

Thank you, Moderator. And welcome again to a wild and wonderful year. Embrace every moment – and Assembly, embrace your Moderator and his family.

Thank you to my incredible family: to my beautiful husband, Stuart, who could have an IOU book as long as a novel, but has chosen not to keep track (yes?) to my daughters, Alex and Gracie, their partners Nick and Catherine, and our granddaughter Oran (whose parents decided that the balcony and this particular 2 ½ year old were not a match made in heaven

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My friends, who listened, who made sure I did not take myself too seriously, who stepped in all the time to make sure Stuart and I had the space to be where we needed to be. There are so many, but a few I need to say a huge thanks to .. Frances Ann, who has had our dog, Delilah, more than we have; whose been a third grandmother to Oran and a constant friend... Glen and Janet ...

To the team in 121: all of you! especially Catherine McIntosh, the woman behind the scenes who makes it all happen with so much grace. Shaw, you are in good hands. And to our Principal Clerk ... Fiona, thank you for an hilarious year. I don't know many people who would go swimming on New Year's day with me, but there ya go.

All year, I have seen what justice, kindness and humility looks like when it is walking around impacting the creation and community God loves. I have been given the gift of walking with them ... in the faces, voices and lives I have encountered. The year was framed with a theme, 'Ubuntu' a Zulu phrase that means 'I am because you are' or 'I am because we are.' A profoundly theological statement, one that resonates with another deeply theological statement.

Yahweh: I am – that mysterious, magnificent statement of being ...

'In our ancient story of liberation, God said to Moses, if they ask you who sent you, you can tell them this. My name, is Yahweh - I am: I am who I am, who I was, who I am yet to be.'

No present, past or future tense to contain or constrain ...

You cannot put me in a box that suits you. I am so much bigger than that. And that's not all. Those syllables, Yah/weh, had their origin a long way back- ... deep in the recesses of our collective memory: the sound of our breathing: in and out (Yah ... weh) God said, I am what holds you together; I am what creates the centre you share; I am what inextricably links you one to another in a bond nothing can break. 'Ubuntu – I am because you are.'

Thank you to all of you for living this every day: as you discern and debate and decide, please remember who you are – the body of Christ: when we hear in communion, 'do this in remembrance of me', it is not a fond harkening back, but a challenge – re-member me: the love, the life, the lessons, the feeding, the healing, the justice, kindness, humility: Re-member ME! And be about MY business, Me walking around in you. Let's build together well, my friends!

