

Introduction

At Synod in October 2010, Bishop John Chapman in his charge, called upon the Diocese and the parishes to pay attention to the 'Five Marks of Mission' which were placed before the Anglican Communion in 1990 and still, to this day guide the mission of our church. He called the Diocese to focus specifically upon:

Marks of Mission # 1 & 2: To proclaim the good news of the Kingdom; to teach baptize and nurture new believers.

He said, "If we are to proclaim the good news of the kingdom, the first of the five marks of mission, and teach baptize and nurture new believers, the second mark of mission, we must begin to think of ourselves not as a church that is dying but rather, a church that is poised for greater ministry, more vibrant mission and increased membership with in communities of faith. It is time to change our focus. For so many years we have adapted ourselves to cope with a shrinking church. Significant membership decline has been with most of us for all of our church life. Enough! We are so conditioned to coping with shrinking numbers that we have lost our capacity to even imagine let alone strategize for a growing church. My friends, we will grow and indeed we did grow in a small way this past year.

"Church history teaches us that church size and church work has increased and diminished throughout history. However, every time it has diminished, the church has refocused its mission or recovered its mission. When the recovery is placed in the context of a faithful response to baptism and restored hope, mission follows. We are at such a juncture in this diocese. I call everyone in the diocese to recapture our hope in Jesus' presence in our midst and begin planning and working toward that which we have not seen for some time - growth. Not just in membership but in ministries within our parishes and in the communities in which we live. Growth in imagination and creative ways in which we evangelize and make known the Christ we follow and obey. There are signs of this new vitality already.

"A refocused church and diocese will be a little unsettling. We will be called to witness and minister in new ways. For some places to grow, others will need to let go and die trusting in the fullness of Christ's resurrection. It is the way of God. Others will need to let go of old ways, so that new and more appropriate work can take shape that will further the mission of the church.

"Our strategic plan calls us to address congregational development. The Parish Growth and Renewal Committee (PGRC) was created and is working toward addressing this matter."

With this charge in mind, eight of the ten parishes in the Ottawa West deanery met with representatives of PGRC three times during 2011. We learned what the picture was of each of us and what the stories were. We looked for strengths and opportunities of coming together in ministry and mission. We discovered many similarities within our parishes and many common challenges.

"What next?" we asked, and, "How quickly can we do it?" some asked. During Lent in 2012, the clergy of St. Marks, St. Michael and all Angels and St. Richards presented a three parish Lenten study. Then in the fall, a small group of two lay and the rector of each of these parishes met to plan next steps. We

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were introduced to the Rev. Mavis Brownlee, incumbent of the Parish of Clarendon, who had experience with the Ministry Assessment Process in the Diocese of New Westminster. We agreed to begin MAP in a joint tri-parish meeting on February 2 in the New Year.

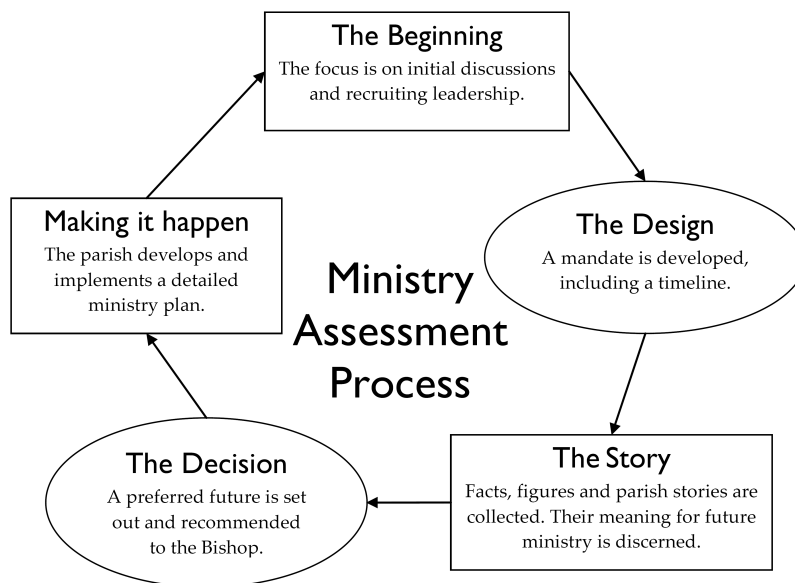
On February 2, 2013, about 60 people from St. Mark's, St. Michael and All Angels and St. Richard's met in St. Richard's hall for a morning of conversation. We shared our best experiences of church, core values and hopes for the future. The team that organized the day agreed to publish the comments gathered and bring a report to each parish Vestry.

What is Ministry Assessment Process (MAP)?

MAP was authorized for use by parishes in the Anglican Diocese of New Westminster in 2007. Members of the PGRC heard about MAP through online conversations, and it helped guide the 2011 conversations in the Deanery of Ottawa West. The following description appears on the website of the Diocese of New Westminster: "The Ministry Assessment Process ("the MAP") is a process by which parishes and regions across the diocese can make informed, spirit-led decisions about future mission and ministry, and—from there— determine how best to use their land and buildings to support those ministries."

MAP is new to the Diocese of Ottawa. While there are some important differences between their Diocese and ours, MAP appears to be the best tool available to us at this time. It does not assume any particular outcome, but provides a guideline that helps conversations unfold, and how congregations together can listen for the voice of God's Spirit. At the same time, it does lead to a concrete decision which congregations can then work towards implementing in a strategic and goal oriented manner.

MAP is a 5-stage process:



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Stage 1: The Beginning

Recognize a need in ministry, set up initial discussions, and lay the groundwork for further stages.

Stage 2: The Design

A mandate identifies participants, questions, a decision-making process, and a timeline.

Stage 3: The Story

Parishes gather, assess and interpret information. In this stage participants value the best of what is... and imagine and discern what could be.

Stage 4: The Decision

Choices are made for future ministry.

Stage 5: Making it Happen

Parishes craft a ministry plan and implementation begins. People give life to the vision, mission and ministry... making Christ's work in the world happen

The team that gathered to begin Stage 1 is now ready and willing to move on to Stage 2, and seeks the approval of each parish vestry to continue this work. Input from many people in each congregation will be required as we progress through the 5 Stages above.

Notice of Motion

The vestry of St Mark's receives the report on the recent conversation with St Michael's and St Richard's from the organizers and is in favour of continuing these discussions using the Ministry Assessment Process (MAP) suggested by the Diocese;

and this vestry supports Georgia Roberts and Judy Darling as St Mark's representatives to the Ministry Assessment Process Team, continuing to liaise with the two partner parishes St Michael's and St Richard's and seeking volunteers to implement MAP at St. Mark's.

[CARRIED IN ALL THREE VESTRIES]

Proposed MAP Team Membership:

St Mark's: Judy Darling, Georgia Roberts, the Rev. Brian Kauk

St Michael's: Audrey Lawrence, Andrew Moody, the Rev. Dr. Linda Privitera,

St Richard's: Paul Dumbrille, John Nicholls, the Rev. Margo Whittaker

Diocese of Ottawa: The Venerable Chris Dunn, Archdeacon of Ottawa West (ex officio) and the Rev. Mavis Brownlee, MAP Mentor and member of PGRC