# **FOUNDERS' DAY 2025**

Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving

7 June 2025





ST STITHIANS

INSPIRING EXCELLENCE

www.stithian.com

What we do matters and ripples out to all those whom we encounter in the course of a day. Beyond that, we are a South African school making a world of difference. This may sound daunting but I find it inspirational. You matter. We matter. I matter. Together, we can choose to bring tenderness and compassion to each member of this Saints family.

- Celeste Gilardi

# **PROGRAMME OF EVENTS**

- 08:30 Refreshments for sale
- 09:45 All students seated; staff assemble at the Boys' Sports Pavilion MC: Alistair Stewart
- 10:00 Founders' Day Service on Baytopp Field Call to Worship: Rev Elroy Kekana (Superintendent Chaplain)
  Welcome: Mr Gary Morolo (Chair of St Stithians Council Endowment Fund Trust)
  Rector's Address: Mrs Celeste Gilardi
  Scripture Readings, Musical Items and Prayers
  Guest Speaker Address: Ms Emma Mashilwane

(Chair of St Stithians College Council)

**Gratitudes:** Mr David du Toit (Deputy Rector, St Stithians College) **Benediction:** Rev Elroy Kekana

12:00 **Refreshments served** Parents and Staff on Andries Dlamini Oval Students return to their schools for refreshments

#### Exhibitions

Thandulwazi Maths & Science Academy Interact Proudly Saints / Stithian Shop

13:30 Old Stithian Association AGM (One & All Club)





Thank you for maintaining our green campus by making use of the refuse bins.

# **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

## Silence During The Founders' Day Service

As this is a formal service held in the open, we request silence for the duration of the service. Please ensure that your cellphones are muted or set to silent mode.

### Information

Public Relations students will assist our visitors.

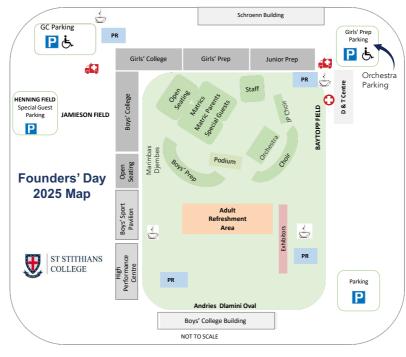
### Emergencies

Security Staff and Paramedics are located next to the D&T building on the Baytopp Field.

### Refreshments

Served on the Andries Dlamini Oval for Parents and Staff. Students return to their schools for refreshments.

## MAP





## **RECTOR'S FOREWORD**

t is a privilege to welcome you to our 2025 Founders' Day Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving. I extend this welcome on behalf of our family of seven schools as we share this, the most important day on our calendar. Today is an opportunity to gather as a Saints family and with our friends to give thanks to our Founders. It is a joy to be able to offer gratitude to so many who have made a significant contribution to the College over its seventy-two year history.

This Founders' Day, I am particularly mindful of our College theme for 2025: "A Family of Schools. A School for Family." In a world that often seems uncertain and unpredictable, we can anchor ourselves in love and thrive if we are surrounded by a family that believes in us and wants the best for us. I believe that this is such a family.

The intention of this service is to reaffirm our faith and Methodist roots. We also give thanks for the many ways in which we have been guided along the path by men and women of vision. Families have times of celebration; this is ours. We celebrate the 30th birthday of our Girls' Schools and the Junior Primary's 25th birthday. Each family has stories that they tell about their history. There are so many in our history that have set the path for those to come. There are, inevitably, times of loss and sadness but we bear those times together. I will take the opportunity today to tell just a few of those good stories that have shaped us into who we are.

In my address, I will be reflecting on how we are called to balance the past with the present and the future. A wonderful symbol of this is the double thorn of the UmPhafa tree (zizyphus mucronate). One thorn hooks backwards to hold memory while the other points to the future. We have planted a tree at the Bishop Malinga Gate and you will also see one next to the podium. Our guest speaker, Ms Emma Mashilwane, is an important member of the Saints family. She was appointed as the new Chair of St Stithians College Council in January.

