



Anglican Diocese of Pittsburgh

The Rt. Rev. James L. Hobby, Jr., Bishop

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Dear Persevering Partner in the Gospel,

While this year has thrown many challenges at us, I've been impressed with the resilience of the clergy and parishes of this Diocese. The limitations of the pandemic unleashed creativity in discovering ways of expressing connection, care, and compassion. The cultural dissatisfaction with abetting racism has provoked honest (and hard) conversations. Even the dysfunctional partisanship in our political system has stirred up a desire to find a more civil way of working through our disagreements.

Into this whirlwind comes the Bishop's visit. I would hope that prayerful discernment and planning would go into my visit every year. This year it is a necessity. I want my visit this year to be an encouragement to you and to your congregation. What that looks like will depend on your circumstances and the mood of your congregation. So, I need you to take some time before my visit to pray and think creatively about how I can best bring encouragement.

I will follow your lead regarding how you can best strategically use my visit; and whether it should be in person or online. But one thing I do want to try this year is connecting with the Vestry (and other key leaders, as you see fit) before the Sunday visit. To accomplish this, I've set aside the Tuesday evening before a visit for a Zoom call with congregational leaders. I imagine a 60-90-minute conversation to hear how things are going, to address anything that would be helpful, and to pray for your congregation.

As I said last year, leading a congregation into passionate love for God, affection for each other, and effective mission in the world is both a privilege and a challenge. I want to encourage you in that work and to partner with you in it. You will be getting a planning sheet from Bonnie closer to the time of my visit. But I want you to be thinking and praying now about how my visit can be most helpful and encouraging.

Peace,

+ Jim