

**Transcript of the October 6th Online Rollout Meeting
for the
2021 Convention of the Diocese of New York**

The Rt. Rev. Mary D. Glasspool:

Good evening. I'm The Rt. Rev. Mary D. Glasspool, Bishop Assistant of the Episcopal Diocese of New York. And on behalf of our Bishop Diocesan, Andrew Dietsche, and our Bishop Suffragan Allen Shin, and all the good people of the diocese, I welcome you to the 245th Convention of our diocese. The theme for this convention comes from the words of Jesus, both to the healed leper in Luke's gospel and to the woman who touched Jesus's cloak in a crowd in Mark's gospel. The theme is, "Your faith has made you whole." Those of us responsible for orchestrating this convention felt strongly that the world is in need of Jesus's healing touch. In fact, we are all in need of the healing that is brought about by faith. So, may this entire convention nourish and support our faith and our healing, empowering us to share those gifts with the world in which we live.

As a brief housekeeping detail, there is as a working part of the Zoom app we are using, a globe icon at the bottom of your screen. Please click on that and then click English or Spanish for the language you use. Clicking on Spanish will give you auditory access to our Spanish translator. Clicking on English will help you to feel that you can follow directions. Many people have worked and continue to work diligently to make this convention happen. This evening, I want to give a shout out to three people in particular, the Reverend Matt Heyd, secretary of convention, Jeannine Otis, who is coordinating liturgical and worship aspects of our meetings, and Lucy Breidenthal, whose skill at piecing together the many moving parts of our roll-out meetings is without measure. Thank you, friends.

This is the first of five roll-out meetings, each of which will be focused on an aspect of our life together that we are very intentionally working on. This first meeting focuses on the new and very exciting program titled, Episcopal Futures, which you will hear more about from Abby Nathanson, Canon Victor Conrado and Bishop Shin during this hour, in addition to others who will join us either live or through a video clip. In all we do during the course of this convention, we will also focus on staying safe, keeping connected, and being accessible to all.

I welcome you, and I'm glad you tuned in. We will now move to an opening song and prayer. Enjoy.

Singer:

(singing)

The Rev. Susan Fortunato:

Oh God, by your grace, you have called us out of our parishes in the Diocese of New York and into a fellowship of faith. As we prepare for Convention, bless our bishops Andy, Allen and Mary, bless our clergy and our lay leaders, bless those who are charged with Episcopal Futures, that it may serve as a catalyst for spiritual growth among us. Grant that your word may be truly preached and truly heard; your sacrament faithfully administered and faithfully received. By your spirit, unite us to your Son, that we may show forth the power of your love and shine with holy purpose; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The Rt. Rev. Mary D. Glasspool:

Bishop Shin will now introduce the theme of tonight's roll-out meeting.

The Rt. Rev. Allen K. Shin:

Good evening. Thank you very much, Bishop Glasspool. By now, many of you have heard of Episcopal Futures. It was last year we received a major grant from Lilly Endowment for this initiative, for what they call the Thriving Congregations Initiative. It's a congregational renewal for our diocese, which we have named Episcopal Futures. And now we thought it was appropriate time for us to update you all about what's been going on since the beginning of this year when we started. To update us, I introduce Canon Victor Conrado, our Canon for Congregational Vitality and Formation, who has been overseeing this project, and Abby Nathanson, the managing director for Episcopal Futures. Canon Conrado?

I'll take that from Victor that I'm starting then. Hi everyone. My name is Abby Nathanson. I'm so happy to be here with you. I just wish I could see everyone's faces. I am the managing director of Episcopal Futures, and I'm going to show you a little presentation and then Victor is going to talk and then Diane is going to talk, and we have videos. So you're going to be hearing from a bunch of different people, not just me. I will share my screen and start at the beginning. If it works. There we go. So, we are here for the Diocesan Convention roll-out meeting. I'm so happy to get to share with you what we've been doing. I'm sure, inevitably, we won't get to tell you everything, so please do ask questions in the chat. If we don't get to your questions now, we'll get to them later on.

