

Presidential Inauguration

Invocation and the benediction given on Friday, October 21, 2022, by Charles Howard, Vice President for Social Equity and Community and University Chaplain.

Invocation and Benediction

Invocation

A blessing of the Waters: In honor of the inauguration of President M. Liz Magill on land first walked upon by the Leni-Lenape people.

In a state named after and reflecting the welcome of William Penn,
At a university founded by and carrying the spirit of Ben Franklin,
In an auditorium designed by Julian Abele, Penn's first Black graduate from our department of architecture...

On this glorious morning, will you please join me in a spirit of prayer for our invocation...

From here, the Atlantic Ocean (perhaps symbolizing Penn's connection to the world) is about 60 miles away.

The iconic Schuylkill River (a sign of our university's integration with our city and region) is one mile away.

And the Kaskey Memorial Park (which contains a small beautiful pond on our campus)—is just a half a mile away, resting behind the Quad.

Each of these bodies of water—ocean, river, and pond—in many ways point to the reality of what the University of Pennsylvania is today, and perhaps reflects the call and reach of a president in such a time as this.

May our new president—Liz Magill—be blessed with wisdom as she wades into the big, deep conversations and initiatives that make a global impact. May she and our University save lives, find further healthcare breakthroughs, increase access to education around the world, make powerful connections, and make this world a better place.

May our new president be blessed, and led by a mighty current of love as she journeys with Philadelphia and the surrounding area. May she and our university create more opportunities, help to heal brokenness, celebrate joys, and be of gracious and generous service to our neighbors.

And may she be blessed as she leads and serves on our campus.

The graduate students who work at and conduct research at the biopond know exactly how many turtles and fish are in the water. They tend to it with both care and curiosity; both protectiveness and joy.

We are on the edge of the water—a new beginning. And for this exciting moment, for this brilliant leader, for all that awaits, we give thanks. Amen.



University Chaplain Charles L. Howard

Benediction

There is much to be proud of from our yesterdays—as a university and as individuals.

And there is so much from today that we might be grateful for...

This remarkable ceremony—and all who had a hand in planning it. The inspiring words, the gift of music and dance.

A wonderful new university president.

But what of tomorrow?

Let us go forth, with hope, with joy, with conviction, with a “virtuous impatience.”

Let us go forth with this brilliant new leadership, led by our newly inaugurated president, and may our President Liz Magill know that we have her back.

And that she won't be walking alone...

Let us go forth and walk into tomorrow, together.

Amen.

Welcome address given on Friday, October 21, 2022, by Scott Bok, Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Inauguration Welcome from the Chair of the Board of Trustees



Trustees chair Scott Bok presents keys to President Liz Magill.

Thank you, Reverend Howard.

Distinguished presidents, delegates, Trustees of the University, esteemed faculty, staff, students, alumni, and revered guests, it is my great honor to welcome you to the inauguration of M. Elizabeth Magill as the ninth President and twenty-fifth chief executive officer of the University of Pennsylvania.

Today is a momentous day in the history—the nearly-300-year history—of the University of Pennsylvania.

Its importance is symbolized by the gathering here this morning: Eminent Deans and faculty of our great University, two of our past presidents and a former provost, notable representatives of colleges and universities from across the United States. Family, friends, and colleagues whom President Magill holds dear.

Your presence today is a testament to the tradition of this sacred occasion and to the place of distinction that Penn holds in higher education.

We gather in this remarkable venue, which was built in 1929, the year before Penn held its *first* presidential inauguration. In 1930, Thomas Sovereign Gates was inaugurated as Penn's first president—prior to that, as many of you may know, our University leaders were known as provosts.

But I digress.

Today, as we witness the formal installation of President Liz Magill, we celebrate a new beginning. We also honor the deeply rooted custom of the transfer of leadership—and the continuity of Penn's longstanding and noble pursuit of scholarship, teaching, and service.

For those of us who are part of the Penn community, this morning's ritual is also an opportunity to pause and reflect on what an extraordinary institution we have in Penn and how fortunate we are to call this University our home.

And so, to my Penn colleagues and to our special guests, I thank you all for being here on this joyous day.

Now, it is my honor to introduce the following speakers who bring greetings to President Magill from their respective constituencies: Vivian Gadsden, on behalf of the faculty; and Ann Reese, on behalf of Penn Alumni.

I am also pleased to introduce poet, writer, and educator Erica Hunt, the Bonderman Visiting Associate Professor of the Practice of Literary Arts

(continued on page 2)

Presidential Inauguration

(continued from page 1)

at Brown University. We are fortunate to have her join us this morning as inaugural poet.

