



# The Episcopal Diocese of New York

## Transcript of the October 21, 2020 Diocesan Convention Roll Out Meeting

- Good evening. I'm Mary Glasspool, Bishop Assistant in the Episcopal Diocese of New York. And on behalf of Andy Dietsche, our Bishop Diocesan and Allen Shin, our Bishop Suffragan and all the good people of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, I welcome you to this, our seventh rollout meeting that is part and parcel of the 244th convention of the Diocese of New York. These rollout meetings are recorded and posted online. And the previous six, at this point in time, are available on our diocesan website for your viewing pleasure or review. We have operated with the core values of transparency, trust, accessibility, and agency. And I think you will find those values reflected, I hope you will, in everything that we do. There's a small convention executive team that I try to thank at the beginning of each of these meetings, Matt Heyd, Secretary of Convention, Sarah Saavedra, Assistant Secretary, Alice Yurke, Chancellor of the Diocese of New York, Geoff Smith, Director of Technology, and Nick Richardson, Director of Communications. Thanks. They've been working since early in the spring, just about when the pandemic started and things began to shut down. And my thanks knows no bounds to those people and to others who have helped us produce these rollout meetings in preparation for our final day of convention on November 7. We begin these meetings with an opening song and an opening prayer. ♪  
The Lord is my Shepherd ♪ ♪ I have all I need ♪ ♪ She makes me lie down in green meadows ♪ ♪ Beside the still waters she will lead ♪ ♪ She restores my soul ♪ ♪ She rights my wrongs ♪ ♪ She leads me in a path of good things ♪ ♪ And fills my heart with songs ♪ ♪ Even though I walk ♪ ♪ Through a dark and dreary land ♪ ♪ There is nothing that can shake me ♪ ♪ She has said she won't forsake me ♪ ♪ I'm in her hand ♪ ♪ She sets a table before me ♪ ♪ In the presence of my foes ♪ ♪ She anoints my head with oil ♪ ♪ And my cup overflows ♪ ♪ Surely, surely goodness ♪ ♪ And kindness will follow me ♪ ♪ All the days of my life ♪ ♪ And I will live in his house ♪ ♪ Forever, forever and ever ♪ ♪ Glory be to our Father, ♪ ♪ And daughter, and to the Holy of Holies ♪ ♪ As it was in the beginning ♪ ♪ Is now and ever shall be ♪ ♪ World without end ♪ ♪ Amen ♪

- Spirit of life, I have many names in our hearts and minds, as we come together to pray for our world.

- We come grateful for our blessings and hopeful for the future.

- Let us know that we come from various traditions to lift our spirit in unity.
  
- Knowing that we are part of an interconnected web of life, let us acknowledge and embrace our witness.
  
- We pray that we may be loving and able stewards of this world.
  
- We pray that we acknowledge our differences as we seek out common ground. Each of us working towards the good of all.
  
- We recognize that there is hurt and sorrow, deeds that confound us and actions for which we can find no justification.
  
- We pray that we have the strength to recognize the occasional tiredness in our bones and in our hearts.
  
- We call upon the strength of a higher power that we might be the best person that we are called to be. Let us be the change we seek. Amen.
  
- Amen.
  
- It is now my great privilege to invite my brother bishop, Bishop Allen Shin, to introduce the theme or at least a part of the theme tonight, Christian Formation. Allen.
  
- Hi. I'm Allen Shin, Bishop Suffragan of the Diocese of New York. And it is my pleasure to introduce one of the themes for today, Christian Formation. Well, let me first thank the planning team and Bishop Glasspool for organizing these convention rollout sessions, which have been very informative and quite good, if I say so myself. If there's one small handicap in this diocese, that, in my opinion, is the lack of a diocesan staff person for Christian formation. But the work of Christian formation has never stopped in this diocese. The Christian Formation Commission has been active, especially under the leadership of its chair, the Reverend Michael Bird, Rector of Christ Church, Bronxville. The summer youth conference did take place this year on Zoom. And I had the privilege of giving an opening talk on the baptismal covenant, which was their theme this year. And the formation ministry to children got its boost from a program developed at a parish in our own diocese, the Story Makers, which you will hear more about.