We are a new initiative in the Diocese of New York, and we are focused on collaboration and transformation. So I'll be calling on Victor to elaborate on both of those in a bit, but I know that there are topics that are close, top of mind, close to a lot of what people are thinking these days. We know that the church of the past is not coming back. The pandemic, which by the way, we started this whole thing right at the beginning of the pandemic. The fact that the pandemic is fundamentally changing how we engage with church has always been part of what we're doing. We know transformation has to happen. We know that change is scary, but we're going to find a way to do it anyway. The best way to deal with these changes we believe is through collaboration.

There's all kinds of different collaborations that aren't happening now that we could strengthen and make happen. There's all kinds of collaborations that are happening that maybe we just haven't noticed or haven't given as much attention to. Our mission is to catalyze collaborative, imaginative, and spirit-led communities to faithfully transform our Episcopal futures. Plural. So how are we going to do that? Canon Victor will elaborate, but these are our core values. I hope that they are resonate for you and your congregations as well. We believe that the best culture is one that is collaborating. We want to renew in a faithful way that honors and centers our Episcopal roots. We want to be engaging in justice. We want to include the people that haven't been included in the past. We want to discern in new ways, think about things differently. We want to have new leaders. Young people. People who haven't always had leadership roles in their churches. We want to make that happen now. We want to have place-based innovation, which means that your town matters, where your church is located matters.

We have such a diverse diocese that spans from the rural to the suburban to the very urban, they're all very different contexts and where they are makes a really big difference. We want to honor those contexts. This is a quotation that is attributed to Albert Einstein, but also Canon Victor Conrado with great frequency, because he says it so much when we talk about this work. Which is, that we can't keep doing the same thing over and over again and expect a different outcome. I'm going to pass it to Victor to talk a little bit more about that. Then I'll share with you some of our projects that we've been working on.

The Rev. Canon Victor Conrado:

Thank you, Abby. Thank you for that nice introduction. Episcopal Futures, an initiative for collaborative transformation, believes that the purpose of all the congregations is to gather, transform, and send. We [inaudible] is to gather, transform and send out into the world, women and men to continue God's work. These gather, transform, send, have been in [inaudible] for the last 18 months. Been done in a context of so many changes and changes that have taken us to new understanding of our purpose, requiring us to adapt to new realities and especially to understand ourselves in a different way. How we see ourselves, how we understand ourselves, and most of all, how we gather, transform, and send people today. Changes brought to us by the pandemic have affected our liturgy, our communication processes, our technology, our operating procedures, our roles and responsibilities, and our [inaudible] of the parish and congregational life.

Episcopal Futures Initiative wants to invite the congregations in our diocese to respond to these changes and challenges in collaboration. We believe in the development of congregations of all sizes, locations, and conditions into more faithful, healthy, and effective communities of faith. That are called to invite others into their conversations and explore solutions for their similar challenges. Congregations that are centered on and faithful to their unique reason for being and primary task as congregations, which are local expressions of the body of Christ. Congregations that are connected to an expression of their unique ecclesial tradition, ethos, and character. Congregations that are self-renewing and responsive to the challenges and opportunities before them. Congregations that are sustainable or working toward greater sustainability in terms of a fit between the elements of their organizational life.

... Fit between the elements of their organizational life, being vision for ministry, leadership, culture, size, property, finances and so on. And fostering a culture of transparency, collaboration, courage, flexibility and forgiveness in which the congregation and its leaders have a greater sense of choice.

So, with all of these in mind, Episcopal Futures is in collaboration already with some other entities in the church. One of them being General Theological Seminary. We are in collaboration as well with other entities in the life of the church like Trinity Wall Street, continue this sense of... And inviting congregations to deeper collaboration among themselves. And what do we mean by that? We are looking at models right now that are keeping us in our own silos and thinking that the problems that we have are unique to us. But, when we look at our diocese and I want you to pay attention to this word diocese, we think of that expression, that word as the expression of the body of Christ here in New York. And that word in itself takes us out of our silos to think as congregations, to think that my actions and my existence depend on the actions and existence of those ones who are near to me.

