



# **AFM Luton Assembly**

## **The Year of Blessings and Thanksgiving 2023!**

Ephesians 1:3-4, 5:20  
Galatians 3:13-14  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18



**Rev E Mbizi & Mrs C Mbizi**  
**AFM Luton Assembly Resident Pastors**



## THE YEAR OF BLESSINGS AND THANKSGIVING 2023!

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### Theme Scriptures:

**Ephesians 1:3-4a (NIV)** Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. <sup>4</sup>For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

**Galatians 3:13-14 (KJV)** Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree"), <sup>14</sup>that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NKJV)** Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

**Ephesians 5:20 (NIV)** Always give thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### Introduction to the theme

Having sought the Lord concerning the direction for 2023, the Holy Spirit drew my attention to the struggle, pain, and agony that we all experienced during the preceding years essentially due to the Covid pandemic. Most of us lost our loved ones and there was untold suffering worldwide. However, at Luton assembly, we can attest to the fact that the Lord preserved our lives. The Lord has great plans for us if we remain in fellowship with Him. 2023 is a year we can expect the manifestation of the blessings of God and in response, we will express our gratitude through perpetual thanksgiving.

We thank God for the theme as it depicts what God has done historically, existentially, and futuristically.

From creation, God intended the blessing to be a prerogative for His children. Notice in Genesis 1:27-28, God created Adam and Eve who were the crowning jewel of creation and blessed them (Genesis 1:28). In other words, they were created to live blessed. God told them to be successful in every area of their lives. God wanted humanity to live an empowered life, a successful life. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve temporarily enjoyed

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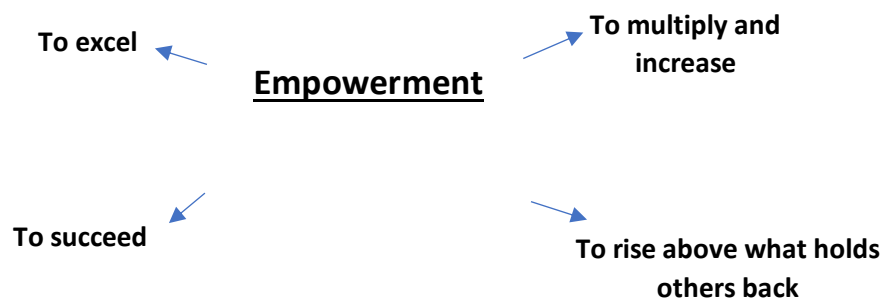
the blessing of God. They did not have to toil or worry about necessities vital for life such as food, shelter, or clothing. The blessing was totally covering them, and they were completely in charge of their environment. They were in complete fellowship with God and did not lack anything. It is the will of God that His children are blessed all the time. Matthew 7:11 says “if you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father give good to those who ask Him!”

When Adam and Eve committed high treason and sold out to the devil, God never changed His plan. In Genesis 9 God blessed Noah. In Genesis 12 God introduced Himself to Abram and said, “I will bless thee”. God’s intention for man to live blessed is evident all through the ages. In Deuteronomy 28, we are given a list of the blessings. However, the blessing is preceded by the conditional pronoun “**IF**” which means it is **not automatic**. Deuteronomy 28:2 says, “And the blessings shall come on thee and overtake thee if thou shalt **hearken** unto the voice of the Lord thy God”.

*(Hearken means to hear and do) You can not just be a hearer but be a doer of the word also*

*The voice of the Lord today is His word, you disobey the word you disobey the voice.*

## What is the blessing?



The blessing is **holistic**, it is an empowerment that affects the total person. It has to do with life, creative power, or fruitfulness. It is not limited to the physical material possessions such as houses, cars, and money but involves the total person which includes spiritual, physical, psychological, social, and financial aspects of our lives. God is big on fruitfulness; He not only adds but

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multiplies. Through multiplication, big numbers are obtained quickly. From 2 people on earth, we now have approximately 7 billion people. This fruitfulness and multiplication belong to us not only in the physical but, as the body of Christ, we are supposed to multiply and increase new births or new believers to add to the body of Christ. This is what transpired in the early church after Pentecost, many believers were added to the church (Acts 4:4, Acts 5:14).

**Notice: You cannot access the blessing without being connected to God**

Do not ask God to bless you because you are already blessed according to Ephesians 1:3. If the word of God is our final authority, if it says we are blessed then we should believe that we are blessed. We should think blessed and talk blessed. However, the greatest challenge we face is the lack of knowledge. The Lord is willing to do far greater things beyond your imagination, but He needs your participation. Amos 3:3 says how can two walk together unless they agree. God's part is giving us grace, but our part is believing and receiving through faith. Faith only appropriates what God has provided by grace. The blessing is ours but if we do not receive it by faith, we will not experience it and we cannot dispute its existence just because we have not witnessed it experientially. Faith is the door, from today onwards, see yourself blessed, plan blessed.

