

**Right Reverend Deon Johnson &
The 183rd Convention of The Episcopal Diocese of Missouri,**

Grace and Peace to you!

First, I would like to heartily thank Bishop Johnson and for the vision, initiative, and invitation to serve the Diocese of Missouri as your Missioner for Creation Care and Stewardship for this last year. This is truly the intersection of my passion and God's call upon me. I would also like to thank Rev. Kevin Mcgrane and the entire Creation Care Commission. The commission was formed by Rev. Mcgrane prior to my being named missioner and continues to be an incredible resource for all those within the diocese.

In the description of the position, Bishop Johnson described the missioner as "tasked with mobilizing a wave of religious activism within and beyond the diocese to protect and heal God's Creation. The Missioner is to invite us as a Diocesan household to recapture our original mandate as stewards of creation." I was thrilled to see him describe our initial mandate as first one of "stewards of creation." In the initial conversations with Janis Greenbaum about how to talk about the work of the missioner we agreed to make it more "about the *mission* than the *Missioner*." This is because the mandate is to all of humanity, not just one who wears the title – to serve God in reflecting his rule throughout the entirety of creation in the same way he has exercised his dominion over us. I pray that the work I have begun as Missioner has in some small way invited others to participate in Gods redeeming work of the entirety of creation.

One of the responsibilities of the role is to "represent the Bishop and Diocese at environmental conferences and other gatherings," which I was able to do this past year, most notably as an official observer to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) attending the Convention of the Parties (COP26) with the Christian Climate Observers Program and under the credentials of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) while also representing the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri. My reflections from this experience can be found at my blog, linked below.

I was able to prod a few of the incredible individuals I met at COP26 to participate in a six week lecture series through the season of Easter entitled "What is Creation Care? Reframing the Idea of Dominion." This series proved wonderfully inspiring as we heard from people actively engaged in this area from both within and outside the Episcopal Church.

While my work as missioner is just getting started it is now shifting slightly while I begin a postgraduate program at Oxford University in the UK. I will continue to work in the role of Missioner during my time here in some capacity however, a few of my responsibilities may not receive the attention they deserve. It is for this reason I am again grateful for the continued resource that is Rev. Mcgrane and the rest of the creation care commission. It reminds me that this is a work that doesn't depend on me, but that I have been invited to participate in God's mission with the rest of my brothers and sisters. The privileges that come with studying in a place like Oxford will provide opportunities to connect with some of the leading thinkers and doers that are working alongside us. These are all interactions I plan on sharing with you as I find new ways to equip the Diocese of Missouri in this glorious call that God has tasked us with.

I will leave you with the question and challenge I felt upon returning from COP26 - what is the unique call to obedience for the follower of Jesus in response to the creation care mandate and climate change? Yes, it is to vote. Yes, plant your gardens, get solar, protest. But that is not

the unique call, hope, shield, or weapon of the Christian.

It is prayer.

Prophetic proclamation.

And perseverance.

In Katherine Hayhoe's book *Saving Us* there is a quote that has been often (mistakenly) attributed to St. Augustine -

“Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are Anger and Courage. Anger are the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain as they are.”

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, enclosed in a dashed rectangular border. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'Parker Williams'.

Parker Williams

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