

DIOCESAN MISSION PLANNING COMMISSION

The Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania

240 South 4th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106 ♦ www.diopa.org

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Introduction

The latter half of the 20th Century and these first years of the 21st have presented significant challenges for the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania. Our population is shifting from home and workplace in the city to homes and workplaces stretched across the region. The shift in the regional economy from manufacturing to one that is more diverse has created significant challenges all around us; pockets of poor and seemingly disenfranchised folk are dotting the urban landscape. Many of our churches are feeling pressure. Some have dwindling membership and leadership in almost all areas of the Diocese have relied on diminishing endowments to fund property upkeep and in more recent years to pay for clergy salaries and benefits as well as the work of the church. Yet the commandment from Jesus stays the same, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20).

In order to take on these challenges and the many others that face our Diocese, the Diocesan Mission Planning Commission (DMPC) was birthed and we are well into our work. As first steps, remembering that God is with us even to the end of the age, we are presenting three resolutions for your consideration. The first is a Vision Statement developed to cast the broad idea that our commitment to Christ is lived out in varied ways though clearly as a community of communities. Second, the Mission Statement was drafted to help us focus our ministry and claim our Baptismal Covenant. Third, we confess that there is significant work still to be done; significant challenges do not beget simple answers; our third resolution asks this body to constitute this Commission for another year of work.

Here we present a general overview of the work of the DMPC and our several reports:

- The Reconciliation Team attempts to tell the truth about where we have been and where we are now as a community of communities. We invite each community to practice a discipline of gathering around scripture, sharing sacred stories and using the Kaleidoscope Institute Respectful Communications Guidelines in all meetings of the communities of the diocese.
- The Justice and Peace team pushes the door open a little further with a discussion about justice and race, an honest and open conversation that is still needed within the community of communities of the diocese. We need to expand our conversation with other marginalized groups, such as the poor, the disabled, elderly folk, and the GLBTQ community, just to name a few. We invite the

people of the diocese to a Justice and Peace revival/workshop event in the coming year to inspire and empower our work in witness to God's call for Justice.

- The Congregational Development Team attempts to provide answers to a myriad of challenges presented to the commission by the 227th convention, issues that face congregations and dioceses of the 21st century. Although this work is unfinished, we also provide some tools to help congregations face challenges, such as a new *MissionInsite* demographic service. In 2012, we invite ten congregations to work with the Kaleidoscope Institute in a missional redevelopment project of congregational transformation. Our intention is to enhance and complement the work of the bishop and others faithfully working with the congregations of the diocese.
- The Mission and Outreach Team invites the communities of the diocese to share with us reports of your mission and outreach ministries throughout the diocese. There is much good work in progress that the larger diocese is unaware of.

Please take this report home, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest it. Prayerfully consider how each of us fits into our Community of Communities of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, and how we are called to live out the commandments of Christ and *commit*.

Executive summary

The Diocesan Mission Planning Commission (DMPC) was created by the 226th Diocesan Convention and continued at the 227th Convention. The DMPC, appointed by the Bishop and Standing Committee, was authorized to review Christ's mission and ministry through the people of the Diocese of Pennsylvania; engage and consult Diocesan leadership groups in an evaluation of these ministries, make recommendations for the future, and begin a process of reconciliation to help us move forward together in Christ.

The core work, as defined by the 227th Convention of the Commission included continuing a process of Christian reconciliation that would allow all members of the Diocese to move together into a new future; continuing the process of evaluating current missions and ministries and congregations, with appropriate recommendations for affirmation, reconfiguration, or redevelopment; examining demographic, financial, and cultural trends and their potential impact on future congregational mission and sustainability, mindful of our commitment to eradicate all racist structures, practices, and policies; envisioning creatively what new structures and ministry models Christ might lead us to in the future, including the establishing of new ministries, missions and congregations; and reporting the preliminary findings and recommendations of the Commission to the 228th Diocesan Convention.

A Common Vision as our First Thing. During our mandated process of review, engagement and consultation, we found that there was no common vision for the Diocese, no fully shared understanding of who we are or why we are here, beyond being the place “where it all began.” It is usual and customary for congregations to create and affirm a vision statement every few years; yet our Diocese has not done so. We believe that a common vision is necessary if we are to “move forward together in Christ.” We are more than our individual congregations, institutions, missions, ministries, committees and commissions. So, broadly consulting throughout the Diocese, during the Spring of 2011, the Mission Planning Commission created a Vision Statement and a Mission Statement with Ministry Priorities to guide us into a new future together. It is our prayer that these statements will give us clarity and purpose, focusing us on our purpose as a Diocese. The Vision and Mission statements are on the agenda for approval at this 228th Convention. We expect that these statements will be modified and changed at coming conventions as the Diocese continues this process of discerning how we live out our calling as a community of communities committed to Christ.

Our Vision: The Lay Persons, Bishop, Priests and Deacons of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania are “A Community of Communities ... Committed to Christ.”

Our Mission: That the Mission of the Laity, Bishops, Priests and Deacons of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania is to:

- + Gather regularly for worship, Biblical teaching, fellowship, prayer and the breaking of bread.
- + Resist evil and whenever we fall into sin repent and return to the Lord
- + Proclaim by Word and example the Good News of God in Christ
- + Seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbors as ourselves
- + Strive for justice and peace among all people, and
- + Respect the dignity of every human being.

The Diocesan Mission Statement is informed by the Baptismal Covenant. We respect our diversity as we strive for unity under the Triune God. The historic Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania seeks to live as part of the Body of Christ in Southeastern Pennsylvania, serving as a collaborative catalyst, conduit and coordinator of the Ministry Priorities of its congregations.

The Ministry Priorities. The following Ministry Priorities help us respond to the call from Jesus, as Head of the Church and Author of Salvation, acknowledging the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in all of our efforts to glorify God as we work together:

- **Reconciliation:** Our goal as a Diocese is to be united in the peace of Christ as a *Community of Communities*. Through the ministry of reconciliation, we will be allowed and freed to move together with trust so that we all may be one.

- **Justice and Peace:** Our goal as a Diocese is to provide and support initiatives that promote justice and peace within, among and beyond our congregations and communities.
- **Discipleship Formation:** Our goal as a Diocese is to provide the resources and education that our congregations will be formational centers, equipping lay and ordained disciples for ministry to the world.
- **Evangelism:** Our goal as a Diocese is to support congregations as they invite people into a relationship with Jesus Christ, living into the Great Commission and Great Commandment.
- **Congregational Development:** Our goal as a Diocese is to develop and provide resources and expertise for leaders and promote best practices, so that our congregational communities will thrive according to their unique size and character.
- **Mission/Outreach:** Our goal as a Diocese is to nurture and support mission and ministry within the Diocese of Pennsylvania, allowing for both Diocesan and congregational initiatives, and/or a collaboration between the two:
 - Through our congregations;
 - Through Diocesan led initiatives supported by Diocesan Convention;
 - Through congregational or Diocesan mission initiatives reaching beyond the borders of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- **Stewardship:** Our goal as a Diocese is to faithfully shepherd all the resources entrusted to us for Kingdom work.

The 2011 Members of the Diocesan Mission Planning Commission

John T. Sorensen, *Chair; Saint John's Church, Glen Mills*

Sam Adu-Andoh
Church of St. Andrew and St. Monica
Jennie M. Anderson,
Church of the Epiphany, Royersford
Lionel Broome
Saint Luke's, Germantown
Jack Henn
St. Christopher's Church, Gladwyne
Norman (Mac) McCausland
Church of the Good Samaritan, Paoli
Jeffrey Moretzsohn
Church of the Good Samaritan, Paoli
Candace J. Woessner
Christ Church, Pottstown
Kathleen Walter, *Saint Jude's Church*

Kathryn A. Andonian
Church of the Holy Spirit, Harleysville
William Berry
Calvary & St. Augustine's Church
Jonathan N. Clodfelter
Saint Mark's Church, Frankford
Beth W. Hixon
Redeemer, Bryn Mawr
Isaac J. Miller
Retired, Church of the Advocate
Emily Richards
St. Peter's Church, Glenside
Gregory M. Wilson
Saint James, Aston
Emily Wolf, *Trinity, Solebury*

Consultants: Eric Law and Bill Cruse of the Kaleidoscope Institute

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¹ The Mission Planning Commission has concentrated on three reports for this year's convention with more work to be continued for the 2012 convention of the Diocese of Pennsylvania.

Reconciliation Priority Team Report

Reconciliation: Our goal as a Diocese is to be united in the peace of Christ as a Community of Communities. Through the ministry of reconciliation, we will be free to move together with trust so that we all may be one.

Team Members: Beth Hixon, Emily Richardson

Biblical References

John 17:11; 20-23

And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Ephesians 4:1-7;11-16

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knitted together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

Reconciliation Priority Team Issues: The issues we are trying to address are: Disunity, distrust and hostility between various, and not always easily identified, individuals and groups within the Diocese. Disunity, distrust and hostility are expressed in fight or flight attitudes and behaviors, often demonstrated in behaviors that disrespect the dignity of human beings and are often concentrated and most visible around Diocesan power and authority figures and structures. Commission members postulate that this state of affairs severely compromises the proclamation and living out of the Gospel throughout the entire Diocese, and is therefore a condition that profoundly affects the mission, ministry, core identity and purpose of the community of communities of the Diocese of Pennsylvania. Addressing this condition of the Diocese is therefore of paramount importance.

- I. **Issue Identification.** The events and circumstances surrounding Charles Bennison's inhibition as Bishop Diocesan created a crisis that led to the naming of "reconciliation" as one of four primary issues to be addressed by the Diocesan Mission Planning Commission, a commission mandated by the Diocese of Pennsylvania Convention (DMPC) in 2009 and the commission submitting this report. The issue, though is likely much deeper than this presenting issue.
- II. **The development of the problem statement and recommendations.** The reconciliation issue statement was developed through the work of a five-member DMPC task force in consultation with Eric Law and the Kaleidoscope Institute staff and finalized by a majority of commission members. Recommendations were developed in consultation with Eric Law and other Kaleidoscope Institute staff, with diocesan leaders, and others who are knowledgeable and experienced in the scriptural, theological, ecclesiological and systems theory underpinnings and aspects of conflict resolution within faith communities.
- III. **History and Background of Reconciliation Issues in the Diocese.**
 - The reconciliation team members who have worked consistently with this priority for the last two years are convinced that only the tip of the systemic iceberg is discernable at this time and the tip itself is often obscured or changes shape as the fog of fear and reactivity rolls in and out. The antecedents and dynamics of conflict and power/authority issues within the Diocese of Pennsylvania are considered by many of those consulted to be multifaceted, complex, culture-bound and worthy of intentional, prayerful, inspired, systemic, possibly systematic, and most likely extended engagement and study that is crafted in a way that will help this community of communities to heal, to be strengthened and to engage the many transitions and changes before it.
 - **Previous steps** taken by the Diocese to address conflict and reconciliation at the level of inquiry, assessment, and intervention being recommended by the DMPC are, as yet, unknown to commission members.