Notice you are already blessed, you were chosen before you existed, you are accepted in the beloved, you are accepted not because of your performance. It is all by the grace of God. The blessing that was on Abraham is now on us by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Thanksgiving

### Definition:

- Thanksgiving is devotion, sacrifice, praise, or an offering.
- Thanksgiving is intended to glorify God as an act of worship, giving thanks for all things as part of God's providence.
- Thanksgiving is a spiritual force that puts things that connect you to victory in motion.

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Thanksgiving honours God and as children of God, we must live in thanksgiving mode. We owe our entire existence to God who loved us, chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, predestined us unto the adoption of children and made us accepted in the beloved (Ephesians 1:4-6). We are eternally secure in Christ. The very air we breathe is the breath of God and He has not retracted it; He provides, protects, and sustains us. If we reflect on events over the last two years, it is explicit that the Lord preserved our lives. We are thankful for the grace of God over our lives. We did not do anything special, but God kept us and our children. God continually watches over us, and He cares. In response to God's benevolence, we must be consistently thankful. Thanksgiving keeps us continually conscious of the presence of God in our lives and helps us live Godly lives.

We do not only thank God when everything is turning out well, but we also thank God even in the midst of adversity. Our thanksgiving during times of adversity changes our attitude towards the circumstance and brings us to the submission of His will.

Thanksgiving is powerful. It operates in the present and future. It is a powerful thing to thank God now for victories and triumphs not yet experienced; it facilitates access to the grace of God. Thanking God in advance is also an act of faith. When you thank God before the victory, you access the grace to change your situation.

**There is no middle ground, you are either thankful or unthankful. Thanksgiving energises us mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.**

## ATTRIBUTES

**Day 1: 2 January 2023**

### PEACE

**Definition: freedom from disturbance; tranquillity.**

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Peace is knowing that the Lord of the universe is by your side and resting in that. It's not just knowing, but it is also living it out. Peace is sitting in comfort and knowing that God watching over you.

We are living in a world of chaos and turmoil. Evil has reached unprecedented levels and social media is relentless with the reporting of bad news. If you listen to the news, you will understand that the world is facing turbulent times morally, socially, economically, politically, and spiritually. However, we do not leave in a vacuum, and we are still present physically in this world, but in John 17 Jesus prayed for us and said, "Lord they are in the world, but they are not of this world". We are designed to be in peace even when everything around us is in turmoil. Our peace comes from knowing that our father is in full control, and we are not alone. In Matthew 8:23-27 the disciples were frightened because of the storm but Jesus remained calm and maintained His composure while the disciples were panicking. We are designed to be in peace because Jesus is the Prince of Peace, and He resides in us. Notice peace for the children of God is not the absence of trouble, but it is being content despite the prevailing circumstances. The blessing of God brings with it the peace that surpasses human understanding.

## Scriptures

- **[2 Thessalonians 3:16](#)** Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all.
- **[Isaiah 26:3](#)** You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.
- **[John 14:27](#)** Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.
- **[Romans 12:18](#)** If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.
- **[Psalm 4:8](#)** In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.
- **[Hebrews 12:14](#)** Strive for peace with everyone, and for holiness without which no one will see the Lord.
- **[Romans 15:13](#)** May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope
- **[1 Corinthians 14:33](#)** For God is not a God of confusion but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints,

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- **Psalm 29:11** May the LORD give strength to his people! May the LORD bless his people with peace!
- **Philippians 4:9** What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.
- **James 3:17** But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.
- **1 Peter 3:9-11** Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. For “Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit; let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it.
- **Numbers 6:24-26** The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.
- **Romans 14:17** For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit
- **1 Thessalonians 5:23** Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ

## Prayer points

- We pray that the peace of God that surpasses all human understanding guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus
  - **Philippians 4:7** And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus
  - **2 Corinthians 13:11** Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.
  - **Romans 15:33** May the God of peace be with you all. Amen.
- We confess that peace is our portion, we receive it in Jesus' name

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- **Jude 1:2** May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.
- **Romans 8:6** For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.
- **Colossians 3:15** And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

**Day 2: 3 January 2023**

## HEALING

**Definition:** The process of making or becoming sound or healthy again.

Healing occurs through the integrating forces that restore, transform, sustain and nurture the whole person (body, mind, spirit) at each phase and in every dimension of life, and within relationships of the person to the creation, to other people, and to God.

