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Charter of Friendship between

The South-Eastern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church
in Southern Africa, (ELCSA-SED)
Private Bag X9204

Maphumulo

4470

and

The Diocese of Skara in the Church of Sweden
Church of Sweden, Diocese of Skara
Box 173, 532 23 Skara

This agreement was signed on... 26 of October in the year 2025 at ... Newcastle

Preamble

Liberated by God's grace, a communion in Christ, living and working together for a just, peaceful, and reconciled world. Inspired by the vision of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), we, the undersigned parties, affirm our commitment to these principles.

Article 1: Introduction and Background

The South-Eastern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa, (ELCSA-SED)

The South Eastern Diocese (SED) is one of the seven dioceses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (ELCSA), which is a church of some half a million members, comprising South Africa, the Kingdom of Eswatini, Lesotho and Botswana. The SED herself comprises 10 circuits, 101 parishes and about 70 000 members spread across the whole of KwaZulu-Natal, parts of the Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and Free State provinces.

The Diocese of Skara in the Church of Sweden

The Diocese of Skara was the first Diocese in Sweden. According to tradition the year 1014 is mentioned and Thurgot of Bremen is considered to be the first bishop. Around the year 1000 the first Christian king Olof Skötkonung was baptised in the well "Husaby" 20 km north of Skara. Today Skara is one of 13 dioceses in the Church of Sweden, an Evangelical Lutheran Church. Approximately 60 % of all 570.000 inhabitants in the Diocese are members in the Church of Sweden. Skara is situated between the big lakes

Vänern and Vättern. Borås with its 115.000 inhabitants is the largest town and Skara town where the diocesan office and bishop's residence is situated has 18.000 inhabitants. Skara Diocese has 413 churches in 102 parishes where about 220 priests and 90 permanent deacons serve. Total number of employees in the parishes of Skara is 2100.

Article 2: Common ground and intent

As members of the Lutheran World Federation, we share a foundational commitment to fostering a global communion of churches. It is our intention to deepen this communion within our respective church communities, the ELCSA-SED and the Diocese of Skara, by expressing our commitment to visible unity in diversity.

The ELCSA-SED and the Diocese of Skara operate within distinctly diverse environments and social contexts, each facing unique and multifaceted challenges. Despite these differences both our churches are united in our mission to proclaim the gospel to all people (Matthew 28:19-20) and all of creation (Mark 16:15). Both churches also share the endeavour to formulate and implement a Christian contribution to global crises, notably climate change and social injustice—issues that disproportionately impact the most vulnerable populations.

Through these efforts, we aim to not only address these pressing challenges but also to foster a more just and compassionate world. Together, we acknowledge the importance of the Christian community's role and importance in realizing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Article 3: Areas of special interest

Areas identified as being of special interest for sharing and mutual learning is:

- To be a grassroots Church
- Pastoral Care

Article 4: Commitments and priorities of collaboration

This agreement is centred on spiritual support and collaborative efforts rather than financial exchange. The partnership will rely on digital means to reduce our carbon footprint. When we mutually agree that it is essential to meet in real life we need to compensate for the climate impact of our travels.

Our partnership will focus on:

- Regular prayer support for each other's communities.

- Engagement in regular dialogues between bishops and church leaders on current and common themes.
- Sharing of theological reflections and practices in areas such as peace, care for creation, diversity, grassroots church and pastoral care.
- Promotion of the development of local relationships between parishes within our Dioceses.
- Promotion of gender justice and the advancement of women in leadership roles within our churches.

Article 5: Operational Framework

- Each church will designate a contact group responsible for the coordination of the partnership.
- Regular updates will be provided to the Lutheran World Federation regarding our collaborative efforts and progress.

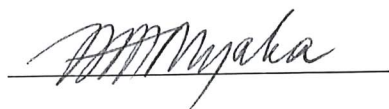
Conclusion

Through this Charter of Friendship, we commit to building each other up in faith and action, as guided by the spirit of mutual respect and shared purpose. Our agreement is valid for five years after signature. After a joint evaluation during the fifth year we decide together on a possible prolongment.

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Signatures



Bishop Nkosinathi Myaka

**Bishop of South Eastern
Diocese**



Bishop Ulrica Fritzson

Bishop of Skara Diocese