



## THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MISSOURI

1210 Locust Street | St. Louis, MO 63103 | 314-231-1220 | [diocesemo.org](http://diocesemo.org)

### Office of the Bishop

November 12, 2024

*The Commemoration of Charles Simeon, Priest, 1836*

"So that the people could not distinguish the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the people's weeping." –Ezra 3:13b

Dear siblings in Christ,

As the people of God and people of faith, we have faced times of trial and tribulation. We have faced times of unknowing with the certain hope that we may not know what the future holds but we are confident in who holds the future.

Regardless of partisan affiliation, regardless of how we voted, regardless of who was or was not elected, we are called to seek the welfare of our neighbor, to be prophets of hope, and to be heralds of God's transformative love.

Our faith in Jesus Christ involves flesh and blood, time and space. We are a people of incarnation, and our call is to respond to God embodied, enshrined, and enfleshed in those we call neighbors. The truth of our faith is not merely expressed in creeds and books but in frail, fragile human bodies.

This election, like all elections, was not simply about policy, power, or partisanship but about people. People who dream of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in ways that honor who they are, where they are from, who and how they love, and how God named and claimed them as beloved. In that real sense, the Church then by its very nature is political, but not partisan. We cannot remain silent in the face of hatred weaponized against any of our siblings.

Our Baptismal Covenant implores us to seek and serve Christ, to love our neighbors as ourselves, and to respect the dignity of every human. In order to fully live up to those promises we in the Church cannot be silent in the face of policies that demean, discriminate, or debase the rights of some in order to prioritize the rights of others.



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We must be vocal and vigilant in defending the rights of the vulnerable and making no peace with oppression. We who follow the incarnate Word in Jesus Christ must always, in all ways, be concerned and compassionate in caring for all the people of God!

How we, as people of faith and followers of Jesus, respond to the needs and desires of our siblings matters. How we show up to advocate for and advance the dignity and worth of every human being, especially those with whom we disagree, matters. How we strive for justice and peace and seek to serve in Christ's name with those who are most vulnerable matters.

We must commit ourselves to continue the task that God has set before us, "to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."<sup>1</sup>

We must commit our communities of faith to be outposts of hope and places of sanctuary in the world, caring and carrying each other, bearing one another's burdens when the weight of justice seeking is too heavy.

We must commit to working hand in hand to build the Beloved Community that is God's dream for humanity in which everyone is cared for, absent of poverty, hunger, and hate. This is our essential work for such a time as this.

Pray with me for our nation. Pray with me for those elected to office to serve the common good, that they may do justly, act kindly, and serve humbly. Pray with me for the communities in which we live, move, and have our being. Pray that God's grace and love may be made manifest in us as we care for God's people, no matter who they may be. God has work for us to do!

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Deon K. Johnson".

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

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 4:18