She has an impressive and extensive Curriculum Vitae and, importantly, she has a passion for the work done by the College. I know that this woman of vision and courage will guide us in the writing of more good stories. Ms Mashilwane will be introduced by the Boys' College Head Boy, Stefano Stankovic.

I am mindful of the extent and influence of our Saints family both gathered here and across the world. The recording of this service will be watched by many Old Stithians. I hope that whether you are here on our magnificent campus, or in another part of the world, that you will be reminded of your roots and of some of the good stories that make you part of the history of Saints. In a world where negative narratives often dominate the news and social media, I encourage you to share your memories and to continue to point to the future, still rooted in our values and living the Honour Code

I am grateful to, and for, each one of you. To our staff and students, our parents, and invited guests, enjoy the day. I hope you will leave inspired, balancing past, present and future, and ready to start another significant story.



Mrs C Gilardi Rector



# **ORDER OF SERVICE**

## BELL RINGING

(Please rise: Congregation to stand for the Staff and Students Procession) Commemorating 72 years since 1953

#### **Bell Ringers**

Girls' College: Senzekile Nzimande and Anesu Nyalugwe Boys' College: John-Paul Suzi-Banda

> "I believe the world is one big family, and we need to help each other."

> > - Jet Li

## CHAPLAIN

### Call to Worship (with Opening Prayer)

#### Superintendent Chaplain Rev Elroy Kekana

(Congregation to join in saying all the text in **bold print**)

#### Leader:

Today we gather to honour the vision, faith, and dedication of our Founders those who planted the seeds of this school in hope and purpose.

Let us worship with thanksgiving, celebrating the past, embracing the present, and envisioning the future.

#### All:

We give thanks to God for our Founders and for all who have shaped this school with faith, courage, and sacrifice.

#### Prayer:

Faithful God,

On this Founders' Day, we remember with gratitude those who responded to your call to establish this school.

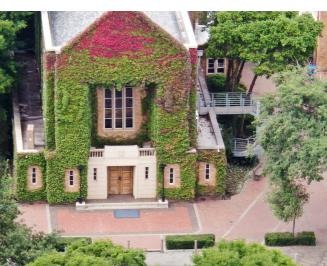
Bless us with the same boldness of vision, the same strength of character, and the same trust in your guidance.

May this time of worship renew our sense of calling, deepen our unity, and inspire us to serve with excellence and integrity.

In the name of Jesus Christ, the true foundation of our lives, Amen.

(Congregation to be seated)

"Family is not an important thing, it's everything" - Michael J Fox



*"The bond that links your true family is not one of blood, but of respect and joy in each other's life."* 

–Richard Bach 🚺 🌾

## WELCOME

#### Mr Gary Morolo (Chair of the Endowment Fund Trust)

(Congregation to rise)







## NATIONAL ANTHEM

E Santonga / ML de Villiers Arranged and Orchestrated by Yvette Schoeman

Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika Maluphakanyisw' uphondo lwayo, Yizwa imithandazo yethu, Nkosi sikelela, thina lusapho lwayo.

Morena boloka setjhaba sa heso, O fedise dintwa le matshwenyeho, O se boloke, O se boloke setjhaba sa heso, Setjhaba sa, South Afrika — South Afrika.

Uit die blou van onse hemel, Uit die diepte van ons see, Oor ons ewige gebergtes, Waar die kranse antwoord gee,

Sounds the call to come together, And united we shall stand, Let us live and strive for freedom In South Africa our land.

## RECTOR'S ADDRESS Mrs Celeste Gilardi



**"Family means no one gets left behind or forgotten."** - David Ogden Stiers



## CHAPLAIN

(Congregation to rise)

#### Let us pray: Rev Madika "Dix" Sibeko

Gracious and Eternal God,

Thank you for the message shared by our Rector—words that remind us of who we are and why we exist.

As a community rooted in faith, may we continue to grow in wisdom, love, and service.