Divine healing is an accomplished fact, it belongs to us because it was provided for us by the Lord Jesus Christ. Healing is a done deal as far as God is concerned, but we must accept the gift of healing God has already provided. According to 1 Peter 2:24 by His stripes we are healed. Notice the tense, it indicates that we **were** healed not we are **going** to be healed, Peter is looking back at calvary, we were healed then. We must accept that healing now. In Matthew 15:22-28 Jesus refers to healing as the children's bread. In Luke 5:12 the leper said to Jesus if you will, you can make me clean. We find that healing is God's will according to this narrative. Healing is one of God's blessings, but it is conditional. Let us not wait on God concerning healing because God is waiting for us to act on His word. Healing can be physical, psychological, spiritual. Whichever the case, God wants us to be healed. Let us act on the word of God. Prayer will not work if we deny what God has done. Sickness is not from heaven because there is no sickness there. We must not accept anything that does not come from heaven. Make a confession and declare your healing, rebuke the devil, don't be perturbed by symptoms you may feel. Continue to stand on the word of God. Faith begins where the will of God is known. Healing was provided by grace, but it must be received through faith. You will remain ill

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if you do not appropriate your faith to the healing that has already been provided. Jesus said to most people He healed, let it be done according to your faith i.e the woman with the issue of blood (Luke 8:43-48). The blessing carries healing as part of its package.

## Scriptures

- **Jeremiah 17:14** - Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise.
- **Isaiah 53:5** - But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.
- **James 5:15** - And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.
- **James 5:14** - Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:
- **Psalms 147:3** - He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.

## Prayer points

- **We pray for healing for all manner of sickness and disease.**
  - **Acts 10:38** how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.
  - **Matthew 10:1** - And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.
- **We are going to confess or make bold declarations concerning healing that has been provided according to the word of God.**
  - **1 Peter 2:24** - Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.
  - **Psalm 103:2-3** Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits:

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Who forgives all your iniquities,  
Who heals all your diseases.

- Lord help us to appropriate our faith to what has already been provided by grace.

## Declarations

- **The word of God is my final authority**
- **Lord Jesus, you are the Lord of my life.**
- **Sickness and disease have no power over me, by your stripes I am healed. I believe you suffered for me,**
- **I believe I am forgiven of all my sin as I forgive others**
- **I am an overcomer because of your word, I walk and live in power for your resurrection power lives in me.**
- **I live by faith and there is no room for fear in my life**
- **I thank you for the angels that encamp around me**
- **I thank you for your presence in my life**
- **In the name of Jesus**  
**Amen**

**Day 3: 4 January 2023**

## **WEALTH**

### **Definition:**

- An abundance of valuable possessions or money.
- Wealth is the sum total of assets (things that you own) that give you financial security. The word wealth carries the idea of abundance and security.

We are the children of Abraham by faith Galatians 3:29 says now that you belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are his heirs, and God's promise to Abraham belongs to you.

Galatians 3:13-14 says Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

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Genesis 13:2 says Abraham was rich in cattle, silver, and gold. When the blessing is working, it has a way of affecting your finances, your assets, net worth etc. Genesis 24 :1 says God blessed Abraham in all things. God's blessing is already in you, it came on you the minute you received the Lord Jesus Christ in your life. Therefore, you get up every day with an advantage. The lord said to Abraham I will bless anything you put your hand to, child of God, make sure you have put your hand to something otherwise there is nothing for God to multiply.

The blessing will cause you to enter a life of more than enough to share with others and to advance the kingdom. We are blessed to be a blessing. God wants you to be a distribution centre or clearing house, the conduit that is used to bless other people. Being poor is not a sin, it is just inconvenient because you are limited to what you can do for God, yourself, and others.

God wants us to recognise that He is our only source. God does not want us to have the welfare mentality, but He wants us to use our potential to explode in this environment. We don't have to live on the limits of our salary but on the limits of our potential. The enemy wants us to see our jobs as our source. The lack of money does not make us poor, it's the lack of knowledge that makes us poor. Abraham was very rich, and all his riches are ascribed to God. Many patriarchs of the faith had wealth namely, Job who was known to be the wealthiest man in his day, yet he was also considered righteous by God Himself (Job 1:3). Abraham was a man of faith, but God blessed him with much wealth in livestock (Genesis 13:2). David was also one of the wealthiest and most successful kings, yet God called him a man after His heart.

## Scriptures

**Galatians 3 :7-8** Therefore know that *only* those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. <sup>8</sup> And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, *saying*, "In you all the nations shall be blessed." <sup>9</sup> So then those who *are* of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

**John 1:16, NLT** "From his abundance we have all received one gracious blessing after another."

**2 Corinthians 9:8, KJV** "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work."

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**Psalm 62:10, ESV** "...if riches increase, set not your heart on them."

