Dear Friends in Christ,

Our 2016 session of the Virginia Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church is calling us to prayer and action as we participate in God’s mission in the world and our own backyard.

Part of author Frederick Buechner’s definition of compassion is, “the knowledge that there can never really be any peace and joy for me until there is peace and joy finally for you too.” We as United Methodists in Virginia always respond to the needs of others in compassionate response to God’s call on our lives. Our offering this year reflects that compassion as we once again reach out to touch and be touched by God’s hand in global and local mission.

We will continue to support our three long-term international partnerships with:

**Cambodia** – As we strengthen our commitment to the Methodist Mission in Cambodia in our fourth year of support as that church continues its rapid growth moving toward being an autonomous Methodist Church.

**Brazil** – In our long-term partnership with the Shade and Fresh Water ministry of the Methodist Church of Brazil, we support this compassionate ministry with at-risk children in cities and communities.

**Mozambique** – Our partnership with the Methodist Church in Mozambique focuses on education through providing laity resources that strengthen their discipleship and witness in a growing number of sites throughout the country.

Finally, as a conference we will provide funds in partnership with UMCOR here in Virginia as we help in the long-term recovery and rebuilding of homes after the devastating tornadoes that touched down in three areas of our state.

It is my prayer that each of us draws upon our tradition and calling of a compassionate missional response as an expression of our faith in a God who first made compassion incarnate in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In Christ,

Young Jin Cho