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Dear Friends:

During the early morning hours today, we learned the outcome of yesterday's elections. I am grateful for the parishes who opened their doors for those seeking prayer yesterday. I learned many years ago, "The church is at its best when it prays." Your prayers offered online or in person were reassuring, healing, and loving.

For some of us, the results of the election are encouraging and hopeful, while others receive them with deep disappointment, fear, and disorientation. Being mindful of the tenderness of this time, I invite us to be gentle with each other and with ourselves, showing compassion and love for all around us. Let us give this challenging time to God's care.

Regardless of our political allegiances or our reactions, we are children of God, claimed and redeemed by Jesus Christ. Our baptism calls us to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbors, striving for justice and peace while respecting the dignity of every person, and proclaiming by example the Good news of God in Christ.

Elections do not change our identity as God's children or our common mission. We gather for Word and Sacraments each week to refuel and rest so that we're ready to carry the love of Jesus out into a hurting world. We gather to remember that only God is ultimate and eternal. We're called to keep reaching out to the least, the lost, to friends and strangers, with love, acceptance, and hope, sharing our faith stories and following the One who has all power to hold and heal.

Our prayer book tells us our mission is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ. That means my first work may be to pray daily for those I like the least, trusting that in such prayers, God will transform my heart and teach me to love beyond my ability.

As followers of Jesus, we live with confidence in the newness and fullness of life in the assurance that nothing, not even death, can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

As we move through this transition as a nation, let us start by praying for those we struggle to love, and let us pray that our leaders will lead with compassion, wisdom, and courage for the well-being of all people. In the midst of our prayers, may God heal us. As always, I hope I see you at church!

Blessings,

*Bishop G*