- **Episcopal Church, Diocesan and Cultural issues and trends that contribute to Diocesan conflict.** To name a few possibilities that may have roots across generations: Uninspired, dormant relationships with God in Christ; profound human loss and suffering that is unheard, unacknowledged and unaddressed; economic realities and inequalities that stress individuals, divide communities and isolate congregations from one another and that often particularly afflict minorities; stereotyping that results in overt or insidious, unjust treatment of whole groups of people; the culture of violence, fear, survival of the fittest, individualism and greed in which the church floats and from which it struggles, not always successfully, to differentiate itself; a congregational (closed system) mind-set in which “hunkering-down” is a fundamentally more familiar and comfortable way of being and coping with uncertainty and fear than is reaching out to the unknown other (God / brothers and sisters in Christ) in order to engage *reciprocal* relationships that heal and strengthen the larger community as well as its individuals; “power-over” based leadership operating on many levels; lack of transparency; blaming and scape-goating.

IV. Current status of reconciliation issues, with possibilities for resolution. The Reconciliation Journey of the Mission Planning Commission. When members of the DMPC began to meet in April of 2010, the tension generated by our diversity around any number of issues and factors was palpable. At each meeting, we gathered first to review and affirm our guidelines for respectful communication and the mutual invitation process, an invaluable practice that, despite its simple content, had a most profound impact on our interactions and growth as a community. We then broke into small groups for Bible study and prayer and then met as a large group to discuss the content with which we had been charged by Convention. We always ended our day-long meetings with a celebration of Holy Eucharist. Over the months, as we listened to scripture and one another and as we prayed and worshiped together, our trust, acceptance and appreciation of one another grew. Differences that seemed monumental and anxiety provoking early-on did not evaporate, but were effectively dwarfed by the growing sense of a larger picture and the experience of becoming one. As trust developed, our willingness to risk expanded and our work became more and more creative even though members dropped in and out of the process according to other claims on time and energy.

Initially, members of the Commission lived in tension around the definition of the word “reconciliation” as it was to be applied to the Diocese of Pennsylvania. As the DMPC began its work, the tension revolved around the question of whether the work of reconciliation was to be focused primarily on Diocesan reconciliation with Bishop Bennison. When we moved more solidly into our work with our consultants, a bigger picture of the history of conflict and the ways conflict has been engaged in the Diocese began to emerge if only briefly. When Bishop Bennison resumed the work of the Diocesan Bishop in August 2010, the issue of reconciliation in supercharged fashion

again focused on the question of Diocesan reconciliation with him. From that point forward, energy was directed to immediate needs of the group formulating a structure for congregational development. The healing fruits of trust and community building allowed the *conversation* about reconciliation to lie fallow, to assume its proper place in space and time as more urgent work was productively engaged. In time, as the Diocese strengthens and becomes more responsive and trustworthy, the deeper work of reconciliation between individuals or community entities ready and willing to engage one another in dialogue, in authentic and respectful listening and speaking and then in amendment of life and forgiveness will, no doubt, take its place in the life of the larger Community. Fostering trust within a healthy, growing community and attending to human conflict is likely to be a never ending process that can and should always be consciously and carefully tended as one would tend every inch of a garden that was conceived for the purpose of flourishing and glorifying its Creator.

V. Recommendations for Reconciliation in the Diocese.

The plans of the reconciliation team are to build upon present efforts of the Mission Planning Commission and others in the Diocese for the specific and ongoing healing ministry of trust building, community building, and reconciliation.

1. Establish a subcommittee of the DMPC that will do the following:
 - **Kaleidoscope Bible Study and Respectful Communication Methods.** Since the KI communication methods have been such a help to reconciliation on the Mission Planning Commission, we seek to share and encourage these methods throughout the Diocese. We will develop materials, gain significant support throughout the Diocese for, and invite the congregations and committees of the Diocesan community to learn and practice Kaleidoscope Institute elements of *Respectful Communication, Mutual Invitation and Bible Study* at Diocesan meetings and gatherings.
 - Recruit and train teams of volunteers, and hold workshops, to instruct Diocesan communities who wish to learn about the practices of *Kaleidoscope Institute* elements of *Respectful Communication, Mutual Invitation and Bible Study*. There are brief versions of these methods that can even be used to begin vestry and committee meetings.
 - Report outcomes to the Bishop, Standing Committee and Diocesan Council, and invite these bodies to practice KI methods.
 - Regularly review and revise program content and process and outcome criteria according to new knowledge gained from consultants, publications, and experiential observations. Be open to learning other methods and best practices that encourage healthy relationships and reconciliation in the Diocesan community.
 - Make recommendations to future Diocesan Conventions in the form of a report and resolutions as deemed important to the ongoing health of this reconciliation ministry.

2. **Other Reconciliation Practices: Ethnography.** We plan to create a task force under the auspices of the DMPC, with the intention of publishing a work which will explore, in consultation with the Bishop and/or other diocesan leaders, a ministry of ethnographic listening² designed to provide individuals and groups opportunities to share stories of parish or Diocesan community life. Ethnographic research is a growing field in congregational Development.³ As Dori Grinenko Baker observes, “Something beautiful happens when a skilled listener creates a safe space for stories to be told in an unhurried, unworried fashion.”
3. **Collaboration with Anti-Racism Commission, the Union of Black Episcopalians (UBE) and the Justice & Peace Priority Team.** Create a team under the auspices of the DMPC to begin exploring and describing the characteristics of conflicts and injustice in the Diocese from generation to generation throughout the history of the Diocese especially as related to the exercise of power, authority and race. The intent is to produce a document that will describe and share. This work should be an asset to any Diocesan self-study undertaken in the future.

Our reconciliation charge from diocesan convention: RESOLVED: That the core work of the Commission will include:

1. Continuing a process of Christian reconciliation that would allow all members of the Diocese to move together into a new future;

² From Hope and Ethnography as adapted from [Greenhouses of Hope: Congregations Growing Young Leaders Who Will Change the World](#) by Dori Grinenko Baker, copyright ©2010 by the Alban Institute.

³ Professor David Gortner includes ethnography practices in the Doctor of Ministry program at Virginia Seminary.

Justice and Peace Priority Team Report

Justice and Peace: *Our goal as a Diocese is to provide and support initiatives that promote justice and peace within, among and beyond our congregations and communities.*

Team Members: Isaac Miller, William Berry, Mary Laney, Reed Brinkman, Arthur Sudler and Jane Cosby

Scripture: Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and its righteousness (God's Justice), and all the rest will be added unto you.

In the first three Gospels, one of the dominant themes is the Kingdom of God, or in Matthew's Gospel, the Kingdom of Heaven. Though this emphasis seems lessened in the Fourth Gospel, the concern for the reign of God's Love, Justice and Mercy is reflected in the story of Nicodemus nighttime encounter with Jesus. Jesus tells his visitor, who has sought Him out under the cover of darkness, that he cannot see, much less enter the Kingdom unless he is born again, "born from above," as one contemporary commentator translates the phrase. There is a thrust in all the Gospels that presents the work of Jesus and the Spirit as the process by which we become Children of God—children who serve God's vision for us and the whole of humankind—as opposed to idolatrous servants of the one who holds sway in the world as it is and ourselves.

A new social order, a radical overthrow of the present regime rooted in the prophetic witness, is envisioned throughout Scripture, and is to be found in the words of Jesus. This anticipated overthrow of lived oppressive historical circumstances, sometimes accompanied by visions of violence has been radically affected by the non-violence of the Cross. It was Gandhi, the Hindu leader of the Empire shaking resistance in India, who described Jesus as the greatest practitioner of non-violence in the whole of history. Jesus' Way of the Cross, of course, touched Martin King and whole generations in this country and the struggle in South Africa. One could argue the same for much of what is referred to as the largely non-violent Arab Spring (at least in Tunisia and Egypt, where Copts and Muslims stood together) in the world of Islam. Interestingly, it is so frequently the young (infants having been newly born?) who hear and respond to Jesus' and the Prophets' vision/call. Liturgically in our Church this drama, always present, is captured most vividly in Holy Week and Advent.

In spite of Justice as a theme deeply rooted in our Biblical and liturgical traditions and the faith itself, the Church (thanks be to God for the exceptions that have kept this tradition alive) has managed throughout much of its history to smother this theme of Justice in its practice. Howard Zinn points to a monk as the person through whom the Roman Church's sanction of trans Atlantic slave trade originated. Early in the history

of slavery in “the new world” there was a debate about Baptism of slaves. Some argued that the Africans held as slaves had no souls, and therefore could not be baptized. Those whose position prevailed argued that baptism would make for more docile, malleable slaves. Thank God that those who escaped slavery in this country—to a large extent right here in our See City—found at least a remnant who would become foot soldier activists and leaders in the antebellum abolitionist movement.

In our Diocese, we are known through out the Church for courageous work in behalf of Justice that is associated with names like Robert DeWitt, David Gracie, Paul Washington and others. We have provided four presidents of the Union of Black Episcopalians—Jessie Anderson Sr., Jessie Jr., and Barbara Harris, with Tom Logan having served as the president of the organization that preceded UBE—and, of course, Absalom Jones and Richard Allen led the first resistance to racism within the Church in this country.

It is with the movement to which Martin Luther King lent his eloquent intellect and voice (and gave his life) that the Church in recent history reached its high point in standing for the Justice to which we are all called. It is significant to note all the movements toward Justice (and the academic areas of study, women’s, Native American, Latino/Latina, Post Colonial, in addition to African studies programs) that the Movement gave impetus to. One could also argue that this same assertion of Justice’s call has given rise to a flowering of literary genius that has given us all the artistry of writers from Chenoa Achebe, Arundati Roy, August Wilson, Toni Morrison, the late Manning Marable and our own Diocese’s Lorene Cary.

At the present, however, (again, thanks be to God for the exceptions) it would seem, as many scholars have lamented, that we have lapsed back into a notion of privatized faith (and a culture in which “spirituality,” with its almost totally apolitical associations, has almost logically replaced faith for so many). This private, “spiritualized” approach to the faith, where concern is focused on the personal and familial is the piety that has allowed the Church to stand as silent observers of so many of history’s crimes. This personal, familial, tribal and cultural piety, once learned, is part of what allowed the horror of Rwanda some seventeen years ago, or the religious cover for so much other conflict in the Third World.

Struggling with declining numbers and diminished resources in a declining economy, our priority as Church becomes Church Growth for the sake of institutional survival alone, and the Church’s involvement in the public discourse seems more and more to be associated with “fringe” positions. Such a posture is simply not deeply challenging—not calling us to offer ourselves to God in the Hope that by the Spirit, our flawed gifts might be transformed into struggle that approaches the Love, Justice and Mercy of God’s vision for us.

It is in accepting the Challenge of the Kingdom, as has been part of the Church's call from Jesus days among us (and before Him in the call of the Prophets), that we have and have been given by God's Grace, the opportunity to receive what we need for hard pressed congregations and for the sake of the integrity of the witness of the Church as a whole.

