



January 2012

Dear Friends in Christ:

When the risen Lord Jesus commissioned his disciples before his ascension He gave them this promise: *"...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."* (Acts 1:8). Recently I heard a pastor ask a diverse congregation, "How many of you were born in Jerusalem? In Judea? In Samaria?" When no one raised their hand, he continued: "You first heard the Gospel 'at the ends of the earth' – whether that was in the Americas, Europe, Africa, Australia or Asia. We are the beneficiaries of the faithfulness of those who went before us, who brought the Gospel to our culture, to our language, to each of us."

As your congregation meets for Annual Meetings in 2012, it is a timely reminder that we are the beneficiaries of the faithfulness of those who went before us – and the fiduciaries of those who will come after us. Having been blessed by the Gospel, and the power it brings to free us from sin, injustice, and oppression we are converted from rebels into ambassadors for Christ. Our calling is to continue to make disciples at "the ends of the earth". Our witness, in deed and in word, is the means God is pleased to use to bring hope and help to those who lack it, from one person to another all around the world. The book of Acts concludes with a description of Paul's witness in Rome – *"He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ – with all boldness and without hindrance!"* (Acts 28:31).

Your partnership in the East Coast Conference provides you with resources, networking, and coaching support as we join together to make & deepen disciples, start & strengthen churches, develop leaders, love mercy & do justice – and do it locally, regionally and globally.

Our prayer for your congregation in 2012, and for our entire conference of churches, is that we would advance in bold witness in the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Kingdom of God and teach about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance. May you encounter the risen Lord yourselves – may you hear His voice, trust His promise, and carry out His will. Be bold! Be unhindered!

Yours because of Him,

Howard K. Burgoyne
Superintendent

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