



Growing Together in Christ

## *From the Desk of Bishop W.R. Bowles*

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**Dear Christian Friends,**

Greetings in Christ! I have asked Sandra, our Secretary, to write a short Christmas Message as she also studies Theology. May God richly bless you all during this festive period!

The story of Christmas have been told and retold year after year, all centered round the birth of His Son, Jesus Christ. We hear Christmas carols playing everywhere; homes and shops have been decorated; and everyone seems to be in a more jovial mood than normal. Childhood memories flood back to us; wonderful family memories of images that we treasure and hold unto are part of our lives this time of the year. We become all sentimental when it comes to Christmas time and we wish it could stay that way forever.

During this time we celebrate the event when Jesus entered into our lives: "*The Word became flesh and lived among us,*" says the Gospel of John. When Jesus was born, God revealed Himself and His plan for our salvation. What does Christmas truly mean for us today? Is it about the holidays, presents, family gatherings, or festivities? Should Christmas not be about how God loved us that He sent His only Son to this world? Should it not be about receiving what we most want and need; Love ór rather unconditional Love? Will we invite Jesus into our lives? Will Jesus be part of His birthday celebration on 25 December? Will we share this time with the poor; those who are depressed; those that are alone; the elderly ór reached out to broken families in our community and society?

God ask of us, like Joseph and Mary, to hear and understand the cries of children and of people in need. He calls us to listen; learn and to understand the unspoken cries of all who need to be cared for. The Word became flesh and lived amongst us, and we can tell the story by how we live. My prayer is that we will not only celebrate Christmas once a year (25 Dec), but everyday of our lives by caring for each other and ourselves. Let us love one another as we have been loved. God invites us to share in the kingdom He has prepared for us through His son Jesus Christ. Let us also BUILD and DEVELOP the Cape-Orange Diocese (ELCSA) and set a "new normal" for 2012. Amen!

*"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."* (Isaiah 9: 6)

Bishop William R. Bowles