

## PASTORAL PSYCHOLOGIST CONDUCTS SEMINARS

DR ROLF STEINHILPER, a pastoral psychologist and pastor of the Evangelical Church of Württemberg, visited the Cape Church in August 2002 at the invitation of UELCSA. It was his second visit to our Church. Over many years Dr Steinhilper was an institution on the *Süd-West Funk* radio, Stuttgart, where in the mornings he would answer listeners' questions live. He also ran a psychologist's practice, held lectures and seminars and wrote several books. His visit was co-ordinated by the Pastoral Counselling Desk.

The pastors had the special benefit of his ministry, through his Bible studies, as well as personal interaction, during the very successful annual **Convocation of Pastors** at the Bainskloof retreat centre, 27-29 August.

CCN could attend the open seminar at Bellville (below) and was able to peruse extensive notes on the Bainskloof proceedings by Pastor Peter Molchin (copies available from all pastors). What seems to have been most stimulating and enriching was Dr Steinhilper's ability to combine theological and psychological approaches to the Bible. The one concentrates on understanding the Bible rationally and theoretically, and talks about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit in that way. The other treats a Biblical story, a parable or otherwise, as though it were a dream, and asks the question: What is it in the story that we subjectively identify with? In this way, we encounter the Scriptures at a subconscious level. This allows us to explore the delicate labyrinth of our deepest feelings and discover deep-rooted pain, fears and anxieties. "Then we may turn to the Healer, Jesus, who is able to reach out to us and restore us to wholeness and holiness." Beyond that, it is important that subconscious processes are taken seriously in everything we do in our churches and ministry, in preaching, counselling and personal interactions.



Dr Steinhilper also held a seminar for congregation members at the Church of the Cross, Bellville, on 24 August 2002, in German, on Personal Use of the Bible and How to improve living together in Marriage and Family, and preached in the divine service there the next day (see separate article).

UP