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Christmas Greetings from the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

Office of the General Assembly December 25, 2017

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Office of the General Assembly
THE REVEREND DR. J. HERBERT NELSON, II
STATED CLERK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

*For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government will be upon his shoulder,
and his name will be called
“Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” (Isa. 9:6)*

I am writing this letter while in the Holy Land with a delegation from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) A few days ago, President Trump set off a firestorm in this region by committing to move the United States Embassy to Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the center of three great religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. This Holy City is the gathering place of these faith traditions in spite of religious differences and governmental/political interference. Sadly, this widespread harmonious acknowledgment of religious diversity and integrated history is disrupted by the Occupation, which oppresses Palestinians. Moving the United States embassy is a concrete reflection of cultural and religious indifference.

Jesus, a Palestinian Jew, was born with the threat of death over his life. Sadly, this story is still being repeated in this present age. The prophet Isaiah reminds us during this time of the year that the Lord’s coming is couched in the theme of Jesus’ birth. His attributes are listed—“Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Isa.

9:6).

It is my prayer that we will both act and pray to eradicate the global climate of oppression and indifference towards one another. May we be willing to declare the call to a peace that surpasses all understanding. This call includes challenging leadership in high places to seek higher ground in their efforts to build loving communities across the globe.

May this Advent/Christmas season be a time of faithful reaffirmation to our call to serve the peaceable Kindom of God.

In the faith we share,



J. Herbert Nelson, II
Stated Clerk
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)



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“And the Word became flesh and lived among us.” —John 1:14

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