The youth ministry was also energized by the leadership of Andrea Dedmon, who is the youth, children and youth ministry person at St. Michael's Church here in Manhattan. Not all ministry has seen some wonderful growth and maturity in recent years, while that ministry has seen some setback due to the pandemic, a group of young adult, faithful young adult leaders have been meeting regularly, keeping the flame alive, both in the diocese and also in the provincial level. One of our ministry to young adults is New York Service and Justice Collaborative, which is continuing with new interns, even under the challenging situation of the pandemic. Michael Bird and Andrea Dedmon and I will be available for any questions after the video presentation of the Christian Formation Commission, which you will see right now.

- Hey guys, I'm Mel from Story Makers.

- And I'm Charlz.

- And we wanted to share with you guys some things that we did this last year to make a pivot since churches have been at home, but we've made it easy for families to stay connected and for churches to equip grownups so they can continue spiritual formation, right from their own living rooms. Charlz, what did you do for Story Makers?

- So I sent out Sunday school kits with StoryMakers' The Stars to all of my Sunday school kids. And I created some school videos for them to watch, to follow along with their very young zine. And it was super easy and they could just dive right in at least.

- So parents basically just pushed play, gave them a zine and the rest was up to the kids. It's just that easy.

- So easy, but Mel, is advent coming up?

- It's just right around the corner, November 29. I'm sure you all know. And so we've got our second magazine ready, "Advent 2020," and we follow the accounts of Luke. We've got some spectacular art, lots of fun activities, and it is so easy. And guess what? Charlz is going to be making some more videos so that parents can just press play. It's that easy. So what do they gotta do Charlz?

- All you gotta do if you want to get plugged in, is head on over to [storymakersnyc.com](http://storymakersnyc.com) and jump into 2021 with ease.

- Oh, I almost forgot to mention, since we're partners of the Diocese of New York, we will match churches. So let's say your church has said, I could buy five magazines. We'll match you. I could buy 10 magazines. We'll match you. So don't forget to take advantage of our partnership with the Diocese of New York. Thanks, guys.

- Peace.

- Hi, my name is Bailey. I'm the Social Media Coordinator for Summer Youth Conference. I've also been on staff there for 14 years. And this year we went virtual, which was an interesting challenge for all of us. Our main goal in going virtual is just to assure the kids that our program was going to last through all of this, and that we were going to keep showing up. And also be a source of comfort for them and for us, 'cause we knew we were having a really hard time with all of it and did not want to miss conference. So we figured they were probably having a harder time. With that in mind, we went through our program and pared it down to what we felt were the most essential parts and what were the most fun and comforting parts, and then figured out how to make them work on a virtual platform. We created a schedule. We had blocks of time laid out. We spread it across different things. We had Zoom meetings, but we also tried to do some things where we just posted them on our social media pages. We made it really clear to everybody, the kids and the staff, that they didn't have to show up to everything. They didn't have to show up to anything they didn't want to. This was entirely optional, but they could pop in and out. They can come to as much or as little as they wanted and that we were going to be there either way. We got to try things that we had never been able to do in person. We got to do a Netflix watch party. We let the kids pick the movie. And then we had a running chat room on the side, which was a lot of fun. We did a trivia night. We were able to do an interest group where a staff member who goes to school to learn American sign language, taught us all how to do the Lord's Prayer in ASL, which was a lot of fun. And that video went up on our social media and actually had some of the largest engagement any of our videos we've ever had. We were also able to open up SYC to a larger platform. By posting our videos and making them public, we were able to get more engagement from people who maybe used to be a part of our program and aged out of it. Maybe our parents of the kids who come now, maybe they were interested in coming to SYC but didn't really know what it was about and were able to dip their toe in the water. And that was kind of cool too, to share more of what we do. Obviously it was not the same as being there in person, and we're hoping that we can all be back there in person next year, but it went really well. It was really comforting. I know for us, but from everything the kids have said, they really did get a lot out of it. Hopefully this will be it, but we do have plans in case we have to do it again next year. And we've even started doing monthly hangs with the kids. And then we always end with the group on Zoom. And it's been really helpful for everyone. Thank you.