**Ephesians 3:20 -21, KJV** "Now unto him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

**Proverbs 10:22** The blessing of the LORD makes *one* rich, And He adds no sorrow with it.

## Prayer points

- **Help us to be a blessing to others**
  - **Proverbs 3:27** – Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in the power of your hand to do so.
  - **Proverbs 19:17** – He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, And He will pay back what he has given.
  - **Luke 6:38** – Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."
- **Help us to acknowledge God as our source**
  - **Deuteronomy 8:18**, "But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth..."
  - **2 Corinthians 8:9, KJV** "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that you through his poverty might be rich."

## Declarations

- **Father, I believe this is a great season for me. I am blessed to be a blessing.**
- **You give me power to get wealth,**
- **You prosper whatever I put my hand to**
- **You cause me to increase supernaturally and naturally.**
- **My increase will benefit the Kingdom**
- **I am a giver and not just a receiver**
- **I will contribute to the work of the Kingdom**
- **I will bless those less fortunate as the Spirit leads**
- **Thank you, father, I believe greater is coming**
- **I declare all this in Jesus' name Amen!**

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**Day 4: 5 January 2023**

## **DIVINE PROTECTION**

**Definition:** The act of shielding someone from danger and evil supernaturally.

There are various ways that God defends His children from evil as revealed in the book of Job and in Psalms. Divine Protection is a covenant right for every born-again child of God. This proceeds from the Redemption we received through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, this does not entail that as a child of God you will not experience any challenges or trouble in this lifetime, it calls for you to depend on the leading and guidance of the Holy Spirit that empowers you to endure and overcome every challenge resting on the Word of God.

### **Scriptures:**

- **1 Peter 1:5** who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
- **Daniel 6:22** My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime."
- **2 Kings 6:17** Then Elisha prayed and said, "O Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." And the Lord opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.
- **Psalms 121:5-8** The LORD watches over you—the LORD is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD will keep you from all harm—he will watch over your life; the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.
- **Isaiah 54:17** "No weapon that is formed against you will prosper; And every tongue that accuses you in judgement you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, And their vindication is from Me," declares the LORD.
- **Proverbs 1:33** but whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm."

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- **Proverbs 3:24-26** When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked, for the Lord will be at your side and will keep your foot from being snared.
- **Psalms 27:1** Of David. The LORD is my light and my salvation— whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life— of whom shall I be afraid?
- **Genesis 28:15** I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.”
- **Isaiah 43:2-3** When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I give Egypt for your ransom, Cush and Seba in your stead.
- **Psalms 5:11** But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you.
- **Psalms 1:6** For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.
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## Prayer points

- **Thank the Lord for divine protection.**
  - **Psalms 34:7** For the angel of the LORD is a guard; he surrounds and defends all who fear him.
  - **Proverbs 18:10** The name of the LORD is a strong fortress; the godly run to him and are safe.
  - **Psalms 91:10-11** no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.

## Declarations

- **No weapon formed against me will prosper, when the enemy come s in like a flood the lord will raise up a standard against him.**
- **I am divinely protected; The Lord takes care over all my affairs.**
- **Divine protection is my portion.**
- **My family is protected**

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- **My home is protected**
- **My health is protected**
- **My future is secure**
- **I am covered by the blood of Jesus**

**Victory is certain in Jesus' name Amen!**

**Day 5: 6 January 2023**

## **GRACE**

**Definition:** The spontaneous, unmerited gift of the divine favour in the salvation of sinners, and the divine influence operating in individuals for their regeneration and sanctification.

Grace is a gift. If you are the recipient of grace, it simply means you have the favour of God on your life.

God's grace in our lives should be evident, it is a gift given, not out of anything we could possibly do to deserve it, but freely because God chose to give.

God's gift is so much bigger than anything we can imagine. Grace is an unmerited gift to you that changes everything. Grace gives us a seat at the table with God. It welcomes us into a family and community that is centred on love and generosity. Grace is the biggest gift ever given. It is salvation and fellowship with Him. It is an invitation to take part in the purpose for which we were all created and to be in fellowship with the God of the universe.

To have grace is to live with the understanding and letting your life overflow with blessings and favour that God has given you.

There are three types of Grace:

- **Common grace** (prevenient grace)-God's active presence in people's lives before they sense the divine work in their lives.
- **Justifying grace** - through which all sins are forgiven by God
- **Sanctifying grace** - allows people to grow in their ability to live like Jesus.

Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness (Genesis 15:6). God's salvation work was

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fulfilled through Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-2). This was done totally by grace and only through faith.

