



THE DIOCESE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Advent 2020

*People, look East. The time is near
Of the crowning of the year. . .
Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
One more seed is planted there:
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
That in course the flower may flourish. . .
-Eleanor Farjeon, "People look East"*

Dear Clergy and People of the Diocese of South Carolina,

Thank you. Thank you for your faithfulness. Thank you for your steadfast selflessness and sacrifice in our shared mission of building up and rebuilding of one another, the congregations of the Diocese of South Carolina. It is a wonder to behold how your faces have been set like flint in your commitment to one another and in deep faith that the seeds you are now planting and nourishing will flower and flourish in ways more wonderful than we can even ask for or imagine. You know that your strength comes from God. Thank you for being such a witness during times that demand our best efforts. This of course is nothing new for you.

With regard to congregational stewardship, in the Diocese of South Carolina we intentionally do not use the language of assessment. We are not a secular organization or club in which specific dues or fees are ordered. We are a collection of congregations and people who, together, are the Diocese of South Carolina. We are members of the Body of Christ. We know that we follow a Risen Lord who actually demands our all, our souls and bodies. And so we ask for a pledge of your gifts, knowing that "the Church is the only society that exists," as Archbishop William Temple once said, "for those who are not its members." Many of you are already either giving or working towards a 10% gift. For this we thank you. The opportunities for mission and ministry in our diocese will only increase in the months and years to come. For this we are immensely thankful, because we eagerly look forward to new growth and new opportunities for service.

This Advent, as we wait, we hope. We expect our Lord to be born in us anew through God's great mystery of the incarnation—in all its fullness— God in Christ, and Christ in us. Like the gifts the Magi brought to the Christ Child at Bethlehem, so we too bring our own gifts before the Lord. "What can I give him, poor as I am? . . . Yet what can I give him: give my heart."

People, look East. The time is near...

God bless you.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Callie".

The Venerable Calhoun Walpole
Archdeacon

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Caleb".

The Reverend Canon Caleb J. Lee
President, Standing Committee