



## CHRISTMAS REFLECTIONS 2016

Dear Friends of The Sophia Foundation

As the end of 2016 approaches there is much concern and uncertainty about what lies ahead for South Africa and the rest of the world. One of the privileges of working with The Sophia Foundation has been the opportunity to meet many inspired people and organisations all working with faith, hope and love for the future to promote a healing of the alienation humankind feels from the self, nature and fellow human beings. During this year, The Sophia Foundation has strengthened its focus on building sustainable collaborations with some of these organisations and individuals and our relationship with our partners has grown in depth and meaning.

Our long-term association with [Ikamva Labantu](#), which has a large and very meaningful humanitarian footprint in our previously disadvantaged communities, has developed over many years and we continue to share networks, ideas and resources. The intensely challenging anti-rhino poaching work led by the [Peace Parks](#) is beginning to show results and we have maintained our contribution through them towards the care and rehabilitation of the growing number of orphaned rhino. This is our second year of partnership with the [Earthchild Project](#) Alumni Programme and we have watched with admiration as the Alumni have grown in poise and confidence through their long association with Earthchild. We have entered a three-year sponsorship of the [Butterfly Art Project](#) in Vrygrond and have been charmed by the colourful pictures produced by the children in this community as they heal their wounds through art. An exciting new project has been our collaboration with the [Natural Building Collective](#) approached by the City Council to bring natural and recycled

building materials in combination with traditional building for an Early Childhood Development Project in Delft.

We wish to acknowledge these organisations and the many others from whom we have learned so much on our journey of becoming over the last four years.

The Board of Trustees of The Sophia Foundation has been delighted to welcome Jessica Chaplin as a new member. Based in Durban she will also be our Development Manager and will explore growth possibilities for our reach in KwaZulu-Natal. Jess is currently investigating ways in which the foundation can work with and support entrepreneurs as well as identify worthy projects in areas such as the waste management sector.

Jack Kornfield, a Buddhist practitioner, wrote in response to these uncertain times “I’d like to encourage all to remember the vastness of time and let ourselves become a manifestation of integrity, with our thoughts, words and deeds. No matter how the outer world turns, compassion in speech and action, virtue and non-harming always brings benefit. May we all be present with the fact that this is our world. Plant seeds of goodness and water them everywhere. Then blessings will grow for yourself and for all.”

As we approach the Christmas Festival and think of the Christmas Mystery, we reflect on the year passing with gratitude and wish you renewed agency, positivity, and hope for the year ahead. The heavens and the earth belong to all; can we hold in our hearts the vision of a universal humanity?

Thank you for inspiring, encouraging and sharing with us as we have continued to unfold this year.

With our warmest wishes,

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