[Introduction of Jim Ryan]

I am honored to present our next speaker, James Ryan, president of the University of Virginia, a colleague, peer, mentor, and friend to Liz Magill. [Remarks and investiture of the President]

Thank you, President Ryan. I am grateful to you—and to each of our speakers—for offering such eloquent greetings to President Magill and for sharing your heartfelt endorsements of Penn’s new leader and ninth president.

Your words, I must admit, came as no surprise to me. I had the great honor of leading the search committee that nominated Liz Magill, who was confirmed without hesitation.

Liz Magill’s extraordinary career has been devoted to legal scholarship and to the advancement of higher education. She has inspired future generations with her knowledge of constitutional and administrative law while making significant contributions to the field. Her belief that it is the power and the duty of higher education to enrich society aligns perfectly with Penn—an institution founded on that very idea.

Throughout her life, as she would tell you, Liz has been guided by invaluable mentors—parents, siblings, teachers, professors, colleagues, and bosses.

Likely the most famous is Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

As a newly minted lawyer, Liz landed the prestigious position of law clerk with the late U.S. Supreme Court Justice—a job that Liz has called both “grueling” and “one of the most amazing experiences of my life.”

Some of you may be familiar with this quote, attributed to Justice Ginsburg, on the subject of leadership. It goes like this: “Fight for the things

that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you.”

Clearly, Liz has taken this advice to heart. She has a great talent for people and for building relationships to reach a common goal. She understands—like every successful leader, including our very own Benjamin Franklin—that we will achieve so much more collectively, than we ever could separately.

Today we celebrate Liz Magill. Her inauguration marks a renewal of our aspirations for Penn and all it can be. Like any new beginning, we face it with excitement and joy, along with a seriousness of purpose.

We live in complicated times, and we cannot know what challenges are ahead. But what I do know is that we are ready: with a University resolved to academic excellence and service to others, a Red and Blue spirit that is strong and tenacious—and beginning today—a president who was hand-picked for this moment at Penn.

So, it is now my great privilege formally to invest M. Elizabeth Magill as the ninth president of the University of Pennsylvania.

By the authority of the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania, I hereby invest you as president. This badge is a symbol of that office.

[The medallion is placed around President Magill’s neck and she is presented with three brass keys]

More than 120 years ago, Pennsylvania Governor Daniel Hartman Hastings delivered these three keys to Charles Custis Harrison on his induction as Provost of the University.

They, too, are emblems of the “authority with which you are now invested and the solemn responsibilities laid upon you.”

With these keys, symbols of the custodianship of this great University, I entrust the University of Pennsylvania to your sure leadership.

Congratulations.

Address given on Friday, October 21, 2022, by Jim Ryan, President of the University of Virginia.

Address from Jim Ryan

Thanks, Scott, for that introduction. It is an honor to speak at this most joyous occasion, the inauguration of a Cavalier Quaker, Liz Magill.

I first learned that I could completely count on Liz Magill when she convinced me not to send what I thought was a really important letter. As you may have already guessed, given that I mentioned its importance, the letter was addressed to my kids’ preschool and it was, let’s just say, something less than super friendly.

To give some background: Liz and I were law professors at UVA at the time; we started there together in 1998, nearly 25 years ago. I had heard of Liz a decade earlier, when we were both undergraduate students at Yale. She was president of the student council, so I often read about M. Elizabeth Magill in the student newspaper, the *Yale Daily News*. My main extracurricular activity was playing rugby. Strangely enough, our paths did not cross in college. In fact, it wasn’t until a few years after we met as law professors that I connected the M. Elizabeth Magill I read about in the *Yale Daily News* with the Liz Magill I met as a colleague.

Liz and I nonetheless became fast friends at UVA Law, as did our families. My wife, Katie, and I, along with our four kids, spent a good deal of time with Liz, her truly extraordinary husband Leon, as well as their amazing kids Alex and Claire. We hiked and traveled together; watched our kids from the soccer sidelines; shared meals, adventures, and more than a few misadventures; and we shared both joyful and tearful occasions alike. Liz was also one of my closest work friends. I often dropped by her office at the Law School to ask for advice or exchange ideas. Very rarely, because we were super serious academics after all, we would gossip or complain about university administrators, which of course we vowed never to become.

So back to the letter. Two of my sons were in the local Montessori preschool. The school one day announced that if a student did not stay through kindergarten, any younger sibling would no longer be allowed to attend. We wanted our son, Sam, to attend kindergarten at our local public school, but that would mean his younger brother, Ben, would be kicked out of the preschool. I thought this policy unfair and contrary to

the stated philosophy of the school, which was to treat each child as an individual.

At the time, I had the unfortunate habit of *drafting*, and the even more unfortunate habit of *sending*, melodramatic letters when faced with an unjust situation that intersected with my life. The letter I drafted to the preschool was a doozy. Weaving together pedantry and hyperbole, I explained in some detail the gross injustice and rank hypocrisy of this policy. Luckily, before hitting send, I decided to consult with Liz, on whom I had come to depend for advice in matters of judgment, which she had in abundance, and I obviously did not.