- Hi guys, this is New York, my name is Andrea Dedmon. I'm the Director of Children's and Youth Ministries at St. Michael's in Manhattan. I got involved with youth ministry beyond the parish level last year when I was trying to gather together a delegation of youth from our diocese to go to the Episcopal

Youth event 2020. And we gathered a delegation. There were 18 youth from across our diocese who were going to come. Of course, everything was canceled with COVID, but we had this group of enthusiastic youth, and I and the other chaperones and youth leaders invited them to gather on Zoom, to check in and to talk about what they wanted to do and to be of service. And what they ended up deciding was to do a service project. And they wanted to invite all the youth in 6th through 12th grade in our diocese to participate. So they did. And the youth gathered on Zoom as well as many youth leaders, and the youth decided to send cards to nursing homes and group homes, from throughout our diocese. We had a nursing home a week. People sent as many cards as they could to each nursing home each week. And in the midst of this, George Floyd was killed. And our nation rose up in protest of racial injustice. The leaders of the youth realized we wanted to talk with our youth about this, but we weren't really equipped. So we'd heard of this curriculum, Dismantling Racism, that had come out of the Diocese of Atlanta. And we found out that to use this curriculum, you needed to be trained in the curriculum. The diocese paid for us to bring the authors of Dismantling Racism to lead us in a training. And so there were 17 adults in ministry with youth who participated in the Dismantling Racism training at the end of August. And we're still working on how we're going to implement that, but we're looking forward to it.

- The New York Service and Justice Collaborative is the Episcopal Service Corps ministry in the Diocese of New York. In partnership with our host church, Trinity, Morrisania, this unique experience forms spiritually grounded leaders through service and action for social justice. This year's a group of fellows, which you're about to meet, are living with intention this year in direct service of others. Their stories will unfold as they discern God's call in their lives and work to build a beloved community with their neighbors, parishioners and each other.

- A diverse group of young adults arrive in the big city after an extensive recruitment process. Following their initial retreat, they settle into their intentional community, sharing meals, spiritual formation, and worshiping together. Throughout the year, fellows engage in human rights advocacy, education accessibility, tackling food insecurity and workforce development for formerly incarcerated individuals.

- Let's hear from our fellows. One thing I really enjoy about our program is that every week we get to explore our spirituality. So sometimes that means the friars come and we about things like racial justice, food injustice, and really try to understand what it means to be Christian in this American culture.

- Part of our community building with Trinity, Morrisania is through service and through worship. Two Saturdays a month, we accompany the parishioners, as we operate a thrift store out of the front of the church or the local community. We also have the opportunity to worship with Trinity once a month. And we participate in the service as lay readers.

- The Trinity, Morrisania congregation genuinely cares so much about all six of us. We see them multiple times a week at safe social dinners that they host for us here, or they come and check up on us or work

on the church. And we even have a buddy system where each fellow is paired with a church member to kind of get a mentorship relationship. And it's truly so special.

- I get the opportunity to serve thousands of people per week and also learn organizational skills which I can carry on in any career.

- Working at CEO has given me the opportunity to work with truly dedicated people. They work to reduce the stigma of people in our communities that have been incarcerated. And they truly embody the belief that every human being is deserving of respect and dignity.

- Intentional community for Trinity House means cooking dinners together, going to church services together, hanging out, spiritual formation every Wednesday afternoon and sharing in each other's good moments and difficult moments, and just being there to support each other in our growth and our journey throughout the year.

- Part of the mission and ministry of the Spiritual Formation Commission is to develop and inspire and nourish people in their 20s and 30s, folks that are often classified as young adults, who are members of communities and congregations throughout the Episcopal Diocese of New York. And so it's a real, it's a privilege to be able to be someone who works among with and for, alongside people who are called with the same baptismal covenant of people younger than them, people older than them. That we do seek to offer a place for folks to gather for spiritual practice, social connection, and ways to be of service. We empower people for leadership that they are already called to. We have events and gatherings, giving people in Episcopal communities and folks that can be invited from all around to better serve the needs of those that Christ calls us to serve, which is every human person. It's an extra special kind of lens that we can put on serving the community of people in their 20s and 30s. It's just a lot of fun to focus on a group, perhaps with a demographic chronological age in common, yet also being aware that all of us are called to the same mission, to the same baptismal covenant, to the same discipleship. And so we want to reach out specifically not only to serve, but to receive gifts from people who are in their 20s and 30s, who are part of this diocese and who are always welcome to join. We want to equip and want to commune with. We have so much to give and receive to and with each other.

