

# Community of Christ

3 May 2011

To the church:

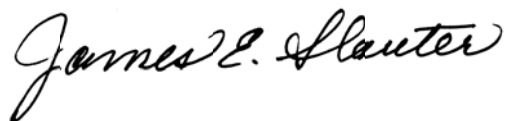
It is with deep humility that I have requested early retirement and release from my full-time church responsibilities and leadership roles in the Council of Twelve Apostles. This change will allow me the freedom to give added support to the ongoing needs of our 5-year-old grandson, Matthew, who was diagnosed with Mitochondrial Disease over three years ago. This difficult decision would not be possible without the love and support of my wife, Jan, and our family. I am deeply grateful for the pastoral support that has been extended to my family and to me by the First Presidency in granting this request.

The church and its mission have been my life calling and vocation for 24 years. Words cannot adequately express the blessings I have experienced as I have traveled throughout the church and witnessed the life changing power of God's grace expressed through relationships shaped and molded by Christian community. Thank you Community of Christ for all the ways you share Christ's peace in our world! Your lives of service to God and community are a living testimony of Christ's peace.

I am blessed by the loving, caring support of my colleagues in the Council of Twelve, World Church Leadership Council, International Leadership Council, and our office staff. Their devotion and response to God's call to lead the church in mission is beyond reproach. I will miss our insightful conversations about the church's mission, worship experiences that refresh my dry soul, laughter that breaks through the tension of difficult discussions, and tears that express the depth of our caring for one another and the people we serve. They are, and will always be, a special part of my life.

May God's blessings continue to find expression through the lives of our members, friends, and congregations around the world is my hope and prayer.

In Christ's peace,



James E. Slauter  
President of the Council of Twelve and Director of Field Ministries