We lift up our school leaders, educators, staff, students, alumni, and families.

May we honour our past by living with purpose in the present, and may our future be shaped by courage, compassion, and commitment to your will.

Bless the legacy entrusted to us—and may we steward it well. In Christ's name, Amen

#### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

LET IT BE SO!

(Congregation to be seated)



## FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

(Deuteronomy 6:4–9 (NIV) Read by Unakho Mboniswa (Thandulwazi Grade 11)

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road,

when you lie down and when you get up.

Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

## SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

Hebrews 12:1–2 (NIV)

### Read by Jake Finch (Boys' College Deputy Head Boy)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before Him, He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

## THIRD SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 7:24-27 (NIV)

## Read by Shannon Driver and Thando Mcobothi (Girls' College Deputy Head Girls)

"Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house;

yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.

The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house,

and it fell with a great crash."





## JOHN WESLEY'S PRAYER

#### John Wesley Covenant Prayer (Modern Version)

#### Read by Mackenzie Elliot (Junior Prep Student)

I am no longer my own, but yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will; put me to doing, put me to suffering;

#### Read by Khethiwe Onyango (Junior Prep Student)

let me be employed for you or laid aside for you, exalted for you or brought low for you; let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing: I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal.

#### Read by Aayan Judy (Junior Prep Student)

And now, glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. So be it. And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

## JUNIOR PREP MUSICAL ITEM

You Will Be Found Music and Lyrics by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul

(Congregation to rise)





"Friends are the chosen Family"

- unknown





On Founders' Day each year we welcome the parents of the Matric Class to take their seats on the field in recognition of this milestone year and the important role that our parents play in the St Stithians College journey.

Thank you #OneAndAll.



## THE COLLEGE HYMN

Be Thou My Vision - Irish Traditional Melody Orchestration by Christo Jankowitz and Yvette Schoeman

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart, Be all else but naught to me, save that thou art; Be thou my best thought in the day and the night, Both waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word, Be thou ever with me, and I with thee, Lord; Be thou my great Father, and I thy true child; Be thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.

High King of heaven, thou heaven's bright Sun, O Grant me its joys after vict'ry is won; Great Heart of my own heart, whatever befall, Still be thou my vision, O Ruler of all. "In every conceivable manner, the family is a link to our past, a bridge to our future."

- Alex Haley





## PRAYERS

Let us pray:

#### Read by Chelsey Angelo (Girls' Prep Student)

Dear God,

Thank You for our school and everyone who helps us learn and grow. We thank You for the founders who had the vision to build this place. Help us to follow their example by being kind, brave, and wise. Amen.

#### Read by James Sinclair (Boys' Prep Student)

Prayer of Thanks for Our Founders Loving God, Thank You for the people who started our school long ago. They cared about learning, faith, and helping others. Help us to remember their story and live with the same big heart. Amen.

#### Read by Babalwa Mbolambi (Girls' Prep Student)

Prayer for Our School Today God of love, Bless our teachers, friends, and families today. Help our school to be a place of joy, learning, and peace. Let us keep growing in kindness, truth, and courage. Amen.

#### Read by Yash Kuseeal (Boys' Prep Student)

Dear God, As we celebrate Founders' Day, thank You for the past and the future. Help us be proud of our school and do our best every day. May we always walk in Your light and share Your love.

Amen.



## THE COLLEGE PRAYER

Read by Rev Philippa Cole (Girls' College Chaplain), Rev Gift Monnapula (Girls' Prep Chaplain), and Rev Thandeka Dintlhe (Junior Prep Chaplain).

Let us pray:

Dear God,

Let my purpose each day be to honour You, I seek to praise You through faithful service, I seek to honour You through dedicated worship, I long to be filled with the fruit of Your Spirit So that I may journey along a path of prayer Towards knowing You as my God.

Let my purpose each day be to honour others, Let me seek to respect and value each person that I meet, And see You reflected in my neighbour. Help me to journey towards finding the beauty in others. Help me to journey towards building others Through co-operation rather than competition, And towards an understanding of You as my God.

