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# Oldest Church in Rustenburg



**Rustenburg** – Established on 21 January 1850, the Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk in Rustenburg is the oldest church of our Platinum-rich city. According to Dr. Hennie Kotze – Reverend of the church – the area where the church now stands was once used as a medical facility by soldiers from England during the Anglo-Boer wars. “They [English soldiers] occupied the building during May 1900 and used it to nurse those wounded in battle. About 85 of their soldiers died here,” said Dr. Kotze. “Thereafter the land of the church was purchased for about £20 000 and the first congregation that settled in originated mostly from Pretoria. This church is also the second oldest church in the whole of the *old Transvaal*,” added Dr. Kotze. Today, Dr. Kotze runs the church together with the help of his daughter – Zelda Kotze – co-ministering

this vibrant congregation. Together they make up a rare and beautiful father-daughter combination of church leadership. “She heads up the food project – one of her passions. On woman’s day we celebrated the day by feeding about 240 kids. I guess we still see ourselves as a hospital, a place of healing and care.” According to Dr. Kotze, the prime challenge facing Rustenburg today is the escalating number of young people engaging in drug- and alcohol abuse. He feels that churches within the community should continually enlighten young people to the fact that there is more to life than alcohol and drugs. He exclaimed, “Younger people do not understand that they are ruining their lives if they continue on the wide path of drugs and alcohol. In most cases, poverty has a huge role to play. Here at the church,

we have a support system for people where they can get all the help and counselling that they would ever need to stop these bad habits and addictions.” “We also have cell groups at homes where people encourage and draw strength from each other. We also have a very popular women’s bible study group, held on Thursdays. Everybody is welcome!” For the normal Sunday services, the church opens its doors to the public from 09h00 to 10h00 and from 18h00 to 19h00 for evening services. “We want to have a heart, have an eye and have a hand for the people who are in need. This is our mission,” says Dr. Kotze.

Why not attend the service this Sunday? The church is located on the corner of Fatima Bhayat and Beyers Naude Streets.