

PRESBYTERY of Western North Carolina

Strengthening Congregations | Equipping Disciples | Engaging in Mission

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Dear Presbytery of Western North Carolina,

I hope you are well and experiencing the blessings of Advent.

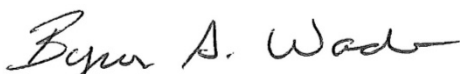
This year has been particularly difficult for our nation and churches. We continue to suffer from the presence of the COVID-19 pandemic. We hear the cries of those who are seeking freedom from oppression and the establishment of racial and social justice. We are seeing a daily rise in those who are unemployed. We also see and are beginning to experience firsthand our friends and loved ones who are alone and dealing with depression. Our churches have not been able to worship fully and many continue to struggle and discern the best ways to worship as COVID-19 infections increase. Although a vaccine is here, we still have many days to endure our current situation.

However, in the midst of all this, we still have hope. For soon and very soon the Christ child, Jesus, will be born to Mary and Joseph. He is the one that we are looking and waiting for because so many of us need hope and comfort from the one who will be our Savior. Despite everything we have faced and still what is to come, it is my prayer that you will remember the words from Matthew 1:23 –

*'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel',
which means, 'God is with us.'* (New Revised Standard Version)

In this season of waiting and expectation, may you and your loved ones experience the love, peace, joy and comfort of the Christ child, Jesus.

Peace,



Rev. Dr. Byron A. Wade,
General Presbyter