



Dear Siblings in Christ,

Do not be afraid. These words are spoken over 300 times in the Bible. They are uttered by angels and prophets, saints and ordinary people like us – to ordinary people like us. They are God's words to hearts in need. *Do not be afraid.*

We have always needed this reminder, and we need it now. The coronavirus pandemic, while changing, has not completely loosened its grip. Political divisions and changes in weather patterns add to our uncertainties about the future. Right here in the Diocese we are in the midst of a transition in leadership as we prepare for the Ordination and Consecration of our next Bishop Diocesan. In every time of change, our anxiety and fear can escalate. And so God's message to us is *Do not be afraid.* God's promise is that we are not alone. God is always with us and God gives us the gift of community with each other and with God to strengthen us.

We grow in community with God and with other people when we come together in hope and love, when we pray and worship, and when we share the abundant gifts, God has given us for the transformation of the world. I invite you to share a portion of the financial gifts of your congregation by making your pledge to the common mission and ministry of the Diocese of Virginia. Please pray together with your vestry and, without fear, offer your commitment to the work we share in a world that is so in need of the message of God's love.

As you consider and make your pledge, be assured of my prayers for you. May you feel yourself to be held tight in the arms of God's unending love. May you hear God's words echoing in your ears and entering your hearts – *Do not be afraid.*

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan E. Goff" with a small cross symbol above the first letter of the first name.

The Rt. Rev. Susan E. Goff
Bishop Suffragan and Ecclesiastical Authority

P.S. – Please take time prayerfully to determine your pledge, then complete the enclosed pledge card and return it in the envelope. If you prefer, you may pledge online at <http://www.thediocese.net/forms/pledge-form/>