So, collaboration means that I step out of my comfort zone and invite others to walk with me in a process of exploring, trying out, failing, failing, and failing, and maybe something will work out and together, we'll say, "Yeah, this is the church. This is the diocese working out something different right now." As Abby was pointing out earlier, we have tried out things again and again and again and again, hoping for different results. Right now, we want to invite you to Episcopal Futures, inner city wants to invite you to try something different, try something new and to do that in a safe space.

So, we have congregations that have, first of all, sent to us, their letter of intent. Wanted to explore more about Episcopal Futures. And now, we're moving into those who send us their application. And that is exciting to see, that there are so many of you want to join us in this adventure. So, keep us in your prayers, keep trying, keep collaborating, keep going out of your silos and trying to see that maybe something that you want to work on, the next congregations next to you wants to do the same. And how best to put our resources together and to explore possibilities. So, continue exploring. We know some of you are really doing that. Many of you are already doing that. Continue exploring collaboration, continue trying out and join us in this adventure. So, back to you Abby.

Abby Nathanson:

Thank you. Thank you, Victor. I will share my screen again. So, if I've done my job correctly, you've heard about the Learning Communities by now. That's what Victor was just mentioning. So, Episcopal Futures itself, it's an initiative. In my opinion, it's a movement. We're bringing our churches forward, into a new type of being church. There are so many different ways we're going to do that. We have a few different projects that we're offering as Episcopal Futures. And the biggest one is the Learning Communities. So, that's probably what you've heard about. That's the thing we've been focused on the most, so far. It's a discernment and experimentation program for a congregation. So, congregations put forth a team of five people. One of them is young. And I know for sure, some of you who are here in this room have worked so hard and just moved heaven and earth to find your person who is under the age of 30.

So, they're in their teens, or they're in their twenties and they want to be part of discerning the future of their church and it's happening, and we have those people. So, we received letters of intent from 46 congregations, and then full applications from slightly fewer than that. It's a big chunk of the diocese. It's really, really big. And we're really excited. So, between now and convention in November, our evaluators are going to be reading those applications and announcing who our congregations will be. Those congregations are spanning the entire geography of the diocese, and they're going to come together in these Learning Communities. That's the language of the Lilly Endowment. So, it's three congregations all together, either they're already geographically near each other, they're neighbors, they already work together, they already have some shared ministry, or if they don't, they want to figure it out.

But, others are totally different. They're in different areas, but they're all part of the body of the diocese. And they all have similar goals and challenges. So, they'll go through this process of discerning their future, experimenting, where it's okay to fail. It's not a grant, where you write a grant proposal, you say, "I'm going to do this project. It'll be perfect. And if it's not..." You get to experiment. And then, at the end of 18 months, there's seed funding to start trying something new. Other projects that we're doing, is that in those Learning Communities, every congregation will be paired with a coach. And so, we have also recruited coaches. Now we're training coaches and we will be sending them to support the parishes, all of the coaches live within the diocese already. Another thing we're doing that I'm really excited about and really, really proud of, is that we've allocated a lot of our budget for financial aid.

So, we understand that going to a whole big event, a whole big workshop, is time consuming. It takes a lot of resources, we're trying to fill in those gaps. Another thing we're doing, is the online presence project here at Episcopal Futures. So, some of you here don't have websites, feel free to put it in the chat. If a website has been a burden for you and your community, let us know, we'll take note. We hope to get every single church in the diocese, a website, a Zoom account, all the resources that you need to do your ministry best. Another thing we're doing, which I don't think as many people have heard of, are the Youth Grantmaking Boards. This is a program that was piloted at Christ's Church in Rye, to get young people involved in financial stewardship. And we will be starting one next year at the diocesan level. So, these young funders, here they are, at Christ's Church in Rye, were the very first board. And now, I'd like to invite via prerecorded video, Kate Malin, to explain what that ministry is.

