

10th November 2014

Your Excellencies, Distinguished invited guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the church fraternity in Zambia, I welcome you who have gathered to join in the send-off service for His Excellency Mr. Michael Chilufya Sata, the 5th President of the Republic of Zambia who passed on in London on 28th October 2014. I am deeply privileged to give you the opening remarks in this Interdenominational Church Service.

By calling for this thanksgiving church service, we remember with gratitude his life, his accomplishments, his values and all that he stood for in his entire life and we give thanks to God for those things President Sata did to contribute towards making Zambia a better place in which to live. Death is a painful reality on this side of eternity and it robs us of people that are so dear to us. Unfortunately we cannot stop it but only prepare for it by living in obedience to God's will. Allow me to quote the wishes made by Alexander the Great. (*Refer to the attachment*).

Through this thanksgiving church service, may we reflect on the faithfulness of God and of His love towards this country. We should dedicate ourselves towards serving others with a selfless attitude and servant-hood. May our eyes be lifted to that which is eternal. May we place our trust in the Living God and lean on His guidance and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible says – "*Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted*". **(Mtt.5:4)**

And so, we give thanks to God for the life of President Michael Sata as we have great hope and gratitude in our hearts, in the eternal promises of God for our lives and for this great nation. We unite together as one people in giving our President a prayerful send off.

Let us pray !