

Vitality

from the Office of Theology, Formation & Evangelism

Director's Message

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Advent has become a pensive season along my spiritual journey. Preparing to celebrate the One who is the incarnation of God always changes my perspective. In the midst of the injustice, hatred, war, suffering, and death the world brings our way, I struggle with how to move together with love and healing in our hearts, minds, and actions. And amid the immeasurable grief of losing people we care so deeply about; I often cannot see the next step or utter the next word. Yet, Advent is that one time of the year in which all these things are brought together in our preparation to celebrate the only gift that is eternal—the promise of God's loving presence in our lives.

In both the beauty and difficulty of this world, we belong to God. And part of my Advent preparation throughout all these years of ministry has been remembering the God who always shows up. Every December, I think of the Christmas Eve services of the first church I served after graduating from seminary. After all the evening services in that little town ended, people would gather along the banks of a sleepy, winding bayou to witness a Christmas Eve fireworks display. I can still remember standing with many others on cold

winter nights, looking together into the dark sky that was bursting with vibrant colors and recognizing again that God's healing love and justice will always prevail and bring the renewal of life to all God's people.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it."
(John 1:1-5)

I am thankful we are together on this journey of God's healing love through Jesus Christ. You are in my prayers as we continue to live as the people of God.

Grace,



Ray G. Jones III
Director, Theology, Formation & Evangelism



To subscribe to the Vitality newsletter
by email, please sign up [here!](#)



Presbyterian Mission

**Theology, Formation
& Evangelism**

www.pcusa.org/