Let my purpose each day be to learn to honour self, Allow me to grow in moral courage so that I may express the truth, Allow me to find the strength to live a disciplined life. I ask You to walk beside me, As I journey from loneliness to solitude, Towards a discovery of the uniqueness of self, And a personal knowledge of You as my God. **Amen.** 





HONOUR GOD HONOUR OTHERS HONOUR SELF

Click/scan here for the updated Statement of Spirituality

"Family is like music, some high notes, some low notes, but always a beautiful song." - Jesse Joseph

## MUSICAL ITEM

A//2

**Pompeii** by Dan Smith (Bastille) Arranged by Peter McLea

"Our Family is a circle of strength and love. Every crisis faced together makes the circle stronger"

- Unknown



## ADDRESS BY OUR GUEST SPEAKER

Introduction by Stefano Stankovic (Boys' College Head Boy)

**Ms Emma Mashilwane** (Chair of Council)

Thank You by Bukelwa Biko (Girls' College Head Girl)





(Congregation to rise)



## THE COLLEGE SONG

Orchestration by Christo Jankowitz and Yvette Schoeman

In honour and in praises To highest heaven'ly rule In gratitude to founders We cherish this our School We'll "One and All" remember. And lest we should forget Our song fore'er reminds us Of our eternal debt.

With hearts and minds we praise thee Our Saviour and our King To thee our lives we render Our all to thee we bring We'll "One and All" remember. And may we ne'er forget That thou dost call to service From heights of Olivet.

When school's a distant memory Of happy youthful years We'll oft times look behind us To all that still endears We'll "One and All" remember. How could we e'er forget! That here our ship once anchor'd And here its course was set.







### Raising R150 million: Embark on a shared voyage

Are you a visionary? Join St Stithians College on a remarkable journey: We're raising R75 million each for the St Stithians College and Thandulwazi Trust Endowment Funds, in celebration of our 75th Birthday in 2028.

#### Why an endowment fund?

The school fees fund our operating and annual capital expenses; however, to advance the College's strategic longer-term priorities and ensure its sustainability, it is imperative to grow an endowment fund. An endowment fund provides the school with financial stability to plan for the future!

#### An endowment is a donation to a nonprofit organisation, which uses the resulting investment income for a specific purpose.

A well-invested endowment fund provides income to the school from the capital amount without the need to continually fundraise. We will pass this financial asset from one generation to the next, ensuring the school's financial security. This is a must for South Africa's academic institutions if they – and the country, in turn – are to thrive in the years to come.

#### How can you contribute?

We invite donations of skill, contacts, expertise and money to establish and grow our Endowment Funds for both St Stithians College and the Thandulwazi Trust Maths and Science Academy.

Our Methodist faith anchors us and our Saints spirit helps us to stay the course as we plan a tomorrow for our children.

# Make your contribution to a brighter future for One and All.











Scan to donate to the St Stithians College Endowment Fund.



Scan to donate to the Thandulwazi Endowment Fund.





## GRATITUDES

### Mr David du Toit (Deputy Rector St Stithians College)

(Congregation to rise)

## BENEDICTION

#### Superintendent Chaplain Rev Elroy Kekana

As we go from this place, May the God who called our Founders still call us to courage and vision.

May Christ the Cornerstone strengthen our foundation.

May the Holy Spirit empower us to build wisely, lead humbly, and serve faithfully.

And may the blessing of God Almighty—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—rest upon us and remain with us always. **Amen**.