- What a wonderful video highlighting the expansive work of the Christian Formation Commission. Thank you, Bishop Shin and Reverend Michael Bird, and Andrea Dedmon. We invite your questions in the chat for representatives of the commission, and as people enter their questions into the chat, one question to start with might just be, how do you see the future of Christian formation for all ages in the Diocese of New York?

- That's a nice easy layout question, Lucy, thanks for keeping it so narrow. The reality is as we've all worked our way through the pandemic, we understand a deep truth, and that is that we're stronger together. And for us, as we bring our children together and our young people together and all of us together, we know that we're simply the better for it. We know we have so much to learn from one another. So realistically, if we were pointing to a theme for us this year and beyond, it's "stronger together." And particularly when we look at the Diocese of New York, one of the great challenges we have is that we're Ulster, Sullivan, Putnam, Orange, Dutchess, Rockland, Westchester counties, plus Manhattan, the Bronx and Staten Island and getting us together is the thing we will need to do once we are able to do it. And I think we need to be spending. And I think we are already laying the groundwork for ways to come together in meaningful activity and service to others.

- And you've shown already how incredibly adept you've been at being able to gather, even during a pandemic. One question that's come in, is this the last year for the New York Social Justice program?

- Well, that's been a challenging, with the COVID pandemic, and this is something that we discussed and we kept it going this year, and this is something we'll have to continue to discern and continue to watch, because it is a huge responsibility on many levels, especially in the midst of this pandemic. So we have to, I know that many Episcopal Service Corps programs, many dioceses have closed this program as soon as the pandemic happened. We decided to keep it going this year and we'll have to see, and I hope that we can continue, but we'll see.

- Thank you, sort of two questions together. One is what, how has the Commission supported or what have children, how children have been able to gather together during the pandemic? And also we've been asked, what are some ways to compete with soccer for the time of kids and the families? So in a pandemic, I'm not sure if you know how that works. Maybe you can speak to that.

- Andrea, do you want to take the first part of that?

- Well, I heard, I see the thing down there about soccer, which comes from the warden at my parish, John Avery. He used to teach Sunday school and well knows that that is a challenge. I mean, I think, one of the blessings of the pandemic is we're all reassessing our priorities and our schedules have changed in ways that we couldn't have predicted. So, I mean, I actually, among the youth at St. Michael's, like we had better attendance than we've ever had when we first started off meeting on Zoom, because nobody had any other conflicts and that's how we were able to get the service project for the diocese going is 'cause people were at home and they wanted to be of service. So I would say more will be revealed. And I don't have a great answer for that in the future. But...

- Yeah. I think the, it's not the best motto in the world, but it's the motto we're sort of living with right now out here, is that a crisis is a terrible thing to waste. And essentially the pandemic has been an accelerant. It's shown us the places that were struggling. It showed us the places that are broken or were in the process of breaking. And it's allowed us the opportunity and space and time to really look at them and figure out how we're going to come back. We found that we have been able to through technology, but also through distance, right, in person, but distant ways, been able to bring our teenagers together. We are doing for Sunday school, we've done Sunday school in a box and it's something I highly recommend, which is why we're big supporters of StoryMakers. So our kids have come out, they pick up their box, which is essentially once a season. So we're in the middle of realizing that we're behind the ball for getting Advent ready. and they pick up that box and they get a video from us, tied to a video from StoryMakers every Wednesday, but there's also all the activities that go in between. And then we collect and show their artwork, right? So we've got a whole All Saints Day artwork extravaganza that's coming up, that we'll show at the end of our live stream and we'll try to put into place. And so we're learning to be as nimble as we can be, but we also, it's requiring us to stretch the imagination. I will disclose, Andrea, to your former warden or current warden, I couldn't remember which, sorry -- I was still stuck on soccer -- right, that I have, of my 23 years of ordain ministry, 18 of them were spent coaching varsity sports in the public school system. So I'm not a hater of sports, and the reality is that in kids' eyes, in many parents' eyes, we're not going to win that battle over what's important, right? That's a cultural battle that is not ours to win or lose. What we have to do is respond and make sure that what we're offering is an equal or better, and that we're anchoring them in a deep encounter with their faith and an encounter with the other. And then I think things start to grow. So I think that's really where I sit on it and really sits at the heart of the programs. The other thing I just wanted to take a minute to mention, is the thing you would think wouldn't be working, would be young adult ministry. Most of the young adults that I know from our parish are working at a distance from Vermont or something like that. Like they just left the city, but somehow Megan Sanders has done an amazing job of getting them together. And they've got a great website that helps connect them, which is relatively new. It's [episcopal20s30s.org](http://episcopal20s30s.org). And so that's a good resource to know for all the parishes who have young people working in the city, or even going to college in the city and want to connect through the chaplains. There's probably a way to do that through that website.

