

**Bishop Deborah Lieder Kiesey  
Message to the people of the  
Dakotas Conference**

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Dear Friends,

Once again the Dakotas Conference is preparing for rising waters. From north, south, east to west and all of the places in between, we are keeping a watchful and prayerful eye on the rising floods. Once again we find ourselves filling sandbags, preparing thousands of sandwiches, holding prayer vigils, moving household, moving household items to higher levels, making plans for the “what ifs”. Once again we are watching with careful eyes the weather forecasts and how things will freeze and thaw.

Friends we have been here before. We know the emotional, physical and the psychological toll of these uncertain times. I want you to know that my prayers, the prayers of many across this conference and the entire United Methodist Church are with you. You are not fighting this fight alone. Working side by side with UMCOR and the various community organizations we will give it our all. Together with the presence and strength of God we will fight the good fight and we will finish the race.

In the words of the prophet Isaiah, *Do not fear for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters they shall not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fire you will not be burned. For I am the Lord your God, you are precious in my sight and honored and I love you. Isaiah 43*

Friends please remember that our prayers are with you. You are not alone. May the peace of God be with you.

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