There are probably two aspects of Justice ministry that we in the Episcopal Church, along with those in most mainline churches, must wrestle with. First, Justice is not service. The fact that people are in need—Philadelphia as a city has the highest percentage of persons living at or below the poverty line of any major city in the country—testifies to the entrenched effects of the injustice suffered by too many for far too long. (As a Diocese we have the largest number of African Americans, persons whose history is rooted in the institution of slavery, so cleverly--and hypocritically--avoided in the Constitution penned here.) These effects—the effects of what is called institutional racism—touch not just blacks in this country, but all of us, regardless of race.

We are bound by Jesus in Matthew 25 to seek to serve those in need with soup kitchens, by providing shelter for the homeless, after school programs for students of a largely segregated and underfunded school system, clothes closets, etc.

Justice ministries, however, seek to address the causes of the need to which we respond in so many instances remarkably well, both as congregations and through the work of Episcopal Community Services. Service is in so many instances what we “do for others,” while Justice allows us all to seek to respond to the Kingdom's Call together.

Though related and appropriately paired in many instances, Justice and Service are different. Justice always means power. Fredrick Douglass captured the necessity of power in the work of Justice as eloquently as any one:

“Let me give you a word of the philosophy of reform. The whole history of the progress of human liberty shows that all concessions yet made to her august claims, have been born of earnest struggle. The conflict has been exciting, agitating, all-absorbing, and for the time being, putting all other tumults to silence. It must do this or it does nothing. If there is no struggle there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground, they want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters.”

"This struggle may be a moral one, or it may be a physical one, and it may be both moral and physical, but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.”

Power, the power to which we are called in pursuit of the Kingdom's Justice, is in a very real sense radically different from that of the world and those who wield power after the example of the one who holds sway in it. John captures this difference as Jesus washes the disciples' feet on the night before His Death. Jesus says in effect that rather than "lording it over", His example is to serve...and He serves by dying, modeling the admonition that we take up our own crosses. Power that points to the Kingdom is never power over, but power "with". "Power with" was the most vital ingredient of the struggles in South Africa, in the Near East, in this country in the days of Martin King and those who stood with him, the same is true of India in the time Gandhi.

This was the basic resource of the movements South Africa, in the Near East, in this country in the days of Martin King and those who stood with him, the same is true of India in the time Gandhi.

It is our proposal, as represented in the attached resolution, that the 228th Convention of the Diocese support a revival/workshop at which congregations might be given an opportunity to respond to the Gospel's Justice/Kingdom call in these times. Specifically, we would allow persons and congregations in the Diocese to begin the process of organizing for the sake of the power by which the reign of God's Love, Justice and Mercy is made real.

Part of the reason for this revival/workshop initiative is that we as people of faith in this culture have an almost visceral reaction against the notion of power in relation to our faith. Part of this is an unintended consequence of the basis, referred to above, upon which the decision to baptize slaves was made, by which we have all been rendered passive, by a piety that focuses on the private issues of life—family, sexuality, personal moral probity as to whether we tithe mint, dill and cumin—whether we are "good" girls and boys. It takes time to break through this cultural corruption of the faith and it takes disciplined work together to make the abstract notion of Justice real in our practice.

Finally, much of this is written out of the history of Black Folk in this country. This is not to imply that we as a church are called to struggle only for Justice in light of the nation's long, sad history with regard to race and the economic exploitation that is so closely associated with it. Nor is it to imply that women, immigrants, native Americans, those with sexual orientations differ from the "norm", and the desolation of God's Creation do not cry out like the unpaid wages of exploited workers in James. Martin King observed that justice denied to any is justice denied to all. It is simply that the longest sustained reflection on and resistance to injustice in our culture has come from among the "least of these", those deemed despised and rejected. As the late Edward Said observed in reflection on the struggles for justice among all the

world's oppressed, There is room for all at the (banquet, to use a Biblical phrase) table of Victory. And there is room for all in the in the struggle and witness in response to Jesus' Kingdom call...AND THERE IS A JOY OF WHICH THE ANGELS ARE JEALOUS IN THIS KINGDOM STRUGGLE IN WHICH THE KINGDOM IS INDEED PRESENT TO WHICH THE SAINTS HAVE ALWAYS GIVEN THEIR LIVES. Did not He say, "Whenever two or three of you are gathered together, I AM—recalling perhaps God's ancient name—in the midst of you"?

If we can build a vision and passion for ministry like this, even if it is not shared by every last congregation, youth will beat their way to us in the same way that they saw something that resembled a Kingdom hope in the 08 election. If we can build in the proposed revival-workshop initiative an opportunity for all congregations to come together to formulate the manner in which they are called to respond to Jesus and the Prophets' call, perhaps even old folk "will find their strength renewed, They will walk and not faint, will run and not be weary, will mount up on wings like eagles."

Justice and Peace Revival/Workshop

We invite the people of the diocese, including those doing justice work or considering organizing for justice in our diocese, to a Justice and Peace revival/workshop event in the coming year to inspire and empower our work in witness to God's call for Justice. Our plan is to bring in speakers of national stature to inspire our commitment to justice, to educate us and give us the tools to do this work. Watch for our announcement as planning continues during 2012. Two leaders we are hoping to bring to the diocese are Biblical Scholar Ched Myers, author of *Binding the Strong Man*, a commentary on the Gospel of Mark, and leader of Bartimaeus Cooperative Ministries (www.chedmyers.org); and renowned preacher James Forbes, Pastor Emeritus of Riverside Baptist Church.

Congregational Development Priority Team Report

Congregational Development: *Our goal as a Diocese is to develop and provide resources and expertise for leaders and promote best practices, so that our congregational communities will thrive according to their unique size and character.*

Team Members: John Sorensen, Jon Clodfelter, George Vosburgh, Nora Adelman, Kathy Andonian, Michael Knight, Sam Adu Andoh, Kathy Walter, Peyton Craighill

Executive Summary

Issues Surrounding Congregational Development. Dramatic changes in the cultural and religious interests of our country and region are having an impact on the future of the congregations of the Episcopal Church. The demographic effect is that the normative “market” of the Episcopal Church is declining both in numbers and in terms of percentage of the population. These changes will require that we deeply, thoroughly, courageously and intentionally rethink some of the basic assumptions about what it means to be “church” and specifically what it means to be the Diocese of Pennsylvania in the Episcopal Church. Many of our congregations are shrinking and declining in their ability to sustain congregational life.

We also have congregations that are growing or that are stable and able to sustain congregational life. Declining parishes can learn from the best practices of growing congregations. Congregations that honestly examine their lives and are willing to change can grow or become sustainable, if they are willing to become a new creation. The changes required of us if we expect growth will be radical and extremely difficult to envision and embrace. It is essential that we quickly and deliberately undertake the hard work necessary to honestly evaluate how our unique Episcopalian ethos, worship and history may be revisioned to be relevant and attractive to emerging generations and demographic groups.

The Design of this Congregational Development Priority Team Report. Generally there are two complementary outcomes in this report:

- **Support for all Congregations:** We provide resources and expertise for congregational leaders to help their congregational communities thrive.
- **Guidelines for aiding declining congregations.** We construct and recommend practices and processes for evaluation, affirmation, reconfiguration, or redevelopment of declining congregations in a fair and just way.

What is a congregation? We spend some time with the liturgies of the *Book of Common Prayer* examining and defining “congregation” in the Diocese of Pennsylvania. We

reason that if we want healthy congregations we ought to describe and define what we mean so we know what we're trying to become. "Sustainability" is a strong theme.

The Role of the Bishop and Diocese in Development of Sustainable Congregations (not in crisis). We examine the roles of Bishop and Diocese and make recommendations for helping congregations thrive, including a Congregational Development staff person to collaborate with the Bishop, Diocesan Consultation Team and other Diocesan partners; best practices sharing, clergy colleague groups, canonical changes and demographic research tools.

Congregations not Self-Sustaining: Congregations in Crisis, Decline, Redevelopment or Receiving Funding from the Diocese. There are a number of congregations that require the intervention of the Bishop and Diocese if they are to continue, or find solutions to their decline. We give guidance in this section by recommending

- General education in Life Cycle theory and strategic planning
- Structural models for reconfiguring congregations
- A new emphasis on the small church and "pairings"
- Vicar's status changes to provide career stability to clergy of small congregations
- Categories for deciding when a congregation is a Mission
- Support and accountability structures for all Mission clergy
- The category of "DCMM Congregation" should be replaced by merging these clergy and congregations with a support structure for all mission congregations.

An Invitation to a Process of Congregational Transformation. In 2012, we invite ten congregations to work with the Kaleidoscope Institute in a missional redevelopment project of congregational transformation. Our intention is to enhance and complement the work of the bishop and others faithfully working with the congregations of the diocese.

MissionInsite: We conclude by describing a demographic research tool to be provided to all clergy and congregations to help them plan the mission of their congregation.

The Congregational Development Team had the charge from Convention in mind as we worked: RESOLVED: That the core work of the Commission will include:

2. Continuing the process of evaluating current missions and ministries and congregations, with appropriate recommendations for affirmation, reconfiguration, or redevelopment;
3. Examining demographic, financial, and cultural trends and their potential impact on future congregational mission and sustainability, mindful of our commitment to eradicate all racist structures, practices, and policies;
4. Envisioning creatively what new structures and ministry models Christ might lead us to in the future, including the establishing of new ministries, missions and congregations;

The Congregational Development Report

Issues for the Congregational Development team. The congregational development team of the Diocesan Mission Planning Commission (DMPC), working over the Summer and into the Fall of 2011, has worked under two job descriptions, one from our 2011 Diocesan Mission Statement (#1 below) and the other left over from our original charge from the 2009 and 2010 Diocesan Conventions (#2 below):

- 1. Congregational Development:** *Our goal is to develop and provide resources and expertise for leaders and promote best practices, so that all our congregational communities will thrive according to their unique size and character.*
- 2. Congregational Reconfiguration, Money and Imagining the Future.** We have repeatedly heard from leaders throughout the Diocese, over the two years of our existence, that what Diocesan leaders were and are most expecting us to produce for the convention is the content of the following resolve, that the DMPC:
“Continuing the process of evaluating current missions and ministries and congregations, with appropriate recommendations for affirmation, reconfiguration, or redevelopment;

This work is also combined with other tasks in the 2009 resolve, which include demographic research, mindfulness to a Diocesan history of racism; and creative imagining of new ways of being church or planting new churches within the Diocese. And most importantly for many, these issues are related to money, and the appropriation each year of hundreds of thousands of dollars of Diocese of Pennsylvania money to congregations and missions throughout the Diocese.

The Congregation. We spent some time, both within the larger DMPC over two years, and in our more recent Congregational Development Priority Team deliberations, considering the definition and purpose of the congregation in the Episcopal Church tradition. What is a congregation? Why are we here? What is our purpose? Those answers begin in scripture. The Book of Acts tells us that the first Christians instinctively gathered in congregational communities, and Paul’s Epistles are written directly to Congregations, or to the people in them, establishing for all of us that the primary place where Christian faith is lived, learned and practiced is the Congregation. We members of Diocesan Convention all practice our faith in congregations that either joined to create the original Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania, or were created by the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania, or by one of its congregations. This is part of why we keep returning to our vision, that we, as a Diocese, are a “community of communities” bound together in Christ. Definitions of the congregational community are found in a number of places, but for brevity here, we offer a definition of the congregation based on the baptism liturgy and the liturgy for the Consecration of a Church as found in the *Book of Common Prayer*.