### GRATITUDE

Guest Speaker: Emma Mashilwane The Methodist Church of Southern Africa St Stithians College Endowment Fund Trustees St Stithians College Council The Old Stithian Association and Alumni The College Executive Committee St Stithians College PTA's St Stithians College Staff Members and Scholars Invited Guests of the Chair of Council and the Rector The many other role-players and contributors: Musical Performers and Staff Jaline Oelofse, Taryn Clur, Linda Glass, Mike Sibanda Students and Staff playing a role in the Service Students and Staff involved and participating **Operational Team** Communications and Public Relations Teams **Events** Team Advancement Team Empact – Catering Sound Stylists - Technical E-Prints – Photography PixPlay – Videography Junior Prep – Podium Flowers Servest – Podium Greenery Imagination Tree – Programme Decor - The Decor Room



"La famiglia è lo specchio in cui Dio si guarda e vede i due miracoli più belli che ha fatto: donare la vita e donare l'amore". Giovanni Paolo II

## ST STITHIANS COLLEGE ENDOWMENT FUND TRUST

Mr Gary Morolo (Chair) Ms Nerine Kahn Mr Carel Nolte Rev Dr Matshedesho Molale (MCSA Presiding Bishop's delegate) Bishop Faith Whitby (MCSA District Bishop)

## ST STITHIANS COLLEGE COUNCIL

Mr Lwazi Bam (Independent) Mrs Olimpia Benfield (Girls' College PTA Chair/ PTA Chair of Chairs) Mr Christo Boshoff (ICT Committee Chair) Mr Philip Bradford (OSA Representative) Mr Graeme Du Bruyn (MCSA Representative) Mrs Celeste Gilardi (Rector) Mr Russell Harvey (OSA Representative) Mr Rob Hawton (Finance Committee Chair) Ms Nerine Kahn (Lay Trust Representative) Rev Elroy Kekana (Superintendent Chaplain) Mr Malose Kekana (Sustainability Committee Chair) Mrs Sibongile Luthuli (Junior Prep PTA Chair) Mrs Nomvula Mabunda (Girls' Prep PTA Chair) Mrs Sylvia MacLeod-Zeller (Boys' College PTA Chair) Mr Lebogang Madibo (MCSA Representative)

Mrs Nomfanelo Magwentshu (Transformation Committee Chair) Mrs Simphiwe Mashego (OSA Representative) Ms Emma Mashilwane (Chair of Council) Rev Dr Matshedesho Molale (MCSA Presiding Bishop Delegate) Mr Gary Morolo (SSCEFT Chair/ Lay Trust Representative) Mr Ishmael Motsoeli (OSA Representative) Mrs Sheila Mutugi (Boys' Prep PTA Chair) Mrs Thandi Ngxongo (MCSA Representative) Mrs Nonkululeko Ntshona (Planning & Development Committee Chair) Mr Charles Nupen (Governance Committee Chair) Adv Racquel Nxumalo (MCSA Representative) Mr Israel Skosana (OSA Chair) Mrs Sungeetha Sewpersad (People and Talent Committee Chair) Ms Janet Van Der Poel (independent) Dr Vusi Vilakati (MCSA Rep) Mrs Claire Watson (Head of Finance) **Bishop Faith Whitby** (MCSA District Bishop, Trust Representative and Church Committee Chair) Mr John Williams (Thandulwazi Trust Chair)

## ST STITHIANS COLLEGE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mr Stephen Baytopp

(Head of Kamoka Bush School) Mr Thando Bili (Head of Operations) Mr David du Toit (Head of Boys' College and Deputy Rector) Mrs Celeste Gilardi (Rector and Chair) Mr Velaphi Gumbi (Head of Thandulwazi Academy) Mrs Gayle Harris (Head of Junior Prep) Dr Sally James (Head of Girls' College) Rev Elroy Kekana (Superintendent Chaplain) Mrs Kim Lowman (Head of Girls' Prep) Mr Sanele Majola (Head of Boys' Prep) Mrs Marshy Nel (Head of Information Communication Technology) Mrs Verushka Ramsamuj (Head of Human Resources) Mrs Noma Shange (Head of Diversity and Transformation) Mr Alistair Stewart (Head of Advancement) Mrs Claire Watson (Head of Finance) Dr Adrienne Watson (Head of Educational Research and Innovation)

