



Letter from our Moderator

PRESBYTERY of PHILADELPHIA CHRIST'S WORK ♦ OUR WITNESS

Sisters and Brothers in Christ of the Presbytery of Philadelphia,

We recently concluded the Season of Christmastide with Epiphany. Epiphany is the day we remember the Magi as God revealed to them the Star in the East which led them to the Christ Child in Bethlehem. It was a rigorous twelve-day journey for the Magi but one in which their eyes were upward to the Star that led them to the Messiah. Eyes upward was what enabled them to be in the presence of Christ and to experience a life changing epiphany of Christ's love.

Epiphany happens at the beginning of year but it is also a time to see what epiphanies we might have had the previous year. As I look back on 2022, the Epiphany for me as Moderator of this Presbytery was community. Through moderating installation and ordination services and being present in gatherings throughout the year there was a sense of a new connectedness for me within this body of believers. Through new relationships, I now feel more connected to the Presbytery than I have ever felt before. I have established rapport with Presbytery leadership, pastors and congregants that have encouraged me to know that I am not alone but we are on this journey together as disciples of Jesus Christ proclaiming the gospel to all people. We are connected in this calling through our love of Christ. A love to receive and a love to share. Thank you for the ways that you care of one another in this presbytery.

Love is shared with words but also with deeds, as I reminded of the story of a little boy named Jimmy who was only five years old. He came home from school one day and decided to play outside in the backyard. His mother was watching him as she always did through the kitchen window. As she was watching him she noticed that he left the yard but she wasn't concerned as he went to the next door neighbor's house. He walked up the front steps of the house and then she noticed that he climbed into the lap of Mr. Thompson who had his hands over his face and seemed to be sobbing as just a few days prior his wife had died. She noticed then Jimmy rocking back and forth with Mr. Thompson on his rocking chair for about 20 minutes and then he came home for dinner. Jimmy's mother then asked, "What did you say to Mr. Thompson and Jimmy replied, "Nothing, just helped him cry."

The story of Jimmy reminds me that some of our most important moments of sharing God's love are just being there for those who are hurting and suffering. Sometimes nothing needs to

be said as it is the action of being there that matters most, as the first thing Jesus did at the home of Mary and Martha was to weep with them when they were mourning the loss of their brother Lazarus.

I believe as a Presbytery sharing God's Love is at the heart of who we are. We have been called by God to love each other within the Presbytery and to love those outside of our Presbytery. I have great hope of the love of Christ flowing from us in this New Year. A year in which God has an Epiphany of love for us and a year in which we will be Epiphany moments of God's love to others. Moments in which we will reach out to those close to us and moments in which we will reach out to those who are all alone.

As I close, my encouragement is to have our eyes upward and if we do, we will not miss God's love of us and the divine calling to love others in 2023.

In Christ's Love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ted Mingle". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned below the phrase "In Christ's Love,".

Rev. Ted Mingle, Moderator of the Presbytery of Philadelphia