



THE UNITING  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH  
IN SOUTHERN  
AFRICA

09<sup>th</sup> January 2023

*Let's Journey Together (LJT) (1/2023)*

**TO ALL IN THE UPCSA**

Dear Fellow Presbyterians,

*Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings. (Isaiah 58: 12 NIV)*

Compliments of the New Year. We pray for justice, peace, love, and happiness in 2023.

The Moderator of the UPCSA General Assembly, the Rt Rev SJ Mtetwa has, in the past two years, been making a clarion call for the UPCSA to "Go back to the Basics". We are now starting the last six months of his moderatorial tenure. It has been a dynamic epoch, with COVID 19 causing devastation in the lives of many people and institutions. It has left many engaging in exercises of 'redefining', 're-imagining', and 're-engineering'. I urge all of us in the UPCSA to join in different processes to redefine who we are, restate our faith; re-imagine church in the post COVID era; and re-engineer our processes to be a responsive denomination that is confessional and confessing.

In this issue, I bring to the fore our mission and will make some comments thereafter. Our mission determines the agenda of every member, congregation, Presbytery, Fellowship, and structure of the UPCSA. We should all assess our effectiveness and relevance by how much we have done to attain our mission.

***Our Mission***

*We will proclaim our Triune God in Southern Africa through*

- *Bearing witness to the saving love of Jesus Christ;*
- *Building vital, reforming congregations for worship, ministry and discipleship; and*
- *Visibly proclaiming the Kingdom of God through unity, justice, peace and love.*

As we begin 2023, I beseech the Presbyterians to strive to live up to the ideals of our mission, as we strive to be church in post COVID times.

***Bearing witness to the saving love of Jesus Christ.***

My request is that we should **reclaim the pulpit** so that it becomes a spring of living waters to heal the broken and the wounded, and to nurture faith holistically. The gospel should be presented with its saving and liberative power, as a witness to the saving and liberating Lord, Jesus Christ. We should pray that every preacher is ready, equipped and anointed to stand in the pulpit with vigour and to use the pulpit for good news, only. Every effort should be made to ensure that a preacher is healed from brokenness and woundedness, for a broken and wounded preacher is a hazard to the proclamation of the good news. Preachers should, therefore, be consistent with reading the word of God and with prayer. Preachers should be forgiving, so that they hold peace as they rise to the pulpit. Congregants want to listen to healthy and peaceful preachers. Let us **reclaim the pulpit**.