



NORTHERN DISTRICT COUNCIL
PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF THE WORLD, INC.
5TH EPISCOPAL DIOCESE

Office of the Diocesan Bishop
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Bishop Ira Combs, Jr., D.D.
Diocesan

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To the Northern District Council Advisory Board, Council Members, Families and Friends:

We, the leadership of the Northern District Council, take the time to offer praise, honor, adoration and homage to the Lord Jesus Christ, and grace and peace to the New Testament Church, its members and *"all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:"* (I Corinthians 1:2). We trust we all have enjoyed a blessed Holiday Season, celebrating the mass (worship) of Christ (Jesus our Lord).

Christian historians and Bible chronologists have used the tables of archeology and chronology to date the conception of Jesus Christ with the recorded birth of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ and his biological first cousin. With the documents found and authenticated, they conclude John the Baptist was born six months before the birth of Jesus Christ as well as conceived six months before Christ's conception. This, they say, puts the conception of Christ around December 25th, 5 BC and his birth on September 29th, 4 BC. This history stimulates the argument or debate over the veracity of the actual date of birth of Jesus Christ our Savior. What is more important are the words of the Apostle Paul found in II Corinthians 5: *"¹⁶Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. ¹⁷Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."*

The event of our salvation and gift of eternal life far exceeds the annual commercialization of Christmas as a gift giving celebration. Even Jesus Christ made note of this when he said to his own people (Jews), *"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"* (Luke 11:13). Our new life in Christ, through water baptism in the Name of Jesus Christ and receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, is the essence of the authenticity of Christ Mass (Christ worship). We received the ultimate gift in time and eternity, and nothing can compare to Him (Isaiah 40:18 *"To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?"*).

Let us rejoice and be glad, and to all Merry Christ Mass and have a holy, blessed, happy New Year!

Bishop Ira Combs, Jr.

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Diocesan – 5th Episcopal District

"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" – Micah 6:8