

**Transcript of the October 20th Online Rollout Meeting
for the
2021 Convention of the Diocese of New York**

The Rt. Rev. Mary Glasspool:

Good evening, I'm Mary Glasspool, Bishop Assistant of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, and along with our Bishop Diocesan, Andy Dietsche, and our Bishop Suffragan, Allen Shin, and all the good people of the Diocese of New York, I welcome you to this, the third roll-out meeting of our five roll-out meetings comprising our 245th Diocesan Convention. I'm speaking to you from Donegan Hall and it's an historic place with all these bishops surrounding us. And they remind me of the theme of our convention, which is "your faith has made you well." It's something that Jesus says a number of times in the gospels to people whom he has healed. He says it to the tenth leper who comes back to thank him in Luke's gospel, "Your faith has made you whole," and he says it to a woman in Mark's gospel who braves a crowd and manages to touch Jesus' hem of his cloak and be healed of her bleeding of her hemorrhaging.

And he turns around and says, "Your faith has made you whole." We feel, the leadership of people who are putting together this Diocesan Convention, that we're all in need of healing after this last 18-month period that's been particularly challenging. And so, we invite you into a healing space that is Diocesan Convention. There's a brief housekeeping detail that I offer. At the bottom of your screen is a thing that looks like a globe and I think it says interpretation under it. And if you click on that and click then on Spanish, if you're a Spanish speaker or English, if you're an English speaker that will help the Spanish speakers hear the translator who is translating in real time. Many people have worked and continue to work on bringing this convention to its culmination on November 13th and there would be a whole host of people I could thank by name.

We will have a slide at the end of our time this evening that gives the official credits, but I really want to call out and shout out our secretary of convention, Matt Heyd, the assistant secretary of convention, Sara Saavedra, Jeannine Otis, who is coordinating all of the music and liturgical pieces for our entire convention, and Lucy Breidenthal without whose skill we would not have these roll-out meetings. So, thank you to you people in particular, and to all of you who are working on this. The theme of tonight's roll-out meeting is "Creation Care" and I'll say a little bit more in introducing that theme a little later. For now, we'll move to the opening song followed by the opening prayer.

(Singing)

The Rev. Liz Maxwell:

Good and gracious Creator, we give thanks that from your communion of love, you made our planet to be a home. By your holy wisdom you made the Earth to bring forth a wondrous diversity of living beings that filled the soil, water, and air. Each part of creation praises you in their being and cares for one another from our place in the web of life. With the Psalmist, we sing your praise, that in your house, even the sparrow finds a home and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young. We remember that you call human beings to tend your garden in ways that honor the dignity of each creature and conserve their place in the abundance of life on Earth. But our will to power pushes the planet beyond her limits. Our greedy consumption is out of harmony and rhythm with Earth's capacity to sustain and heal herself. Habitats are left barren or lost. Species go extinct and systems fail where reefs and burrows, mountain tops, and ocean deeps once teemed with life and relationships, [crosstalk 00:10:28] lie empty.

Human families are displaced by insecurity and conflict migrating in search of peace. Animals flee fires, deforestation, floods, and famine, wandering in search of a new place to find a home to lay their young and live. In this urgent moment we pray that your creative breath would move in our hearts as in the waters of our birth and baptism. Give us faith to follow Christ to our just place in the beloved community of creation. Enlighten us with the grace to respond rightly to

your call to care for our common home in our tilling and keeping, gladden our hearts to participate with your Holy Spirit to renew the face of your Earth and safeguard a dwelling place for all. In the name of the one who comes to proclaim good news to all creation, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Bishop Mary Glasspool:

Thank you, Liz. The opening prayer was beautiful and really states the theme quite well in a petition to the almighty God. I did a little work before this particular roll-out meeting to do a little research on when was the last time we had a resolution at Diocesan Convention that had to do with Creation Care. It was very recent. In 2019, a resolution was submitted by the Reverend Matt Calkins and there were several resolves, but I want to quote from two of them.

“Resolved, that the 243rd Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of New York consider the potential for utilization of church-owned property for new ministries, integrating the care of creation. Also, be it resolved that the Episcopal Diocese of New York through collaboration with partner agencies to care for creation, sequester carbon through regenerative agriculture, biodiversity, conservation, green burial, and habitat restoration.”

