



THE DIOCESE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN SOUTH CAROLINA

December 15, 2021

Dear Episcopalians of South Carolina,

As we approach the Nativity of our Lord, my heart is filled with gratitude for the countless ways you have welcomed me and my family into your midst. Already, we are at home here. As I have listened to you all in our folding chair conversations across the diocese, I have been moved by your resilience, your creativity, and your bone-deep commitment to sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ in every place where you are planted. You are a blessing in your local communities as you give generously of your time, talent, and treasure.

Our work, in the Office of the Bishop, is to serve, support and expand your ministries at the local level and to leverage our collective voice for the gospel in South Carolina and beyond. We are developing resources to support your ministries in a range of ways—from training days for lay leaders, to formation opportunities for youth and adults, to educational offerings in racial justice, and strengthening resources to support excellent business practices—and more.

At Convention, we talked together about ways we abide in deeply rooted communities. Specifically, I have heard you express a desire to continue nurturing stable and safe, connected, courageous, visionary communities that allow us to serve those within and beyond our walls. We can do this work most effectively when we lean into God's abundance, sharing from our individual resources to support a vision that enlivens and expands local ministries. I therefore ask you to join me in giving generously to the ministry of our common life.

If your parish or worshipping community is presently meeting or exceeding the 10 percent asking, we are grateful. If you are able to increase your giving, even a percentage point or two, we are grateful. If you are already stretching as much as you believe you can, we are grateful. For any gift you are able to make, thank you. Your gift will help us respond faithfully to God's invitation to us into a new season in which we will build a bright and compelling future anchored in God's reconciling love and liberating justice.

Thank you for all that you do. Thank you for who you are. You are a light to the world and a blessing to all among whom you minister. My prayer is that you will encounter anew our Lord in this holy season.

Wishing you a Joyous Christmas,

The Right Reverend Ruth Woodliff-Stanley
Bishop of the Diocese of South Carolina