- Wonderful. Thank you. One final question. How might someone join the commission if they wanted to?

- So obviously we are... the Christian Formation Commission, I think probably like every single commission of the diocese, is a wide ranging entity. if you have a passion for Christian formation for children or teenagers or young adults, I think probably the easiest thing to do is to let me know, [mbird@ccbny.org](mailto:mbird@ccbny.org) and I promise to connect you to the right people. That is a growing group of people, particularly in our ministry to teenagers, Andrea and Kyle Martindale and Lauren Reed and others have done marvelous work coming up with a program life. I think there's even a Breidenthal on that list name who's done good work.

- And so we want to continue to grow that. So just let me know. We'll get you plugged in. Love to have volunteers.

- Wonderful. Thank you all so much. Thank you to the Commission on Christian Formation. Maybe you can put your email in the chat, Michael, and we'll turn it over to Matt Heyd now for voting.

- Thank you, Lucy. Over this last month, we've been working together to be able to have voting for convention that's both easy and equitable for all of us. And so here's where we stand right now. We're working with the values that Bishop Glasspool has articulated every week: Transparency, trust, accessibility and agency. And here's the way we're going to vote this year for convention. We're going to begin voting for candidates for diocesan offices on Wednesday, November 4. We're going to vote via email link. Everyone who's registered as a clergy or a delegate will get an email at nine o'clock on November 4, that they can then click through and vote for the first ballot of our candidates. Voting will begin at nine o'clock, end at five o'clock. It gives people the whole day to vote and us the whole day to answer any questions you might have. We'll have successive ballots each day, opening the voting in the morning and ending in the afternoon. And then we'll vote live for resolutions, including the budget, on Saturday, November 7th, at the full convention. So we've been trying this over the last month and what we think is the process works, and we're listening carefully to your experience, that 95% of the folks who have tried to vote over the last month, either live or via email, have been able to vote. And we're listening to the 5% to make sure we hear your questions. Now, two things where we need your help. First, if you haven't registered for convention, register, because only folks who are registered voting delegates, clergy, will be able to vote. And then secondly, when we asked for email, either the email you get to vote for candidates, or we're about to ask for you to put in your email for a live vote, you should use the email with which you've registered for convention. A bunch of us have multiple emails, you need to use the email you've used to register for convention. And, as we've been saying over these last weeks, if you're having trouble, let us know at [election@dioceseny.org](mailto:election@dioceseny.org). I'm incredibly grateful to Sarah Saavedra and Geoff Smith, who've worked through all of these questions of how we vote together. So we're going to try two different votes tonight with different levels of security, just to try 'em out. One secure, one open. The first question is: Are you going to vote in the US election in November? Lucy's just going to put that email, the web link, in chat right now. So you'll be able to see it. Make sure I can see it. Now, when Lucy puts this in chat, you're going to click through and you'll see two questions. The first question is going to be, the email you used to register for convention. That's what it'll ask you first. The second question is the password, and the password for everybody is 2020. So the website is going to know who you are because of your email, invite you in because of 2020. And we'll give you a moment to vote for that. So, click through, and for the email address with which you registered for convention, and then put in 2020 as your password. Are you voting in the US election? Yes or no? You can also abstain. You'll have about 15 minutes. I'll give you a moment to get in right now, but you'll have about 15 minutes to vote for this and for the next question. And we'll, before we close tonight, we're going to talk about what people have done, what their results are. The second question is, with open security, and the question is, do you plan to vote in person or by mail? Lucy's going to put a second link in the chat and this time, once you click through you'll be able to vote. If you have trouble with either one, just let us know [election@dioceseny.org](mailto:election@dioceseny.org). And the first one asks two questions before you'll be able to vote.

