Brothers and Sisters,

I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

As we prepare to celebrate the season of Advent, I’m reminded of Jesus coming to the earth as a precious child, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. Truly, how humble were Jesus’ beginnings!

We can read countless stories of the special affinity Jesus had for children. Mark 10:14 tells us, “He took the children in His arms, placed His hands on them and blessed them.”

This Scripture reminds me of the familiar song, “Jesus Loves the Little Children” by C.H. Woolston.

“Jesus loves the little children,
All the children of the world.
Red and yellow, black and white,
They are precious in His sight.
Jesus loves the little children of the world.”

The love of Jesus knows no bounds. God loves and sees even the weakest and the smallest among us. And this song reminds us so aptly that they are precious in God’s sight. All children are made in God’s image and are worthy of God’s love and grace.

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Your gift makes a difference.

Three refugee children, along with their families, pose next to Wesley UMC’s 15-passenger van after being dropped off at their home one Sunday morning after church. In coming months, the van will also be used to transport the children to “finish immunizations, go to a paperwork session at the Neighborhood Christian Legal Clinic, medical exams and fingerprinting.”

Last year, the Refugee Care Team at Wesley UMC applied for a grant through The Bishop’s Christmas Offering for Children to make their 19-year old van more safe and reliable. “We have maintained it as best we can as limited church funds cause us to struggle in this area,” they said in their application. The Bishop’s Christmas Offering granted them $2,000 that was used in part to purchase 6 booster seats and 1 infant car seat for the van, start a van maintenance account, have a maintenance check and oil change, and professionally clean the van.

The children are now transported safely in new booster and infant seats. The van serves as a reliable transportation for congregants to and from church services, youth group activities, medical appointments, and the necessary meetings that come with refugees transitioning to America.

When you donate to The Bishop’s Christmas Offering for Children, you are making a difference in the lives of children both locally and around the world.

Will you help make a difference in the lives of children around the world this year? Each year, our Indiana Annual Conference supports the Bishop’s Christmas Offering for Children, which is divided to meet the needs of the following ministries:

- Impact 2818, the Indiana Conference camping ministry
- The 3 Indiana United Methodist-related children and youth homes: Bashor United Methodist Home, Indiana United Methodist Children’s Home, and United Methodist Youth Home
- Local outreach projects
- United Methodist advance projects (national and global)
- Bishop’s fund for emergency children’s project and the promotion of this offering

Please join with me in giving whatever amount you may feel led to give toward this long-standing and life-changing ministry. May the words of “Jesus loves the little children” be reflected through your continued and generous support as we work to provide spaces where children are valued, cherished, supported, and have the opportunity to experience the love of God.

Especially this Christmas season, I invite you, your family, and your community of faith to join me in praying for children in Indiana and around the world…because they truly are precious in God’s sight.

On behalf of the countless children whose lives will be changed as a result of this offering, I thank you.

Be encouraged,

Bishop Julius C. Trimble