**The righteousness of God**” refers to the historical death of Christ and its effect on mankind. **This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.** This righteousness is not earned with human effort but given freely by God. It is a gift of grace. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, **“God made him (Jesus) who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”** Though this grace is offered to all human beings, it is only effective for those who believe in Jesus Christ (22a,25a,26). For them, it is life-changing and the most joyful news. Romans 3:24 says **...and all are justified freely by his grace....**” Here, **“justified”** is a legal term which means “declared righteous in court.” Its opposite is “condemned.” Both are the pronouncements of a judge - the final verdict which establishes our status. **“Justified”** means “given free forgiveness,” like a pardon.

Justified is more than that. It has an additional positive aspect which means conferring a righteous status - coming into God’s favour and having fellowship with him. The verdict **“justified”** implies: “You may come; you are welcome to all my love and my presence.” When God says to somebody, “You are justified,” the sinner is righteous, really and truly, outwardly and inwardly, wholly and completely. It means forgiveness of sins and becoming God’s child.

God’s grace is abundant. There is no end to the goodness, mercy, love, healing, forgiveness, and countless other ways he pours out his blessings on His people. Through the endless reserves of God’s grace, he enriches our lives and unites us together in his family, the body of Christ.

### Scriptures:

- **John 1:16-17** Out of the fullness of His grace he has blessed us all, giving us one blessing after another. God gave the Law through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
- **Romans 3:24** Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.
- **Titus 3:7** Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life.
- **2 Corinthians 8:9** You know the generous grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty he could make you rich.

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- **John 1:16** For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace
- **Hebrews 4:16** Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
- **1 Peter 4:10** Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.
- **2 Timothy 2:1** Timothy, my dear son, be strong through the grace that God gives you in Christ Jesus.
- **Ephesians 2:7** So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus.
- **Titus 2:11** For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people.
- **Acts 6:8** Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, performed great wonders and signs among the people.
- **Ephesians 4:7** But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

## Prayer points

- **Let us thank God for His grace upon our lives**
    - **2 Timothy 1:9** He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.
    - **2 Corinthians 9:8** And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.
    - **Ephesians 2:8-9** God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.
  - **Let us pray for a growing revelation and understanding of God's grace in our lives.**
    - **Romans 5:1** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
    - **Philippians 3:9** and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in
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**Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith.**

- **2 Corinthians 5:21** For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

## Declarations

- May the Grace of God locate me wherever I go in my life
- Whatever I am now is not by my power or credentials but by the power of Your grace I am what I am in Jesus' name.
- By the power of Your grace Lord, connect me to those that will add value to my life in Jesus' name.
- Thank you for open doors in 2023
- Thank you, Lord, for answering my prayers

**Day 6: 7 January 2023**

## PRAISE

**Definition: in the original Greek praise means to sing, to tell of, or to confess.** Put simply praise means to be thankful for God's blessings, and to declare that good news to God and to others.

**KJV Dictionary: To commend; to applaud; to express approbation of personal worth or actions.**

Praise comes from a Latin word meaning "value" or "price." Thus, to **give praise to God is to proclaim His merit or worth.** praise is defined **as the expression of one's gratitude and respect towards a deity, especially in a song.** Praise stems from recognising the good acts of God.

Praising God was God's idea in the first place. God's invitation for us to praise Him not only gives God His due but is also beneficial to us because of what it does in us and for us. If you want a fresh awakening to God's voice and power, praise Him. God longs for intimacy with us and establishing intentional time for private praise of our Lord is critical to transformation in our Christian walk. Praise restores our faith, it fills us with joy, changes our perspective, calms our fears and inspires us to love and be

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obedient to God. If you want to experience as much of God as possible, start praising Him.

## Scriptures

**Hebrews 13:15** Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise-the fruit of lips that openly profess his name.

**Isaiah 25:1** Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name, for in perfect faithfulness you have done wonderful things, things planned long ago.

**Psalms 9:1** I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.

**Acts 16:25** About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.

**Acts 2:46-47** Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

## Prayer points

- **Lord help us to keep your praises in our mouth continually**
  - **Psalms 34:1** "I will bless the Lord at all times and His praise shall continually be in my mouth".
  - **Psalms 104:33** I will sing to the Lord as long as I live,  
I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.
- **Lord help us to praise you for everything you have done**
  - **Isaiah 12:5** Sing to the Lord, for he has done glorious things; let this be known to all the world.
  - **Psalms 52:9** I will thank You forever, because You have done it, [You have rescued me and kept me safe]. I will wait on Your name, for it is good, in the presence of Your godly ones
  - **Psalms 9:1-2** I will praise You, O LORD, with my whole heart; I will tell of all Your

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marvellous works. I will be glad and rejoice in You; I will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.

- **Lord help us to praise you for who you are**
  - **Psalm 100:4-5** give thanks to him and praise his name. For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.
  - **Revelation 5:13** Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"
  - Let us thank God in advance for what He will do.

