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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT NEW HOPE
CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP'S ZOOM VIRTUAL WORSHIP SERVICE**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Thank you so much, Bishop. And at the beginning, I want to say, most importantly – first, I want to give honor to God. Without Him this day would not be possible. And Bishop, thank you. I've taken such joy from being with the New Hope community before. And you're right, we'll count the blessings of technology that we get to be together this way. It's not the way we want to be together, but we get to be together still. And faith is so powerful that even if we're not in each other's presence, we can feel the strength of what we are doing together. Bishop, I want to thank you personally. You have – in this time of trouble, you've been a beacon, you've been out there and making sure that people in your congregation, in your community have food to eat in the midst of this horrible coronavirus crisis, economic crisis. You've been out there making sure that people had face coverings – tens of thousands that you have distributed through New Hope. In the midst of a moment where change is demanded and change is needed, you've been out there calling for change and also ensuring that peaceful protest was the way, that people were prayerful as well as active in their fight for change. And I want to thank you. I want to thank you for all you have done. I want to thank all the members of New Hope, because this is a faith community that not only listens to the word, but acts on the word in the community. And I say, God bless you all for that.

I'll be very brief today, but I hope what I say you can hear from my heart. We are coming to grips with something in this moment in our history that we have to look in the eye, all of us. And I think for all of us who happen to be white, it is a time for us to examine our own lives, examine our own consciousness, recognize the things that we don't see well enough and we don't understand well enough, and to be honest about it, and to listen more deeply, and then act on what we hear. I was in Southeast Queens yesterday, an extraordinary organization, LIFE Camp, that works with young people, that stops violence before it happens. It's part of the Crisis Management System and the Cure Violence movement. I listened to a young person after young person talk about what it was like to feel that their lives were surrounded by disrespect, by devaluation, that they were surrounded by trauma and pain when they were trying to find their way to their future. It was very hard to hear, because I know we have all, every one of us, been trying to nurture it and uplift our young people in every way, in our families and in our lives. And yet, it's so clear how much farther we have to go – and not just for our young people, for our whole society, because for people of African descent in this city, in this country, it is clearer than ever that racism is a reality every day, every hour, in every part of life. And sometimes, it is loud. And sometimes, it happens just as horribly, insidiously, but it is ever-present. And that is not consistent with the values of scripture. It is not consistent with our democratic ideals. It's not consistent with anything that we could admit to being a functioning society. And this is where I think white New Yorkers, white Americans have to look in the mirror, our own mirror and our societal mirror and come to grips with these truths and decide what we will do differently. And

that's something that matters in everyone's life, but it also matters in how we go about the work of our city and our society. We can change things. And it is fitting that I'm at New Hope, because the word hope resonates for humans. It's something we always seek. It is the nature of all of us in humanity to seek hope even if sometimes it's obscured. People of faith know hope is always there to be found. And I come to you today, saying, I know we all have to recognize the depth of the problem. We all have to recognize what we need to do better – and that's particularly for those of us who are white. But I also say that with a spirit of hope and possibility, not direness, not hopelessness, but a belief that knowing the truth, seeing the truth is actually the beginning of the answer.

So, when I was with those young people at Southeast Queens, I saw our future. I saw intelligence, the purposefulness, possibility, even if our society so often has ignored the potential of our youth, that potential is no less great. And we in this city will commit ourselves to those initiatives like Cure Violence and the Crisis Management system that engage our young people and help them away from negative influences, help them, in fact, become peacemakers themselves. We'll put real resources into that because it works and it's necessary. We will take resources, take finances from policing and put it into youth services and social services where we go at the root of the problem. We will create new and speedy and clear protocols for justice within the NYPD, because members of the community need to see if we are held, all of us, to a standard of justice, we want the same for those who are supposed to protect and serve us. And there are so many doubts about whether that will happen and we must show that justice and consequences are just as swift for someone whether they wear a uniform or whether they don't. That is the mission for this time.

So, Bishop, I want to tell you that what I've seen in your life and the work of your congregation is a belief that change can come and a belief that change ultimately can come most powerfully from the grassroots. And we in government are not to play the role of bringing change and bestowing it – that's not what works in the end. What works is empowering the grassroots. What works is providing the resources and support for community people to solve community problems, for community leadership to develop; for the world of government to actually hear the voices of the people and act on their needs, their cries for help. There is anguish. There is pain. There is such frustration right now, but it is not, in my view, taking us to a place of distress, it is not taking us to a dead end. It is opening a door to a future where we can get it right.

Bishop, thank you. Thank you for your good work, organizing the community. Thank you to every member of New Hope. Together, we will find a new way. And there is a new hope for this city. God bless you all.

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