Liz came to my office and said, gently but quite firmly, something along the lines of: “I understand why you’re upset. The policy is wrong-headed. But of course you know that you can’t send that letter. You won’t persuade anyone of anything, except perhaps that you are one of ‘those parents.’ Just call or visit the school and explain why you think the policy is unwise and unfair.” After some mild protest, I followed her advice, and it eventually worked.

I raise this somewhat frivolous story because it captures much of what I admire and love about Liz Magill. First and foremost, Liz is a fiercely loyal friend. When she decides she is on your side, she is ON. YOUR. SIDE. You become like family to her. Your hopes become her hopes. Your challenges become her challenges. She makes time to help when you ask, and even when you don’t. Her response to my letter was not driven by a desire to point out how ridiculous it was—and it was ridiculous. Her response was driven instead by the desire to prevent me from embarrassing myself and from making the situation worse. She was effectively sticking up for me and protecting me all at once. I can tell you that the entire Penn community now falls in the category of “friend of Liz,” and you will not have a better or more determined champion.

Liz is also both empathetic and tough, which is a rare combination, though perhaps more common for those, like Liz, who grew up in North Dakota. Going back to my letter, she made it clear that she appreciated my sense of injustice and shared my concern for my kids. But she also knew it was a really bad idea to send the letter, and she told me so, directly and plainly. What this means, and I’ve seen her do it many times, is that Liz can deliver hard news when necessary. And she can say no, which is sometimes as important as saying yes, especially when you are a provost or president. And Liz can do all of this without alienating those

(continued on page 3)



Jim Ryan

(continued from page 2)

who are not receiving the news they want to hear.

Last but not least, Liz has exquisite judgment and an uncanny ability to keep her eye on what is important—on what really matters, on what is actually going to lead to the desired result. Although she is not a huge fan of sports analogies, she herself, as much as anyone I know, keeps her eye on the ball, which is why she suggested I just speak with the school leaders rather than send an overwrought letter.

It is because of these qualities, I believe, that Liz has been called on to lead all of her life. From student council president, to vice dean at UVA law school, to dean at Stanford law school, to provost at UVA, and now president at Penn—in every community she has been in or in those she has been invited to join, people have looked to her to lead, and for good reason. Liz is, in a sense, a natural leader, as her track record attests. But that's an incomplete and in some ways diminishing description, because it misses the fact that few people, if any, work harder than Liz Magill. She is an effective leader because she works hard at it. I saw this true, and again when she was in the provost's office at UVA, but especially during the Covid crisis.

I hated to lose Liz as provost at UVA, given that I had begged her to join me when I became President, telling her, which was completely true, that I couldn't imagine doing the job without her.

But it seems to me only fitting that she is now the President of Penn.

As you may know, our institutions are connected through our founders, Benjamin Franklin for Penn and Thomas Jefferson for UVA. Franklin was a trusted friend and mentor to Jefferson. Jefferson succeeded

Franklin as Ambassador to France and called the experience of following Franklin a lesson in humility. And while Jefferson was the primary author of the Declaration of Independence, Franklin served as editor, supplying the critical and immortal phrase “we hold these truths to be self-evident.”

Penn and UVA are connected in another interesting way. As some of you may have noticed, Liz is the 9th president of Penn, despite the fact that Penn has existed for more than two centuries. It turns out that, I too am the 9th president of UVA, despite the fact that UVA has also existed for more than two centuries. This coincidence is because neither institution, for over a century, believed a president was necessary. This is a fact that I think about a lot, and when I forget, others helpfully remind me that UVA did just fine for a century without a president.

Luckily, at least for Penn, a decision was made to create the president's role in 1930. And I cannot think of anyone better than Liz to fill this role and to succeed the extraordinary presidents who served Penn prior to Liz's arrival. Liz is where she is supposed to be, of that I am sure. Those of you at Penn, in turn, can be sure that Liz will work day and night to promote and protect your interests and aspirations with a determination, selflessness, and wisdom that few can match.

Jefferson referred to Franklin as his “beloved and venerable” friend. And so it is with Liz, for so many of us at UVA. I hope and trust that all of you at Penn will come to appreciate, if you have not already, just how incredibly fortunate you are to have as your president our beloved and venerable friend, Liz Magill.

Thank you.

Poem “Dear Neighbor” recited on Friday, October 21, 2022, by Erica Hunt, Bonderman Assistant Professor of the Practice of Literary Arts at Brown University.

“Dear Neighbor” by Inaugural Poet Erica Hunt

Dear Neighbor

a poem of “what if” for Liz
Magill and the University of
Pennsylvania

“What is it to talk as if the world
you know is the world?”

