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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT NEW COVENANT
DOMINION CHURCH**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Good morning, everybody. What a joy to be at New Covenant Dominion.

[Applause]

First, I want to give honor to God, without Him this day would not be possible.

[Applause]

And I can tell when I'm in a special place, I can tell when I'm in a place of faith, a place of hope. I can tell when I'm in a place of love. And that is what this great church is – and created, created in such a powerful way. I have come to know the story of Archbishop Joseph Alexander, starting in just a living room in the Bronx, creating this extraordinary church, and then so many more houses of worship, so many more ways of reaching people. You are blessed to have a leader with inspiration and vision who has created so much. Let's thank him.

[Applause]

Now, no one does it alone. And having a partner is so crucial and in this great church, your first lady, Reverend Mardette Alexander, does so much good in her own right. At Gracie Mansion, my first lady, our First Lady of New York City Chirlane McCray, she has a rule at Gracie Mansion. We don't use the old terminology. They used to say behind every great man stood a great woman. We don't say that anymore. We say beside every great man stands a great woman. That is your first lady. And a special thanks as well to someone that our City officials have worked closely with throughout this pandemic to serve the people of this community. Pastor Joyce Adou, thank you for your great work as well.

[Applause]

Pastor made clear what we've been through together. And I want to put it in perspective. A year ago, at this exact moment, we barely even had heard the word coronavirus. It was unknown to us and life was so different. And then this city, out of nowhere, felt the horrible crashing wave of the coronavirus reach us in our communities. We felt the pain. We felt the challenge. How many people here were touched by this horrible plague? How many families were touched by it? You know how deep the impact was. You know that some communities got hit harder than others. People of color in this city were hit the hardest. The disparities that already existed were exacerbated, unfairness and pain added one on top of the other. We were the epicenter and then something miraculous happened. The people decided together that we could overcome this dreaded disease. We all fought back together. Didn't we?

[Applause]

Did you see the extraordinary work of our health care heroes standing their ground against this disease, the amazing ways that people helped each other, even in the most dire moments? And then something amazing happened. As we entered the summer, we went from being the hardest hit part of the country to being one of the safest places in all of America.

[Applause]

We went from worst to first, or in scriptural terms, the first shall be last and the last shall be first. We lived it. We proved it here in New York City. When we didn't have PPE, when we didn't have ventilators, we created the factories to build our own. That's what New Yorkers do. That's what Bronxites do. We fought back.

[Applause]

And they said there was no way to open schools with the challenges we face but New Yorkers said, our children need schools. This congregation knows it. You know – and Pastor, the pre-K centers you created, you know how precious education is. So, they said there was no way we could open schools, but in New York City, we did open our schools.

[Applause]

And we fought challenges. But tomorrow morning schools will open again for our younger children. We will be there for them.

[Applause]

And we didn't just open our schools, we proved they could be the safest in the nation. We proved we could protect our children, our teachers, our staff. We proved that thing that New York does every single day. We proved that what was said to be impossible was actually very possible because New Yorkers made it real, New Yorkers made it happen.

[Applause]

And then with a pandemic still raging came Election Day and you couldn't be blamed, no one could be blamed for saying, I can't go out and vote during the middle of a pandemic, I can't get involved, I have so many problems of my own. No one would be blamed, but that's not the way New Yorkers saw it. Because in this city, we set a record. The most people came out to vote in decades and decades in New York City. Despite the pandemic, the people spoke. This is what we've done together. And brothers and sisters, I want you to hear this simple story because sometimes in the rush of our lives, we forget the things we, in fact, have done together. These achievements are yours. This success is because of you and who you are. It's because of what's in your heart. It's because of your strength. It's because of your resiliency. It's because of your faith.

[Applause]

A few weeks ago, someone asked me a question. And he had asked it with pain in his voice and doubt in his voice. He said, Mayor, we've been through so much. He said, will New York City ever regain its past glory? I thought about that question. Something struck me as being wrong

because we love our city. We love our borough. We love our neighborhood. We love all the good things about it. But it wasn't a perfect place before the pandemic. There were problems that needed to be addressed before the pandemic. Too many people were struggling to make ends meet before the pandemic. Too many people couldn't pay the rent before the pandemic. Too many people suffered discrimination before the pandemic. So, the question is not to look back with a [inaudible] nostalgia and say, can we regain our past glory? The question is, how do we get better? How do we become a fairer city? How do we become a city that respects everyone the way they deserve to be respected? The question is not, how do we regain our past glory? But how do we reach our greater glory?

[Applause]

How do we go farther together? Because you've already shown the world what you're capable of. You overcame the greatest odds that brought this city back. And there will be challenges. The next few months will be hard. I'm not going to, for a moment, sugarcoat it. A second wave is upon us. It will be hard, but you know what? A vaccine is arriving in a week in New York City also. And that vaccine is real, and it will help us to fight back and win and defeat the coronavirus once and for all.

[Applause]

And then we rebuild, and we recover, and we move forward, and I leave you with one thought. If you ever have doubt, if you ever have pain about what the future holds, just look around you. I ask you to do that right now. Just look around you. Look at the good people around you. Look at the people of faith around you. Look at the people who care around you. Look at the people who fought back and made us strong again. And now you can believe in what the future holds because there is no place that has one secret ingredient that we alone have, and that is New Yorkers. God bless you all. Thank you all. Better times ahead. God bless you.

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