



THE UNITING
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
IN SOUTHERN
AFRICA

31st May 2020

TO THE UPCSА FAMILY

UPCSА MESSAGE ON PENTECOST SUNDAY: 2020

Song: If you believe and I believe and we together pray, the Holy Spirit must come down and set God's people free, and set God's people free, and set God's people free; the Holy Spirit must come down and Africa will be saved.

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. (John 14:26 NIV)

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8 NIV)

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. (Acts 2:4 NIV)

Blessed Pentecost Sunday to all in the UPCSА and in the catholic Church. The year 2020, with the rapid spread of COVID-19, has presented great challenges to the Church and to humanity at large. There is a wide range of perceptions and ideas about what we should know and believe. The numbers of people who tested positive has risen exponentially. Some of those who tested positive and those who passed on and/or who are bereaved due to the virus are known to us. What we shall we do in times like these?

The Holy Spirit, as per the Acts 2 narrative, came as people were concentrating on their Jewish Pentecost Festival. The disciples were at the Festival as well, but still confounded after the events of resurrection and ascension. They could not speak out or do anything to be seen in the public, as they were not sure when the "clothing with power from on high" would happen. Anyway, they were not of any good social status as to even make a point in such huge gatherings, as "they were unschooled, ordinary men" (Acts 4:13). But when the Advocate, the Holy Spirit came, they attracted the attention of all to the astonishment of many.

The Church has, thus, been called to speak with the authority and power of the Holy Spirit. As the humankind is still flabbergasted by the escalation of the rates of infections and other challenging social issues, Christians have to proclaim a message of hope, peace and justice. We need to consolidate our being and our identity as it is so well captured in Romans 8:16-17 (NIV):

The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

May we continue to exude Christian behaviour and praxis, as we do acts of kindness and justice to the scores of people who are less fortunate, to those who are infected and affected by COVID-19. Those who are in isolation need us more than ever. Let us be available to witness in our respective contexts with courage and determination.

The Holy Spirit must come down and Africa will be saved

Yours in Christ.

Lungile Mpetsheni
GENERAL SECRETARY