—Dionne Brand

Dear Neighbor:

I can easily imagine we have met
before

seated, facing the same
direction

attentive to what's next

side by side in an airplane

the department of

motor vehicles waiting room the

grocery line

perhaps hopping into a shared

ride for the short trip

to the next

stop sign—the signal we've begun

Another beginning

the day after the end

And we break a customary silence to

consider the scene before us:

the present undoes us daily—and not in a good way

the taste of metal invades the tongue

holds words hostage—

“What is that color again?” Magenta? Cerise? Vermillion? Carnadine?

Or perhaps we plunge

impulsively down corridors of intimate speech

during which every other word

is a revelation to ourselves.

We think to pass the time—to “kill” it as they say, but instead, we wake

our fiber from its slumber,

alive to how we are more alike than lazy observation allows:

for what menaces me is a secret nemesis for you.

Dear Adjacency:

We exchange addresses with every intention to be in touch

later. Days and months cue up



Erica Hunt

aging buildings are replaced with glass

exclamations of “progress”—

boiling points rise triumphant to the sky

Streets keep their names, Locust, Spruce, Walnut,

But our cups separate and still

overflow with prophetic discontent.

Small victories miraculously escape

the snares of unforeseen misfortune—

We discover it takes several pounds of worried flesh to

patch this wounded world.

we tangle with a cumbersome

inheritance of missed and dismissed opportunities and more

profitable tangents—

—indisputable “realisms” in the unshakeable calculus of scant
means can meet only a few faltering ends.

Dear Adjacency:

Consider the story just below the sound:

Who here has changed spots?

One day the leopard, the next day prey?

Who here has cowered?

Who has caused others or wished to cause others to cower?

Who here has been shocked to call themselves a coward, studied for
their turn and failed in courage?

Who here has fallen? Who here has gotten back up?

Who here has felon? Who here has been at fault?

Who here has been broke?

Who has broken bread with strangers? Who here has been the
stranger?

Who here has been too strange?

Who filters light to let the sun reach the ground to ripen seed to fruit?

Who has held back light, so saplings never thrive?

Dear Ally:

For a brief time, we think we can read each other

and stand in for an author who writes what we know.

We think we know how to survive the popular innocence:

those who would rather not know

Sorrow falls like ashes into drinking water,

Sorrow bows down insulin-collapsing shelves of sugar and

(continued on page 4)

Presidential Inauguration

(continued from page 3)

white flour
Indifference to sorrow thins the oxygen of classrooms'
dwindling public support,
Sorrow floods courtrooms, where it is already too familiar

We already know where we can find discontent and
the clamoring contents of the given.

*We'd be better off stopping or turning around here
at the threshold of address.*

Dear Neighbor:

Yet, in the space of these few hours on this day we expectantly embrace
beginning again

—as neighbors—

we do not entirely know each other, but it can't stay that way

look closer at the
map of our here and now

Let us ignore the chafing bracelet of rationed patience
and meet this moment with "virtuous impatience."

Let curiosity guide us closer to one another

I'd borrow from Homer, another poet

"He saw the cities of many peoples, and he learned their ways."

And change the line to

"They saw the many cities of people with whom they live and learned
their ways,"

Dear Neighbor:

I find you in the future by zooming in

As if to meet you for the first time

larger than life

Neighbor, I remark—Penn still crowns a hill
rises from the rumpled quilt of Philadelphia
When I last saw you, welcoming your new leader—red and yellow stars
showered on blue-lit fields

Dear Future; Dear Neighbor

I see the expanded glossaries of the possible you've created by proving
that

speaking freely and with respect are not contraries.

I see the books that map the not-quite-yet; they grace shelves
encouraging the public to dream.

I see new constellations you've named on our barely mapped earth trace
the organisms that share "knowledge" that keeps the planet alive.

Dear Future Neighbor:

I see feats of engineering and technology that connect every hamlet on
the globe to medicine, libraries, and care. In turn, these faraway places
reciprocate with lullabies and meditations—an abundance of time-slowness
ways' in a time-starved world.

I meet you again, making a course for our future in legal clinics where
youth practice restorative justice and temper revenge with reconciliation.

I hear porch stoop poets and musicians toss thrilling words, images, and
music that defy the speed of sound.

Dear Future Neighbor:

I see you making space for new neighbors A diverse kindred-kind with
no closing line But an unstoppable passion for the never-complete task
of repairing the world.

¹ This line of thought is influenced by recent discoveries in ecology underlining
the role of mycorrhizal association or **cooperation** between fungi, tree, and plant
root systems crucial to forest health, and in turn carbon and water production crucial
to the planet. See Mushroom at the End of the World and other publications.

