



2018 ADVENT MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MINISTER AND PRESIDENT TERRI HORD-OWENS

(Transcript of video message distributed November 2018)

Hello Disciples,

I'm Terri Hord-Owens, your General Minister and President. For the past 16 months I have been traveling across the church in all of the US and Canada visiting with your congregations, your regional assemblies, our racial ethnic assemblies, the National Convocation, Oprah Hispana and NAPAD.

I want you to know what I have learned. I have seen the richness of the diversity of our Church. I have seen visible signs of hope, joy and plans for the future. I've seen all of you working in your local communities to serve the needs of those communities as you prepare to represent the gospel of Jesus Christ in mission and witness.

I'm reminded as I hope that part of our great legacy is to be a people of the book, to know and understand the scriptures, to be people of spiritual development, to know how to pray both as intercessory prayer partners and as also people who know when to be quiet, to be still and know that God is God. I want you to have the opportunity to see the fullness of who we are when we come together and one opportunity that you will have next July 2019 is to gather with us at the General Assembly in Des Moines, Iowa.

It has given me such confidence that comes only from God to see your passion, your commitment to the work that we do together as followers of Jesus Christ. My very favorite scripture is Philippians 1:6 in which Paul expresses to the Church of Philippi his confidence in them. He says "I am confident of this, that the one who has begun a good work in you will complete it by the day of Jesus Christ." Church, I have confidence not only in us as Disciples, not only as you as Disciples but I have confidence that the God we are called to serve is not finished with us yet. I have confidence that us as Church Disciples, more importantly God has confidence in us, God has called us to this work and God has given us all that we need to continue to live out the gospel of Jesus Christ both collectively together in our churches and as witness to the world as to what the reign of God can look like.

Church we are approaching the season of Advent when hope, joy and peace and love and the presence of Christ are at the center of our gathering together. It's in this season that we must remind ourselves of this very confidence that God has given us. I hope that as we worship together and as you remind yourselves of the great gift that God has given in Jesus Christ that God still has confidence in us and that our work together is not finished. More importantly God is not finished.

May the peace, joy, love and hope of this Advent season be with you now and always. I look forward to seeing you all at the General Assembly in Des Moines, Iowa in July 2019. God bless you and remember that God loves you and so do I.