

Invocation given at the Maine State Assembly on Tuesday, February 28th,  
2023

by the Rev. Amanda Gerken-Nelson, Priest in Charge,  
St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, Yarmouth, ME.

Let this invocation be an invitation  
to take a moment to prepare.  
To quiet the noise  
that followed us into the room this morning  
and to create a space  
of opportunity and meaning.

This invocation is an invitation  
to the spirits in our lives that  
motivate, drive, and inspire us.  
The Spirit or spirits to whom we pray  
and, the spirits that bond us  
one to each other:

The spirit of collegiality  
that reminds us that aisles and hallways  
are places for us to walk  
toward each other  
and journey together.

The spirit of justice  
that brings to our minds eye  
the people who elected us  
and who gave us  
the power to do right by them.

The spirit of hope  
that compels us to seek  
possibilities, opportunities, and generosities.

This invocation is an invitation,  
also, to let go.

To let go of the spirits  
that have had their grip  
on us and our society  
for too long

The spirit of animosity  
that tries to convince us  
that we are enemies  
and not companions on a journey.

The spirit of hubris  
that tries to convince us  
that the “I” is more important  
than the “we.”

The spirit of fear  
of difference, of change,  
of pain, of not being heard  
that prevents us  
from being our best selves  
to and for each other.

And so, dear friends,  
as the community gathered this morning  
let us mark this time of invocation  
with an invitation  
to a brief moment of silence  
in which we breathe in  
the spirits of collegiality, justice, and hope  
and let them fill us

And, we breathe out and blow away  
the spirits of animosity, hubris, and fear  
and let them mark us no more

*silence*

And may the great Spirit or spirits  
to whom we pray  
sustain our breathing in  
and our breathing out  
today and always.  
Amen.