Second one, once you click through it should be just fine. We're just trying different ways to do this. Oh, good question. The password. Thanks for the question. The password is 2020. If you're having trouble, let us know. This is why we're testing both out. So, email you're registered with, password 2020 for the first and just click through to the second. You have about 15 minutes to vote and we'll come back after the next report. We'll tell you what we saw. Bishop, thank you.

- Thank you, Matt. And just remember that the screens, the PowerPoint screens, those addresses are not live links. you have use the link in the chat room. Thank you all. Just in the interest of time, I'm going to just say this. This gentleman needs no introduction. The Reverend Curt Hart is a long time proponent of ecumenical and interfaith relations and is the Chairperson of our Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission. And his comments will be preceded by a video.

- Hey, Reverend Hart, we will share your video in just one moment, if I can invite the tech team to please share the video for ecumenical and interfaith and Reverend Hart. And I will reach out-

- Tell us the basics about. Tell us the basics. Tell us the basics about the Commission.

- Well, I'm going to begin with a rundown of what the, in the formal sense of what the Commission on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations does. And then look into some of the more colorful things that are probably more interesting, but it's important for anyone listening to this to have an idea of what the Commission does. And I'm reading this, the formal statement. So you understand, the Commission's role is to promote understanding and cooperation among religious bodies and denominations found within the boundaries of the Diocese of New York. It has a long and distinguished history in the promotion of inter-religious understanding and dialogue. The commission maintains active relationship through its membership, both clergy and laypersons, among the following groups: the Roman Catholic Church, the United Methodist Church, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Jewish community, the Muslim community, and the New York State Council of Churches. The Commission is also an active participant in the activities among diocesan ecumenical officers, persons like me throughout, at each diocese as one, and here in Province II, And those in the national Church. The Commission maintains liaison with the leadership of the Diocese of New York, regular written reports to the diocesan council and the presence of the right Reverend Mary Glasspool, we all know, at commission meetings and events and how fortunate we are to have her in our corner to help us. How did you become member of this commission? Well, the membership is really self-selecting and it's no one gets, no, it's not any, you don't get in by secret ballot. It's merely you express an interest and then you come to a meeting and we talk and find out where you might want to serve and what particular group. And each member of the commission in their own way has some sort of, and I use the word intimate, connection, with the meaning of inter-religious work, either from their personal lives or their professional lives. And people have had experienced teaching in interfaith settings, promoting relationships and communications in interfaith settings, and some people also, myself among them, through more personal and familial connections with this is important. And it's important to understand that there's no commitment to join other than,

--and I always put it to people very simply-- an open heart and a willingness to learn. This is not something where you have to pass some kind of test, but the mental set of openness and willingness to learn is absolutely important to make this work. When do we meet, five formal times a year. They were in diocesan house, but starting on Wednesday, the 23rd of September, we will meet visually or meet virtually, and we'll continue with my members of the committee. And there are probably about 10 or 12, including a couple of people whom we have, who are there, who are with us ex-officio and who contribute to our work. What kind of things do we do? Well, we've done educational programs having to do with Biblical studies and the Jewish Christian dialogue. We've had various field trips, one to the Holocaust museum in Washington. And we've also had visitors who've come to us from various religious groups, including those who've made films about the Muslim community in city of New York and their struggles in the face of being threatened with deportation and so forth. So there's a lot of that. It's a work that has to do with certainly, I think, social conscience to be sure, but also has to do with the developing of a sense of community and fellowship with our fellow religionists of whatever group. Last year, we've just begun to be able to reconnect and restructure with our friends in the Greek Orthodox community. So that gives you an idea. This commission has gone on for years. I probably was a member for 8 or 10 years, and then I was the Chair for Jewish Christian relations. And then in 2017, I was promoted yet again to this position as chair, and it's been profoundly enriching. And, I think, I certainly found people who share my interests and my temperament. And just to say, everyone who was chair of this group has their own particular skills and gifts. And I believe that for myself, but I also think other people who've served have other interests and gifts, and they need to be nurtured and lifted up and given a chance to bloom and go forward. I think it's important to be able to think about this commission as really, not bridge work, but the connective link between the Diocese of New York and other major religious groups. We certainly at times have dealt with some very sensitive issues, but I think it requires, I think a kind of intellectual acuity. And, I think, I would say that diplomacy in the best sense, because if you understand what people in that realm of service do is they promote relationships and understandings. We don't make decisions for the Diocese of New York. Those decisions are made by the bishops and those that they have--their counsel. We may be asked to advise at some point, but we're not a decision making body, and I've never had that problem with any member of this commission who's decided that they need to go off and make statements on behalf of the Diocese of New York. That doesn't happen. And certainly wouldn't happen under my watch. So we've needed to be careful in that regard as well.