And there are three or four other paragraphs resolving things that we are going to do or engage in as the diocese and part of the reason I bring all this up and introducing the theme is that these diocesan conventions are not just individual isolated benchmarks in the life of the Diocese, but rather part of the ongoing narrative of our life as the diocese. And the videos and reports and conversation that you will hear and be a part of tonight, reflect that reality and I'm very excited to see these videos again.

First, I'd like to introduce Mr. Joseph Harbeson, who is a parishioner at St. John's Tuckahoe and also the [vice] chancellor of the diocese. And he's going to talk to us about our collaboration as the diocese with the World Resources Institute. Joe.

Vice Chancellor Joe Harbeson:

Thank you, Bishop. I'm very excited to announce that the Diocese of New York, along with seven other Episcopal dioceses across the United States, will be participating in the World Resources Institute, Faith and Sustainability Initiative. This new initiative came to the attention of Presiding Bishop Curry, who has encouraged the eight dioceses to pursue this environmental program working closely with the World Resources Institute. WRI is a highly regarded research organization, as they say, a think tank, founded in 1982. Headquartered in Washington, DC, it has operations worldwide with currently approximately 1,400 staff. WRI is very well-regarded as a nonprofit institution with a high level of accountability and transparency. Indeed, it is rated as exceptional by Charity Navigator and earned a perfect score of 100 for accountability and transparency. WRI's stated mission is to move human society to live in ways that protect Earth's environment and its capacity to provide for the needs and aspirations of current and future generations. Its core values are integrity, innovation, independence, urgency, and respect.

WRI focuses its work on seven global challenges: food, forest, water, energy, cities, climate, and its newest area of focus, oceans. As they explained in a video conference to us last month, there is often quite a bit of interconnectedness between the work on these several challenges. They approach these challenges through what they call four lenses, business, economics, finance, and equity. They consider that their contribution to these issues is that they have positioned themselves between the poles of the environment on one hand and development on the other and in the space between other organizations taking action on issues. For example, other nonprofits such as CARE or the World Wildlife Fund, and the other idea generators like other think tanks such as the Brookings Institution. These goals and methods, as well as WRI's global organizational structure and international reach can be seen in the PowerPoint presentation that they gave us, which we will be posting on the Diocesan website.

The Faith and Sustainability Initiative is a relatively new initiative for WRI that seeks to work with and support faith-based sustainability projects to enable faith communities to build capacity for community level solutions, as well as to encourage and support advocacy. WRI recognizes that a substantial percentage of the world's population has a faith affiliation that faith communities are vital vehicles for supporting what people value and that people of faith view the Earth as a divine creation that requires responsible stewardship.

This insight matches the goals of the Episcopal Church as reflected in the resolutions on environmental issues cast at our conventions, as well as in the ongoing Sustain Island Home Program. However, I think it is fair to say that in the Diocese of New York, we have not done as much as we know we should have to follow up on our resolutions and to implement substantive programs.

So, this opportunity to work with WRI is a godsend. The Faith and Sustainability Initiative will allow the diocese to improve our understanding of what has been done by the diocese and our parishes and what can and should be done going forward. This will involve data collection and research to understand our climate and other environmental impacts, gathering data on how our parishes operate, consume energy, and operate sustainably or not, and critically, to use the information and understanding gathered to develop science-based targets for the church.

This is a key part of the WRI process. Only by developing goals founded on solid science can meaningful progress be started with, for example, the reduction of greenhouse gases, and only by measuring against such science-based targets can we know what we have or have not accomplished. For example, whether we have or have not taken concrete steps towards the reduction of greenhouse gases to support the global goal of keeping global warming to levels beyond which the consequences will be dire or have incorporated other sustainable practices that support the welfare of the human family. As WRI would say it, if you cannot count it, you cannot know if you have actually done anything.

Our next steps in this initiative will be for a dialogue to be started between WRI and selected representatives of the diocese to explore how to proceed with a collaboration, to understand our sustainability priorities and what is being done in the diocese now and begin focusing on science-based targets and strengthening the Sustain Island Home Program already in place. We look forward to reporting back to you as this process progresses, and the goals are generated that we can then all work towards. We will also almost certainly be reaching out for help in this initiative, both at the diocesan and parish level. If, for example, you have an interest in joining this program and assisting with this process, by all means, leave your name and email in the chat during this program or afterwards, so that we will know to get in touch with you later. I would now like to turn the program over to Matt Calkins, the rector of Grace Church, Millbrook, who will present some videos of great interest in Creation Care.