The Rev. Kate Malin:

Hello everyone. My name is Kate Malin and I am the rector of Christ's Church in Rye. And I'm here to speak with you about an exciting initiative we began this year called the Youth Grantmaking Board. It was inspired by Abby Nathanson, who is not only the managing director of Episcopal Futures, but also a part-time staff member here. When Abby was in high school, she was a member of a Youth Grantmaking Board. And she's been interested in replicating this for a new generation of teenagers. And so, we have

assembled here, a group of students, some of whom live in Rye and go to school here. Some are members of Christ's Church, others live and go to school in our nearby town of Port Chester. They have various backgrounds and some are bilingual, others are not. But they have made a commitment to each other and to learning about philanthropy and developing their own vocabulary for grant writing and grantmaking. They have determined a focus, geographic focus, and also a set of organizations that are meeting urgent need locally to fund.

They have put out a call for proposals, received applications, and then allocated funds to seven worthy organizations. They are now in the process of doing site visits and impact assessments. And soon they will transition to become the fundraising engine for next year's Youth Grantmaking Board. And there's so much to be excited about, but what makes me hopeful and energized, is that they are prompting adults in our community, to re-examine why we give. What is this thing, so many of us call outreach? And does it need to be recreated? So that it's more relational and respectful, that the giving goes in both directions. And we deepen our understanding of love for our neighbor and self. How is it connected to the living of our baptismal covenant? So, we are learning from these amazing young kids and they will teach their successors. So, I just wanted to share that with you. I hope that some of you will be inspired to perhaps try this yourself and you can certainly learn more, by talking with Abby, or contacting any of us at Christ's Church.

Abby Nathanson:

Thank you, Kate. So, I think she's here. So, you can also go find her in the chat, if you want to talk more about that. So, another church that we wanted to talk about today, we're bringing in a couple of different churches, different contexts. And the reason for that is that it's not like we started that concept of doing innovative, inclusive ministry. There's been so much cool work going on for so long. And before we got going on this whole initiative, we wanted to stop and spotlight and learn from some of the cool things that have been happening already, that's in keeping with our values. And so, many of you know, the church of Iglesia Santa Cruz, Holyhood, which is definitely a unique community, because they are trilingual and their team from their Learning Community application, submitted a video. Which I'm going to play for you here. So, one moment. Here's their video.

The Rev. Luis Barrios:

Hi, my name is Father Luis Barrios. We are La Iglesia Santa Cruz, Holy Rude Church. A multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and trilingual community, that worships in Spanish, English, and American Sign Language. We are a people's church. All these make us a unique church.

Speaker 2:

My name is [inaudible]. Our sisters and brothers who happen to be deaf or hard of hearing, we celebrate with them the challenges of American Sign Language. We are likewise a church that welcomes and celebrates that a person is of human sexuality, including the LGBTQ community. We're also a sanctuary church for our black community of brothers and sisters.

Speaker 3:

Hi, my name is [inaudible]. I'm someone living in sanctuary, in our church. [foreign language]. This is unique in our church.

Speaker 4:



Hi, my name is [inaudible]. To make real, what we learn from [inaudible] is you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But, if you come, because your vision is wound up with mine, then let us work, together.

Speaker 5:

Hello, my name is [inaudible]. What is our dream for our church? First, that we continue our revitalization journey. And second, that we find ways to destroy cultures of individualism and competition. By growing the values of positivity and transformation, and to operate them with all these churches. With love.

The Rev. Luis Barrios:

Our message is, welcome to our parish. We are a friendly and hospitable church. [foreign language]. Peace be with you. Thanks. Amen. [foreign language]. Amen.

Abby Nathanson:

We're a collaborative initiative in many ways, including screen-sharing all these different videos. So, thank you to the people behind the scenes, making this work. The next guest here, this one's actually live, is Diana from the Delaware Catskill Episcopal Ministry. And I just want you to see real quick. This is the road... I took this picture, when we pulled over, driving from one of their churches to their other church, it's a very rural place. And I'm going to be showing some images, while Diana shares a little bit with you about their context.