The Purpose of the Congregations of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania is to live, practice and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ as described in the baptismal covenant⁴ of the *Book of Common Prayer*. Each congregation orders its common life and administers its resources to be a place of apostolic teaching and fellowship, Eucharistic worship, prayer, repentance and reconciliation; each congregation forms its people to live lives that proclaim by word and example the Good News of Christ; and each congregation reaches out to serve Christ in to the world beyond the congregation, loving neighbor⁵ as self, striving for justice and peace and respecting the dignity of every human being. Each congregation is anchored in the *Prayer for the Consecration of a Church*,⁶ and its prayers for growth in relationship with Christ, growth in new members and growth in spiritual grace.⁷

Summary: The Healthy Episcopal Congregation. Each congregation will order and plan its life to: (1) be a sustainable worship community that practices Christ-centered spiritual disciplines, forming its people to live lives that proclaim by word and example the Good News of Christ; (2) have a vital, intentional mission to the neighborhood

⁴ Baptismal Covenant, Book of Common Prayer, pp. 303-304

1. Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?
2. Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?
3. Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?
4. Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?
5. Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

⁵ The Summary of the Law at the Beginning of the Eucharist is a foundation for the Baptismal Covenant, the Love of God and Neighbor: Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets

⁶ The Consecration of a Church, BCP 568-569.

The Bishop: Everliving Father, watchful and caring, our source and our end: All that we are and all that we have is yours. Accept us now, as we dedicate this place to which we come to praise your Name, to ask your forgiveness, to know your healing power, to hear your Word, and to be nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son. Be present always to guide and to judge, to illumine and to bless your people.

⁷ *A Warden or other representative of the congregation continues*

Lord Jesus Christ, make this a temple of your presence and a house of prayer. Be always near us when we seek you in this place. Draw us to you, when we come alone and when we come with others, to find comfort and wisdom, to be supported and strengthened, to rejoice and give thanks. May it be here, Lord Christ, that we are made one with you and with one another, so that our lives are sustained and sanctified for your service.

The Rector or Minister in charge continues

Holy Spirit, open our eyes, our ears, and our hearts, that we may grow closer to you through joy and through suffering. Be with us in the fullness of your power as new members are added to your household, as we grow in grace through the years, when we are joined in marriage, when we turn to you in sickness or special need, and, at the last, when we are committed into the Father's hands.

and/or world beyond the church; and (3) possess the ability to maintain its facilities and support its common life and its mission.

The Purpose of the Diocese in Congregational Development. Put into practice, the purpose of any congregational development effort of the bishops and other Diocesan officials is to encourage congregations to live into the standards of the congregational purpose statement above. This includes enabling congregations to be healthy and sustainable as defined above.

What Congregations Want from the Diocese: Congregational Support, Training and Networking

While a presenting issue for the Mission Planning Commission (DMPC) is the angst and anxiety surrounding the relationship between the Diocese and congregations that receive direct financial support, what many of our congregations want⁸ from the Diocese is much simpler and less costly than direct financial support.

We find that people see the role of the Bishop and Diocese to be a collaborative support network for best practices in how to be an excellent, healthy congregation. Bishops, in their role of regularly visiting congregations, are in a unique position to praise and encourage congregations and clergy who innovate new ways of growing their congregations, finding best practices support for their efforts from the Diocese and providing networking between congregations and their leaders. It is the Diocese that organizes such events as Acolyte Festivals at the cathedral, training workshops for treasurers and wardens (a much appreciated offering of Finance & Property), Eucharistic Minister trainings, or funding for continuing education. It is the Diocesan organizational structure that can bring together congregations for mutual or collaborative ministry (including at the deanery level). Laity and Clergy say that they value learning from colleagues what best practices work for them, such as how to design a contemporary worship service, hire an organist, choose the best heating system or run a stewardship program. Deans and rectors encourage information sharing between congregations in our community of communities to help congregations and their leadership thrive. The operative question of all committees, Commissions and organizations of the Diocese should be, “how can we help your congregation thrive?”

The Role of the Bishop in Congregational Development. Claude Payne, then Bishop of Texas, in his book *Reclaiming the Great Commission*, held that the Bishop is the Chief Missionary⁹ of the Diocese. For a Diocese, the congregations and missions are the

⁸ The Congregational Development Priority Team began a Congregational Assessment Project (CAP) with a Congregational Information Survey (CIS) in the Summer of 2011, surveying congregations as to their current and future health, and asking how the Diocese can help them.

⁹*The Purpose Statement of the Diocese of Texas*: “The Diocese of Texas has a vision of being one church, under the leadership of Jesus Christ as a ‘community of miraculous expectation.’ It is a missionary Diocese, whose bishop is the Chief Missionary, localized in missionary outposts and missionary institutions, utilizing the historic catholic structures of

primary locations, the means through which gospel mission is carried out. It is the Bishop who visits all congregations on a regular basis. It is the Bishop who is notified when a rector resigns, and the Bishop who approves an interim clergyperson and a new rector or a vicar for a mission congregation. It is often the Bishop who fields an appeal for assistance when a congregation is in crisis. Put in one word, the Bishop is the Pastor¹⁰ of the congregations of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, and has enormous influence and power over the placement of the clergy and decisions made regarding congregations when a congregation is looking for help, especially funding or intervention. Beyond parish visitations, Bishop Bennison currently spends the bulk of his parish time with congregations in crisis, and with Bishop Michel's assistance works to solve problems in congregations that have declined to a dangerous level, have serious financial issues, or who are in high-level conflict. In this role as Pastor, then it could be said that the Bishop Diocesan is the chief Congregational Development officer of the Diocese¹¹.

Congregations and Missions. If the Bishop's congregational time is dominated by congregations in crisis, this leaves him little time for the more proactive ministry of congregational development, empowering and encouraging congregations in their gospel mission, strengthening and empowering currently sustainable congregations, providing the knowledge, best practices and expertise to help congregations and clergy thrive in their ministry. With the congregational development recommendations in this report, we hope to fill in this gap. We appreciate our Bishop's genuine concern for the health of all our congregations and missions, for the renewal and revitalization of fragile congregations, and keen interest in the possible establishment of new congregations.

The Purpose of the Diocese in Congregational Support and Development.

Acknowledging the old "describe the elephant" metaphor, that each of us sees reality from our own point of view, but not the big picture, we on the congregational development team nevertheless believe that the first purpose of the Bishop and Diocese is to equip and empower its member congregations to possess all three aspects of congregational health. Remember that the prayers for the consecration of a church

classic Anglicanism, and whose purpose under the Great Commandment to love is focused on the unchurched with a goal of growing to 200,000 by the year 2005. This is growth beyond mere numbers toward discipleship and seeks to include all sorts and conditions of people, bringing joy to those who are reaching out and to those who are reached." *Reclaiming the Great Commission*. Bishop Claude Payne & Haminton Beazley, Josey-Bass, 2000.

¹⁰ *My brother*, the people have chosen you and have affirmed their trust in you by acclaiming your election. A bishop in God's holy Church is called to be one with the apostles in proclaiming Christ's resurrection and interpreting the Gospel, and to testify to Christ's sovereignty as Lord of lords and Kings of kings. You are called to guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the Church; to celebrate and to provide for the administration of the sacraments of the New Covenant; to ordain priests and deacons and to join in ordaining bishops; and to be in all things a faithful pastor and wholesome example for the entire flock of Christ. With your fellow bishops you will share in the leadership of the Church throughout the world. Your heritage is the faith of patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and those of every generation who have looked to God in hope. Your joy will be to follow him who came, not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.

¹¹ This characterization is the result of a conversation between the Bishop and the Mission Planning Commission Chair.

referenced here begin with the Bishop as the Chief Missionary of the Diocese, joined in turn by lay leaders and clergy. All three are responsible for congregational health. All three share responsibility, in the “community of communities” of the Diocese, in promoting and realizing the health of our congregations. We find that most people in the Diocese see this as the first purpose of the Bishop and Diocese. The way we put this in our Congregational Development Mission Priority Statement is that

Our goal is to develop and provide resources and expertise for leaders and promote best practices, so that all our congregational communities will thrive according to their unique size and character.

While we see that all those in leadership in the community of communities of the Diocese share the task of helping congregations thrive, we have recommendations for further consideration.

Our Recommendations for Further Discussion and Implementation

We recommend that the Bishop, Diocesan Council and Standing Committee work together over the next two years to prayerfully consider the following ideas, and implement new approaches to how the Diocese supports its congregations. We believe that these recommendations are a first priority, and should be the first use of Diocesan dollars for congregational support.

Canon for Congregational Support and Development. We believe that a new Diocesan staff role should be established with the primary function of supporting congregations, coordinating resources, encouraging the sharing of best practices, and assisting in effective operations and ministries. There are a number of details to be determined about this role – should it be a clergyperson or a layperson? What kinds of skills, experiences and personal characteristics would best serve our congregations? We suggest this person would be the staff support and coordinator for the Diocesan Consultation Team in addition to working closely with the Bishop and the Canon for Deployment, as there is overlap and interconnectedness in the ways and methods of each role in congregational health. Preliminary ideas for a job description are found in the endnotes.ⁱ

Diocesan Consultation Team. We have repeatedly heard that the work of the DCT, under the leadership of Bishop Bartlett, is excellent, appreciated and needs expanding. We see the development and training of a large cadre of lay and ordained consultants and ministry partners to assist congregations and clergy in dealing with crises as well as long-term redevelopment efforts. In order to expand this work, the new Diocesan staff role would provide the necessary logistical and administrative support for these volunteers.

Continuing Education in Congregational Development. The kind of local training needed is exemplified by the upcoming clergy retreat, sponsored by the Episcopal Clergy Association of Pennsylvania, with the featured speaker being Diana Butler Bass; or the Andrew Weeks *Magnetic Church* workshop offered last year in two deaneries. It would be ideal to have our clergy and lay leaders part of a community of lifelong learners in the practice of the craft of congregational ministry.

Best Practices Sharing. Over and over, we have heard repeatedly the use of the term “best practices.” We hear laity seeing the role of the Diocese as networker, providing opportunities education and support, for more and more workshops and training sessions in the skills and best practices of congregational leaders. The workshop on parish finance held earlier this year in Roxborough is an example, and our laity and clergy would like to see more, so that people can network, learn what has worked, what has not, and be encouraged in their mission as congregations.

Acknowledging that every congregation is different, the Congregational Development team has begun interviewing clergy identified by their peers as excelling in the practice of ministry, and we are assembling this information for future sharing: what is it that works well in particular settings? How can we most effectively share these ideas with clergy and lay leaders?

Congregational Ministry Initiative Grants. There could be a Diocesan budget line item for parish ministry innovations that will help grow congregation through ministry initiatives. Short-term grants (3-5 years) could decline each year, with parishes paying more of the expense as programs expand and become self-sustaining. Funding might be available for projects in healthy congregations such as:

- The hiring of a new youth minister to develop a youth program
- A pilot program funding a new member incorporation coordinator in a growing congregation.