## THE OLD STITHIAN ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE

Mr Israel Skosana- Chair Mr Gavin Meiring - Deputy Chair Mr Rob Hawton- Treasurer Mrs Simphiwe Mashego- Secretary Mr David Arendse Mr Philip Bradford Mr Bruno Fernandes Mr Russell Harvey Mr Tshepang Khunou Mr Chris Kyprianides

## THANDULWAZI TRUST

Mr John Williams (Chair) Mrs Celeste Gilardi Mr Velaphi Gumbi Mr Tshediso Khuzwayo Mrs Caitlyn Loneon Mr Stuart McIver Mr Ishmael Motsoeli Mr Asante Nxumalo Mr Tshepo Pule Mr Jock Seeliger Mr Thabang Sekete Mr Richard Sibeko Ms Lara Stockigt Ms Lauren Urdang

Mr Bongani Mbokazi Ms Nomfundo Ngcobo Ms Busi Radebe

#### PTA MEMBERS - PARENT REPRESENTATIVES

#### **Junior Prep**

Mrs Sibongile Luthuli (Chair) Mrs Lebo Hlatshwayo (Vice-Chair) Ms Wendy Adams Mr Gushwell Brooks Mr Fanie Cordier Mrs Maxine da Costa Mrs Pangidzai Gazi Mr Russell Harvey Mrs Megan Masson Mrs Candice Ngcobo Mrs Danielle Scorer Mrs Naledi Sekete Mr Jonathan Young

#### Boys' Prep

Mrs Sheila Mutugi (Chair) Mrs Lorraine Sithole (Deputy-Chair) Mrs Egbe Adeoye Mrs Linda Mpofu Mr Adrian Kloke Mrs Tessa Marsh Mrs Rea Mbuthu Mrs Samantha Mixon Mr Denga Ramuedzisi Mr Brett le Roux

#### Girls' Prep

Mrs Nomvula Mabunda (Chair) Mrs Jenny Brebnor Mr David Fraser Mrs Refilwe Matenche Mrs Juanita McLeod Mrs Davina Mavuwa Mrs Masibonge Mkhize Dr Bulelwa Muganga Mrs Debbie Ransby Mrs Nathisha Singh Mrs Gugulethu Tsusi

#### **Boys' College**

Mrs Sylvia Macleod-Zeller (Chair) Mrs Lyse Jimerson Mrs Ashmini Kambaran Ms Justine Lacey Mrs Augustine Masilela Chuene Ms Mandisa Mzizi Ms Zimkhitha Ntsodo Mrs Debbie Smith Dr Christina Steyn Mrs Jacqui Wood

#### **Girls' College**

Mrs Olimpia Benfield (Chair) Mrs Debbie Ransby (Deputy-Chair) Mr Mzi Biyam Mrs Tracy Bruce Mrs Fungai Mapenzauswa Mrs Helen Morrison Mrs Dawn Sauls Mrs Angela Steenkamp Ms Lara Stockigt Mrs Gugulethu Tsusi Mrs Philippa Westerveld



## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

St Stithians College gives life to the words **"happy fulfilment"** inscribed on our foundation stone.

As a College of seven schools, we strive to:



EDUCATE individuals to be lifelong learners who participate, lead and serve. Live out a Methodist ethos, providing diverse opportunities for our students and staff to **honour** God, honour others and honour self; to know oneself, to be oneself, and to **CONTRIBUTE** as African and global citizens. Combine tradition with innovation, and academic **ambition** with holistic education as distinguishing features of the St Stithians journey. Promote personal growth and lives of significance for our staff and students in a College of WELCOME AND WONDER. Optimise educational and institutional synergies through our schools collaborating with each other. Create a **COMMUNITY OF BELONGING** among our students, staff, parents and alumni. Provide facilities that enhance our educational mission, while developing our campus as a place of natural beauty, promoting environmental awareness and action. Manage our educational enterprise effectively and efficiently, according to sound and **ACCOUNTABLE** corporate governance policies. St Stithians College is committed to the positive transformation and development of South African society. We seek to embrace ubuntu.

# to be One and All.



ST STITHIANS COLLEGE (011) 577 6000 www.stithian.com

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