The Rev. Diana Scheide:

Thank you, Abby. The Delaware Catskill Episcopal Ministry was formed from a need and a vision to keep an Episcopal presence in Sullivan County. These four churches, under the gentle leadership of the Reverend Canon David Lee Carlson and support from the diocese, found a new life together in 2014. St. James', Callicoon; St. Andrew's, South Fallsburg; St. John's, Monticello; and Grace Church, Port Jervis agreed to share clergy, mission, and vision. They formed a lay council which meets quarterly. The council is made up of two representatives from each church.

Praying for each other, common activities, and invitation, planted the seeds of our life together. I was going to say that each Sunday, but a couple of years ago, St. James' moved their services from Sunday to Saturday, so the clergy could spend more time at St. John's with new people coming to the church. So it's each weekend all churches pray for each other.

We enjoy an annual summer picnic together, which includes worship. At Bishop's visitation, all churches close their churches to attend the church being visited. Common newsletter, Facebook page, and soon a common website, lets everyone know what's going on.

The churches help each other, especially with things like donations and showing up for events, Christmas bazaars, and yard sales. And when there's a big need indeed, they show up with their cash for each other. We all help each other.

This year, we began to discern, through the lay council and with the charge from Bishop Shin, to find a common mission. Fortunately, God is good and two wonderful opportunities have come to us. We, the Delaware Catskill Episcopal Ministry, and the Diocese of New York Campus Ministry, and SUNY Sullivan's faculty and Student Union, have come together to rejuvenate the campus food pantry and develop a



presence on campus to meet the spiritual needs of students, faculty, and staff. Bishop Mary is coming up on October 22nd for the grand opening of the food pantry at SUNY.

The second opportunity for growth and discernment about our collaboration and God's dream for it, is the opportunity to participate in Episcopal Futures. The DCEM makes a significant impact on the souls in Sullivan County and the Port Jervis area. Four food pantries, collaboration with Nesin Cultural Arts, a children's art and music program, the Sullivan County Chamber Orchestra. We're part of SALT, the Sullivan Allies Leading Together. We host AA groups in English and Spanish. And the community looks to us for holiday events and bazaars and book sales and just for opportunities to get together.

The DCEM is a beacon of hope and help in one of the poorest places in our state. Our communities look to us to feed their bodies and their souls. And we look forward to discern what new call God will have for us in a new Episcopal future. Thank you for letting me speak to you about the joy of serving this community.

Abby Nathanson:

Thanks, Diana. So if anyone is thinking to themselves, how am I going to start collaborating with the churches that are nearby, my neighbors? I guarantee you, they are closer to you, easier to access, than these churches are to each other, and they've been doing joint ministry for a long time and I think it's really wonderful.

Our next speaker, we only have two more, is from Saints John, Paul & Clement. They just are doing so many really innovative, really cool things. One of them is a civil rights pilgrimage for youth, if you don't know about it. I know Beverly is here. I think her title in the chat is Saints John, Paul & Clement, so you should definitely talk to her. And here she is sharing via prerecorded video.

Beverly:

The future of the Episcopal Church is I think we're going through a transition now. I think we are realizing we're going to have to make our presence known via Facebook Live, livestreaming, Zoom, and there's nothing wrong with that. I think we need to embrace it, as long as we know what the mission is and we get out the Word to the people. I think that that's what's most important.

Another thing that might be very much important is our, not might be, that is important, is our youth. If we don't have youth in the church, if we don't get young people to come into the church, it won't matter whether we are in person, whether we are on livestream, the future will be bleak.

I think we need to give more, do more, for the youth of the church. That's why we signed up for Episcopal Futures collaboration with other churches to see what they're doing so that we can all work together so it can benefit us in the future.

