



## BRASS BAND ASSOCIATION OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA (N-T)

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### Report to the Synod

It is with thanks that I submit my first report, on the work of the Brass Band Association, to the synod.

I was tasked to assume the leadership of the association after the resignation of Siegfried Prigge in December 2016 until the election of a new brass band association director in June 2018.

It is appropriate to thank Siegfried for his tireless work as leader from 2008 up to the end of 2016. He set a clear direction for us towards closer interaction with the brass band movement of the Church in Germany, especially related to the formalisation of brass band leader training. This work has since been expanded to the Evangelical Brass Band Association of Southern Africa (EBBASA) which was created to facilitate co-operation between the different Lutheran Brass movements in Southern Africa.

This brings me to the work of music in church, and especially the Lutheran Church. Martin Luther considered music to be central to our worship of the Lord. For Luther, music was next in importance to theology, a living voice of the Gospel, a gift from God to be used in all its fullness in Christian praise and prayer.

Music has tremendous power to break down barriers and walls that people build. As with Jericho, music has been able to transcend the walls that have been put up between the different Lutheran Churches in South Africa. The creation of, and success, of EBBASA is a great example of the Lord using music to bring Christians together in worship.

Through EBBASA, we are training brass band leaders from all Lutheran churches together and this work is now being expanded to other forms of church music.

We are thankful of the work our members are doing in this sphere that has resulted in the founding of brass bands in the Western Diocese of the ELCSA, as well as the development of the brass band movement in the LUCSA.

We are working hard to continue this effort to bring people together to worship the Lord, regardless of their church affiliation.

The need to break down walls, even in our congregations, between the different races and languages in our church has become pressing. The role of church music is changing, other

musical forms are gaining traction and the traditional German music we are used to, and love, risks becoming a wall against bringing people together in worship.

Therefore, the brass band movement of the church must start incorporating music from other languages, spheres and styles to allow us to speak into the hearts of all members of our church through our music.

However, the support from congregations is also needed. Of late, it has become apparent that congregational support of music festivals in our church has waned.

I urge the synod to confirm its support for church music festivals as events where we can celebrate and worship the Lord together, get to know each other, breaking down walls and building bridges between congregations, churches, languages, races and generations.

I urge our clergy and church councils to motivate their congregants to attend these festivals, to experience, and be inspired by, the wonder of mass church music in the worship of the Lord.

Further, I urge the clergy of our church to accommodate all the various forms of church music in their congregations and not to allow their personal preferences to dictate worship in church.

For it is in only church music where up to three generations of one family can make music in harmony and complete worship of the Lord. We see this regularly at the brass band and choir festivals.

I look forward to your enthusiastic participation in the All Lutheran service at the end of August, as well as at the next Brass Band Festival on 2 and 3 June 2018 in Johannesburg.

May the Holy Spirit be with you during your work at the Synod.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Egon Otterman". The signature is written in dark ink on a white background.