



## CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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The Rev. Dr. Michelle White, Vicar  
Corallius Alston, Parish Administrator

December 8, 2024

To My Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

This has been a very difficult few months for all of us. We've shared a profound concern for our families, for ourselves and for our country. These are uncertain times and no one is exempt from the current struggles. Although it appears as if our traditional institutions, government, schools and families are stressed beyond measure and it appears as if there is no end in sight—*But God!* These two potent words pop in scripture from time to time. I believe This is our "*but God*" time

We may seem to be very far from the peaceful shore and although, at times, it may appear as if we're going under, the Almighty --the one who speaks peace to the storm and to us--our God is here in the boat, with us! This is not the time for feeble faith. If we step out God will certainly lift us up and return us to the safety of the ship. Yes, everyone's faith has been tested but this is not the time to abandon the church, the one institution that has sustained us through our difficulties so many times before. No matter how we struggle, no matter how great the challenges, we are the indomitable church!

In order to get through this each of us must share the privilege of supporting the ministries of Christ Church. Fear and uncertainty are palpable but we all share this temporary burden along with the privilege of stewarding God's resources. All of us, both priests and people, must open our hearts with the full understanding that fear of lack is a spiritual malaise not a financial challenge and trust God for the outcome.

We've included the 2025 annual pledge card in order that you might pledge your support for the ministries of the church. Our buildings are still in good condition. The food pantry has fed thousands of people this year. Those with whom we share the building are still contributing. Our community supports our work generously. New relationships and skills are developing and we are still meeting as church school, forming disciples and DOING church.

The apostle Paul faced an uncertain future in the twenty-seventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Conditions during his voyage to Rome were dire. The ship and all on board appeared headed to a watery end. Some attempted to abandon ship, but Paul instructed them to REMAIN IN THE SHIP. This is not the time to abandon the ship. We may not feel very confident, *but God* can and will do. This is our "*but God*" time.

Armed with hope, faith and compassion we will continue doing Gospel, as a stronger even more faithful church. People are depending on the Church. Stay in the boat!

Sola Gratia,

*Chellie+*