The Rev. Matt Calkins:

Thank you, Joe. That sounds like a very exciting process and it certainly ties in with what Bishop Glasspool was talking about in terms of prior resolutions. I have a couple of videos to introduce now. One is from St. Thomas, Amenia, up here in the beautiful mid-Hudson region, Dutchess County, and then from a church in the Bronx, Church of the Mediator and the wonderful work of the Green Team led by Chelo Hernandez. But first let's see what's happening over at St. Thomas, Amenia.

[Speaker 6:]

I talked to you earlier. Next to Dennis last night, you said 40 beds.

The Rev. AJ Stack:

Good morning. My name is AJ Stack. I'm the priest in charge of St. Thomas, Amenia, which is the home of Food of Life/Comida de Vida Ministry and the Giving Garden where I am this morning. You can see the volunteers and our master gardener, Marcia, hard at work here. We're nearing the end of our growing season here at the... This is the first day of October, but we think we probably have at least a month more of growing, right, Marcia?

Marcia:

Yes.

The Rev. AJ Stack:

All right. So, this is our garden. Everything that we produce here goes into our food pantry and goes to help give our neighbors nutritious meals. So, Marsha, tell me a little bit about why you choose to do this gardening work.

Marcia:

I've been working in gardening my entire life, my entire professional life, and I knew this was here and I wanted to help, especially with... Can I say this? The Trump era made me feel like I wanted to make a contribution and to give back and do something in a meaningful way. It felt like the world is such a terrible place and this made me feel like I'm doing something good. I'm helping.

The Rev. AJ Stack:

So, tell me a little bit about the yearly cycle of gardening here.

Marcia:

Well, we start probably by filling the boxes with compost. Compost is a really important ingredient in making the plants grow well and making them healthy. And as soon as we possibly can, we start with the early vegetables, lettuces, spinach, rutabaga, peas, snap peas, Swiss chard, anything that will tolerate the cold and then once we get to the frost-free date, we put in everything else, which is we do a lot of tomatoes, peppers, leeks, onions, and... What else do we do? Oh, beans, and then as it starts to cool down, we do the reverse as the cool season's crops go in again.

The Rev. AJ Stack:

And how many pounds are you anticipating we will harvest during the 2021 growing season?

Marcia:

Well, at the end of August, we were at 2,450 pounds, vegetables. I think we will get to 3,000, maybe top that.

The Rev. AJ Stack:

Wow, thank you, Marcia for all your work and the work of the volunteers. Hey, volunteers, give us a wave, please

Marcia:

Diana, give him a wave.

The Rev. AJ Stack:

Give him a wave. Nancy, Edna wave.

Nancy:

Hello.

The Rev. Matt Calkins:

Yeah, those are wonderful videos from the folks volunteering in the garden at St. Thomas with AJ talking about it. But he had mentioned that the garden now going for a good four or five years is expanding into an education garden. It grew out of a food pantry that became the focused ministry of this small church on the border with Sharon, Connecticut. And this food ministry has blossomed into a major source of food for a whole bunch of people in the 11 years it's been, and they emphasize healing and nutritious food with fresh vegetables and fruit, as well as farm supplied food from others as well as their own garden. So, it was really a marvelous work, this Food for Life/Comida de Vida food pantry, as well as the Giving Garden. And it's, uh, as you see going gangbusters and only one of a number of gardens and pantries in our diocese, of course, and as the Creation Care committee, we'd love to encourage others to plant and to connect so that we all might learn from each other and marshal our knowledge and resources together.

That's my dog. And as we come to the end of these beautiful pictures of the produce of the Giving Garden, we will transition over to another garden, another very impressive garden who's over at Church of the Mediator in the Bronx, whose team leader is Consuelo or Chelo Hernandez.

(Music)

The Rev. Matt Calkins:

Well, that was amazing and the work of Chelo Hernandez and the Green Team is just inspiring. There's a lot of other practical things you can do too, just in terms of converting energy use. And Gawain de Leeuw, formerly of St. Bart's White Plains and now in Inwood is going to tell us more about how that might be done.