Clergy Colleague Groups. Distrust, jealousy, embarrassment over our own apparent failures, and the tendency to isolate ourselves can prevent collegiality among clergy as they learn and enhance their skills in the craft of parish ministry. Some of our clergy are in these groups, where 3-5 priests meet monthly, confidentially, with or without a facilitator to share struggles and joys in ministry, to brainstorm solutions to difficult parish problems, to share best practices and to otherwise have a measure of accountability and collegiality in ministry. Participation in such a clergy colleague group would be a requirement for congregations receiving Diocesan financial support¹².

Best Practices Canonical Changes. We have identified several “best practices” in congregations of all sizes that conflict with the implications of several national and

¹² There was a time when *Church Insurance* paid for a qualified facilitator for Colleague Groups. This is one model.

Diocesan canons, and we ask that a team work on consideration of canonical changes to present to the next Diocesan convention, to be in turn presented to the Episcopal Church *General Convention* of 2015 for appropriate change, following testing in our Diocese.

The first of these is the wide-spread practice in our congregations of a dozen or two lay Eucharistic ministers serving in turn to assist the priest(s) to distribute communion at the altar. The canons seem to encourage a much smaller number of Eucharistic “elite”. We recommend that the parish priest (not the Bishop), under guidelines established by the Diocesan Bishop, be allowed to license parish Eucharistic Ministers during worship, and that the number not be restricted. We also suggest that the Prayer Book rubric that requires all clergy present to serve communion before lay people do so be abolished, so that laity can be represented, at the rector’s discretion, not matter how many clergy are present at the Eucharistic table.

A second canonical change we want to explore is with the leadership of small churches, who tend to be devalued as mission congregations and their part-time clergy serve as priests in charge at the will of the Bishop. We want to find a way for small churches to have full congregational status, and even part time clergy to be elected as rectors with the stability that comes with tenure, even if it is tenure with a term. We will explore this concept more below.

A third canonical (or administrative) change is to allow congregations with mid-week services with intact mid-week congregations, to include those numbers in the count for ASA (average Sunday attendance) on the parochial report. This may be as simple as changing the description for “Saturday” services on the Parochial Report to read “Saturday or Mid-Week Services considered Sunday Services.”

A fourth canonical or administrative change is to give congregations a tool for collecting and reporting data on how the church buildings are used by and for the neighborhoods that they serve. This would encourage congregations to look outward, and would recognize that a congregation has an impact beyond the people in the pews on Sunday mornings. Categories for this effort are suggested in Eric Law’s *Holy Currencies* workshop and upcoming book of the same title.

The Innovation Canon. Once in a while an idea comes along for doing or being church that doesn’t fit the normal model of congregational ministry, or that may not fit well with church canons. We want the Bishop to be able grant permission to a priest or congregation to innovate, to experiment, to not always have to pour new wine into old wineskins. Entrepreneurs do not need to hear, “that’s never been done!” When clergy or congregation are willing to take a risk, to try something new for the gospel, we believe that failure is not to be feared, but is always a chance for a new start.

Demographic Research. We have collaborated with the Bishop, the DMPC, the DCT, and the office of Transition Ministries to subscribe the Diocese of Pennsylvania to the expanded demographic tools offered by MissionInsite, the same company that provides demographic research to the Episcopal Church. At an annual cost of \$5,500, our Diocese and its congregations will be plotted on an interactive map, with deanery boundaries, allowing examination of census plot data for predicting demographic trends and helping us plan for the future. Congregations can even opt to plot member's homes. We also plan to have a cadre of experts trained in the use and interpretation of this data, so that local congregations can ask for help in finding and interpreting data.

This expanded service will also be invaluable in Deanery or regional research; for plotting custom areas for planning potential congregational mergers, and for researching areas where the population might be in need of a new congregation.

**Working with Congregations in Crisis or in Need of Funding
Congregational Reconfiguration, Money and Imagining the Future.** We have repeatedly heard from leaders throughout the Diocese, over the two years of the DMPC existence, that what Diocesan leaders were and are most expecting us to produce for the convention is the content of the following resolve, that the DMPC:

“Continuing the process of evaluating current missions and ministries and congregations, with appropriate recommendations for affirmation, reconfiguration, or redevelopment;

This work is also combined with other tasks in the 2009 resolve, which include demographic research, mindfulness to a Diocesan history of racism; and creative imagining of new ways of being church or planting new churches within the Diocese. And most importantly for many, these issues are related to money, and the appropriation each year of hundreds of thousands of dollars of Diocese of Pennsylvania money to congregations and missions throughout the Diocese.

When a congregation needs help. Money¹³ is often the presenting problem when a congregation asks the Diocese for help. The leadership of a congregation will find that they cannot pay the health insurance premium or pension payment of the rector or vicar, or the boiler will break down one last time and there is no cash available for the \$40,000 replacement. Another typical scenario: the long-time rector retires or resigns for another position, and by the time the search committee and vestry have put together a new profile and job description, they find that they cannot afford the cost of a full time successor. First, the salary of the retiring priest had not kept up with inflation, and second, the decline in membership had been masked by a general lack of accountability about the health of the parish, its giving and attendance.

¹³ Conflict between the cleric and vestry/congregation is another reason for intervention by the Diocese in a congregation, but this is almost exclusively handled by the Bishop and is not addressed directly in this report.

The congregational life cycle. As we addressed in our 2010 report to convention, the intentional attention of a congregation and its leadership to the art and science of strategic planning, visioning and mission statement work, is critical to the long-term health of a congregation. Congregations and their neighborhood settings change over time, and if a congregation does not adequately adjust to these changes, and make changes in the mission, ministry and facility of the church, the decline of the congregation can be devastating. This artful science is addressed under the field of study known as “Congregational Life Cycle”, and clergy and lay leadership must become students and practitioners if they are to survive, and thrive.

Arlin Rothauge¹⁴ wrote two booklets that are still the first theory in this science, *The Congregational Life Cycle* and its companion, *Parallel Development*. One of the truths the theory observes is that, the longer revision is postponed, the more difficult redevelopment is. In the best practice, a congregation will study and revise parts of its ministry every year, and the entire ministry every five years. It is clear that all humans fear change and uncertainty, and congregational redevelopment is consequently very difficult for human faith systems. One of the most important tasks of the Mission Planning Commission is to be sure that Life Cycle based revisioning and redevelopment tools are available to all congregations and missions in the Diocese¹⁵.

Structural Tools to Assist Congregations

There are six tools that we recommended for use in dealing with declining congregations, or congregations that are not able to grow enough to support their ministry. These structural tools are (1) Small Church Ministry; (2) Paired Congregations, (3) Merged Congregations; (4) Cluster Ministries; (5) Closed Congregations; (6) Congregational Redevelopment or Restart.

It should be noted at the start that so long as a congregation can support itself and its cleric, the Bishop and the Diocese have no power to arbitrarily close, pair, merge or downsize a congregation. We hear the complaint sometimes, “the Bishop closed us!” More to the point, the congregation usually couldn’t afford its ministry, and appealed to the Diocese for money. With that money, we believe, should come accountability for its use and assurance that best practices for the redevelopment will be followed. Finally, we note that the mission priority goal statement of the Congregational Development Priority Team is that we will *help congregations develop according to their unique size and character*. We want to emphasize again that healthy congregations come in all sizes, configurations and levels of staffing, as long as they “order and plan

¹⁴ Arlin’s booklets, as well as an excellent Power Point show, are available at www.episcopalchurch.org under “congregational Vitality” then “resources for ministry.” The original Congregational Life Cycle booklet’s link is [http://www.episcopalchurch.org/documents/Life_Cycle\(1\).pdf](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/documents/Life_Cycle(1).pdf). The present DMPC chair worked with Arlin Rothauge directly on a reapplication of his theory for a doctoral dissertation.

¹⁵ Any consultant trained in congregational development work will have tools for revision and redevelopment, including those who work as part of the Diocesan Consultation Team.

their lives to be a sustainable worship community that practices Christ-centered spiritual disciplines; have a vital, intentional mission to the neighborhood and/or world beyond the church; and possess the ability to maintain their facilities and support their common life and mission.” All of our congregations should be healthy and sustainable; they do not all have to be large or be served by a full-time priest.

Small Church Ministry. There are a number of congregations in the Diocese, as well as in the Episcopal Church that thrive at a size that is below the financial ability needed to fund a full-time cleric. When we say “thrive”, we refer to the definition of healthy congregation: (1) a sustainable worship community that practices Christ-centered spiritual disciplines; (2) a vital, intentional mission to the neighborhood and/or world beyond the church; and (3) possess the ability to maintain its facilities and fully fund¹⁶ its common life and its mission.” Some congregations have operated at a small church level for decades, or for their whole lives; others have slowly declined so that they have more recently become, or will become a small church¹⁷.

Our reason for mentioning the small church is to hold up such a model of congregational ministry as a distinct and genuine possibility for some congregations, and to encourage the Bishop and congregational development staff to possess the tools¹⁸ to enable a thriving small-church ministry in the Diocese of Pennsylvania, including:

- **Deployment:** that clergy who are part-time, bi-vocational or semi-retired be recruited and trained to serve these congregations;¹⁹ and that the Commission on Ministry and deployment officer explore what are the necessary conditions for attracting such clergy;
- **Clerical Status:** the a status change be found that gives some tenure or stability to small church clergy, since currently any clergy serving a congregation in a part-time capacity cannot be called as a rector with tenure, but are appointed by the Bishop with no term or tenure;
- **Congregational Status:** currently small churches that are able to support themselves need full parish status at convention, full citizenship;
- **Networking:** that the congregational development office help small congregations and their leadership network, and develop and share best practices for ministry in their congregations.

Paired Congregations. Several Diocesan congregations are exploring a new version of the old “yoking” model, where two smaller congregations each keep their buildings but creatively share staff and clergy. If the two congregations can maintain the three-legged

¹⁶ Some of our small churches still receive a small \$10,000 to \$30,000 missionary grant from the Diocese.

¹⁷ Ascension, Parkesburg is a small, healthy congregation that just decided, upon the retirement of their Vicar, that they would resize staffing for a long-term part-time priest, and add a part-time administrator.

¹⁸ For a guidebook and manual see *Effective Small churches* by Carl S. Dudley. Nashville: Abington Press, 2003.

¹⁹ For an excellent, expansive, first-person manual on the work of the bi-vocational minister, see *Part-Time Pastor, Full-Time Church* by Robert LaRochelle. Cleveland: the Pilgrim Press, 2010.

stool of congregational health they should have full status as a congregation in the Diocese and their clergy a measure of tenure as a Rector. As in small churches, it is the role of the Bishop and congregational support and development staff to encourage innovation, help them network and use best practices, and carefully shepherd the pairing process so that good decisions are made for the future. The advantage of pairing is that each congregation keeps a measure of autonomy, and if demographics change or other circumstances change, one of both of the two congregations could restart as a single congregation again.