**Day 7: 8 January 2023**

## **GRATITUDE**

**Definition: Gratitude (Acknowledge the Lord /Remember what God has done for you).**

Gratitude comes from the Latin word *gratus*, which means grace or thankful

**Definition:** the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.

The three stages of gratitude are Recognition, Acknowledgement and Appreciation.

There is a difference between being grateful and being thankful, being grateful is an act or showing appreciation for something done or received. Thankfulness is feeling pleased and relieved. God wants us to show our gratitude by serving others (1 Peter 4:10).

Grateful people appreciate others and notice the positive things in their lives.

Every child of God should acknowledge God and always remember that we did not bring ourselves where we are. Someone greater brought us here. May the Lord broaden our perspective so that our gratitude is not solely focused on or limited to material things i.e. houses, cars, finances etc but extends to intangible things that are of great significance in our

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lives such as prayer, forgiveness, peace, joy, love etc. How would we live without the privilege of talking to God? How would we live without God's pardon? Gratitude pleases the Lord and invokes more blessings. Notice what Jesus says to the leper who returned to thank Him in Luke 17:11-19.

**Gratitude is an ultimate spiritual practice**, this is because of its Proto-Indo-European root, *gwere*, meaning **“to praise, to celebrate; to be in contact with the Divine.”** In other words, being grateful is equivalent to feeling the presence of the Divine in our lives. It is the same as being in a state of bliss.

Several studies link gratitude to enhanced physical health—reduced stress, a stronger immune system, improved sleep quality and lower blood pressure, to name a few benefits—practising gratitude can also improve mental health in meaningful ways.

### **Benefits of gratitude:**

- Better sleep. Before you sleep, spend a few minutes counting your blessings, and you could sleep more soundly and longer.
- Better physical health.
- Better mental health.
- Greater willpower.
- Improved self-esteem.
- Better relationships.
- Improved self-care.

### **Attitudes that kill Gratitude**

- **Worry**-is a futile exercise, robs us of joy and gratitude in this present moment and demonstrates our lack of trust in God.
- **Comparison**- constantly comparing ourselves with other people, afraid that God has short changed us and given somebody else more.
- **Entitlement**- the moment we start thinking we deserve something is the moment we stop to feel thankful for it.
- **Busyness**- It is hard or difficult to be thankful when we are constantly so busy and have no time to feel and express gratitude.
- **Perfectionism**- It is hard to be thankful when all we can focus on are the negatives and faults of the people and things around us.
- **High expectations**- When our lives revolve around high expectations, we will be disappointed. When we are humble and appreciate that all we have is a gift, we are likely to be pleased and grateful when reality surpasses our expectations.

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## Scriptures:

**Ephesians 5:20** Always give thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**2 Corinthians 3:5** <sup>5</sup> Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God.

**1 Samuel 12:24** But be sure to fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you.

**Psalms 91:14** "Because he loves me," says the LORD, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.

**Psalms 77:11** I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago.

**Psalms 103:2** Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits—

**Romans 5:8** But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

**Psalms 95:2** "Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!"

**2 Corinthians 4:15-16** For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day."

**Colossians 2:7** Rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

- You can only be thankful if you acknowledge what God has done for you. Remember the story of the 10 lepers who were healed by the Lord Jesus and only one returned to thank the Lord (Luke 17:17-18).

## Prayer points

- Let us thank the Lord and acknowledge what He has done for us, the healing, protection, provision, (Luke 17:15).
- Let us thank the Lord for the private and public victories (Isaiah 12:4-5).
- Let us thank the Lord for who He is in our lives (1 Chronicles 16:34).
- Let us remember what the Lord has done in our lives so that we remain thankful (Psalm 16:8).

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- Lord help us to remain steadfast and thankful after attaining victory (1 Corinthians 15:57-58).
- We also want to thank God in advance for everything we are believing for, in 2023 (Mark 11:24).

**Day 8: 9 January 2023**

## **DAILY DEVOTION**

**Definition: A religious Fervour/Zeal/passion: Piety**

**An act of prayer or private worship**

We are living in tumultuous times and the Lord promises that He will be with us to the very end. The word of God also instructs us not to worry but to trust in the Lord. The problem is how can we trust Him, if we don't know Him. As in any relationship, time together promotes closeness. Notice how Jesus set time aside to be with the father (Mathew 14:23). Jesus prayed alone most of those times. He was continually in prayer mode. It is evident that Jesus spent a considerable amount with the father, but when He came and prayed for people miracles happened. When you spend time with God, He rubs off on you. In Exodus 34:29-34 Moses spent time with God on Mount Sinai and when he came down the mountain his face was radiant, but he did not realise it.