The Rev. Gawain de Leeuw:

Hi, I'm Gawain de Leeuw, the priest in charge of Holy Trinity Inwood and the former rector of St. Bartholomew's Church in White Plains. In 2019, our Bishop asked congregations to conduct energy audits and develop plans to reduce carbon emissions by 30% in 10 years and report on our progress annually. Buildings are responsible for nearly 30% of all carbon emissions. So, it will be crucial for our churches to invest in new technology that reduces our carbon footprint. As it happened, St. Bartholomew's and Holy Trinity each took the initiative independently to invest in heat pumps, a technology used around the world as an alternative to fossil fuel, one that heats during the winter and cools during the summer. And here the congregation renovated its entire building to start off with a low carbon footprint, after years of high oil bills.

With the help of other institutions, these investments provided the inspiration and leverage for NYSERDA to invest \$4 million for up to 80 religious institutions and not-for-profits to help them discern what buildings would offer the greatest reduction in fossil fuel consumption. We could see what buildings would invest in new technology without breaking the bank. And in some cases, saving money. And we are pleased to see already a number of congregations have taken advantage of this initiative and Episcopalians more so than any other denomination are involved in this effort.

We hope that more congregations will inquire about this technology and the funding available, and the NYSERDA that we provided is a way for us to understand what our resources are and how we can align our efforts together so that more congregations can get heating during the winter, cooling during the summer and do our part to save the planet. Thank you.

The Rev. Matt Calkins:

Thank you, Gawain. It's impressive work and work that I'm sure lots of congregations would like to undertake and as part of what Bishop Glasspool was talking about a set of resolutions at the 2019 convention, we also had one that was moved from the floor by Liz Maxwell coming out of Bishop Dietsche's address called Reduction of Our Carbon Footprint that Gawain just referred to. And if you would put up now the slide on our energy use and carbon reduction survey, I'll just quickly show what we're going to be sending you right about the time of the convention. And this survey is going to each congregation in keeping with our resolution. And we're asking each congregation to fill out this survey so that we might begin a baseline calculation, both in keeping with the resolution and to help our work with WRI that Joe was talking about earlier.

So, the survey, I'm not going to go through it line by line, but suffice it to say, it's going to ask some basic information about who you are, and then each of your buildings, sanctuary, parish, hall, rectory. We're going to ask about dates of construction, types of building, current heating systems and cooling. What kind of windows and installation you have so that we might compile a baseline of where we're at right now, as we move toward our goal of reducing by 30% over the next 10 years, hopefully by 50%. So, when you get this survey, please fill it out as soon as possible. We're hoping by the end of the year to collect them and begin collating. We also ask toward the bottom, if there are other forms of ministry that you would for us to know about in keeping with the resolutions, for instance land use, regenerative agriculture, if there're gardens, if there's food pantries and so on.

And also, as you see, we want to ask you, what are you going to do? What are your projected energy savings? Do you have plans and can you create them? So, if you fill out this survey, it'll at least get you started on planning. It will tell us what you're doing already. And finally, at the bottom we ask if you would like to become involved in the work of our committee. We would love to widen our circle to include people whose specific interest and backgrounds, as well as those who just want to help, help the Earth. So, I want to thank you for filling this out. We're going to be sending that

out soon, and there'll be information about how you can help. And with that, I believe I'm going to be passing it on now to Liz Maxwell, to talk about how you can work a little more on advocacy. Liz?

The Rev. Liz Maxwell:

Thank you, Matt. I don't know about you, but I think that for many of us, when we look at the crisis of climate and the Earth around us, we waffle in terms of what we believe we can do. And for me, finding action that I can take is one of the things that most gives me hope. I think we're often tempted to despair by the enormity of the crisis. So, I want to talk a little bit about some of the actions beyond our local work, our local ministries, which are vitally important. Every one of which helps to help the Earth. I think we can teach and preach about the Earth's sacredness. Our tradition has a bad record in some places in terms of our theology that has preached domination and dominion and exploitation. So, we really need to talk in our Bible studies and our pulpits about cooperation and interdependence.

We need to talk also and think about how Creation Care can be part of every aspect of our lives in the church and how Earth care really undergirds all the justice issues that we're working on and all the life issues that we're working on. We may be aware of issues at a local level, at a regional level, which may be a watershed level. Sometimes we want to work on the issues affecting our watershed, state, federal, and worldwide issues because Creation Care is so interconnected. We need to build conversation with each other and also, we need to build sustainable and just communities in which to do the work of advocacy.

