



THE UNITED
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
IN SOUTHERN
AFRICA

27 September 2023

"IT IS TIME FOR A REVIVAL" – 27th ANNIVERSARY MESSAGE TO THE UPCA

The 27th of September is an ordinary day in the life of the world, but it is an extraordinary day for us in the UPCA. It is the date on which our beloved UPCA was born, out of the best-loved union of two separate denominations. The union, itself, was "God's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes." In our UPCA memory, the 27th of September is, in a special way, "the day that the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:23-24). God brought the reconciliation and made us fundamentally and fundamentally a reconciling church.

As we celebrate the 27th anniversary and our coming of age, we should pray for a spiritual revival, arising from a renewed move of the Spirit that renews the Church, because this is for the whole, the holy, the whole, the safe and the best of the revival of the UPCA. Think on these things...

1. THE MISSION

We take a lead from Habbakuk who prayed:

"O LORD, have heard of your ravens, and I stand in awe; O LORD, of your work, O LORD, my own lips make it, in our own time make it known, in such a way you remember mercy!"

(Hab 1:2)

In this verse, the Hebrew word translated as "ravens" or "rascal" means "to bring back to life." It is time to pray for God to bring back to life the 46 people, to breathe new life into our churches, and to renew our spirits with God's Spirit. We have not only heard of God's renewal in our Church, we have also experienced God's doing when He birthed the UPCA.

Throughout the Bible and throughout history, men and women of God have been compelled to pray for and ask God for spiritual revival for their time. So, in our own time we pray, "Renew us O Lord".

2. THE MISSION

The General Assembly has for a few years now adopted the posture of "Going for Growth." For growth, we need spiritual revival, revival that gives us mental health, structural health, moral health, and programmatic health. These can only happen where we are spiritually healthy and vibrant. Spirituality is the key to the success or advancement of the gospel, the message of the resurrection. Spirituality is the key to our mission.

There is a need for revival because in modern times, our priorities in the Church have shifted and are now influenced by modern day priorities. Many parts of the Church today suffer not only numerical decline, but also spiritual decline as demonstrated in the increase of immorality, greediness and selfish models of doing church, not just in our region but globally.

It is time for a revival, a renewed spirituality. God, who birthed this denomination by giving us the vision of a union, is capable of sending us the revival that is needed to renew, grow and sustain the Church today, revival not merely for our sake, but "for the glory of God's name" (Psalm 76:3).

3. THE MISSION

A revival cannot be manufactured or generated by us, no matter how sophisticated or advanced we are. Revival is neither a well-organized evangelism campaign, program, nor a well-researched church. Revival is a gift that can only be given by God, in God's sovereign timing, but all we can do with Habbakuk is "in our own time" and trust that the God of revival will bring it in God's own way in our time.

We humbly affirm that, "The spirit blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going" (John 3:8).

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