*Address given on Friday, October 21, 2022, by Vivian L. Gadsden, William T. Carter Professor of Child Development and Education and chair of
the Faculty Senate.*

Welcome by the Chair of the Faculty Senate

My name is Vivian Gadsden, and it is my deep honor and pleasure to
represent the Faculty Senate on this joyous and important inaugural occasion.
Liz Magill, on behalf of the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania,
I welcome you as our ninth president. This year, the Senate celebrates 70
years of shared governance. We represent almost 2,800 tenure-line faculty
who work alongside an additional 2,400 faculty colleagues across the 12
schools to advance the mission of the University, center its commitment
to the public good, and promote its excellence within and across multiple
spheres of influence and impact.

Your selection as president reinforces the vision and hopes of faculty to
enhance opportunities for our students to flourish academically, personally,
and with conviction. It also reinforces the vision and hopes we have for our
community—whether located geographically, as we are, on Lenape land
or across other stretches of terrain—and for us to engage meaningfully in
local and global dialogue. Borrowing from our colleagues in medicine, we
aim not only to do no harm but to accept the mandate bravely and challenge
ourselves to do good.

President Magill, you bring a rich, dynamic, and trailblazing history of
strength and leadership, beginning with your trek from North Dakota to Yale,
to your deanship at Stanford, to your term as Provost at the University of
Virginia, to joining us here at Penn—you have covered much of the United
States over the years, and no doubt your experiences have prepared you for
this moment with the insights, energy, and sense of power to work with a
faculty with our own insights, energy, and senses of power. Your experiences
have also exposed you to the possibilities for institutions such as ours
to make a difference, as our very origin as the first American institution of
higher education to be named a university, founded by an advocate for civic
participation, demands of us. You are prepared to lead the next generation
of teachers and scholars forward to the next vital portal of intellectual
and academic greatness, while urging that we share our humanity with
appropriate humility. We know you will lead with a steady hand, uplifting
Penn's faculty and recognizing our different cultural, ethnic, racial, and
gendered histories; indefatigable labor and dedication to inquiry; dauntless
independence and collaborative spirit; and our eye and effort toward social
purpose, equity, and justice.

In closing: This is your day—your inauguration—and our shared beginning.
It is with my admiration and unyielding respect for my colleagues here



Vivian Gadsden

at Penn that we will embrace your presidency. We look to the future with
you as president and as partner—building on our successes, learning from
our challenges, supporting the communities within and around us, respecting
our deeply held tenets of intellectual freedom, invoking due diligence and
process whenever that freedom comes into question, serving as models of
respectful civil discourse, and amplifying the essential role of fairness and
mutual respect in our university and our reach into the world. Welcome.

Greetings on behalf of more than 300,000 Penn alumni were given on Friday, October 21, 2022, by Ann Reese, Penn Alumni President.

Greetings on Behalf of Alumni

Good morning and greetings to all! I am thrilled to be with you today. President Magill, it is my very special privilege to welcome you on behalf of the Penn alumni here today—and on behalf of the more than 300,000 Penn alumni around the world, including 61 in the great state of North Dakota.

Although you have been on campus but a few months, I would bet that you already know this: Penn alumni make up a powerful force within the University community. A loyal Red and Blue contingent that engages, supports—and yes, loves—this spectacular institution.

Quakers have a very special affinity for our alma mater—our enduring tradition of academic excellence, our commitment to diversity and accessibility, and our shared and unshakeable worldview that Penn can make the world a better place.

In 1749, Benjamin Franklin proposed his plan for the academy that would become Penn. He envisioned a school that educated not for learning's sake, but for the sake of *serving others*. This, Franklin wrote, “should indeed be the great aim and end of all learning.”

And while Penn has come a long way since Franklin's time, we remain true to his mission—and I know you share those ideals. As alumni, we are grateful that you have accepted the important responsibility of Penn President. We know that you recognize the value of a strong and energetic alumni base, and we cannot wait to work with you to help move Penn forward for current students and future generations alike.

President Magill, today, we celebrate your arrival and a new dawn for



Ann Reese

Penn. We appreciate your vision, enthusiasm, and thoughtful approach to leadership, and Penn alumni are here to cheer you on. With great anticipation, and a tremendous amount of joy, we stand with you today, President Magill, as you begin to steer our beloved institution forward. With enormous Penn Pride, we extend to you our heartfelt encouragement and our very best wishes!

The following Inaugural Address was delivered by Penn's ninth President, M. Elizabeth Magill, on October 21, 2022.

Draw Down the Lightning

Liz Magill

I.

Let the experiment be made!

Let the experiment be made.

With those words, Benjamin Franklin put his pen down for the day. I imagine him looking over his personal notes, waiting for the ink to dry. The date at the top of the entry was November 7th, 1749.

Up to that time, for many years, a debate had raged among great scientific minds. What, they argued, was the nature of electricity?

