



THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

Right Revd Luke Pato

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TO BE READ ON SUNDAY 21 DECEMBER 2025 IN CHURCH

17 December 2025

To the Faithful of the Diocese of the Highveld

Grace and peace to you in this holy season of Advent.

We write to share a brief update and a word of encouragement as we seek a path of healing together.

1. Progress and Path Forward

The Intervention Task Team (ITT) has been listening. We have met with Bishop Charles, representatives of the #saveourdiocese movement, and members of the Diocesan Executive. These conversations have been honest and often difficult, revealing the pain and strain felt across the Diocese. Yet, beneath it all, we have heard a common yearning: a deep desire for a future marked by grace and unity in Christ.

To continue this work, the Members of the Task Team will visit the Diocese in person from 16 to 18 January 2026. We will meet with various groups, and on Sunday, 18 January 2026, we will worship alongside you in parishes across the Highveld. Further details will be provided after 6 January 2026.

2. A Pastoral Appeal for Christmas

As we prepare for the coming of Christ, we make a heartfelt appeal: let every church in the Diocese be open for worship from this last Sunday of Advent onward.

Christmas proclaims that God's reconciliation begins in tenderness, a Child in a manger, hope in humility. Opening every church door can be our collective act of goodwill, a visible sign that Christ welcomes all and that His Church chooses peace.

3. A Final Word of Hope

This time has been heavy. But our foundation remains: In Christ, God was reconciling the world to Himself.

We urge you, clergy and lay people alike, to hold fast to prayer, to speak with gentleness, and to resist assuming the worst of one another. True unity comes not through victory, but through Christ softening our hearts and drawing us back together.

May this Christmas renew your hope. Emmanuel is with us still.

With prayers for peace, courage, and reconciliation,

Yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Luke Pato".

Luke Pato (Chair)
Retired Bishop

On behalf of the Intervention Task Team

cc Provincial Executive Officer (PEO)
All correspondence to be addressed to the PEO