Greetings to our friends and family of The Penn West Conference:

Although we are not able to be in person with you this year at your annual conference, please know we are with you in spirit and we pray that you are all healthy and filled with the joy of The Lord.

2020 at St. Paul’s proved to be a year like none other. We are grateful for the countless blessings we have been given during this past year. Our residents and their families have endured countless changes and restrictions and yet they continue to be secure and content placing their care in our hands. Our team members have adjusted most every day to new guidance from our regulatory bodies yet they continue to remain steadfast and dedicated to the care of our residents and each other. Lastly, we are grateful to our volunteers and our donors, who continue to give of their time and treasures to support our mission. We are able to do so much more because of them as we create a community where life is worth living and days are filled with deep relationships and meaningful opportunities enabling all of us to grow. Even in the midst of great adversity, our St. Paul’s family remains strong and unwavering.

Throughout 2020, as we faced safety guidelines and restrictions from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid in response to the pandemic, our leadership team has made countless decisions requiring adjustments to our operations - always keeping our residents’ health and safety as our top priority.

In early 2020, dozens of volunteers helped us prepare for the potential of personal protective equipment shortages by sewing thousands of cloth masks and washable gowns to fill our needs as supplies were in great demand with limited availability. Today, volunteers are back assisting with scheduled visits.

Kudos to all of our team members who continue to work tirelessly to maintain safe and secure living environ-
ments for our residents. Our team has faced adversity like never before at St. Paul’s and we are forever indebted for their commitment to residents as well as their commitment to employ good practices in the community and at home limiting our overall exposure to the virus. In addition, our team members largely played the role of family during times when residents’ families were restricted from visiting.

Our Life Enrichment team remains busy modifying ways in which residents can gather safely and enjoy their families whose visitation opportunities have been limited, and for several periods of time non-existent. They’ve held drive-by parades where residents and team members cheered as families drove by with signs and banners filled with messages of love. Socially distanced gatherings continue to be held along with virtual visits via FaceTime or outside visits from a distance.

Countless donors helped to ensure that the mission of St. Paul’s continued without missing a beat. Numerous Penn West United Church of Christ family members and friends donated to our Good Samaritan Appeal that supports benevolent care, as well as other special appeals to enrich the lives of our residents such as our Annual Christmas Appeal that assures residents in personal and nursing care receive Christmas gifts. Many of you have maintained your membership with the St. Paul’s Auxiliary and supported the purchase of our new bus as well as a new shade structure that will be installed this spring in the Fountain Courtyard at the Villas.

All things considered, we have so much to be thankful for. Perhaps as we look back at 2020, we can remind ourselves of what is important – family and friends, safety and security, and most of all faith, hope and love.

We hope 2021 will bring resolve to this pandemic. However, we will never forget the blessings afforded to us in 2020.

Looking forward to the days when we can be together again!