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## From the Clergy Assistant

***“You are now entering the mission field.”***

A colleague of mine recently talked about a church she attended years ago that had signs posted on each of the doors exiting the church. Each sign read: “You are now entering the mission field.” To this day, she still thinks of those small visual reminders whenever she is leaving a worship service in any church.

In our services we offer God praise and thanksgiving, and we are fed with the “Breakfast of Champions!” as another colleague passionately proclaims, fed by the Word of God, in our prayers, fellowship, and in the breaking of the bread. At the end of our Sunday worship services, one of the clergy proclaims one of the four Prayer Book options for our dismissal— our final charge. I must admit that I tend to proclaim, “Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.” The idea of each of us going *in peace*, bringing peace to an often frenzied world, is quite powerful, and there’s the reminder that—bottom line—we *are* here *to love and serve* the Lord; and in loving and serving God, loving and serving each other.

And what of “Let us go forth in the name of Christ”? We are Christ-bearers. Entering the mission field...

And, “Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.” *Rejoicing in the power of the Spirit...* Rejoicing that out of brokenness, the power of the Spirit can always bring new life. “Thanks be to God.”

In this season of Advent, this season of preparation and reflection in expectation for the coming of Christ into the world, what would it take for each of us to hear anew our final charge of each worship service and realize its power as we take that out into the mission field?

In Peace,  
The Rev. Joan F. Conley