Abby Nathanson:

Thank you, Beverly. I couldn't have said it better myself. I completely agree. So definitely do reach out to her if you want to know more about her ministry.

Finally, we have Ryan Kuratko from Canterbury Uptown. He and Megan Sanders from Canterbury Downtown are also applying to be participants in our Learning Communities, and theirs is very interesting because they're two different campus ministries applying as a worshipping community together. And he's going to talk a little bit about what online ministry has been like for him and about collaboration.

The Rev. Ryan Kuratko:



Within campus ministry, one of our ongoing themes is always the question of belonging, about what it means to belong. We work with a very transient population, people who came to the university for a reason, perhaps to be faculty, perhaps to be staff, often to be students. And that time is going to be limited, and so figuring out what it means to belong in New York City, which is always an interesting question, is particularly poignant for students who are trying to also figure out how they belong in themselves, how they belong to God, and what that means.

In the midst of that question of belonging in our more recent context, of course, has been the pandemic, where even that sense of belonging was cast aside as people had to return to their blood family or chosen family, but either way, not where they had really hoped or choose to belong.

Campus ministry in many ways has been very busy for the last couple of years, trying to create a sense of belonging for our students. Some of that has been through just conversation on Zoom. Some of it has been through Zoom church, like with many of you, I suspect, and trying to create creative opportunities like interactive [inaudible] the cross and Christmas services, which are new for us as a campus ministry, but look like Zoom Christmas services might be here to stay. Don't quote me on that.

In the midst of all of this, which has mostly been two years of loss and challenge in so many ways, as we begin to gather again, we are trying to figure out as campus ministers how to continue to support and create the spaciousness at a time that continues to be fraught with anxiety, but also so much hope and so much interest.

Within campus ministry, one of our ongoing-

Abby Nathanson:

Thank you, Ryan. Thank you to everyone who contributed to our presentation and for everyone, who's like, wait, I had more to say, I did edit videos. We all have so much to say about the futures of our churches, what we can do differently, where we're being called to go next, so please don't let this event be the last time that you engage with this initiative and think about all of the different ways that your church can be collaborative and transforming. We're so excited to see how the spirit will move within this project. I think we will be having some time for Q&A, so please do put questions in the chat. Thank you.

The Rt. Rev. Allen K. Shin:

Thank you very much, [inaudible] Abby, and Diana, and many others who made a presentation in this time. Episcopal Futures is really all about three things, collaboration, adaptive leadership, building leadership skills and building leaders, especially among young people, and also discernment, discerning as a community, what is the mission, what is church, and what is our future?

Around those three principles, Episcopal Futures will continue to endeavor to serve the diocese, congregations, the diocese, as we go through this enormous, enormous change together. So, I'm now open for questions if anyone would like to ask some.

Lucy Breidenthal:

Thank you, Bishop Shin, and thank you to the Episcopal Futures Committee for such a comprehensive presentation. It's wonderful to hear from so many collaborative communities in our diocese.

One question that comes up often and came up for me during the presentation is it seems like there's tremendous opportunity if you're part of the 18 month cohort, but is there a way to be involved in Episcopal Futures if I'm not part of an Episcopal Futures cohort in 18 months? How can we continue to learn more and be engaged in other ways?



The
Episcopal Diocese
of New York

The Rt. Rev. Allen K. Shin:

Abby, you can go ahead.

Abby Nathanson:

Sure. I can answer that one. Well, the first thing I'll say is that if you have an idea, you should tell us about it. My email is in the chat [inaudible] just put it there. So this is, I don't want to say it again, but it's a collaborative project. Talk to us. Pretty much everything that's happened so far has been a group effort.

There's a bunch of different projects that we have, so like I was saying, if you're applying to join a Learning Community and we're able to bring your congregation in, that's awesome. But if not, there's so many other things going on. So you might find that you have a coach in your congregation, they're getting announced around this week so you'll be finding out soon, and David, whose email was just put in the chat, he is our program manager and helping out with coaching, which is being directed by April Stace from General Theological Seminary.

