



DAILY SCHEDULED  
GRAHAMSTOWN - PE ROUTE  
Depart: Grahamstown 7:30 & 17:30  
Port Elizabeth 7:30 & 17:30  
Cost: R110 pp

BEST RATES ON SHUTTLES TO PE, EL & PORT ALFRED

Bookings  
Tel: 041 451 4803 (24hrs)

markano@blunden.co.za  
(Bookings Essential)



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**SPIRIT OF THE STRUGGLE...** Bishop Ebenezer Ntlali opened a night vigil in the cathedral with a prayer, blessing members of the various organisations present, including the Unemployed People's Movement, the Women's Social Forum and Students for Social Justice.

## Bishop backs night vigil

THABO JIJANA

The struggles of Grahamstown's Unemployed People's Movement and Women's Social Forum have the blessing - literally - of one of the city's most prominent figures.

Ebenezer Ntlali, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Grahamstown, opened the organisations' night vigil at the Cathedral of St Michael and St George in Church Square on Sunday with a prayer, and a blessing for their members.

From 8pm until 9am on Monday, struggle songs were sung (*My mother was a kitchen girl, my father was a garden boy, this is why I'm a socialist...*), there was lively dancing in the aisles and there were discussions on critical issues, including what kinds of councillors residents demanded for the upcoming elections.

"We are so used to crime in our neighbourhoods that we are past the stage where we fear for our security any more," said Nosigqibo Soxujwa, the chairperson for the Women's Social Forum, addressing about 70 residents from various Grahamstown townships.

"No more accepting councillors whom we have no say in choosing," she said, referring to the list system used by the ANC and the DA, which, together with Mind, will contest Makana in the 18 May election.

The group sang a medley of struggle and gospel songs throughout the night and, around midnight, they circled the Cathedral in a long procession, defiantly singing liberation songs.

But 30 minutes later, as the sentiment expressed by the now toyi-toying group became more militant, five SAPS vehicles showed up and parked in High Street, alongside the church.

Suddenly, and in mock seriousness, the crowd switched back to the gospel songs, until, half an hour later, and without any confronta-

tion, the police duly drove away.

In a media statement issued before the vigil, the social movements cited their dissatisfaction with mayor Vumile Lwana's response to a memorandum of their demands, which included the provision of proper RDP houses and electricity.

Lwana had said building new RDP houses and rebuilding those destroyed in a 2008 tornado were the responsibility of the department of human settlements (formerly housing), not the municipality.

The media statement said the vigil was being held "in the hope that someone from the provincial government will come down and hear the people".

Ayanda Kota, chairperson of the Unemployed People's Movement, said at the vigil: "There is a difference between a home fit for a human being and one fit for an animal. We cannot live in the same house with snakes." (He was referring to parts of Zolani where snakes are prevalent.)

Bishop Ntlali, during his opening address, said the organisations had a huge task in helping unemployed residents find the means to put bread on the table.

"It is disheartening to read that there is government money being returned to national government because it was unused," Ntlali said.

Also attending the vigil were members of a newly formed organisation, called Students for Social Justice.

Bleary eyed participants, including some school children who had attended with their parents, left the church around 9am yesterday.

According to Soxujwa, the night vigil was due to continue last night, and every night, until residents received answers from the office of the MEC for Human Settlements, Helen Sauls-August.