

## **We can ensure that honourable people lead our metro**

Travelling through the metro, I encountered so many things in one day. A motorist randomly stops, gets out of his car and urinates in the street. What happened to public decency?

On the freeway I encounter two cyclists in riding cycling gear. What happened to the laws governing which vehicles are allowed on the freeway?

A little further down the road two pedestrians walking on the freeway hiking a lift. What happened to the laws of the freeway?

Then, entering Summerstrand, the law of the taxi confronts you. A taxi driver stops on a pedestrian crossing whilst the traffic light is green and offloads the passengers.

What happened to upholding the rights of other citizens?

At our first council meeting of 2020 we still have no mayor elected. We continue to be “led” by an acting executive mayor, acting city manager, and any number of acting directors.

We are taking hard-earned taxpayers’ money to pay for suspended city managers. What happened to good governance?

All of this can happen in one day in a city named after one the greatest icons of our history.

Throughout our city and at any time you will encounter disgruntled residents complaining about basic needs not delivered.

Can somebody explain the science and maths needed to provide a resident with a safe and secure city in which they have a home, water, electricity, employment and food?

One of the reasons for all of this lawlessness is simply that there is no vision. Has our local government lost the plot?

Do we need to spell out the importance of the vision of the metro?

Instead, corruption is causing our state-owned enterprises to become a burden on the state, with the poor carrying the burden of delays in the provision of infrastructure as state funds are redirected to save the likes of SAA, Eskom and who knows what is next.

Can we not change our narrative to: “in spite of all this we are providing solutions to our people’s problems?”

In all of this we as the community faces the three giants of unemployment (at an all-time high), poverty and inequality. I think it is time for the electorate to rise up.

I appeal to the biggest constituency – those who are not active members of any political party. We are in the majority

Let us determine where our cross will go. There must be an alternative to the world of corruption that is impoverishing our metro.

Similarly let me encourage the church. Let us influence our constituency ward by ward.

Our communities need us right now. This submarine, the church has to come to the surface.

It is time for the church and civil society to once again rise in favour of the poor who are being marginalised through the rape of taxpayer's money. It is time to shape our future by putting quality leaders into positions of power.

Let us make this metro a desired destination for all.

It is a proven fact that any leadership is only as strong as its followership. The church is the only organ that meets with its constituency regularly.

It was members of the church who put pressure on the apartheid government, forcing change from the bottom up. We need government by the people for the people.

As the church we are everywhere! You will find us in every sphere of civil society. Let us start exerting our influence to create a cohesiveness in our diversity.

Here are some suggestions

1. We are present in all 66 wards of our city. The church can be the difference right where you are.
2. In your ward build relationships with each other as church leaders. The binding factor is: "We all believe in Jesus. We believe that He died in our place. We believe that He was buried, and we believe that He rose again." This is fundamental to our oneness in Christ. Let us not be divided by our own ambitions. It is about the people.
3. Connect with every stakeholder in your ward. The local councillor, the institutions of learning, the sports administrator, the NGO, the police station, community policing forums, the business community, the health clinics, the religious community. Sometimes a cup of coffee shared achieves more than all my preaching.
4. Keep each other accountable so that people and their needs become our focus. Our focus is the eradication of poverty, addressing inequalities, and creating employment.
5. Give ourselves a timeline through which we can measure our effectiveness.
6. If you are going to represent your ward and its community, be sure to be an example of integrity. Be a positive role-model.

In this way we can assist in developing public participation in forging the Integrated Development Plan of our Metro.

Our budget plan for the metro can then be monitored to determine if it addresses the needs of the people in the different wards.

We will also be able to be proactive in securing quality of life for all the people in the metro. We are able as a community to determine who governs our metro. This is not only about Christians. This is about all the people in our metro.

Apostle Neville Goldman, Ebenezer International.