Merged congregations. The merger of two declining congregations, where one of the buildings is sold and the other used as the new location, was promoted as a possibility for some congregations by the Mission Planning Commission at the 2010 Diocesan convention. This has been one tool for dealing with congregational decline for a century or more, with mixed results. It would be beneficial to study recent examples in order to learn from their experiences. More expertise and Diocesan assistance should be provided in future mergers, and ongoing support after the merger is essential. Leadership of recently merged congregations could help the Diocese develop best practices for the future. The new congregational support and development office could coordinate this effort, as well as researching other examples – and could identify expert help from outside our Diocese if it is not available within.

Cluster Ministry. A Cluster Ministry can mean different things to different folk. The basic concept is that one, two, or three priests share clerical leadership for five, six, or even ten churches. Each church must have a strong cadre of dedicated lay leadership and a membership willing to take on roles often assumed or given to parish priests. A strong presence in the cluster of vocational deacons who can fill traditional roles of deacons in the parish and keep priests as well as lay leaders apprised of what they observe in the day-to-day activities of the ministry. There are several administrative and canonical challenges that will impact on this kind of ministry: there is no clear canonical structure which exists for the cluster.

Congregational Closure. Closure is always an option when a congregation is in dire straits financially and an effective redevelopment plan cannot be designed in a way that the Bishop and congregational development office believe that a financial investment will yield a healthy, thriving congregation within five years. Closures can occur when:

- The demographics of a neighborhood will not support the congregation's future
- The congregation has a toxic history of conflict and an unwillingness to repent and change, or participate in the community of communities of the Diocese;
- The congregation is unable or unwilling to consider, or allow changes in the life and ministry of the congregation, or participate and collaborate with Diocesan leadership in an accountable redevelopment plan that will create a sustainable

congregational life and ministry, with a congregational leadership that will become of community of learners in redevelopment practices;

- The congregation undertakes a careful, prayerful look at its past, present and future and in a mutual decision, believes that it is time to end the ministry of the congregation.

Ideally, a decision to close is not forced upon a congregation, but is made deliberately, prayerfully and collaboratively with Diocesan leadership. In the congregational life cycle, death is always followed by birth. For Christians, the people of the resurrection, there is always hope for the future. God always has a new thing in mind for the people of a congregation. Congregations that are considering closure or are being considered for closure should be encouraged to keep hope close at hand. The role of the Bishop, or his designee, is crucial in walking with a people whose congregational story has reached its final end, and there are best practices available for to Diocesan leadership during congregational closure that will enable members to move on to a new life in Christ²⁰.

Congregational Redevelopment or Restart. In reality, each of the above congregational structures is a redevelopment, because something old is being redesigned and rebuilt in a new way. It takes dedicated, intentional clergy working with committed, intentional laity to take the risk of starting over in any way. Probably the most important thing is to verbalize, to say, “This is a complete restart. We are a new creation. We need all the help we can get!”

The decision about which congregations should receive redevelopment funding should be made collaboratively on both the deanery and Diocesan administrative level. The process should be open and consultative. The Diocesan Council and Bishop should collaborate regarding how much funding for congregational redevelopment efforts should be funded through the budget, but we believe that a set and published amount will help long-term planning. The Bishop, congregational support and development office, and Deans, with interested parish clergy, should have opportunity to openly discuss potential congregations in need of redevelopment, with a process for application on the part of a congregation or cleric.

Diocesan Mission as Congregational Redevelopment. In the case of a single declining congregation that is restarting and rebuilding its mission and ministry as a Diocesan-funded redevelopment project, not a merger or pairing, all of the best practices listed above come into play. Since the Diocese is funding the placement of a clergy person skilled in the practices of congregational development in a redeveloping congregation,

²⁰ The Chair is in possession of a set of materials in use in the Diocese of Massachusetts for governing congregational closures, and Bishop Bennison has sent the Diocesan property manager to Boston to learn first hand their best practices for congregational closures and mergers.

then the Diocese should require full and regular accountability from the cleric and the laity. The Bishop and Diocese should nurture, support and encourage the clergy and redevelopment effort, and not neglect the congregation once the new priest has arrived. The management of this redevelopment mission on behalf of the Bishop and Diocese is one of the roles we see for the Canon for Congregational Support and Development.

Diocesan funding for congregational redevelopment efforts should always be time-limited, and eventually declining each year. The expectation is that, with a five to ten year infusion of financing and expertise, the congregation will become self sustaining, either with a full time priest or a part time priest. After ten years, financing should end and the congregation find a level of ministry at which they are financially independent with a sustainable ministry. At that time, the redevelopment money can be used to help other congregations in similar efforts.

Congregations Requiring Long-Term Missional Funding

Mission Congregations. We believe that a congregation where Diocese financial support is needed for the long term, without the short-term likelihood of full financial sustainability, should be called a *mission congregation*. The most obvious reason for the long-term maintenance of a mission congregation is where that congregation is able to sustain the first two legs of congregational health, (1) a sustainable worship community that practices Christ-centered spiritual disciplines; (2) a vital, intentional mission to the neighborhood and/or world beyond the church; but that the mission congregation does not possess the third leg, “the ability to maintain its facilities and fully fund²¹ its common life and its mission.” For normal congregations, we would expect that such a congregation would either be downsized to a sustainable level or be closed. Here are some instances where we believe that the Diocese should fund, sometimes in partnership with neighboring congregations, *mission congregations*:

- Where vital, missional ministry is being carried out to the poor, the hungry, the unsheltered, from the facility of an Episcopal congregation that does not have the financial means to do its ministry; in a community that would not otherwise have that gospel ministry. Recipients are not necessarily members of the congregation, although some will likely become so. Philadelphia’s Free Church of St. John, currently part of the DCMM cluster, is an example of this category, serving through their Parish House ministry a local Hispanic and African American population.
- Where the congregational community is itself a congregation of the poor, the hungry, the unsheltered or an immigrant²² population. The congregational membership is itself the mission, and its existence depends upon Diocesan

²¹ Some of our small churches still receive small \$10,000 to \$25,000 missionary grants from the Diocese.

²² Bishop Rodney notes the need for an additional immigrant ministry in Chinatown to a growing Asian population.

mission support. Two Latino²³ examples of this are San Pablo Hispanic Ministry based in Saint Paul's, Chester, and the thriving Christ & Saint Ambrose Episcopal Church in Philadelphia²⁴. Another example is the East African congregation Trinity, Boothwyn, which moved from the Trinity, Collingdale location to the former St. Martin's, Boothwyn campus. Mostly Kenyan members are from Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Our assumption is that such aided immigrant congregations will, in a decade or two, become self-sustaining. Another emergent church model for reaching the poor, unchurched is the *Common Cathedral* or *Welcome Church* model, usually ministries of local congregations and their clergy where clergy travel outdoors to a public square, or into soup kitchens, and hold worship with these congregations consisting of people *on the margins*. Two of these ministries exist in our Diocese²⁵.

- Where there is an historic African American congregation whose presence the community of communities of the Diocese, upon the recommendation of the leaders of the Black community of the Diocese, believe should be funded as part of an overall effort to overturn a history of racism. Such a congregation should be a sustainable worship community that practices Christ-centered spiritual disciplines; have a vital, intentional mission to the neighborhood and/or world beyond the church; but not possess "the ability to maintain its facilities and fully fund its common life and its mission."

Some see a dialectical polarity with the policy of providing Diocesan support to congregations which define themselves by one race or ethnic group. On the one hand, the spiritual and cultural support provided by an African American Church within a larger, still racist culture, is life-giving to that community. On the other hand, we are called to be a house of prayer for all nations or, as Desmond Tutu put it, a *Rainbow People of God*. The members of the Mission Planning Commission, mindful of a history of racism, support the creation of this mission category, but believe that a conversation surrounding this issue should continueⁱⁱ.

²³The Rev. Canon Anthony Guillen, Episcopal Church officer for Hispanic Ministry, recommends *Ripe Fields* by Juan Oliver for those interested in Hispanic Ministry. His office is available for consultation and support.

²⁴ One of our largest churches is La Iglesia de Cristo y San Ambrosio, 6th and Venango -- the barrio. It has 1100 members and a Sunday attendance of 300-400. Unfortunately, Padre Carlos Santos-Rivera fell from a ladder in July 2010 and is wheelchair-bound now. He still preaches and celebrates from his chair on Sunday. Bishop Bennisson is actively recruiting a Vicar to succeed Carlos.

²⁵ The first *Common Cathedral* was started by Rev. Debbie Little on the *Boston Common* in 1996, itself an outgrowth of Little's 1994 street ministry. In Oct, 2011, she reports that *Ecclesia Affiliates* is aware of 75-100 similar ministries in 85 cities. St John's, Essington's Rev. David Madsen was instrumental in starting two *Welcome Church* ministries in NYC, 2007-2008, and Lutheran Pastor Violet Little of Holy Communion Lutheran Church in 2009 began *The Welcome Church* on Philly's Logan Square. West and North of Philadelphia, Rev. Koshy Matthews of St. Peter's Episcopal Church began a new *Welcome Church* ministry in Phoenixville with Rev. Jennie M. Anderson and the Valley Forge Deanery on Sunday, October 16, 2011 at 3pm.

Accountability and Development of Mission Congregations. All mission congregations are subject to the same guidelines and procedures of the other Diocesan-funded congregations as listed above. When Social Justice Advocacy is part of the ministry of the clergy or laity of a mission congregation, spiritual support is particularly important so that the clergy can find the balance between advocacy and ministry to the congregation.

From the Diocesan point of view, a strategic decision needs to be made as to how many direct missions in the urban centers of the Diocese it can afford. But, it is important for the Diocese to support some such missions. Service to the poor and advocacy are both part of our mission as a Diocese. The book *Forces for Good*, about the six “best practices” of “high impact” non-profits in America, finds that thriving non-profits, committed to transforming the world, practice both service and advocacy. Direct service to the poor changes the lives of both the recipients and the volunteers, creating a two-fold ministry for a sponsoring congregation, one to the clients and one to the volunteers who come from outside to help. Direct service informs advocacy projects and helps identify what to target for change and how best to initiate and manage change. Direct service builds networks of supporters or allies, who want to make a difference in the world. People who are not usually inclined to participate in such projects can become dedicated advocates. Perhaps it is worth noting that in an organization like a Diocese, the collaborative work between people committed to a multitude of ministries leads to a mutuality that promotes the health of the community of communities across the board even as many lives are transformed for Christ.

For congregations located outside the boundaries of poverty, the opportunity of joining mission congregations in direct ministry to the poor is important for the spiritual lives of those serving the poor. Providing a place for this ministry is vital to the mission of the congregation. Being ministered to is vital to those who are poor, hungry and in need. All of us benefit from the support of Diocesan mission. Many of our suburban congregations are in partnership with urban mission, such as Redeemer, Bryn Mawr’s collaboration with Saint Gabriel’s soup kitchen, and the food shelf ministry at Saint Mary’s, Chester which is supported and staffed by Christ, Media; St. John’s, Glen Mills and Trinity, Swarthmore.

