



UPCSA
MERRY CHRISTMAS



**A PASTORAL
LETTER**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY
MODERATOR**

**RT. REV. DR. AMON
KASAMBALA**

Seasonal greetings to you and to your families. By the time you receive this last 2025 pastoral letter, you would already have crossed the threshold of half of December 2025 heading towards the close of the year.

It is that time of the year when we pause and stop the “Bus of life” to reflect deeply on what has gone by and where we see ourselves in the coming year. There are a couple of essential things we can do during this time of reflection – Thanksgiving, Stocktaking and Celebrating.

1. Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving, by general definition, is acknowledging goodness and showing appreciation. Theologically, thanksgiving flows from the grace received in Christ. For a believer, thanksgiving is a life of gratitude.

Thanksgiving is not dependent on circumstances but on God’s character and faithfulness. This is what the Apostle Paul refers to when he says: “Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” (1Thessalonians 5:18).

As you stop your “Bus of life” – it is time to reflect on how God has come through for you and your family. Yes, admittedly, there have been hard times some of you have faced this year. Yet, by God’s grace, you and I are still here – still alive. Therefore, we should give thanks to God.

It is that time of the year to appreciate each person for your passion in serving the Lord Jesus Christ and your commitment to his Church. I would like to thank all UPCSA members (individually) and congregations for the support you have continued to render to the life and ministry of the UPCSA. Thank you for your faithfulness in prayer, worship, giving and service.

Pause and stop - make the time to express gratitude to your family, friends and congregation for standing with you during testing and joyful times you encountered in 2025.

2. Stocktaking

From a business perspective, Stocktaking is simply the systematic process of counting, checking, and recording all the stock (inventory) a business (store, grocery shop, etc.) has at a particular time and comparing it with what is recorded in the books or inventory system. It involves physical counting and checking the condition of stock – whether good, damaged, expired or missing. Stocktaking helps in identifying shortages, excesses or errors in the inventory system.

Spiritually, stocktaking refers to checking how we have fared in our commitment to Christ and how we have practically supported the Church. It is something that each one of us should do both on our own and collectively, such as Congregations, Presbyteries, Synods and General Assembly. The Apostle Paul again reminds us on this in 2Corinthians 13:5; "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you – unless, of course, you fail the test?"

It is that time of the year when each person should pause and stop – and do stocktaking of your own life, asking reflective questions; How was my commitment to the call of Christ on my life? Where do I need to improve in the use of my gifts, talents and skills to help grow the Church, my family and community? How have we, as a congregation/presbytery/synod, done when it comes to making contributions to the Church (ministry and mission contributions)?

I was shocked (and embarrassed at the same time) when I attended the General Assembly Finance Committee meeting, about a week ago, noticing that this year 2025, some of our Presbyteries and Congregations in the UPCSА have contributed ZERO Cents (nothing) to the life and ministry of the Church. It is a very sad discovery, which left me dumbfounded. If we, indeed, love the Church and stand for what the Church does in society (training ministers, supporting full-time Church staff, and supporting mission work in communities), we will do everything possible to support the Church not only by praying for it, but also by contributing financially and other necessary resources. This is where we should do a lot of stocktaking, and plan to do better as soon as we enter the New Year. Nevertheless, I am very grateful to all Congregations and Presbyteries that have continued to support the UPCSА.

Please make the time to check with your Congregation Session, Presbytery and Synod and ask Congregation Session, Presbytery and Synod and ask the officials how you have fared when it comes to ministry and mission contributions to the UPCSА.

If you discover that you have not done as you should have, it's never too late to call the General Treasurer and CFO at Central Office (for Presbyteries) or your Presbytery Treasurer (for congregations) and make a new commitment to giving. Let's make it a point that 2026 will show a completely different picture to what I saw a week ago. This is our church (our denomination), and we are all partners in mission to support it grow and make an impact on society.

3. Celebrating

It is that time of the year when we not only pause and stop but also celebrate the gift of our salvation. We celebrate the birth of Christ – the light that shines in the dark world we encounter on an everyday basis – a world of pain, suffering, violence, wars and divisions. We celebrate the peace which a great company of the heavenly host celebrated as they praised God:

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace (shalom) to men and women on whom his favour rests" (Luke 2:13-14).

May you make the time to Pause and Stop -and celebrate with family and fiends this special season in both our Christian calendar and family life. Make the time to enjoy the company of family and friends you have had no time to meet during the course of the year. I am in prayer for all those who lost their beloved ones to death in 2025 – may the Lord continue to comfort you. May you sense God's presence in the absence of your beloved ones.

I wish you a blessed Christmas, may it be full of joy and peace. And a very happy New Year to you.

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