

Charrette \* 18 September 2017 \* St. Mark's Plainfield

36 people in the room.

Includes 3 Steering Committee: Amy, Emily, Karen;

3(?) Diocesan Staff: Debi, Bishop & Susan

About half the room participated in one of the bishop's forums; about a third at the days of discernment

### **Dwelling in the Word**

*Where did you stop*

You give them something to eat

sheep without a shepherd

compassion

And he gave them to the disciples to set before the people

Hurried there on foot and arrived ahead of them

No leisure even to eat

And all ate and were filled

*What word or phrase stopped you? Why?*

compassion – if you have compassion you meet people where they are; no matter how little you have, you always have a little that you can give

Five loaves and two fish – sense of the impossibility of the task

You give them something to eat – The disciples were expecting Jesus to do it and Jesus turned it back to them: *you*

taking, looked up, blessed, broke – very Eucharistic, all the actions needed for it to happen

compassion – not everyone who came to hear Jesus was a believer, but when he showed his compassion, there was no test; he loved everyone believer or not

*Is the Holy Spirit nudging you?*

Stewardship abundance – fundamental truth is there is enough for everyone, we are so rich that there is always enough no matter how poor we think we are.

This passage calls for teamwork; disciples were called to action, to use what Jesus had provided. Had to get involved, not just sit back and watch.

Diocese is called to participate to the love of Christ.

Called to respond to “how many loaves have you?” – called to “Go and see.”

Lack of money didn't prohibit ministry from happening.

“Sheep” are more than just the twelve; Jesus is attentive to both the large group and the near group in the same way.

(inaudible)

Had compassion despite having been tired and hungry; somehow found the energy.

Noticed that the disciples hadn't had time to eat; then they get where they are going and have to sit through a long day of Jesus' teaching, when it finally ends and they think

they can eat, Jesus sends them to take what they had for themselves and give that to others.

12 baskets of broken pieces – also about abundance

“Recognized them and hurried ahead” – the energy is not around just Jesus but also his followers, that people want to see and share in the experience.

## **Review of process and findings so far**

*per handouts*

### **Introductions/ministries represented**

Anti Racism (3)

Black Ministry

Board of missions (2)

Chancellor

Christian Formation

Clergy Continuing Ed

Clerical compensation (3)

College Ministry Foundation,

Committee on Diaconate,

Congregational Development Commission,

Diocesan Council (4)

General Convention Deputy (2)

Hispanic Commission

Liturgy Commission,

Nominating Committee

Postulant for the diaconate

Rutgers Chaplaincy

School of ministry

Standing committee (4)

Stewardship Commission

Treasurer of the Diocese/Finance and Budget

Way of St Paul (5)

Youth Council

### **Table brainstorm #1 – What do you believe are the essential functions of the Bishop and the Bishop’s staff?**

Establish and maintain contact with parishes

resource for parishes and missions

leadership

overseer

pastor to clergy and laity

speak to the issues of the world from the perspective of the gospel

and speak after consultation with the members of the diocese

our connection with TEC

Spiritual leadership  
resources and financial support to the parishes  
intervention when things go wrong  
transitional support

Guidance  
leadership  
Support  
pastoral care  
unification\  
connection  
grand shepherd  
to be visible  
fiduciary  
theology

Pastor to priests  
lead the diocese  
offer assistance to parish churches  
chief shepherd to the diocese  
supervise transitions  
staff assist bishop in carrying out work in diocese  
administer finances of diocese  
leads management of business affairs

Ecclesiastical and fiduciary oversight  
Communications  
guidance  
serve congregations  
represent diocese to national church  
leadership  
articulate a vision  
be a good role model

What's missing? Sacraments: ordination

### **Table Brainstorm #2 – stop/keep/start/priorities**

*\*\* see spreadsheet for results \*\**

Large group debrief: Any Insights, ah-has, clear direction?

- noticed things that were similar in nature but listed separately; eg Hispanic commission and multicultural ministry: why aren't they given one pool of money to split among them?

- lots of agreement in the group
  - seems like we do a lot as a diocese
  - We may rate it as important to do this or that particular thing, but we also have to ask if we are doing it in a way that makes sense
  - We need staffing for the initiatives that are high priority
  - some of things we thought were very valuable, we wondered if they would make more sense regionally
- nice segue to*

**Table Brainstorm #3 – what ACTIVITIES can be resourced outside the budget**

*side conversations revealed: - that there may be a couple things on the evaluation sheet that aren't really resourced by the diocese (constable grant, acolyte festival; also that people don't know that what the diocesan budget contributes is a leveling of the playing field, so that smaller congregations can also do the things that better resourced congregations can easily do.*

EFM

Clergy Conference

ashes to go

Eucharistic Minister training

convocations

Lenten programs

spiritual direction

convocations

school for deacons

Immigration committee

interfaith dialogue

mission trips

sanctuary

ERD

Canon for Congregational Development/Way of St Paul

Acolyte festival

ashes to go

anti gun violence

convocations

Eucharistic Ministers

Lenten programs

*starts that can be resourced outside budget:*

sports ministry

STEAM programs

Community Church Council

Ashes to Go  
acolyte festival  
choir camp  
Education for Ministry  
Eucharistic Ministry  
Lenten programs  
Mission trip  
music ministry  
Sudan

