

Epiphany 2017



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Relationships form the center of our existence. This is my firm belief and one I've shared with you many times. The Christian faith is the story of relationships—God's relationship with humanity, most fully embodied in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and our relationships with each other. The work of the Office of the Bishop is all about relationship building: Connecting and Igniting Congregations in BOLDLY Sharing Christ, PASSIONATELY Making Disciples, and FAITHFULLY Doing Justice. ***Together in Mission*** is our highly relational vision for a growing and evangelizing church that is part of our synodical DNA.

January 29 is *Together in Mission Sunday* in the Florida-Bahamas Synod. I am encouraging your strong financial support because I strongly believe that ***TiM*** continues to be a collaborative, imaginative, outward looking way of being church together by supporting congregations, conferences, and the synod to proclaim and live the gospel. What a great sign of our common baptismal identity it would be to have 185 congregations celebrate ***Together in Mission Sunday*** and make a strong common show of support. It is a way of corporately saying, "Yes! God is calling us into the world—together!"

The homeless, the hungry, the elderly, students and conferences, as well as those seeking God, have been positively impacted by ***Together in Mission***. Our vision for worship has been expanded, leaders have been trained, congregational health and vitality is being increased, disciples are being trained, and we continue to welcome ideas for new projects that will impact the synod together with the communities we serve.

God bless you as support for ***Together in Mission*** continues to help partners in the Florida-Bahamas Synod to transform our communities in our witness and service.

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Robert G. Schaefer
Bishop of the Florida-Bahamas Synod