
**MEDIA RELEASE
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**10 YEARS OF CHANGING THE HEART OF CAPE TOWN WITH THE HELP OF MES
BRINGING HOPE TO THE MARGINALISED AND DESTITUTE IN THE WIDER METROPOLITAN AREA**

BELLVILLE – The Cape Town branch of MES, that has been adding value to the marginalised and destitute in the wider metropolitan Cape Town for years, is celebrating its significant milestone tenth year of hope and empowerment. The main celebration was announced today as tickets went on sale for the birthday gala benefit dinner and show, featuring a top celebrity line-up including the platinum selling South African singer Elvis Blue, all contributing to celebrating the selfless cause of MES, reaching its first decade in Cape Town. A thanksgiving service that was hosted on 4 March at the Bellville Presbyterian Church signalled the period of thanks and celebration for the value that MES brings to people in dire need.

A gala benefit dinner and show will be held on 24 October this year as the main celebration and all proceeds from the tickets sold at R10,000 per table of 10 guests or R600 per individual will go directly towards the extraordinary work that MES has been doing since 2008 for the homeless, the unemployed and those in need of social support. MES is a Christian social development organisation that has been changing the heart of South African cities for the past 32 years and has been actively working towards providing sustainable solutions to pervasive poverty in the inner city of Johannesburg, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and Kempton Park.

“This year we want to celebrate each month with our loyal supporters and benefitting clients through sharing our history and progress made since 2008. The first thanksgiving service at the Bellville Presbyterian Church was our first of many celebrations in the lead up to the gala event in October,” states Rev. Alan Childs, chief executive officer of MES. “Valued partners, donors and MES employees shared this special service of thanks led by Rev Rod Botsis (Bellville Presbyterian Church) and Lilly Franks (MES Cape Town’s branch manager)”.

Lily Franks explains the journey of the last decade and says: “Since 2005 Bellville Care Mission functioned as an outreach ministry and registered non-profit organisation reaching out to the homeless communities in Bellville by offering social relief and spiritual enrichment activities. During 2007 it became evident that MES in Johannesburg and the Bellville Care Mission shared a vision of hope and had similar dreams and organisational cultures. Both organisations recognised the intense need in the wider Cape Town area and acknowledged the synergies between the two NPOs. Finally the efforts were merged in 2008 when Bellville Care Mission was renamed and registered as the MES Cape Town branch in March of that year”.

“Over the past decade MES Cape Town was able to establish a very strong outreach and social relief component that serves the immediate and short term needs of the homeless and unemployed community,” says Franks. “The launch of the GROW job rehabilitation programme, social work and occupational therapy services in 2014 paved the way for the further expansion of vocational skills training and job placement in 2015. MES also established LECA, a platform for job placement and a third income stream that would support the activities of MES. LECA is involved with hydroponic farming of herbs and had their first basil harvest in December 2014 and will soon be transferred to another focused charity organisation that will take it to its next level of growth,” notes Franks.

In 2016, MES Cape Town started providing social work services and youth programmes to the tenants of MES’s sister company Madulammo Housing Association. The services also addresses the need for youth holiday entertainment programmes in the wider Bellville / Cape Flats area that is marred by gangster activity and poverty. In May 2017 we opened the doors to our step-down shelter, The Safe Space, which has been



addressing an enormous need for the lack of accommodation for street people in the area. “This facility was received very well but is in need for additional funding to meet the need of those it serves,” says Franks.

“We remain focused on finding suitable solutions to the severe challenges in our city, which will bring about positive change and lead to the restoration of our client’s dignity and self-worth,” stresses Franks. “Over the past years employees, donors and volunteers have invested time, energy and resources into MES benefitting clients and programmes for which we are very thankful,” she states.

Rev. Childs invited business people and citizens from all surrounding areas to join MES for this special gala evening. He stressed that the tickets are sold as a fundraising initiative and called on corporates and individuals to support MES Cape Town through this noteworthy event in aid of the organisations life changing work. He also invited Capetonians to get involved in MES in the interest of the welfare of people on their doorstep.

“Visit www.mes.org.za and see the many opportunities available where companies and individuals can gain value from their involvement in such a good cause. Involvement need not only be financial contributions and contributions, services and goods in kind are also welcomed. Where applicable, donors will also be able to benefit from 18A receipts that allows donations to be deducted from their business or individual tax contributions,” concludes Franks.

EDITORS NOTES:

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MORE ABOUT MES

Since 1986, MES has been developing a unique strategy that addresses the development of the communities it serves. MES follow a holistic approach towards the development of people, while applying resources that ensure the successful and sustainable exit from the different programmes.

- Mould
 - Support and reach out with compassion, love and care
 - Encourage and motivate through positive communication
 - Treat others with respect and fairness irrespective of their religion, race, gender, age, cultural background or sexual orientation
- Empower
 - Accountable and responsible with clear strategy, roles and structure
 - Apply sound corporate governance and financial procedures, as well as effective monitoring and evaluation processes
 - Reflect and enhance integrity, transparency and effective leadership
- Serve
 - Practice Christian disciplines and create a servant and service culture
 - Be a voice of righteousness for the disempowered
 - Serve as integrated team with a common vision and goal

MORE ABOUT THE GALA BENEFIT DINNER AND SHOW

- The benefit gala dinner and show will be hosted on 24 October 2018
- Tickets sell for R10 000 a table of ten guests or R600 per individual guest
- All proceeds from the evening goes towards the continuation of MES’s work in wider Cape Town
- Contact Anelle Erasmus for more information on 021 949 8736 or e-mail her at anelle@mes.org.za