Parishes are often communities like this, but not always. Sometimes we build communities across parishes, sometimes interfaith communities, sometimes communities with people of goodwill of no particular faith, just because we are part of the human community and the creation community. Very currently, as I'm sure you're all aware on the federal level, an infrastructure bill is being hotly debated in Congress, looking to make an energy transition to clean energy, but also focusing on biodiversity, the preservation of species and habitat, land, and water and food sources.

We need to focus on finance and what we're paying for in terms of energy, what gets subsidies, what is easy to do because it's cheaper, green jobs and also such things as climate reparations, because those with means have often been the ones who've profited the most from dirty energy and extractive work. And those who have had the least are often the ones who suffer the most. So, these bills are working for a 50% reduction of fossil fuels in the U.S. by 2030. I really think our diocese should be looking at a 50% reduction as well. I'm aware that there are young people, often the leaders in climate activism who are on hunger strike in Washington and around the country, pushing for the strongest tenants of a Green New Deal. I think we can also take direct action. We can educate ourselves. We certainly should contact our legislators.

We should call out the lies put forward by fossil fuel companies to say, "Oh yes, you can do this, and it'll be okay." And there's more and more and more. I think you know. The timing of this bill is partly because of Glasgow, the COP26 UN meeting that's happening at the beginning of November when it's very, very important for the United States to go, able to make meaningful commitments to carbon reduction with integrity and to lead the world community in that, and also join with others, particularly with indigenous leadership, because very, very often Creation Care land use, biodiversity is particularly tied to respect for indigenous culture, indigenous leadership and indigenous Creation Care practices.

We need an ongoing change of our culture. We need big changes and we also need the kind of personal and local spiritual practices that sustain us over the long haul. That includes doing with less, learning not to assume that growth is always better and learning how to care for each other and care for the Earth and all her creatures. I think part of what we need to do is renew our love for the earth. That's part of why I love these videos of the gardens in our diocese. And I love that one of them is quite rural and one of them is in the middle of the Bronx. I love the fact that we can find particular connections with the earth, no matter where we are. Whether it's a particular tree, an animal, a flower, our water, we need to take time to be in the natural world and let that nourish us as well as our conversations with one another and our prayer. And for sure, our advocacy includes our prayer.

I want to close with a quote from Robin Wall Kimmerer who is, as you probably know, a scientist and teacher and an enrolled member of the Pottawatomie Nation. She says, "Action on behalf of life transforms because the relationship between self and the world is reciprocal. It is not a question of first getting enlightened or saved, and then acting. As we work to heal the Earth, the Earth heals us." Let us know how you want to help. Thank you so much.

[Speaker 12:]

Thank you so much, Reverend Maxwell into the Creation Care committee for such a rich presentation. People have put in emails and chat and have shared how they would like to be involved. So, we will be sure to have the committee review the chat. And in the meantime, we'll move on and present to you the Reverend Matt Heyd.

The Rev. Matt Heyd:

We want to talk to you tonight about how we're going to gather on November 13th for the day of convention. All of us in our communities are trying to figure out a way to gather and gather safely. We've been talking about this over the last several weeks. We want to describe what that day together, that Saturday together, will be like. So, on Saturday, November 13th, we're going to have a hybrid convention. That day will be the bishops' addresses, our Eucharist coordinated by Jeannine Otis, recognitions and any resolutions coming from the Bishop [Dietsche's] address. We'll also include small groups where we get to connect with each other and pray for each other at this moment.

So, here's how that'll work. We're going to meet at the cathedral in person. The cathedral will also be livestreamed, and folks will be able to join online remotely. So, people can be where they feel most safe. In registration now, we're going to indicate whether we'll be in person on the 13th or whether it will be online. We think there's also the possibility of having small regional gatherings in different parts of the diocese. How'd we get here?

Well, we listened. Over the last two months we've been listening to the elected leaders of the diocese, the standing committee, the trustees, diocesan council, about where they [inaudible 00:46:36] their communities and what they hope from Diocesan Convention. The group described both concerns about safety that all of us are having in our common life, wherever we are, but also a deep desire for connection.

