholic traditions and teachings. It was not long before this movement started threatening the doctrinal soundness of the South African Churches, St. Georges being no exception.

Rev. George Hough had obvious leanings toward Tractarianism and this was evidenced in his preaching. This caused many in the congregation who still held to the Reformation doctrines and the principles held out in the 39 Articles and who rejected the unscriptural Anglo-Catholic teachings to withdraw from St. George's Cape Town in 1841 and build a second church under the leadership of Rev. T. A. Blair in Cape Town in 1846. The resultant church was Holy Trinity Harrington Street which remained steadfast and true to the Biblical reformed faith, the 39 Articles, and the 1662 Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England. Cameron states that "The remaining congregations of the Church of England in South Africa were scattered and battled to survive on their own. The sole survivor of those days was Holy Trinity Church, Cape Town" (2017).

HOLY TRINITY CAPE TOWN

The Church of England in South Africa has been preserved and perpetuated through Holy Trinity Harrington Street. Ives underlines this reality "The historical continuity of Holy Trinity, Cape Town is that of the Church of England in South Africa" (1992, p.16). In 1970 Holy Trinity Harrington Street moved to a new church building in Gardens because the old building had become difficult to maintain and the Harrington Street area had developed into an industrial area. Today it is known as Holy Trinity Gardens.

TOKAI COMMUNITY CHURCH'S LINK TO HOLY TRINITY CAPE TOWN

ST. STEPHEN'S CLAREMONT

The industrialization of the Harrington Street area caused many people to move out into the suburbs. As a result, in 1941 Holy Trinity Harrington Street planted St. Stephen's Bible Church in Claremont.

ST. JAMES KENILWORTH

Under Rev. Stephen Bradley's vision and direction, St. Stephen's planted St. James Church in Kenilworth. Rev. Frank Retief, who was doing a curacy at Christ Church Pinetown, was placed as the first rector of St. James in 1968. This church grew rapidly and soon outgrew itself. Rev. Frank Retief, being a Gospel man, had a church planting vision and lead St. James to plant many churches in the Cape Town area. According to Rev. Luke Giles, there is a saying among the CESA community that alludes to the immense church planting contribution of St. James, "Holy Trinity Cape Town planted St. Stephen's Claremont, St. Stephen's planted St. James Kenilworth, and St. James planted 'all' the others" (Appendix 1).

TOKAI COMMUNITY CHURCH

One of the many churches that was born out of St. James Kenilworth's vigorous church planting vision was Tokai Community Church.

THE HISTORY OF TOKAI COMMUNITY CHURCH

A SUNDAY SCHOOL START

One of the church planting strategies of Rev. Frank Retief of St. James Church was to focus on children's ministries which are not only vital ministries, but also a very effective way to reach the parents and consequently the community. In his congregation were some school teachers who taught at Kirstenhof Primary School. In March 1983, under the guidance of Frank Retief, these teachers started a Sunday School at the Kirstenhof Primary School.

BIBLE STUDY AND FIRST SERVICES

The Sunday School meetings at Kirstenhof Primary were very well attended and were effective in reaching the parents. In June 1983 a Bible Study for the parents was started which also grew rapidly. By September 1983 the first church services were begun in the staff room under the guidance of Rev. Desmond Inglesby who was doing a curacy at St. James and became Tokai Community Church's first minister.

CHURCH BUILDING

Tokai Community Church very quickly outgrew the staff room at Kirstenhof Primary School and moved into the school hall. In 1987 the church was able to purchase land in Raapkraal road and started developing building plans. However, in 1989 just before building could be commenced, a more suitable property, the old Breezeland Nursery, became available for purchase right on Tokai Road. The building project took two years to complete at this new site and in 1991 Tokai Community Church moved into its very own church building at 28 Tokai Road where it still is today.

THE STAFF TEAM DEVELOPS

Rev. Desmond Inglesby remained Tokai Community Church's only minister though he received help from a number of trainee ministers who were being trained for ministry elsewhere and therefore did not stay very long. Because the transient nature of these trainee ministry assistants did not encourage a stable church environment, Tokai Community Church decided to start building a ministry team. In 2002 Luke Giles was employed as assistant minister and in 2003 Jason Palacio joined as Youth Pastor. When Rev. Desmond Inglesby was appointed Cape Area Bishop, it became all the more apparent that a staff team was vital for the stability of the church as Desmond Inglesby was now often away performing his duties. The staff team continued to grow with Jeanine Palacio joining as Children's Pastor in 2005 and Nils Holmgren joining the ministry team in 2006. In 2008 Luke Giles became the rector of Tokai Community Church, Rudi Swart joined as assistant Children's Pastor, and Jeanne Westgate joined as administrator.

CHURCH GROWTH AND CHURCH PLANTS

By 2006 Tokai Community Church had outgrown its building and introduced a second morning service. Because of the steady church growth, a church plant was considered. In 2009 Jason Palacio began a concentrated effort to plant a church in Constantia and trained a team affectionately called 'the Plant'. In 2010 a meeting venue was secured at the False Bay Rugby club and the first services were commenced. This church plant was named Southern Cross Church.

Though this church plant brought immense joy to Tokai Community Church, in accomplishing its purpose, Southern Cross Church took about 25% of TCC's regular

members. Tokai Community Church, however, continued to grow and plans for expanding and extending the church building were made and by 2011 the building project began.

TOKAI COMMUNITY CHURCH TODAY

In early 2013 Tokai Community Church moved into its newly renovated and expanded building. The church has continued to experience rapid growth and now has three church services, two morning services (08:15 & 10:00) and one evening service (18:30).

The staff team has continued to grow. Currently on staff is: Luke Giles as Rector, Graham van Veen and Denzil Abrahams as assistant ministers, Kim Quickfall as Curate and Youth Pastor, Jeanne Westgate continues as administrator, Cindy Koikemoer is the office manager, Susan Newkirk handles the Westlake Village Ministry, Carrie Gie as the Junior Children's Worker, Andy Pitter in Pastoral care, and four apprentices (Matthew O'Kelly, Stephen Temple, Kirsten Wannenburgh, and Olivia Clegg).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Appendix 1, 2017. *The history of Tokai Community Church.*

Beckman, A. P., 2011. *A clash of churchmanship?: Robert Gray and the evangelical Anglicans 1847-1872.* M. A. Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University.

Cameron, B. D., 2017. *Our history.* [Online] Available at: <http://reachsa.org.za/about-us/our-history/> [Accessed 23 April 2017].

Ive, A. G., 1992. *A candle burns in Africa.* Gillitts: Church of England in South Africa.

Tokai Community Church, 2013. *Constitution and rules of procedure of Tokai community church.* [Online] Available at: <http://www.tokaicommunitychurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Constitution-TCC.pdf> [Accessed 23 April 2017].