### **Scriptures**

**Galatians 2:20** I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

**Philippians 4:13** I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

**Galatians 2:20** I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

**James 1:26** If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

**Colossians 3:1** If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

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**Galatians 6:7-8** Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

**Ephesians 2:10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

**John 13:34-35** A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

## Prayer points

- **Pray that we may be intentional in our daily devotion and set time aside for this.**
  - **Colossians 3:17** And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.
  - **Philippians 4:8-9** Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. 9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.
  
- **Pray that we grow in the wisdom, revelation, and knowledge of our Lord as we seek Him through the word, meditation, and prayer.**
  - **Ephesians 1:17** That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:
  - **2 Peter 3:18 KJV:** But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever

**Day 9: 10 January 2023**

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## GENEROSITY

**Definition:** Generosity is a quality that is a lot like unselfishness; a quality of being happy to give people in need. Generosity involves sacrifice; it costs you financially, or it costs your time, or your efforts. Generosity is the virtue of being liberal in giving.

7 forms of generosity:

1. Thoughts
2. Words
3. Money
4. Time
5. Things
6. Influence
7. Attention

## Scriptures

### **2 Corinthians 9:6-8**

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

**Hebrews 13:16** *And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.*

**Proverbs 11:25** A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.

**1 Timothy 6:17-19** Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

**Acts 20:35** In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

**Deuteronomy 16:17** Every man shall give as he is able, in accordance with the blessing which the LORD your God has given you.

God is the original giver, He so loved that He gave. All giving is a love affair. When you love God, you will give as He

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commands. You cannot have close fellowship with the father if you are not a giver. The relationship between prayer and giving is explicit in John 3:13-23. When you close your heart to the needy you close heaven to your prayers. The reason for many unanswered prayers is shown in this scripture. Also notice the measure of your giving is the measure of your receiving.

Giving is the one thing that God tells us to test Him with. People fall into 2 categories, takers, and givers. If you are a giver, you are not just a giver at church, but you are also a giver at home, work and everywhere you go because that is your nature. You take after your father.

Giving comes in different forms i.e., time, loyalty, love, faith, wisdom, resources. 3 John 2 says Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers. Your external prosperity is directly tied with your internal prosperity. The woman in Mark 12:41-44 gave all she had, she could afford to give, and, in that way, she acted like the blessed or the more blessed because its more blessed to give and when you do that you are prospering on the inside and you have seed on the ground that God can multiply. But when you get narrow and restricted inside and you feel you don't have enough and hold on to what you have, then you do not see yourself as prosperous and that restriction on the inside stops the flow from the outside.

God's nature is open-hearted and giving, likewise, God desires to see his own nature duplicated in his children. Cheerful giving is God's grace revealed through us. As God's grace toward us reproduces his graciousness in us, it pleases him. However, if we give grudgingly, it's a sign of an underlying heart condition. God loves a cheerful giver because the gift comes from a heart that has been made glad.

## Prayer points

- **Let us pray that we become cheerful givers**
  - **Proverbs 22:9** says He who has a <sup>l</sup>generous eye will be blessed,  
For he gives of his bread to the poor.
  - **John 3:16** For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.
  - **1 Chronicles 29:9** Then the people rejoiced, for they had offered willingly, because with a loyal heart they had offered willingly to the LORD; and King David also rejoiced greatly.

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- **Let us ask the Holy Spirit to lead us where there is need**
  - **John 14:26** But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.
  - **Galatians 5:25** If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

**Day 10: 11 January 2023**

## **SELFLESSNESS**

**Definition:** concerned more with the needs and wishes of others than with one's own.

A selfless individual is one who places less importance on themselves than on others. It is a state of mind in which one puts equal or more consideration towards other people's interest rather than towards their own. A perfect example of selflessness is parenthood. Most parents will always put their child's interest and needs above their own without expecting anything in return. Selflessness is the opposite of selfishness. When one is selfless, they are more inclined to be thankful because everything is not just about them.

### **Scriptures:**

**Philippians 2 :3** Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,  
**1 Thessalonians 5:15** See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.

**James 3:16** For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

**Proverbs 18:1** An unfriendly person pursues selfish ends and against all sound judgment starts quarrels.

**Proverbs 3:27-28** Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act.

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**John 15:12-13** My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

**Ephesians 4: 32** Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

## Prayer points

- **Lets us pray and ask the Lord to help us not to seek our own good**
  - **1 Corinthians 10:24** No one should seek their own good, but the good of others.
  - **Galatians 5:14** For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbour as yourself.
- **Let us pray that we do not conform to the pattern of this world but that our minds are renewed.**
  - **Romans 12:2** Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will.
  - **Philippians 2:13** for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose.

## NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE

Compliments of the new season!

