

# **Christmas Greetings to Disciples of Christ throughout the Region of North Carolina.**

I vividly remember the three moments in my life when I first saw the tiny babies that were my two daughters and later my granddaughter. Each time, I was speechless. I simply stood there and gazed at the small miracles—gifts from God.

I can only image that Joseph responded in much the same way when he kneeled next to Mary and gazed at the small miracle—his son—a gift from God.

These gifts from God we call our children, even if they are not our own, give us hope. They give us a purpose for living. They compel us to look toward a future—a future in which we may not be living, but surely they will.

The gift from God to Mary and Joseph— baby Jesus— each Christmas becomes a gift to the whole world. He gives to the whole world a purpose for living. He compels us to look toward not simply our future, but God's future. And there we discover hope, peace, joy and love—even while living here and now.

May the blessing of God's gift to the world embrace your congregation, your family, and your life this Christmas season.

As you come in faith to Bethlehem, I invite you to consider a Christmas Special Day Offering gift to support the ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in North Carolina. Your faithful giving enables your regional ministries to continue. Thank you!

Christmas blessing to each of you.

**– John M. Richardson**  
Regional Minister