Acolyte Festival  
mass on the grass  
Ashes to go  
anti gun violence  
choir camp  
church next  
clergy retreats  
constable grant videos  
Lenten programs  
ministry institute  
mission trips  
recovery ministry  
Regional confirmation (add instruction regionally)  
retreats  
spiritual direction  
Theo's Café  
Urban Promise

**Table Brainstorm #4 – What resources would you tap to support these values**

Fundraising/Sponsorship  
Lilly endowment  
grants/grant writer  
capital campaign  
pay to play congregations  
estate planning (episcopal Church Foundation)  
\*Publicity (better known as branding)  
\*Review Investment portfolio  
    \*indicates a secondary priority for this group

Grants  
Clergy associations  
fundraising  
planned giving  
telethon

program utilization funding by parishes  
social media campaigns (like for ALS)

Foundation Grants  
Legacy giving  
local businesses  
special events  
non profit organizations  
special envelopes

Grants  
Local businesses  
Special fundraising  
estate planning  
Go Fund me

TEC Grants  
Convocation Resources  
Parish resources  
Legacy Giving  
Foundation grants  
National associations  
The Gates Foundation  
Historical (building) grants  
Episcopal philanthropists

### **Take aways**

This exercise has been all about individual pieces of the pie; not putting things together yet. Maybe organize the budget into master committees for ministry areas (e.g. justice ministries; give \$100,000 for all justice programs). Those committees split up their pool of money, and might fund different things in different years.

Might be helpful to connect missions with large congregations who can share the load, local relationships, shared clergy, support for admin and lay leadership, rather than the diocese (possibly distant).

There are some large diocesan expenses that weren't covered in these conversations that it's worth having conversation about: eg camp crossroads, convention. *Camp Crossroads was funded as one of the special initiatives.*

Could be useful to combine brainstorm 3 and 4, e.g. connect Congregational Development to a network of parishes that need to find a way to fund it.

I don't know where we are with grant writers – do we have one on the diocesan staff?  
*No.* There is money that goes unused because we're not asking for it, (n.b. grant writing is a lot of work.)

(Are we looking for a grant writer??)

*We have had some conversation about a development officer for the diocese (we're leaving a lot of money on the table.)*

There's a huge disparity in the diocese between very rich and very poor congregations. We want to treat each other equally but some can pay and some can't; how do we even the playing field so that those who can't pay can have full access (against embarrassment, shame) and those who can pay want to do so?

*That's a primary function of the diocesan budget, to level the playing field.*

Is the next phase in this process going to be serious talk about the stewardship half of the budget? (Our table assumed diocesan budget is not going to change as far as income when we were doing this exercise.)

*Marks of mission giving passed at last convention, so assuming income is moving forward at status quo. Further conversation about that probably has to be generated by a resolution to the regular convention; it's not part of this process.*

What happens as a result of this evening's conversation and similar ones? Are we going to have some hard stops? There were lots of common elements around the room which could make some of the decisions easy.

With you (bishop) as our leader, can you share whether you have a new perspective or outlook based on the conversations thus far? *I'm still processing this; I'll address convention after thought and prayer.*

How do we factor in the idea that resources/funding are getting scarcer and scarcer as a result of TEC/mainline denominations shrinking? May not need to/be able to maintain a budget based on three million Episcopalians.

Demographics in NJ are changing. Growing churches in some cities while other churches are shrinking and probably going to close. Especially Latino/Hispanic growing congregations; a lot of people in those churches are willing to come but don't have financial resources. If we are going to grow, we are going to have to support those congregations and not say "why aren't they paying their fair share?" There are people who are working two jobs and are homeless because they can't afford rent. 200 or 300 people going to a church doesn't mean they can give a lot of money. Don't judge resources on ASA; use well-resourced sheep to take care of sheep in the desert. As shepherd of the diocese, take a priest from Princeton and send them to Tom's River to see what's going on there. (Sounds like to educate and create relationships?)

*This is the issue I've been raising in this whole process; we've been too much in silos, we need to work out our mutual dependency.*

Haven't really addressed the fact that there are congregations that are not contributing what they could be to diocesan funds.

*How do we hold one another accountable? Every time a vestry makes a decision about giving below their asking, they are making the decision that this (diocesan) community is of less value than everything else. I want to challenge that slippery slope.*

I wonder where all the seasonal chapels are in this mix. There may be more resources available if members of my congregation aren't also giving to a summer chapel.

*Most seasonal chapels operate outside the polity of the diocese; are separately incorporated. They do give, variously, to the diocese.*

Way of Saint Paul coaches are learning to ask: why are we accepting declining membership as the way of the future? We should not be accepting that it's inevitable that we are going to shrink, because accepting that is accepting we are not going to do our mission that Jesus sends us on. WSP is not a quick fix, but we should not give up and accept decline as a reality.

For budget going forward: need to be sure people in the congregations understand what we are doing with this money. Use that teaching to put pressure on vestries to give their fair share. Get people to talk to their vestries about wanting to fund the things we do. (Story about a parish treasurer who refused to write checks "in that mess around the turn of the century")

As a parishioner, I didn't even know we were supposed to be giving to the diocese.

It's hard to get people who are already over-committed to give their time to diocesan ministry.

*Board of consultation is not merely an enforcer of the money question, it's going to look at supporting congregational health.*

Necessity is the mother of invention. We need to do something so we are going to do it, even if we don't know what it is yet.