- So in your time on the commission, what difference have you seen the commission make in the life of the diocese and the life of the wider faith communities? Since, I think, it is much more active in terms of engaging situations in the world. I think in earlier years we were more involved, instead of matters of, I would call them ecclesiology of the relationship between, and the nuts and bolts say the movement and episcopal dialogue, whereas in recent years, we've been much more interested in reaching out to our colleagues and friends in other religious communities, and to act in a supportive manner when there's been some kind of, say, conflicts regarding antisemitism. So I think that it's a much more, it's a much more outward thrust among the interest which hasn't been dictated, but it sort of emerges naturally and organically from the people who were there. I, when I was a hospital department head with for years, I always thought the best thing to do when you hired people was to get really able people and

then not mess with them too much. That if you mess with people who are smart and are idealistic, and have got-- you give them opportunities, you give them direction, and by and large, they're going to produce something important. And what's more, there's going to be, there's not going to be a lot of, there's virtually no sort of bureaucratic infighting in any of this.

- Kurt, this is great. Thank you very much.

- Reverend Hart, thank you so much for that in depth look into the work of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission. We are running short on time. So I invite people to enter questions into the chat box, and we will be sure that Reverend Hart receives them and can respond as able. I do just want to mention, obviously there are many reasons for ecumenical and interfaith collaboration at this time, but we are also aware of the most recent events and conflict between Azerbaijan and the republics of Artsakh and Armenia. And I know that Bishop Dietsche this evening will be at the Cathedral of St. Vartan with the patriarch there for a service of peace and justice for the republics of Armenia and Artsakh. And so one example of the ways in which interfaith and ecumenical work is so important and immediate right now.

- I would like to make just one remark to be very brief. And that is, I got an email today from one of our members, Bob Flanagan, who reports something very important, is that he says, I'm going to read this quickly. And we'll put this on the diocesan website. And it's exemplary of the work that we do. And Father Flanagan says as follows, "I'm delighted to inform you-- This is Bishop Mary and myself-- That the schedule is set for Bible study hosted by our diocese and the Archdiocese of New York, Roman Catholics. It will be an Episcopal and Roman Catholic Bible study, exploring the acts of the apostles. We don't have a title as yet, but we will focus on the development of the unity of the early church." [HE] goes on to say it will be done in a series of five sessions each and via Zoom. And I'm going to send this on to Nick Richardson, but this is one example, when you have talented people. And I don't, I wouldn't mess with Bob Flanagan for a minute, because this is what happens. That's all I would want to add, but I'd be pleased to answer any questions that anyone wants to put forth to me. But thank you.

- Thank you so much, Reverend Hart, for your exemplary interview and to Matt Heyd. We'll move on to voting results. Thank you.

- Well, that didn't work. The links we gave you, especially for the first vote, caused trouble, that's, we really appreciate the feedback you gave us. That'll help us figure out kind of where this went awry today. And next week, we'll try it one more time. More people were able to vote for the open security link, the second vote about voting for in person or by mail, than were able to vote on the first. So that's helpful to know too. So thank you. We will keep, we put in chat every feedback you've given us, this will help us improve. And this today, which went differently than we thought, will help us be better for next week as we get ready for November 7. Bishop, thank you. And thanks to Lucy for helping with that.



victory won ♪ ♪ May I reach Heaven's joys ♪ ♪ Oh bright Heaven's sun ♪ ♪ Heart of my own heart ♪ ♪  
Whatever befall ♪ ♪ Still be my vision ♪ ♪ Oh ruler of all ♪ ♪ Heart of my own heart ♪ ♪ Whatever befall ♪  
♪ Still be my vision ♪ ♪ Oh ruler of all ♪ ♪ Ooh ♪