THE UNITING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

17 April 2020

MODERATOR'S EASTER MESSAGE

Dear friends,

> "I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to Him in His death" (Phil 3:10).

This Easter, let us embrace "the power of His resurrection" and experience the life, freedom and joy that it brings. Let us make hope stronger than despair. Let us make sharing more attractive than greed. Let us make faith more persuasive than fear. Let us make love stronger than hate. Let us make civility more attractive than uncivility. Let us make generosity stronger than stinginess. Let us spread more gentleness than harshness, more optimism than cynicism, more relationship-building than gossip, and more self-control over instant gratification.

We spend so much time focusing on the problem of evil – but have we ever thought about how to account for the problem of good? How do we account for so much goodness in this world? How do we account for so many random acts of kindness? How do we explain the love that keeps families together? Or the protection from evil that we receive daily. Or the daily provision that keeps us physically alive? Or the presence of friends that keep us emotionally stable? Or the peace of mind that we do not really deserve? Or the resilience of many in hardship situations? With "the power of His resurrection" let us fix our eyes on these resurrection side of things which is right there before us.

Jesus' resurrection reminds us that the death side of things was overcome by the resurrection side of things. The challenge this Easter is for us to take on the power of Christ's resurrection and be the light of the world in all the spaces of darkness. The challenge is to give our death-like experiences to God so that God can turn them into life-giving experiences. Jesus said, "Come to me all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mat 11:28). Yes, darkness is real, but resurrection power takes all the darkness and all the death-like experiences and transforms it to create:

- Learning from the past
- A new and life-giving present
- Much needed hope for the future
- A better state of living, resurrection living
- Freedom from the bondage of negativity
- True and lasting happiness

So give Jesus' resurrection power a chance this Easter. The resurrection power comes for free, because Jesus overcame death. "If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Rom 10:9). This Easter let's make this a reality. Happy Easter!

Yours in Christ's family,
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Moderator of UPCSA

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