Joining Jesus in a New Missional Age
Our world is changing. From globalization’s impact on our economy and our shifting political landscape, to warp-speed technological advances and the rise of multi-culturalism, so much seems to be in flux in our lives. And the Church is not exempt from change. In the last ten years, the number of American adults who identify as Christian has decreased 12%, and it seems like the church as we have known it is declining. And yet, Americans still hunger for connection: connection to God, connection to each other, and connection to our neighborhoods.

We are changing. As Episcopalians, we continually seek to serve God and God’s mission in the world, especially in these uncertain times. As our society becomes increasingly secular, we are being given an opportunity to imagine new ways to come together to worship and to serve God. What might God be inviting us into in this new missional age?

God’s mission is calling us. God will always have the Church, the Body of Christ, that God needs to fulfill God’s mission. Joining Jesus in a New Missional Age is one way the Episcopal Church in Connecticut seeks to respond to God’s invitation to join God and what God is up to, in our parishes, Regions, and neighborhoods.
The Episcopal Church in Connecticut is on a journey to imagine how our Church must be transformed to participate more fully in God’s mission in these changing times. We have embraced changes to our common life and structures, including the establishment of Regions, the introduction of Region Missionaries, and the empowering of Ministry Networks. To join God more faithfully in our neighborhoods, we have actively engaged in five spiritual practices: listening, discerning, trying on, reflecting, and deciding. And through all these changes and developments, God in Jesus through the Holy Spirit is blessing us with **new life** and **new possibility**.

And we still ask faithfully: **How do we follow Jesus in this new missional age?**
Joining Jesus

Inspiring Episcopalians in Connecticut to participate in God’s mission with greater creativity, confidence, breadth, and depth, the Episcopal Church in Connecticut has launched *Joining Jesus in a New Missional Age*. Through this initiative our parishes, Regions, and the wider diocese are being transformed.

The Episcopal Church in Connecticut seeks to nurture cooperation among people, parishes, and ministries within and across Regions, providing training and experiential opportunities to form disciples and apostles in this new missional age and supporting parishes that are becoming more engaged in God’s mission in the neighborhood. In addition to seeking $4 million to support parishes’ own capital, programmatic, and endowment needs, *Joining Jesus in a New Missional Age* seeks to raise $4 million to support five diocesan-wide priorities.

“What we are considering is nothing less than a fundamental spiritual transformation of individuals and communities.”

- The Right Reverend Ian T. Douglas, Bishop Diocesan
Building the Beloved Community through increasing capacity for racial healing, justice, and reconciliation across ECCT
$250,000

Transform Christ Church Cathedral into a flexible, multi-purpose space to serve ECCT and the community
$1,500,000

Support for new intentional Christian communities, such as college chaplaincies or young adult service corps
$500,000

Launch an entrepreneurial fund to resource new undertakings in each Region
$1,000,000

Expand Camp Washington’s capacity to serve as a resource for Christian formation for all ages
$750,000
Support for Regions

The six Regions were established in 2016, after extensive discernment of the Taskforce for Reimagining the Episcopal Church in Connecticut (TREC-CT), to provide greater opportunity for collaboration among parishes and with other organizations. Each Region is served by a Region Missionary who helps parishes and parishioners catalyze, connect, convene, and build capacity to engage God’s mission in meaningful ways. Supported by the Regions and Region Missionaries, ECCT parishes have had the opportunity to participate in many collaborative initiatives, from Region confirmation classes to Region Training Programs for Lay Preachers. The development of Ministry Networks has nurtured Episcopalians’ involvement in community gardens, international mission, and racial healing, justice, and reconciliation, to name just a few.

Joining Jesus in a New Missional Age seeks to further support the Regions with a newly launched entrepreneurial fund that will provide grants to new projects and ministry possibilities arising out of our Regions. Financial support for new projects will enrich and invigorate our common life as Episcopalians in Connecticut participating in God’s mission.
“The Regions are efficient and sustainable spaces for collaboration, sharing of best practices, formation, and fellowship that is focused on serving God’s mission.”
Establishing **Intentional Christian Communities**

As the church changes, the Holy Spirit calls us to form new types of Christian community. New Intentional Christian Communities invite Christians **to practice our faith deliberately**, both by living in community and through serving others. The development of new intentional Christian across our six Regions might include such communities as Episcopal Service Corps, chaplaincies on college and university campuses, and intergenerational shared housing. Living together, preparing and sharing meals together, worshipping together, questioning together, caring for one another together, and serving God and the world together, opens us to **new possibilities in God’s mission.**

*We own anew our calling as followers of Jesus – disciples of Jesus in a new age. Sealed with the Holy Spirit and marked as Christ’s own forever, we are sent into the world as missionaries – apostles of the mission of God.*
For where two or three gather in my name, 
there I am with them.

Matthew 18:20
Christ Church Cathedral

Christ Church Cathedral in Hartford has been a place where Episcopalians across Connecticut have come together to worship God for over a century. As a place where we gather with our bishops, our Cathedral empowers us to be sent in God’s mission as apostles. Christ Church Cathedral is the only Cathedral in Connecticut that serves the entire state; it is truly Connecticut’s Cathedral.

