

Highlights of diocesan news in printable format — October 26, 2022

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## From the Bishop

### Two ways we can think about beginning anew

*This is a transcript from a video message.*

This is Bishop Hughes in the Diocese of Newark. And I want to talk with you about beginning anew. I talked about that in our last blog post thinking in terms of the beginning of the program year and that sense of fresh start that we all feel so often in September. But there are two other reasons I want us to think about that.

One is we have begun a process of strategic visioning and planning in our diocese. It is a time for us as a whole diocese to ask the question, what is God calling us to do now? Who is God calling us to be? What will we do with our time and our energy and our resources in order to serve God at this time in our lives? So that question is one that the entire diocese will be a part of asking and answering. Members of the visioning and planning team will visit every single parish, and all clergy, all lay professionals, all lay members and lay leaders, all who want to participate, will have the opportunity to sit and think about those questions and answer them together. And then all that information will be collected together, and we'll start considering what our next steps are. That's one reason I think it's important for us to all be thinking about beginning anew as we have that larger question to answer.

There's another reason that I think is very important for us to be asking, that thinking of

beginning anew, is that I think we need to ask that question, as individuals. What is it that God is calling us to do and be as people of faith at this particular time, in our parishes, in our communities, in the world, in our country? Who are we called to be and what is God calling us to do? My hope is this, that every Episcopalian will spend time discerning what they are called to do. That God has created you for something specific in this world, and that you have discovered that, or are in the process of discovering it, and that you are doing that thing to the best of your ability. That is your number one calling, that thing that God has created you to do. That's how you bring God into the world.

I also hope that every Episcopalian has developed an ability to pray for others, and a deep ability to pray for others, not just to pray for ourselves and the people in our family and the things that we need or that our parish needs, but to pray for the problems of the world. I think that serious Christians also lay their hands on people who are sick. And when I say serious Christians, I mean, the committed Christians and people who have really spent time working on their sense of who God is calling them to be and working on their spiritual life. That when we pray, we expect that God is going to do something, and that we lay our hands on people, knowing that God is going to do something in response to our prayers.

I also expect that people who are committed Christians, people who are serious Christians, people who have become mature in their spiritual life and in their faith, live the kind of life that the things that they do and say, reflect on who they are

as faithful people. That they so live, following Jesus, that they are loving God's people, wherever they find them. They bring God's love and mercy and compassion wherever they go. People actually know they are Christians, not so much from what they say, but for the way that they live.

I keep using these words, serious Christian, mature Christian, spiritual maturity, those kinds of words. I think we begin anew and doing that and developing as who we are, and growing into our faith, every single day. Most of us need help. And thankfully, many of you are connected to clergy. And you're also connected to people who have deep, deep faith. I call them the elders of the church, the people who have long experience in living a faithful life.

So I want to encourage you, every single day, to begin anew, to start the day asking that question, God, who is it that you would have me be? What would you have me do this day? Please show me the steps that I need to take and put the teachers in my path that can help me be the person that is needed at this particular time in my life. That all of us in some way, want to be that person that God can count on. Begin anew.

## Diocesan Announcements

### October update from the Strategic Visioning Team

The Strategic Visioning Team has spent the last three weeks reaching out to congregations across the diocese to schedule Listening Sessions, as the first phase of the visioning process. A few congregations have already held their sessions, and the Visioning Team met on October 24, 2022 to review how well things are going and make adjustments as needed.

For those folks in the diocese who are unable to attend the listening session at their own congregations, we are offering two virtual sessions on Zoom in December:

- Thursday, December 1, 2022, 7-8:30 PM
- Monday, December 12, 2022, 7-8:30 PM

The Visioning Team will share details about how to register for those sessions next month.

Meanwhile, our consultant, Katie Ong, will meet with diocesan staff for their own listening session, as well as talk to a few diocesan leaders, over the next few weeks.

The Visioning Team is also working on developing new mission and vision statements, taking into account the work done by a task force appointed by Bishop Hughes in 2021 to articulate the Diocese's mission. The team will propose language to the diocesan leadership in early 2023 for formal approval.

Finally, as a reminder, the members of the Strategic Visioning Team are:

- Co-leader: The Rev. Mark Collins, All Saints, Glen Rock
- Co-leader: Janelle Grant, St. Paul's Paterson
- The Rev. Raul Ausa, Trinity Allendale
- The Rev. Carrie Cabush, Calvary Summit
- Nelson Diaz, Church of the Epiphany and Christ Church Orange
- The Rev. Miguel Hernandez, Holy Trinity West Orange
- The Rev. Vicki McGrath, All Saints' Millington
- Jim Mollo, St. Paul's Chatham
- Jewels Quelly, St. James Hackettstown
- Michele Simon, St. Paul's Church in Englewood
- Belinda Stokes, St. Paul's and Incarnation Jersey City
- The Rev. Lorna Woodham, Christ Church Budd Lake

### Call to Convention 2023

The 149th Annual Diocesan Convention will be held **Friday and Saturday, February 3 and 4, 2023** at the Hilton Meadowlands in East Rutherford.