



The United Methodist Church
The Philadelphia Area Episcopal Office
(Eastern Pennsylvania and Peninsula-Delaware Conferences)

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Greetings in the Name of the Risen Lord,

Grace and peace be with you during this Easter season where we remember once again that life is stronger than death and love will always overcome discouragement. Thank you, pastors and lay people of the Peninsula Delaware Conference for your faithful service to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In the short time I have served here I have been overwhelmed with joy by the many missions and outreach ministries that you are doing to minister love and caring to people with financial difficulties. You are the presence of Christ for many and it is your faith in God that spurs you on to this sacrificial service in the face of the economic downturn.

The purpose of this letter is to let you know that the leadership of the annual conference is in partnership with you in ministry. As revenues have declined we have responded by rapidly cutting costs where possible and finding creative ways to fund essential ministries to those in need as we are called by God to do. For the longer term, we are exploring alternatives for significant expense reductions through restructuring. However, the work of the Lord is never downsized. As we adapt to new conditions and learn new ways to meet needs in mission, we know that God's grace is sufficient to meet all of our needs. We resurrection people make a way out of "no way" and continue working for the Lord with the same zeal and commitment. The world is full of negativity but we bring light and life. In Christ we can do all things.

We will continue our Healthy Church Initiative that resources churches for mission and ministry. Let us know how we can help you. We will continue to pray for you. The conference staff prays for 14 churches and pastors every week. We will continue to communicate with you and be responsive to your ideas and needs. The conference values our partnership with lay and clergy in all decision making in all levels of conference life.

This is a message of hope. In the midst of the economic crisis God is doing a new thing and is working for good. Jesus is in the midst of the storm with us and there is a bright future ahead. Bless you all for your leadership and faithfulness.

Sincerely,

Peggy A. Johnson

Bishop Peggy A. Johnson

"Our hope is built on nothing less, than Jesus' blood and righteousness."