Top thinkers of the day went back and forth. Electricity was mechanical. No, it was a form of fluid. Or was it two fluids? The phenomenon and the controversy intrigued Franklin. But he rejected the craze for toys, like static electricity sticks, used in public demonstrations. And Franklin was impatient with the abstract nature of the investigation by natural philosophers. He thought rigorous experiments were the way to make progress in understanding electricity.

Before long, he looked up to the sky.

If we could hold his personal notes in our hands, we'd see that Dr. Franklin was laying the groundwork for his famous kite and key experiment. Within the next few years, he would fly that kite and prove that lightning and electricity are one in the same. Today, it may be difficult to comprehend just how foundational his discovery was. It would be a century and a half before the Nobel Prize in physics was first awarded (1901), but, had it existed, it would have been his. And in Franklin fashion, his experiments produced both fundamental discovery about the properties of electricity and something so practical—the lightning rod that protected homes and cities from devastating fires.

Soon, a lightning rod was on the belfry of Independence Hall. A few blocks away, another rod was installed on a young University of Pennsylvania.

But let's go back for a moment to 1749, to Franklin's notes. Only two weeks before he wrote those words, he published something just as profound with his printing press. It was a pamphlet. Titled “Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania,” it was to become Penn's founding manifesto.

This timing is not simple coincidence. Franklin knew that knowledge solved problems. It is the single most powerful force for improving life and our understanding of it.

And so, *Let the experiment be made!*



Liz Magill delivers her inauguration speech.

There's a wonderful urgency there, don't you think?

What do you hear in that phrase?

I hear the enterprising spirit of invention that defines this University as much as our founder. I hear restless curiosity and tenacious investigation. More than anything, I hear the call that Franklin answered his whole life: The call to meet the moment to make a better future.

Through the centuries, this University has answered that call as well.

II.

We are the latest in a long and celebrated line of individuals who have been given the privilege—and the responsibility—of determining how Penn will meet this moment. How can the future be made better by what we do in the days to come?

It is in that sense, then, that today is not a moment when we gather to mark

(continued on page 6)

Presidential Inauguration

(continued from page 5)

the inauguration of Liz Magill. Today, we come together to celebrate Penn.

I can think of no better place to start than by acknowledging two giants in the history of our University who join us on stage today. Dr. Judith Rodin directed Penn's sight outward and upward, embracing our community and our destiny for greatness. Ambassador Amy Gutmann advanced our University from excellence to eminence in all that we do. Their leadership utterly transformed Penn to become the globally renowned institution we know it to be today. I also want to acknowledge and thank Dr. Wendell Pritchett, who as Interim President steered Penn with a steady hand, upholding our preeminence while supporting my arrival. We owe these three leaders so much. I hope you will join me in thanking them now.

Thank you, President Ryan for your very kind and too generous remarks on my behalf. And my thanks as well to all our speakers who offered words of welcome and inspiration earlier in the program, as well as our amazing student performing groups. To raise a child, it takes a village. To successfully plan and flawlessly carry out a multi-day event of this scale and scope, it takes a good-sized town. I thank everyone, most sincerely, who helped bring this all together.

When you are the fourth of six children—who have then gone on and had children of their own—names can sometimes be an issue. There are many Magills here in attendance today, and Trousdale and Shines, and not a few Szeptyckis as well, including my husband Leon and our children, Alex and Claire. I will not pause here to name each of our family members present. Or the very many people in attendance who are dear personal and professional friends, former teachers (from high school to college to law school), former students, and even former bosses. I will only say that you have come from near and far, and I am so grateful to have you here today.

I grew up in Fargo, North Dakota, a place that sometimes proudly identifies itself as “north of normal.” The weather app says that Fargo has a cold season that lasts for three-and-a-third months, but I can tell you from personal experience it can feel upward of three years. The average high temperature in January is 19 degrees, and the North Dakotan in me wants to point out that is without windchill. But I don't remember the cold. More than anything, I remember growing up in the warming embrace of a loving and supportive family and community. The values of high plains pragmatism and caring for others had a formative influence in my early life. The fundamental importance of community is at its core. Which is what I see as being so special and potent about Penn and Philadelphia today.

III.

Great urban universities are like great cities: They never press pause on their own reinvention. Times change. The needs of the people—and the world—also change. To meet the moment, the university must evolve as well.

You can find this truth in every square foot of our campus and at each location Penn has called home. There is a distinctive feature of our architecture, art, and outdoor space. They are not stuck in one single style or historic period. We rightly cherish and celebrate our history. Franklin's genius and spirit remain every bit as foundational today. They define who we are. And they suggest where we are headed, but they do not dictate it. At Penn, we respond to the opportunities of the present and the needs of the future.

