WITH FAITH IN THE WORKS OF WORDS
THE BEGINNINGS OF RECONCILIATION IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1985-1995

ERIK DOXTADER
“This is simply the best available record and analysis of the debate leading to the adoption of the South African TRC and its implementation. No one interested in South Africa’s transition from apartheid to the beginning of democracy can afford not to read it.” - Charles Villa-Vicencio

With Faith in the Works of Words is the first book to look behind the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and examine reconciliation’s larger and fundamental role in the transition from apartheid to nonracial democracy. In doing so, it finds that there have been many beginnings of reconciliation in South Africa.

Based on documents that have received little public attention, including controversial texts from the religious community and fascinating transcripts from South Africa’s constitutional negotiations, the book reveals how reconciliation was used to energize the struggle against apartheid and the ways in which it underwrote the negotiated revolution, including the development of a constitution whose very promise was pegged to the willingness of South Africans to pursue the work of “reconciliation and reconstruction”.

With Faith in the Works of Words challenges many common assumptions about the discourse and dynamics of reconciliation in South Africa. An important history of reconciliation’s rhetorical power, this book shows how reconciliation shaped the process of South African nation-building long before the TRC took to the stage and captured the world’s imagination.

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