

***Remarks to the 229th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut
by the Rev. Kathie Adams-Shepherd, rector of Trinity Episcopal Church, Newtown***

October 26, 2013

Thank you for a moment.

I simply wanted on behalf of Trinity Newtown to thank you for your many gifts to us and the community of Trinity and Newtown over these last nearly 11 months.

Hundreds of scarves, prayer shawls and quilts have wrapped us in Christ's love and your care - your fundraisers and monetary offerings to our healing ministry and to the Ben's Lighthouse ministry for the longterm healing of Newtown's children and youth have given us hope and strength as we move forward on a long journey predicted by experts to be 12-20 years. Your prayers have indeed been the light that God has wrestled forth from the darkest time any of us have ever known.

We are very aware that the tragic loss that took 28 lives in Newtown joins our loving community to the many communities across this state, country and world who lose precious loved ones to gun violence every day. I believe that laws do finally change when every day people like you and me form a groundswell of energy calling for stronger mental health services for all who need them, common sense gun and trafficking laws and tirelessly working for the safety of all God's children.

Thank you so very much for your many prayers - they are felt - we have begun to find our hope in the presence of God they surround us with - thank you for your many plans you have shared with me to mark the one-year anniversary looming before us. It matters a great deal to us. This time as December approaches it is difficult to say the least - we are deeply grateful for your continued prayers and support - not only for Newtown but for our own communities and our world - God's mission alive in us is what will change our culture of violence to the culture of peace so longed for. Thank you.

Finally I want to publicly thank our Diocese for gifts to support our ministry of healing thru the Diocese and the Bishops' Fund for Children and our three bishops for their incredibly loving support of me and our community in this tragic time. Their support has been unwavering and their presence with me and among us has been a strength and great gift and grace - thank you - thank you all.