



THE UNITED CHURCH OF ZAMBIA

SYNOD HEADQUARTERS

"All One In Christ"

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REF: CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR MESSAGE – CHANGING THE NARRATIVE ISAIAH 43:19

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ,

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

As we celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, we do so under The United Church of Zambia's Diamond Jubilee theme, **"Changing the Narrative."** Christmas stands as the greatest moment in human history when God decisively changed the narrative of humanity through His Son—transforming despair into hope, darkness into light, and death into life.

In a world that often promotes narratives of failure, economic hardship, injustice, fear, division, and hopelessness, the message of Christmas boldly proclaims a different truth: **God is still at work, and He has not abandoned His people.** The birth of Jesus rewrote the human story and remains a living assurance that our God sees, hears, and acts. Through Christ, God invites us to view ourselves, our Church, and our nation through the lens of redemption rather than defeat.

Prophetically, we declare that narratives of stagnation, division, injustice, and spiritual dryness shall no longer hold sway over our lives. In Christ, we affirm with faith that God is indeed changing the narrative. Where there has been discouragement, God is releasing renewed vision. Where there has been brokenness, God is restoring

wholeness. Where the Church has been misunderstood or challenged, God is refining her and strengthening her witness.

Pastorally, we are deeply aware that many among us have endured difficult moments—marked by the loss of loved ones, unanswered questions, disappointments, economic pressures, and spiritual fatigue. To such hearts, the Christmas message speaks tenderly: **God meets us where we are.** Jesus was born into vulnerability so that no human condition would ever be beyond God's reach. Your story is not yet over; the God of second chances is still writing it.

As The United Church of Zambia, we are therefore called not only to proclaim a changed narrative, but to live it out. This Advent and Christmas season calls the Church to speak the truth in sincere love, to stand with those on the margins, and to reflect Christ in tangible ways. May the Christ we proclaim be clearly evident in our unity, integrity, and faithfulness to God's mission in the world.

As we step into the New Year 2026, we do so not by our own strength, but by the grace and power of the risen and faithful Lord. We believe the year ahead is a season of renewal, restoration, and recommitment to God's mission. God is calling us once again to deeper prayer, greater discernment, stronger unity, and courageous witness.

The road ahead may demand sacrifice, but it will also reveal the glory of God. Therefore, I call upon the entire Church to take heart and lift your eyes beyond present challenges. Walk into the New Year with faith, humility, and hope, knowing that the same God who came to us in a manger walks with us into tomorrow.

May the peace of Christ reign in your hearts and homes this Christmas. May the joy of the Lord renew your strength in the New Year. May the Holy Spirit empower The United Church of Zambia to truly change the narrative for the glory of God.

I wish you a blessed and hope-filled Christmas and a New Year overflowing with God's grace and purpose.

Yours in Christ's Service,



Rev. Bishop Festus Chulu
SYNOD BISHOP

CC: General Secretary
Administrative Secretary
Financial Secretary
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