

Dear Saints,

Friends, two Sunday's ago, we started our New Members Class & Confirmation Class. We have five folks who meet ONLINE at 6-7pm on Sunday evenings. Last week we did an overview of the Old Testament and looked at the work of CA Van Peursen, Prof of Philosophy, who presents some fascinating perspectives on Thinking. This Sunday we do an overview of the New Testament.

Go to this link to join: <https://meet.google.com/unf-yabn-dns>

Bring a Bible; note-book, pen, and a keen sense to learn. Please let me know if you intend joining so we know to expect you.

Now, Scripture says, in Acts 15:6, in the Contemporary English Version,

⁶ "The apostles and church leaders met to discuss this problem about Gentiles. ⁷ They had talked it over for a long time, when Peter got up and said: 'My friends, you know that God decided long ago to let me be the one from your group to preach the good news to the Gentiles. God did this so they would hear and obey him.'

²² "The apostles, the leaders, and all the church members decided to send some men to Antioch along with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Silas and Judas Barsabbas, [\[a\]](#) who were two leaders of the Lord's followers.

²³ They wrote a letter that said: 'We apostles and leaders send friendly greetings to all of you Gentiles who are followers of the Lord in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia.'" (Acts 15: 6, 7, 22, 23)

This is what we commonly call the Council of Jerusalem. It was when the leaders of the NT church came together to discuss how to deal with Gentile Christians.

Sometime after the destruction of the temple by the Roman army in AD70 (CE), Christians separated from Judaism and effectively became a new Jesus religion. When they wanted to find a common way forward on difficult and potentially divisive questions, the fledgeling Church felt a need to hold council. They called all the leaders from near and far to meet to thrash out a common answer to problems.

On Sunday, we will be holding our annual congregational meeting (ACM) to consider the minutes of the previous ACM, to look at the issues facing the congregation and wider church, to hear about the mission of the congregation, to give account of the finances and to present the budget for the next financial year.

These documents have already been sent to you. Please read them with care, and let's come together to consider the work and witness of St Columba's Presbyterian Church, Hatfield.

Scripture provides the framework for faith and practice, and so we follow the precedent of the Jerusalem Council on Sunday. We need you to be present and to ensure a quorum for the ACM. Thank you.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING - EDICT

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Congregational Meeting (ACM) of St Columba's Hatfield, will take place on Sunday, 26th November 2023 at 10h30 immediately after the morning service.

Members who are unable to attend, are invited to send their questions and comments to the Session Clerk beforehand (email sessionclerk@stcolumbashatfield.co.za. so that they can be addressed at the ACM, and the appropriate feedback given thereafter. We encourage as many members as possible to attend either in person, or by submitting correspondence to ensure we are all inclusive and we make decisions together as a community that will drive and steer our congregation into the future.

Please tender apologies if you are unable to attend – admin@stcolumbashatfield.co.za. From Ryan Johnson - Session Clerk.

We are also holding our Christmas Carols on the 3 December at 9h30am so do come and join us for some nostalgic singing and our last Holy Communion Service for 2023, our Centenary.

Have a super weekend,

Rev Craig

26 November 2023

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