We didn't gather last year in-person for Convention. We gathered online. This is a chance for us to figure out a way to gather in person if we can. We also talked to parish leaders across the diocese about their current safety precautions and the bishops decided on a hybrid convention. We think this hybrid convention respects the values the bishops put forward for our gatherings together, this hall, both for the roll-out meetings and for convention on November 13th. Keep safe, stay connected and to be accessible to the whole diocese. So, we're excited about being together, both in person, online and about our small groups. We'll talk more about these small groups in the weeks to come, in a way in which we can listen to each other, share our prayer for each other and hear what we've been through over these last 18 months of the pandemic. I want to spotlight and say, thank you to our convention leadership.

First, our bishop liaison, Bishop Glasspool, who has done so much to bring this together, to help us reimagine how we gather together at this moment. Nothing happens without senior assistant secretary, Sara Saavedra, who for so long has helped us gather in convention. And then through the pandemic, an executive committee, including Chancellor Alice Yurke, Geoff Smith, Nick Richardson, and Peter Ennis

Also wanted to spotlight the leadership of the different paces of convention. Jeannine Otis for liturgy. Production with [Brian Fall 00:48:26]. Resolutions, Anne Sawyer. Credentials, Mary Barbara. Elections, Chris Colón, and Canons, Colleen McMahon.

We have a convention planning committee and Elias will be working on the logistics and the gathering for our hybrid convention on November 13th. And I wanted to celebrate their work and who they are. Mary Barber who's priest in charge at St. Paul's, Poughkeepsie, and St. George's Newburgh; Deacon Dorothy Caulfield, deacon for Grace Church, the new Grace Church in Ossining. Chris Colón is the deacon at El Buen Pastor at Good Shepherd in Newburgh; Lisha Epperson pastoral fellow at St. Peter's Church in Chelsea here in Manhattan; Earl Francis, Diocesan Council and St. Andrew's, Manhattan; Douglas Hatcher, former warden at St. James the Less in Scarsdale; Claire Newquist, active in ministries, and the Guild of St. Margaret Soup Kitchen at Grace Church in Middletown.

And there's one more slide, but the slides are sticking. So, here we go. Julia Macy Offinger, associate rector, Grace Church, Manhattan; Deacon Geraldine Swanson, Deacon to the Richmond Episcopal ministry of Staten Island; Patrick Trettenero, former warden at Church of the Regeneration, Pine Plains; and Yannis Urbaz, the warden at Holyrood/Iglesia Santa Cruz in Manhattan. The convention planning committee, the convention leadership reflects the whole diocese, every region of the diocese, every order of ministry. And we're excited to be able to gather again this

year online and in-person. Welcome your questions. We're going to practice voting in the weeks to come. Chris Colón will lead us through that. Bishop?

The Rev. Matt Calkins:

Thank you.

Bishop Mary Glasspool:

Thank you, Matt. And thanks to all of you who have been participating. It's very exciting to see people sign up, put things in the chat box. And boy, this whole program to me has been inspiring. We always take time out to have a prayer time of two or three minutes with some background music during which we can pray together, even across this new form of technology, even in a Zoom meeting. So, for the next two or three minutes, as the Spirit moves, I invite you to put your prayers in the chat box, the chat room. They can be prayers of petition or intercession, thanksgivings. As we would say in an in-person incarnate worship service, either silently or aloud, put them in the chat room or offer names and petitions silently in your hearts to almighty God. Let us pray.

(Singing)

[Anne:]

Let us pray for our common prayer that Christ taught us. Eternal Spirit, Earth maker, Pain bearer, Life-giver Source of all that is, and that shall be Father and Mother of us all loving God and whom is heaven. The hallowing of your name echoes through the universe. The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world. Your heavenly will be done by all created beings. Your beloved community of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on Earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurt we absorbed from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and test strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen.

Creator God, look upon the creatures gathered here together and send us where you would have us go so that we may embody the ministry of justice for your creation through our beings and acts. Walk with us so that we may face the winds of change and walk the good road. Protect and renew our common home. Enlighten us. Sustain us. May God, our creator be with us this day and always. Amen.

Bishop Mary Glasspool:

Thank you, Anne. And thank you all. I hope following the blessing you'll stay for a gorgeous rendition of Deep River. The blessing of the God who creates us, redeems us, and sustains us be upon us and remain with us this night and forevermore. Amen.