DCMM congregations. The Diocesan Consultation on Mission and Ministry congregations have been subject to much change for as long as this program has been in place. In its time, these centers of urban mission were strongly supported by the Diocesan budget and did valuable mission and ministry within, and on behalf of, the Diocese of Pennsylvania. In recent years, there has been much contention, with impassioned lettersⁱⁱⁱ, over the existence of the DCMM congregational structure and its funding by the Diocese. But change has occurred nevertheless. One DCMM congregation left the group by attaining full sustainability, and therefore parish status. Several others declined in size and ministry enough that Bishop Bennison, in

collaboration with local deans and congregations, effected reorganization that allowed for a reduction in funding as well as a reversion of their clergy to part time status. Another, Church of the Advocate, with interim rector Rev. Bud Holland has participated in a fulsome evaluation of its properties, finances, ministries and facilities and, with the guidance of the Bishop, is embarking on new ministry initiatives, which include a team ministry, whereby the new Vicar of the Advocate will also serve as a Chaplain at Temple, with the Lutheran Episcopal Campus Ministry Board at Temple University. One of the challenges for Church of the Advocate has been its relationship with population expansion from Temple, five blocks away; Advocate has a storied history as a center of social justice, and is a shrine of African American History. Advocate has a past history of collaboration in Philadelphia²⁶ low-income housing development, and may have an opportunity to reengage that ministry²⁷ in the future; Advocate has a thriving soup kitchen and hosts an after school program. Here, we emphasize that the model for a re-vitalization of an inner-city parish complex like the George W. South Church of the Advocate will be a multi-faceted, multi cultural, multi-enterprise parish with many ways – some income producing – of doing and being the Church of Jesus Christ in the world.

All Mission congregations and other aided congregations are part of the same community. All of these missions and ministries of the Diocese have a life cycle. It is clear to us that the structure known as *Diocesan Consultation on Mission and Ministry* needs to be reinvented with a new way for the bishop and Diocese to collaborate in mission with these congregations. We believe that it is time for the congregations of the DCMM community to join as full partners of the community of communities of the Diocese. We believe that it is the work of the bishop, the Diocesan Council and the congregational development structures of the Diocese to collaborate with these congregations and assist them in revisioning their mission and ministry as equal partners in the community of communities that is the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania. We believe that current DCMM congregations should be fully supported in their mission and ministry according to the guidelines proposed in the previous pages, along with other Diocesan congregations who are also receiving Diocesan financial support and assistance. As we have previously noted, the Bishop as Chief Pastor and Missionary has a great deal of responsibility in shaping this collaborative support ministry, not only in the placement of clergy in congregations receiving financial support, but in working with Diocesan Council, congregational development support staff, the DCT, the Deans and clergy involved, the Deployment Officer and

²⁶ *Fixing Broken Cities*, John Kromer, 2009. From U Penn's Institute of Government, this book is about the planning, execution, and impact of investment strategies designed to improve postindustrial urban downtowns and neighborhoods. The central focus of this book is how to implement— how to achieve transformative change in highly distressed urban areas. Given Advocate's past history, what role might there be for this church, perhaps in collaboration with other congregations and agencies, for a new revival of this ministry.

²⁷ *Saint Edmunds Housing Redevelopment Corporation* is a recent best practices example, www.stedmundsrc.org, based at and founded by Saint Edmunds Episcopal Church in the Diocese and City of Chicago www.stedmundepiscopalchurchchicago.com.

Bishop Rodney to recommend levels of financial support. There have been many new ministry initiatives in other congregations since the original DCMM model was invented several decades ago, and the collaboration of all these ministries in the future is vital to the future of the mission of the Diocese.

Hope for the Future, Bread for the Journey

An Invitation to a Process of Congregational Transformation. In 2012, we invite ten congregations to work with the Kaleidoscope Institute in a missional redevelopment project of congregational transformation. Our intention is to enhance and complement the work of the bishop, the Diocesan Consultation Team and others faithfully working with the congregations of the diocese. We invite leadership teams of ten congregations to join in this innovative congregational development program. This is an opportunity for education of diocesan leaders in the skills and practices of congregational development.

When Eric Law was Canon for Congregational Development in Vancouver, BC, he started a pilot program for congregational transformation where, instead of working with one congregation at a time, he would work with ten congregations in a larger workshop setting. The program was successful and an effective model for leading transformation change in congregations and for transforming and training congregational leadership and clergy. For the first six months of 2012, Eric Law will be in New Jersey leading a series of weekend congregational transformation workshops. Our plan is to offer a Sunday afternoon sessions (and possibly some Saturday evening sessions) at a location in the Diocese of Pennsylvania on those same weekends in 2012: January 8, February 26, March 25, April 15, May 13 and June 10.

Our goal is to make healthy congregations healthier, and to help declining or stable congregations transform their congregational lives with new life in Christ. To remind the reader, our vision is to transform the congregational communities of the diocese by *developing and providing resources and expertise for leaders and promote best practices, so that our congregational communities will thrive according to their unique size and character.*

We invite ten congregations of all sizes and conditions to commit a team to attending six weekend Congregational Transformation sessions during 2012. If you are interested, speak to Kaleidoscope Institute representative Bill Cruse at the KI booth at convention, speak to a member of the Mission Planning Commission, or email the chairperson at rector@saintjohnsconcord.com.

New Demographic Tool: MissionInsite

Innovating the Standard in Church Demographics

An Expanded Tool for Demographic Research. Members of the Congregational Development Team of the Mission Planning Commission have recommended the subscription by the Diocese to the expanded demographic tools offered by MissionInsite, the same company that provides demographic research to the national Episcopal Church and a growing number of Dioceses & denominations. At an annual cost of \$5,500, our Diocese and its congregations will be plotted on an interactive map, with deanery boundaries, allowing any cleric, congregational leader, dean or church planter to examine census plot data for any selected area, predicting demographic trends and helping you plan for the future. We also plan to have a cadre of experts trained in the use and interpretation of this data, so that local congregations can ask for help in finding and interpreting data. This highly recommended tool, which Kirk Hadaway at the Episcopal Church offices in NYC used to help our DMPC planning, is:

- *flexible* web based information system
- *comprehensive* socioeconomic and lifestyle data
- *interactive* mapping platform
- *responsive* system to answer your individual questions
- *strategic* information resource for ministry
- *value and benefit* for your financial investment

This expanded service is also invaluable in deanery or regional research; for plotting custom areas for planning potential congregational partnerships, mergers or pairings, for understanding why some congregations are declining and for researching areas where the population might be in need of a new congregation. Congregations who wish to grow can learn how they can reach out to their neighbors by studying the lifestyles of the area. For a small additional cost, MissionInsite also provides an *Accelerate* tool to help individual congregations in strategic planning.

While a basic 2 mile profile, and an ECUSA statistical graph is available on the “studying your congregation and community” link on the Episcopal Church web site at www.episcopalchurch.org, this expanded MissionInsite has many more options for congregational development work in the Diocese and many custom options. As of October 18, 2011 contracts were being prepared and data gathered for plotting the 144 congregations of the Diocese on MissionInsite’s web site. When all is ready, each congregation can request their parish username and password from J.D. Lafrance (jdlafrance@diopa.org). Our goal is to have this tool ready for use in the Diocese by convention or the week following. Training opportunities will follow. You can learn more at www.missioninsite.com. For more information, contact John Sorensen, Chair, Diocesan Mission Planning Commission at rector@saintjohnsconcord.com, or Rev. Dr. Adam Kradle, Christ Church Media, at apkradel@gmail.com

Mission/Outreach Request for Information from Congregations

Mission/Outreach: *Our goal as a Diocese is to nurture and support mission and ministry within the Diocese of Pennsylvania, allowing for both Diocesan and congregational initiatives, and/or a collaboration between the two:*

- *Through our congregations;*
- *Through Diocesan led initiatives that are supported by Diocesan Convention;*
- *Through congregational or Diocesan mission initiatives reaching beyond the borders of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania, regionally, nationally and internationally.*

Members: Jennie M. Anderson, Thomas Eoyang, Michael Giansiracusa.

Request for Information: The Mission and Outreach priority team have begun their work for 2012 and would like to know what mission and outreach ministries the congregations of the Diocese are undertaking and supporting. We plan to make an extensive report to present at Diocesan Convention in 2012. For example, there are many congregations with active companion parishes in Guatemala to which they make regular mission trips; numerous congregations support mission partner congregations, shelters, food shelves and other ministries in our cities; others have begun outdoor “Welcome Church” ministries like that in Phoenixville.

Please write up your congregation’s mission or outreach ministry and send to: Jennie Anderson (rector@epiphanystar.net) or Michael Giansiracusa (mikegian@earthlink.net). A sample write-up follows:

Sample Mission Report: Saint James School

From Sean Mullin, Rector, Saint Mark’s Episcopal Church: I first started exploring the idea of a new Episcopal School about 7 years ago and made a pitch to the Bishop around that time that did not get off the ground. 5 1/2 years ago the people of Saint James the Less abandoned the church property in response to a decision by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania that did not require them to do so, but would have required them to stay in the Diocese as a congregation. 3 years ago Saint Mark's, Locust Street, persuaded the Standing Committee to allow us to adopt St. James the Less as a mission, with the thought that a school might be the best central mission there.

We spent a year talking with the neighbors, praying, holding services, meetings, building relationships, etc. We did a lot of research and conducted a feasibility study. We aligned ourselves with the Nativity Miguel Network of schools - experts in faith-based urban middle schools for kids from low-income families. We drew together an Advisory Board to help us discern the way forward. We continued to report to Standing Committee and to convince them this was a good way forward. We partnered with Andrew Kellner and the Youth Ministry office to found City Camp in 2009, which in only three years has grown tremendously and is widely regarded as a new standard in

mission-oriented ministry with youth. We found enough support and raised enough money to hire a full-time Executive Director in August 2010. During that year we focused on raising money, building partnerships and strengthening community relationships. Because of our fund-raising success (during a sharp economic decline) we were ready to meet our goal of opening the school this fall with our first fifth-grade class of 16 students.

Our mission statement: St. James School — located in the Allegheny West neighborhood of Philadelphia — is a faith-based middle school for traditionally under-served children, devoted to the education of students in a nurturing environment and with a challenging academic program. St. James is an Episcopal school that develops students' moral and spiritual identities, as well as their intellectual, physical and creative gifts.

What this means is that we serve kids from families who cannot afford to give their students the education they deserve, in a city where the public schools cannot be relied on to do an adequate job. The fees for the school are about \$250 a year, although it costs about \$22,000 per child to run the school. All but one of our students qualifies for free or reduced lunch, according to federal government guidelines – which means they all come from families with great need.

St. James School is the only Episcopal School in the city of Philadelphia. It is fundamental to the mission of our school that kids are taught that they are the beloved children of God, and therefore people of dignity and value, bestowed with gifts that should be developed and used. The school's identity as a community is shaped as students begin each day in a morning meeting that includes prayers for the people and things that are important to each and to all of them. The incomparably beautiful church of Saint James the Less serves as the school's chapel, where the Eucharist is celebrated with the students once a week. We have established this school as an expression of the Gospel imperative to serve those in need - especially children. We know that schools - and especially church schools - can and should be places of transformation for young lives. We intend to address the achievement gap for low income and under-served students that prevents them from realizing their potential as children of God, and that in fact leaves them in great peril. And we will do this as long as the need persists and we can garner the support to give kids the education they deserve.

