

Up to the task

Lingelihle “Jay” Jadezweni

The story of our nation’s regime change, and transition to democracy reads like a fairy tale when compared to that of many other countries in Africa and the world at large.

Right up to the first democratic election, the world looked on in anticipation of a civil war that was not to be.

Some 27 years into that hard won victory we once again heard rumblings and threats of civil war when treasonous demands, violent unrest and looting sprees disrupted two of the provinces with the highest contribution to our national GDP.

Much like the Covid-19 pandemic has done to expose the systemic rot we had become accustomed to living with, the recent spate of looting and destruction has served to lift the carpet under which we had swept our social challenges.

The ever-increasing rate of inequality, deepening poverty, racial tensions and tribalism undertones are a reality that we have plastered over with sloganeering and well-crafted legalisms that have no tangible effect on the people on the ground.

It is little wonder then that the slightest spark is able to ignite a fire worth more than R20-billion, in KwaZulu-Natal alone, and result in the tragic loss of over 300 lives.

South Africa is on fire.

Our nation is bleeding, and we can no longer afford to outsource our healing and reconciliation to government alone.

In the midst of the chaos and the mayhem of the last couple of weeks, the picture that we saw in Nelson Mandela Bay, and the Eastern Cape generally, shows just what a people united can do.

When we stand together, we can stem the tide.

Our province and our metro are undoubtedly ravaged with poverty, but our people were able to stand selflessly in defence of the little that we have, in defence our future.

The Bible says that when the people are one and have one language, nothing they propose to do will be withheld from them.

Indeed, the business, religious and taxi formations spoke one language and were able to save our metro from the destruction we see in other parts of the country.

United in our differences and yes, just as the rainbow is made of different colours that work together to make a single cohesive unit, we too need to work at healing and reconciliation.

It is not enough to merely declare ourselves a rainbow nation, we need to be intentional in overcoming our challenges and be committed to selflessly uplift those who are most affected.

In the process of rebuilding our nation, we need social architects who are going to craft new models of being.

Our role as the church is to serve as a blueprint for social cohesion but we cannot fulfil that role if we continue to operate in a silo, exclusive of the social issues faced by the society we serve.

Einstein said, we cannot solve our problems by employing the same kind of thinking we had when creating them.

It is time for us to rebuild with the future in mind, to build in unity.

The Rainbow Nation may have proven to be idealistic, but it is an ideal worth pursuing and we have proven ourselves up to the task.

Senior Pastor Lingelihle Jadezweni: RUCC PE