There's also the Youth Grantmaking Board, which will be coming out. We're thinking about doing some lay rejuvenation retreats, plan to be determined. But I think a lot of people have said at different points, being a full time volunteer for your church is really, really hard, and a lot of people are working so hard to keep their churches going, and we need to give them some rest and some recognition for everything that we're doing. So we'll definitely focus on that.

At the very least, if you do not have a website, I know you will be hearing from us for sure, so you can look forward to that. But above all, if you feel called to be a part of this initiative, I hope that you'll reach out to us and tell us how you think we can work together.

The Rt. Rev. Allen K. Shin:

The other thing is that this first cohort is 18 months and then we will start another new cohort the following year, so there will be one more opportunity, because it is a five year grant, so that is the time span we will need to carry this through.

Lucy Breidenthal:

Wonderful. Thank you so much to the Episcopal Futures Committee for all their hard work. We're going to move on to our introduction to voting with Reverend Matt Heyd. So please continue to contact Episcopal Futures, and we'll welcome, Matt Heyd.

The Rev. Matt Heyd:

Bishop Glasspool talked about the values with which we're planning convention this year, to stay safe, to keep connected, and to make everything we're doing accessible to the entire diocese in New York. We hope that's true of voting this year, as last year.

This year, as last year, we're going to vote in the days leading up to convention to make sure everyone has equal access to voting, and we'll vote together on candidates, on the budget, and on resolutions. And so, in coming weeks in these roll-out meetings, we're going to practice how we do that together, and then we're going to be able to hear from Candace and from people about the resolutions which they've sponsored.

I'm grateful to Sara Saavedra, our Senior Assistant Secretary, for doing the background work on the right way to vote together electronically, which we'll try out in coming weeks. I'm especially grateful to the



Reverend Deacon Chris Colón from El Buen Pastor in Newburgh, who's going to be Inspector of Elections this year.

We'll practice together, I want to make sure we can all do this together, as we get ready for our convention on November 13th. Thank you.

The Rt. Rev. Mary D. Glasspool:

Last year, one of the most memorable parts of each roll-out meeting was a prayer time during which we collectively asked those who were in attendance to put prayer requests, be they intercessions, petitions, thanksgivings, anything you want to pray about corporately, in the chat box.

I found it incredibly moving to know what's on people's minds and hearts, and so I invite you, as a community, even though we are electronically connected, the Holy Spirit works in mysterious ways, so I invite you now to put your prayer requests into the chat box and join me in a time of prayer.

[Prayer.]

(Singing).

The Rev. Theodora Brooks:

The Lord be with you. Let us pray. Dear God our mother and father, how magnificent is your name. You created the heavens and the earth, and all that dwells therein, and yet you still love us enough to send your son to die for us. How can we thank you enough for the blessings that have come our way, blessings freely given from the bounty of your love?

And so this evening we ask that you accept our feeble thanks and praises as the instance of the evening sacrifice. As we gather to celebrate the ministry entrusted to our care, as a diocese we ask for your guidance, open our hearts, ears, and eyes to feel, see, and hear that which is not visible or audible.

Remind us that there is no dream that cannot be realized because with you all things are possible. And so we ask that you use us as your hands, feet, and voice, and empower us to be your bearers of hope and healing. All this we ask in the name of Jesus, your son, our brother, and confidant. Amen.

The Rt. Rev. Mary D. Glasspool:

Thank you Theodora. Next week the focus of our convention roll-out meeting will be the budget. And once again, it will be from 5:00 to 6:00, and we invite you to come see how we are appropriating our resources in the common mission of the diocese, as it is lived out by all of you in this wonderful diocese we call New York.

And now go forth into the world in peace, be of good courage, hold fast that which is good, Render to no one evil for evil, strengthen the fainthearted, support the weak, help the afflicted, honor all people, love and serve the Lord. And the blessing of the God who creates us, redeems us, and sustains us be upon us and remain with us this night and forever more, amen.

(Singing.)