In our early years, Penn chose 4th and Arch Streets as home. This was a choice, and it was a tough decision. A wealthy Philadelphian offered a tempting gift of land. It was on 6th Street, across from the State House. This would locate the academy at the heart of power and wealth in the city. But that was not our founder's egalitarian vision. Instead, Franklin purchased the property on 4th Street.

Up to and through the American Revolution, Penn grew. By 1779, we had the first medical school and the first hospital in the country. We were also the first to combine college and professional schools. By 1800, we had more students, more faculty, more need for what Penn offered. Philadelphia had grown, too. So, the Trustees purchased a structure at 9th and Market Streets in 1801. It was once intended to be the house for the U.S. president.

Before long, we outgrew that as well.

Penn's last and greatest move was in 1872 to our present location, across the Schuylkill River. This move came at just the right moment, giving Penn the ability to expand just as American universities were being transformed. Lab work, scientific investigation, and clinical training were becoming an integral part of the University's efforts. Graduate studies ushered in the modern era of advanced scholarship and original research. The bold move

to West Philadelphia kicked off Penn's pioneering transformation into a modern urban research university.

There is one move we considered but did not make, which is revealing. In the 1920s, many alumni supported the idea of relocating the University to Valley Forge. Their campaign was meant to address what some called “The Problem of a College in a City.” In the 1930s, President Thomas Gates even offered a formal vision for a Valley Forge campus. The debate continued for decades and was not finally put to rest until 1959. A board meeting resolved, “That the proposal to establish a College [...] near Valley Forge is hereby abandoned.”

I trust the chair of our Board of Trustees still agrees with that decision. Right, Mr. Bok?

I think we all agree it would have been a grave error. Penn's move to Valley Forge would have been a flight away from who we are. Being directly involved in—and informed by—our great city has always been Penn's catalyst. Without Philadelphia, we would not have arrived as a leading research university; home to top schools in the liberal arts, sciences, and professions; and a leader in academic medicine. A home for the world's sharpest thinkers and sturdiest doers, from the poets and the physicists to the professionals and the public servants. An institution grounded in and whose greatness depends on and rises hand in hand with its diversity and inclusivity. A dynamic collective whole, energized across our many back-grounds and fortes. The decision to stay came from knowing who we are, knowing what fuels our vitality, and committing to it.

At every step, and with every brick, this University confronted the challenges of the time by declaring, “Let the experiment be made.” Not just for us but, in, the spirit of our founder, for the good of all.

Now, I'd like to make a confession. While preparing for today, a thought has kept me up at night: How does a person capture in one speech the breathtaking scope of what Penn is and does in our world today? I could cite Penn's nearly 300,000 alumni worldwide and 28,000 current students, or the 600 undergraduate students who hail from this great city, 100 of whom call West Philly home. Or our University and health system faculty, physicians, and staff, more than 47,000 strong. Or cite Penn's translational breakthroughs—more than 1,800 patents issued in the last five years alone. Or the many honors and awards our more than 5,000 faculty have won for their remarkable scholarship, teaching, and engagement. But numbers alone don't do it. There is a better metric.

A highlight of my job has been getting out to meet students, faculty, and staff. On Move-in Day, I went out with a pad and pen and asked our newest students, the Class of 2026, for 26 top things to do on and around campus. While they were giving me fantastic suggestions, I was learning about them. The new class in many ways captures the vitality, breadth, and reach of Penn. They come from 84 countries and 49 U.S. states, and they look like the world: encompassing race and ethnicity, gender, walks of life, faith, and points of view. A significant number will be the first in their families to graduate from college. They say they're most motivated

(continued on page 7)



Liz Magill succeeds Judith Rodin and Amy Gutmann as the third woman president of Penn, a first in the Ivy league.

(continued from page 6)

by community impact, a commitment to learning, cultural engagement, and personal development.

Our students learn and engage with a faculty second to none. A diverse faculty that contributes to our fundamental knowledge, deepens our understanding, and shares discoveries with the world. Their contributions range from ingenuity that saves lives—such as mRNA technology and CAR T therapies—to new insights that sing to us all.

Take the work of Penn scholars like Dr. Emily Wilson. She is the first woman to publish an English translation of Homer's *Odyssey*. Dr. Wilson has garnered every imaginable honor for her translation and is lauded for breathing new immediacy and fresh relevance into one of the oldest epics we know. Her latest project is a new translation of the *Iliad*. Thinking on scholarship like hers, it is clear to me that, just like any longstanding theories and other orthodoxies, translations need reexamination with fresh eyes. That's what it takes to understand the human condition anew in a world that only spins forward.

It's also a world and a reality that we still know so very little about. That is just one reason why basic research at Penn is so critical. Solutions to even the greatest challenges such as climate change depend first upon fundamental understanding—like the scholarship of Dr. Joseph Francisco. He applies novel tools from experimental physical and theoretical chemistry to enhance our understanding of the atmosphere at a molecular level. Illuminating the secrets of those chemical processes is essential to ensuring a sustainable planet.

