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Dear Bishop Brown:

United Nations Day annually observed worldwide on October 24, this year falls on a Sunday. I write to ask you to encourage the Diocese of Maine clergy and laity to observe UN Day in sermons, prayers and continued personal acts of global citizenship.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt's dream and Eleanor Roosevelt's deep faith were indispensable to the birth of the United Nations 76 years ago. Both were Episcopalians. Eleanor seldom missed a Sunday service - nor did she allow her children to - and her personal service to others is legendary. In 1968 she was awarded, posthumously, the UN Human Rights Prize.

The Episcopal Church ought to be in the vanguard of religious bodies observing United Nations Day. The UN's humanitarian and diplomatic mission is deeply consistent with our church's own mission. (See UN facts, below - supplied by the UN.)

Maine has its own chapter of the United Nations Association (info@UNA.org). UNA-USA has 20,000 members nationwide (UNAUSA.org). Although Maine's chapter is non-denominational and diverse, St. Paul's in Brunswick has supported it, providing meeting space for the Board's monthly meetings. The rector Carolyn Eklund and numerous parishioners, myself included, are chapter members. As a teenager in Princeton, NJ, I lived next door to a classics professor and his wife. Their excitement about the potential of the UN remains a part of me.

The Maine chapter, as part of its effort to educate Maine people about the UN, initiated Maine's Model UN Conference for high school students (MeMUNC) over two decades ago. It has grown from about two dozen to nearly six hundred students in its 21 years of existence and is held in May at the University of Southern Maine. (See MeMUNC description, enclosed.)

Thank you so much for doing whatever you can to help Maine's clergy and lay leaders observe United Nations Day on Sunday, October 24.

Faithfully,

Rev. Alfred M. Niese
Board member, UNA-USA, Maine Chapter

United Nations facts:

- combats pandemics; coordinates COVID-19 vaccination efforts globally
- provides food and assistance to ninety-seven million people in eighty-eight countries
- supplies vaccines to 50% of the world's children, helping save three million lives a year

- assists, protects 97.3 million people fleeing war, famine, and persecution
- works with 196 nations to keep the global temperature rise below 3.6 degrees (F)
- keeps peace with 90,000 peacekeepers in twelve operations around the world
- tackles the global water crisis affecting over 2.2 billion people
- protects and promotes human rights globally and through eighty treaties/declarations
- coordinates US \$34 billion appeal for the humanitarian needs of 160 million people
- supports over thirty million women a year with sexual and reproductive health services
- uses diplomacy to prevent conflict and assists over fifty countries a year with their elections