

A LETTER FROM THE BISHOP

MARCH 18, 2025

CYRIL OF JERUSALEM, BISHOP AND THEOLOGIAN, 386 C.E.



"The apostles gathered around Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, 'Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.'" –Mark 6:31-32

Dear Siblings in Christ,

Over the past five years, we have accomplished far more than we could ever dare to hope or imagine. Together, we have engaged in ministries that have been transformative, imaginative, and creative in responding to the needs of God's people. Together, we have dared to dream of "a world transformed by God's love, justice, and peace." Together, we have stood with the vulnerable and marginalized and served the lowest and the least among us in the guise of Jesus. Together we have been busy!

I could not be more proud of all that we have accomplished. I am tremendously grateful to have the privilege of walking alongside you in ministry as your bishop, supporting our clergy and lay leaders, and discerning together how God continues to call us to serve in our time and place.

It is now time for us to engage in an intentional period of creative restfulness. As I mentioned at the Diocesan Convention in November, I will be away this summer on a sabbatical, which is a time for renewal, reflection, and recreation. My sabbatical will run from **mid-June through September** which will allow space for tending to the mind, body, and spirit so that our shared ministry may continue with vitality and clarity of purpose.

During this sabbatical time, I will step away from my diocesan responsibilities to engage in a period of rest, study, prayer, and exploration. It is customary for clergy to have a sabbatical project, and I am excited to tell you about mine! I will be spending June through July in the United Kingdom learning about exciting new expressions of Christian Community and writing a book of prayers. I am also looking forward to spending some time in Barbados in August with my extended family as we gather for our family reunion. The final weeks of my sabbatical will be spent here in Missouri deepening ties with family and hiking the wild beauty of our state.

This sabbatical will allow me to return refreshed, renewed, and ready to journey with you into the next chapter of our shared ministry. Thank you, as always, for the joy and blessing of being in ministry with you. I look forward to a renewing sabbatical, and more importantly, to many, many years ahead as your bishop.

Yours in Christ,

The Rt. Rev. Deon K. Johnson
XI Bishop of Missouri