Or take the pioneering work of Penn physicists Dr. Charles Kane and Dr. Eugene Mele. Full disclosure: I am a legal scholar, not a quantum physicist. But when I spoke with Drs. Kane and Mele, who share a Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics for their discoveries, I was inspired by their theories about quantum topology and symmetry. They're exploring the unique properties of topological insulators, materials that could lead to new levels of energy efficiency, and quantum computing. Maybe, one day, we'll look back on their basic discoveries as our age's kite and key—only unimaginably tiny.

IV.

Which brings me to the big question before us. Franklin declared, "Let the experiment be made." In the centuries since, time and again, Penn has met the moment. Today, Penn's effect in and on the world has never been greater.

Now, we must ask: What comes next? What does the world need from Penn?

We face many challenges. Faith in the promise of democratic self-government and the usefulness of institutions has eroded, not just here but around the world. Climate change brings existential threats. We stand on the cusp of revolutionary changes in medicine and human health and are only beginning to realize the promise of fundamental discoveries. And too many people lack access. Our society is profoundly polarized. We can't agree on the facts. The gap widens between those who have a lot and those who have too little. Many people no longer believe that knowledge, education, service to others, and arts and culture are the best and surest paths to well-lived and better lives. And we require leaders—broadly and deeply learned, service-minded, and bearing all the other hallmarks of an excellent education.

Yes, the challenges are many. The need is great. But here's my message: In its long illustrious history, Penn has always met the moment. Now and for the future, Penn will make the moment.

We can be confident enough in our strengths to be bold, to take risks, to play offense. We can stand tall on Penn's distinctive values and the creativity and tenacity of Penn's people.

Making the moment. What does that feel like? What does that look like?

Let me offer you an image: It's drawing down the lightning.

A few years after Franklin astounded the world with his discoveries, a Scottish physician wrote to him. He asked how Franklin had first thought to conduct his famous experiment with the kite and the key. Franklin shared his thinking freely, his drive to help humankind and build knowledge, his burning curiosity, the steps in his scientific process. The sum of his efforts, as he put it so memorably, was to draw down the lightning.

Here is what making the moment, what drawing down the lightning looks like to me. It requires the right kite and key. Ours are Opportunity and Truth.

Over many centuries, universities have been unique drivers of these two



Liz Magill walks in the academic procession as part of her inauguration.

things. At our most fundamental, we seek truth and convey it. At our most aspirational, we enhance opportunity and hone the tools for attaining it. No other institution in the world can claim the staying power of universities. No other institution today can fully claim our legacy. Now, today, the very nature of truth and the means to opportunity are fragile. The University of Pennsylvania is called upon to redouble our historic—and forward-looking—commitment to these twin principles.

For Franklin, opportunity meant finding new and innovative means anywhere to improve the lives of people everywhere. For Penn now, it means maximizing possibilities for people of all backgrounds. It means increasing fairness. It means strengthening diversity and inclusion. Both within Penn and all around. It's the sum of Penn's efforts throughout our city, the nation, and the world. Never in our history have we been more strongly positioned—never before has the word "opportunity" been so rich with possibility.

The same holds true for Truth. Penn empowers truth through our teaching, research, and invention. We have never been in a better place, or better prepared, to drive the highest levels of interdisciplinary collaborations. We will do even more to bring together the very best minds with the best resources. We will fuel that signature Penn drive to create and disseminate knowledge to bring about a better world.

Penn welcomes a challenge—we thrive on it. To answer the great challenges of our time, Opportunity and Truth will be our conductors, our kite and key. Our means to draw down the lightning.

Which brings me to the most important perspective of all: tomorrow. The throughline of Benjamin Franklin's life and of Penn's history—and present—is an unblinking focus on the future. Franklin sometimes regretted being born too soon, deprived of knowing what would be known 100 years hence. We have that virtuous impatience, that wonderful urgency to put our knowledge and discoveries to work in order to make the future better for all. The reason we're all here today, really, is for tomorrow.

V.

Opportunity, Truth, Tomorrow. These ideas define Penn's history, its mission, and what we bring to the world. They embody an uncompromising commitment to excellence in all we do while constantly striving for better in everything we do. That work is ongoing. The work remains unending.

Today, we commit our University and ourselves not only to meeting the moment but to making the moment. It is the right thing, the necessary thing to do. And we are capable of doing these great things.

What is truly uniquely Penn?

It is making the experiment.

It is making the moment.

It is drawing down the lightning.

As Penn's ninth president, I pledge to do everything in my power to support this University, this city, and our people in making the moment.

The future awaits. We stand ready. Let us draw down the lightning—together. Thank you.