

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

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CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT POP-UP
VACCINATION SITE AT FIRST CORINTHIAN BAPTIST CHURCH**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Quick, and to the point, we've got something really good happening here at First Corinthian. And this is a house of worship I have a very close, personal relationship with. And it's a place that has a profoundly positive impact for the Harlem community and for New York City as a whole, a place where faith and social action come together in an extraordinary way. So, this is exactly the kind of place where we need to have a vaccination center because if there's a vaccination center at First Corinthian, you know people from the community will trust it and believe in it. And we said earlier, this is an example, the famous phrase, if you build it, they will come. Once First Corinthian had a vaccination site, it was immediately filled up. The appointments were snapped up because people want to get the vaccine more and more. There's more trust starting to build. But there's nothing like the trust that comes from community leaders and community institutions that people know and in their heart, believe in. So, that's what's happening here today.

This is part of how we address a number of injustices that came together sharply and clearly in the coronavirus crisis. We saw the horrible disparities in the impact this disease had on some communities versus others. But those disparities were not new. They were put in sharpest contrast by this crisis. The answer to this crisis is to do things differently, to change the way we in government work, and the entire society works, to focus on equality more deeply. And to redistribute all things that comprise wealth into communities that have done the work, but have not been rewarded. And one of the ways to do that is to bring the vaccinations to people who need them most, who've borne the brunt of this crisis. So, FCBC is synonymous with equality, synonymous with changing our society, positively, constructively using faith as a fulcrum of change.

And so, I'm so proud that this center is here. And I see immediately, just hearing the stories of people who got vaccinated, that this is a place that makes a difference. I want to share two stories here for a moment, because I love them so much, what I just heard just now. You know, you can read different reports of what people are thinking and what they're feeling, but there's nothing like talking to people directly and just listening to their stories. So, I met two folks out here, Joyce, someone who needs a home health aide, and her home health aide is Viola. And they both were trying to figure out what to do about the vaccine. And they talked about it and they said, okay, if we go together, we know it'll be okay. And especially because they knew it was FCBC, they were willing to come together. So, they decided they would both come this day, get their vaccine. Both said it was really easy. It was just like getting a flu shot. They felt very good about the experience. And then just a moment ago, two sisters, Wanda and Diane. And they admitted that they had some hesitancy. But you know, who convinced them that they really needed to get this vaccine? It was their mom. Their mom is 83 years old, God bless her. And she said, I want to

see my daughters, you need to get this vaccination. We need to get together as a family. And when they heard their mom's voice, there was nothing more powerful than that.

So, this is what we've been saying all along. What's really going to change the trajectory here is word of mouth, is people hearing from those they love and trust in their own life and from places they trust, like First Corinthian. I want to just say thank you to everyone in the First Corinthian family for everything you do for this community and this city. Special thanks to the Pastor for Programming and Community Engagement, Pastor Heaven Berhane. We thank you so much for what you do. I don't know if I said it right? Berhane.

Audience: Berhane.

Mayor: Berhane, I'm sorry. My apology, Pastor Heaven. I got Pastor Heaven right. And a special thank you to the new Executive Director of our City's Center for Faith and Community Partnerships, Nancy Pascal. New on this job, but she's been doing so much good work for the city for years. We're so proud of her and so happy, she'll be leading the way, bringing faith communities into this vaccination effort. And with that someone who I have just the deepest, deepest respect for. He has led our city's efforts to bring clergy of all faiths together in common cause. He was one of the people that helped us make Pre-K for All reality, helped us improve access to mental health services, helped us make sure that people got affordable housing, whatever we have done, he has been one of the reasons why it has worked. Just an exemplary leader in this city and of all faith communities, Pastor Mike Walrond.

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I have one more thing to say, and this is what we call breaking news. Okay. We just got a report of the number of vaccinations yesterday in this city. I want to remind everyone what we've been asking for, for weeks and weeks is for the federal government, the State government, the manufacturers, to get us our fair share of vaccine in New York City. We're ready to provide half a million vaccinations per week, half a million per week or more. We are ready right now. And you know, last week we all saw the disruption from the huge storms around the country. So, we didn't get our supplies. This week we finally got last week's supply and we're getting this week's supply. So, we have an unprecedented opportunity to really show what we can do. So, we're going to do our math skills for the day now. We now, as of yesterday, yesterday, Friday, had the biggest day for vaccinations since vaccinations began in New York City. Friday is our record setting day. Yesterday in New York City, we vaccinated 76,024 New Yorkers.

[Applause]

76,024. So, we can do that in a single day. You do the math – times seven, and we are right there on pace to do a half million or more per week. And our goal is to reach five million, fully vaccinated New Yorkers by June so we can bring this city back strong. The last thing I want to say is we're going to be talking a lot over these next months about recovery, but we are not trying to recover the status quo before COVID. We need to create something new. So, I say a recovery for all of us, not just for those who have done very well. A recovery for all of us. It is a painful moment in history because of COVID. It is also a transformational moment because we've learned a lot. Our eyes have been opened. We see new possibilities. We have a chance to do something different. So, I'm particularly moved to be here because this is a difference making

place, to remind us of what we have within us. But I'm telling you from the evidence yesterday, we will hit that five-million-person goal. And we will be able to bring this city back in all its fullness, all its goodness, all its fairness and build something better. Thank you everyone.

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