Its that time of year again of jubilation in anticipation of what lies ahead. No matter what your goals are for the coming year or how many resolutions you plan on making for 2023, it is important to take a moment to acknowledge, reflect on all the experiences of 2022 and welcome the new year ahead. It is without a doubt that we are confident of a brighter future because of the faithfulness of the Almighty God. While they may be resolutions that were not realised, we continue to trust in the omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent God, whose vision and plan for our lives is never hindered or obscured by natural or supernatural influences.

We would like to thank The Lord for our leadership, we appreciate our church board, our board of trustees (BOT), the entire leadership and the saints of God, for your

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relentless and diligent work, facilitating the smooth functioning of the church during the year 2022. May the Lord continually strengthen and uphold you in your continued subservience to Him.

## **Challenges**

2022 presented challenges including the loss of loved ones who were promoted to glory. The church also witnessed the promotion to glory of our distinguished member Mrs Mahachi. We stood together in solidarity and supported each other emotionally, financially, and spiritually to ease the burden posed by such traumatic circumstances. We will continue to support each other through the grieving process praying, trusting, and depending on the Holy Spirit's comfort.

## **Accomplishments**

Following restrictions posed by the pandemic it was becoming increasingly difficult to have a stable venue. However, in 2022, we managed to secure a leased place of worship with exclusive use which has given us much needed stability and unrestricted access. We are grateful to our church board and BOT and above all, to the Lord Jesus who is our enabler in all our endeavours.

AFM Luton Ladies attended the regional ladies retreat and a local assembly retreat which all turned out to be successful events.

## **Baptism**

We are grateful that our church continues to increase in membership. We had 9 people who were baptised in 2022.

## **Fellowship**

We also had lighter moments where the church came together to celebrate marriage ceremonies, family fun days, graduations, and other celebrations that continually brought the church together.

## **Departments**

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The church is only as strong as its functional arms. We would like to thank The Lord for AFM Luton because the church remained strong despite the destabilisation it incurred because of the covid pandemic. Our departments continued to be highly functional, the ladies department were unrelenting in their prayer of intercession which was launched in response to the limitation posed by the covid pandemic. I am reliably informed that the ladies have been meeting online on Monday evenings and Fridays at midnight. I understand some men have also been joining the midnight intercession on Fridays. We would like to commend the leadership who have spearheaded this initiative that contributes immensely to the wellbeing of the church. As we all know a praying church is a powerful church. We would like to commend the ladies department for being functional and providing the much needed fellowship to strengthen and encourage one another as stipulated in the word of God.

In relation to our youth ministry, the life of the youth ministry has not been questionable because of its continued impact, innovation, and ingenuity. The youth ministry has been instrumental in keeping the church at large in pace with the changing technology, making sure our services are broadcasted online. The youth have also held their meetings online and in person and we would like to thank the youth and their leadership for the sterling work. The youth had outreach sessions, social activities, teachings, and a powerful first purposeful youth service which was held in October. The youth department has continued to shine the beacon by sponsoring a Child in Zambia, such charitable deeds are commendable. We are also proud that we have 21 youth members currently at university. We would like to encourage our young people to aspire to learn and develop the talents God bestowed on them.

Our Sunday school ministry has been phenomenal with an outstanding performance when they ministered in various ways through short dramas, nativity plays and scriptures. We also had 12 children in Bridge builders class graduate to the youth department. We would like to commend the parents for bringing children to church. We would also like

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to applaud the teachers for their dedication, commitment, and patience working the children. May the Lord remember you as you continue to serve in His vineyard. We would also like to thank the men's ministry for their contribution to the life of the church. May the lord Bless you.

We also want to thank God for our couple's fellowship which is still functional and met online. Charity begins at home and so we encourage one another to nurture a culture of prayer at home so that our church is stronger from grass root level.

To our ministries, the praise and worship, we would like to thank you for your commitment and dedication to the work of God. May the Lord richly bless you for your immense contribution to the uplifting of the saints during our worship services.

To our hospitality and decorations, we thank you for your sacrificial giving to the work of God and your labour of love. May the Lord bless you and enrich you to continue in your ministry. To our ushering and security, thank you for your sterling commitment to the work of God, may God bless you as you continue to serve.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank every single person in this assembly for your commitment in coming to church, attending conferences, cell groups, your contributions in tithes and offerings, your generosity and kindness, your prayers and above all your love. May the Lord fulfil all your hearts desires in 2023.

Each new year offers an exciting opportunity for a fresh start and new beginnings. Let us enter 2023 with optimism and expectation because we have a heavenly father awaiting impossible requests from His beloved children. 2022 came and has now gone and we have now been ushered into 2023. Let us enter 2023 believing for the impossible.

I thank you

May God richly bless you!

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