We are grateful to the Diocese for its cooperation in this mission, to our many parish and school partners and to the hundreds of people whose support of money and time and effort has made the school possible.

The Rev. Sean Mullin is President of the Board of Saint James School, located in a closed church property in the City of Philadelphia. Dave Kasievich is Head of School.

ⁱ**Canon for Congregational Support and Development.** A full-time paid staff member to provide appropriate professional and support staffing for congregational support and development at the Diocesan level. This role would staff and coordinate the Diocesan Consultation Team. This position would provide support, expertise, education and resource coordination for multiple congregational development programs and initiatives throughout the Diocese.

The new position would be responsible for at least the following scope of work: coordinate directly with the Diocesan Consultation Team to assist and provide support to their ministry; assist with the implementation of the goals and objectives of the Diocesan Mission Planning Commission; access, coordinate and develop resources for “best practices” and innovative programs for parishes at all stages of development throughout the Diocese; work in conjunction with the Diocesan Leadership Institute and other Diocesan programs/staff and parishes to develop, coordinate and present education programs on all aspects of congregational support and development. The new position would make regular reports to the Diocesan Council and other identified leadership bodies.

Process for assessment and evaluation of congregations:

There need to be criteria for evaluation and intervention. Here are the reasons for a standard process (courtesy of Palmer Hartl):

- It is always easier to customize from a known standard process.
- The standard process should be the one that is the most efficient and effective.
- The client is in enough turmoil and needs some clear idea of how this process should go. They do not need an ambiguous process.
- Without a standard process it is harder to know what the unique contributions are of each entity trying to help.
- Developing the standard process is the best chance to work out overlaps and underlaps. This makes it most likely that the client will not have to go through the same thing twice with two entities that use different processes and give different advice. It is also less likely that something important in the process will be left out.
- Regular use of the standard process and comparison to those times when it is necessary or elected to customize the process will allow adjustments to the standard process in a more thoughtful way when necessary.
- When the process is not spelled out clearly in writing and is always customized, it is easy to manipulate the outcome. Chaos is the enemy of predictable outcomes and the friend of those who want to play destructive games.

The evaluation process should include, but not be limited to: Average Sunday Attendance; parish finances; condition and rehabilitation needs of the church building(s), including cost/benefit analysis; level of interaction with local community; presence and measurement of a vital ministry in the local community; realistic assessment of opportunities for development of new partnerships, programs and ministries; measurable goals and objectives; and appropriate, clear timelines.

Using criteria or a descriptive framework of a congregation, if a congregation lacks critical components, what would it take to rebuild or create the components? Should consideration be given to an alternate form of ministry in that location/community or another more appropriate location? Congregations will have to engage in some “work” of self-assessment as a part of the evaluation and planning process.

ⁱⁱ Part of a correspondence from the Chair of the Mission Planning Commission to the Union of Black Episcopalians, in response to a UBE reflection paper, includes the following questions and reflections toward continuing a conversation about the role and place of African American Mission Congregations in the Diocese:

African American Identity vs Multiculturalism. I say this with the following assumption based on observation: the world of our youth – and the world of the future -- is not exclusively any one color, but all colors, that is “multicultural.” Urban life is, as well, multicultural. The redevelopment of a congregation in a neighborhood will have to respond to, and welcome in, the people living and working in that neighborhood if it is to be successful. One cannot predict who will come when a church is restarted, but if only one race or culture is the target of a congregational restart, then some of them will not be successful, if success is defined as a self-sustaining ministry with a full-time priest. If it is the goal of the UBE to maintain certain traditional black congregations as such, intact, then it is likely that some of the current facilities may be too large for the congregation to worship in and maintain, and the congregation may need to go through a downsizing process. It may be better in that case to sell or demolish the complex and move the congregation to a more appropriate site. Again, I suggest that the UBE do some thinking and praying within the black community about how many congregations of color can be successfully redeveloped enough so that they are self-sustaining, or whether it is preferable to maintain a group of smaller, downsized congregational units.

Question: Is the mission of the Diocese of Pennsylvania to maintain and support as many existing African American congregations as possible, or out of the several current congregations to create one or two new African American or Black church plants strategically located throughout the city? Where is support money best spent?

Question: What culturally unique issues in the Black Community should be addressed to make these conversations effective and productive?

Personally, I think that the ideal racial model for a congregation for a new generation is one that is explicitly inter-racial and inter-cultural. This is the model that is presented to us at the invention of the Christian Church in the first chapters of the Book of Acts, and most closely mirrors the world we are trying to transform for Christ, where all nations and cultures and races are united in Jesus Christ. It may be, however, difficult for the African American community to make this transition, especially because of the nurturing role that the Black Church has played in American history. As a Diocese, competing with existing congregations from other traditions, the inability to rethink church may leave us with a few thriving urban black congregations, and a number of others with 25 people on a Sunday morning, barely existing, either closed, merged or downsized. Merging, however, does not guarantee that the new unit will be twice the size of the old, unless both congregations are willing to become something new. I imagine that the lessons learned from the Calvary/St Augustine merger should be studied and expertise gained used in similar mergers in the future.

Question: what is the role of the Black or African American Church in the creation of new, multi-cultural church communities? Is this model desirable or possible? How do we balance the historical black identity with the call of Desmond Tutu to become a “Rainbow People of God?”

iii **CLAIMING AND PROCLAIMING THE RESURRECTION: WILL THE WOMEN SPEAK, WILL WE?**

[RE: the ministry of the DCMM congregations]

In Mark’s account of the Resurrection, there are no post Resurrection appearances, no Resurrection proof texts. The Gospel ends with the three women leaving the empty tomb in fear and silence. These first sisters of ours in the faith have been instructed by the young man in white to tell the disciples that they are to return to Galilee where they will meet the Risen Christ. The question: “Will these women who came up from Galilee with Jesus to serve Him, who seek with sad hearts to serve Him still in death, will these women speak?”, so that we might know of the Resurrection and meet the Risen Christ?

We in the Diocese of Pennsylvania share the charge to speak of the Risen Christ and where He can be met. For twenty years we have supported a unique and bold testimony of the Risen Christ. Rather than abandon crumbling neighborhoods and communities that are barely existing on “life support” as many denominations have, we made a commitment to stay in the city. Our strategy to support Diocesan Missions is unlike that of any other Diocese in this country. Eight locations were identified in these communities throughout the Diocese and designated The Diocesan Coalition for Mission and Ministry (DCMM). This strategy compels us to be a truly missionary Diocese knowing and allowing the whole church to meet the Risen Christ in the faces of the poor and marginalized. For two decades, all of us in this Diocese, like those women, have spoken and we have walked the road to Galilee.

For two decades committed DCMM clergy have been freed of the need to raise their own salaries so that funds could be sought for ministry. Congregations committed their meager resources and space for service, and hundreds of lay volunteers were challenges and supported in vital ministries; e.g., after school programs, soup kitchens, feeding programs, work with the homeless, literacy and job training centers. As clergy and laity around the Diocese spoke and walked to Galilee, hundreds upon hundreds were and are touched to give, sometimes sacrificially, to support programs and campaigns to renovate battered buildings for service. Several persons from these ministries have met the Risen Christ and offered themselves to the Church’s ordained ministry. The most ambitious campaign in this nation to revitalize once historic cities, Philadelphia’s Neighborhood Transformation Initiative, was a result in large part of our Diocesan strategy to stay in the city and minister in abandoned communities. (It should be noted that the initiative was unveiled to the public in one of our mission congregations).

This strategy has opened our eyes to the reality that mission congregations are treasures, places where the Risen Christ is met day in and day out. We understood in the beginning, but now understand more fully, that the value of these ministries is not that they become “little replicas” of the most prosperous among us. The inestimable value of this mission strategy is that venues are offered where we can all meet and serve the One of whom the young man in white spoke. These congregations, these gifts of location and place, allow us to minister to and with those with whom Jesus identified Himself – point blank – “the least of these”. Our Diocesan Mission strategy simply says that without the least of these in the Body of Christ, we are all incomplete, even the most self sufficient among us.

For two decades, the Diocese of Pennsylvania, through the support and leadership of our Bishops, Standing Committee, Diocesan Council, Deans, Diocesan Coalition of Mission and Ministry Vicars, clergy and laity, has chosen to speak rather than to be silent; to follow the road to Galilee rather than return to the Tomb. We have chosen to stay in the city;

we have chosen to be beacons of hope to mean streets and broken lives; we have recognized these awesome pearls of great worth. We have spoken with budget support, mutual accountability, and sharing our experiences of meeting the Risen Christ with one another.

As the Diocese of Pennsylvania begins to review our mission strategy, we need to look for opportunities to speak of this journey, this commitment, this road we are walking to Galilee. To remain silent is to return to the Tomb and say we no longer have the courage, the faith for the trip to Galilee. To remain silent is to deny where He can be met. The ministries in these mission congregations are more critical than ever at a time when the violence and death of war abroad and in our urban streets say that sacrifice and love are not the answer. We as a Diocese need to speak out to the Church as a whole, not solely for the sake of beacon ministries along dark streets, but for the sake of our all knowing the Resurrection.

Once again we are confronted with the challenge to Claim and Proclaim. We are faced with the question: “Will we speak as our first sisters in the faith did?” We have two decades and more of commitment by which Mark, the women, the young man in white, and Jesus Himself are made proud – it is a commitment of which angels are awed! In recent years this commitment to meet the Risen One in Galilee has been threatened. It is a commitment that is challenged by the current national and international economic crisis, which threatens us all and the poor most immediately. . . It is a commitment to be kept and honored.

The Rev. Mary E. Laney

For Diocesan Coalition for Mission & Ministry
Diocesan of Pennsylvania

The Rev. Isaac J. Miller

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Our consultants for the Diocesan Mission Planning Commission are the Rev. Eric Law, founder of the Kaleidoscope Institute and Mr. William “Bill” Cruse, his East Coast Coordinator. Eric began his work as a consultant in racism and reconciliation in California after the Los Angeles riots. His interest in transformative change developed into an expertise in Congregational Development, including a period as Officer for Congregational Development in the Anglican Diocese of New Westminster in Vancouver, BC. We are excited to bring Eric to the Diocese in 2012 for a six part series in Congregational Transformation for a group of ten congregations.

Eric is based in the Diocese of Los Angeles, and travels extensively consulting with Episcopal, United Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, American Baptist and United Church of Christ congregations, dioceses or judicatories. The institute and its associates continue to develop programs, resources and structures that will serve and support church leaders to become more competent in our diverse changing world.

Eric is the author numerous books including: *Sacred Acts, Holy Change: Faithful Diversity and Practical Transformation*; *Inclusion: Making Room for Grace*; *The Bush Was Blazing But Not Consumed: Developing a Multicultural Community*; and Eric has developed a training workshop which will become a book on *Holy Currencies: Emergent Conversations on Money and Sustainable Ministry*.