Our Cathedral’s current worship space seriously limits how we are able to utilize it as a place to support us as apostles in God’s mission. Redeveloping the worship space will open up new possibilities for service to the Episcopal Church, the city of Hartford, and the state of Connecticut. The redevelopment will both maintain the building’s historic character and remarkable architectural provenance while making changes necessary to become a fully versatile worship, artistic, and community space. Planned changes to this incredible cultural asset will provide handicapped accessibility, modern restrooms, flexible seating, full spectrum lighting and sound, and new improved heating and cooling.

With a redeveloped interior, we can gather together more regularly, helping to connect Episcopalians from across Connecticut in a variety of events and programming. Through liturgy, we offer opportunities for experimental worship. Through ecumenical and interfaith relationships, our Cathedral creates partnerships in faith. Through community collaboration in the arts and education, we demonstrate how connected we are to the world around us. And through advocacy, we follow Jesus into our state capitol.
As they were going along the road, someone said to him, ‘I will follow you wherever you go.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.’ To another he said, ‘Follow me.’ But he said, ‘Lord, first let me go and bury my father.’ But Jesus said to him, ‘Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.’ Another said, ‘I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home.’ Jesus said to him, ‘No one who puts a hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.’

Camp Washington, the Episcopal Church in Connecticut’s camp and retreat center located on 300 acres in picturesque northwest Connecticut, has been a site for spiritual respite for over one hundred years. Camp Washington is a sacred place where God’s love for the world, made known to us in Jesus Christ, is shared with all God’s people through the ministry of hospitality. From summer camp to adult retreats to diocesan events, Camp Washington is a year-round resource for discipleship rooted in the beauty of God’s creation and love.

Through facilities enhancements and additional financial support for programming, we endeavor to further Camp Washington as the primary resource for Christian formation for youth and adults in the Episcopal Church in Connecticut.

Camp Washington is a place for reflection and renewal, education and training, for exploring and experiencing God’s mission of restoration and reconciliation.
In the promises of the Baptismal Covenant we own our calling to be disciples and apostles of God’s mission in a changing world and church.
We are in the midst of a historic mobilization of people in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement and in support of a more racially just society. In the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, we are called to redress the sins of racism, white supremacy, and anti-Black bias. The work of racial reconciliation is an essential part of our participation in God’s mission of restoration and wholeness.

The Episcopal Church in Connecticut’s 2018 Annual Convention embraced the call for a Season of Racial Healing, Justice and Reconciliation. We have been faithful to that call in a variety of ways: through the dedication and commitment of our lay and ordained leadership; programs offered through the Racial Healing, Justice, and Reconciliation Ministry Network; and in initiatives led by our dedicated staff at The Commons. This is holy and important work.

Although much work has been done – individually, in parishes, and at the diocesan level – to move us towards a deeper understanding of race in America over the past two years, the events of this Spring have demonstrated clearly that there is still much work to be done in dismantling racism, educating our communities, and taking concrete steps towards social and racial justice. Together, we must do more. The Episcopal Church in Connecticut is committed to the transformation that is required to ensure that the Beloved Community becomes a reality.

ECCT seeks to increase its capacity to engage in the work of dismantling racism and building the Beloved Community. Your support will fund new strategic initiatives, which could include:

- A dedicated fund for collaborative projects at the parish or Region level designed to address racial reconciliation
- New curricula and other resources for parishes
- Diocesan-wide anti-racism trainings to deconstruct white supremacy and anti-Black bias
- New strategic partnerships with groups committed to building the Beloved Community
- An enhanced staff position to help build capacity across our diocese

“As the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement, we dream and work to foster Beloved Communities where all people may experience dignity and abundant life and see themselves and others as beloved children of God. Together, we are growing as reconcilers, justice-makers, and healers in the name of Christ.” - Becoming Beloved Community, The Episcopal Church
He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Micah 6:8
Joining Jesus

Joining Jesus in a New Missional Age provides Episcopalians across Connecticut the opportunity to come together with new faith, hope, and possibility as we look to the exciting future God has set before us. This initiative will have a substantial lasting effect on the Episcopal Church in Connecticut at this pivotal time as we seek to:

- Invest in parishes so that they might more faithfully participate in God’s Mission
- Support our Regions as they collaborate in new, innovative projects and programs
- Establish new intentional Christian communities across the Regions, led by the Holy Spirit
- Redevelop our Cathedral as a resource for apostolic ministry in the 21st century
- Provide experiential opportunities at Camp Washington that form disciples for this new missional age
- Build the Beloved Community and increase capacity for racial healing, justice, and reconciliation

We will continue to follow Jesus in this new missional age; and together, with courage and joy, proclaim the kingdom of God.
What could be more exciting, what could be more hopeful, what could be more wonderful than to participate with God in God’s mission of restoration and reconciliation in a world so much in need of the love of God in Jesus?