

Ministries in Action

Report of the
COMMISSION ON
PARISH DEMOGRAPHICS



Presented to:
The Right Reverend Donald F. Harvey
Bishop
Anglican Diocese of
Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

October, 2003

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL
FROM THE
COMMISSION ON PARISH DEMOGRAPHICS

October 15, 2003

Right Reverend Donald F. Harvey
Anglican Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador
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Dear Bishop Harvey:

It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the Commission on Parish Demographics, to present to you the report: *Ministries in Action*.

We thank you for the opportunity we have had to explore the life of the church in the diocese. It is our hope that the contents of this report will encourage the diocese, under your leadership, to introduce bold new steps that will help ensure a healthy and vibrant Anglican church in our diocese for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Dr. Harold Press (chair)
Mr. John Jarvis
Rev. Marilyn Moore
Ms. Heather Skanes
Rev. William Strong

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Commission on Parish Demographics would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to all those who gave so freely of their time and talents in support of this effort.

Specifically, we thank the Bishop for giving us the opportunity to work on this exciting challenge. We thank as well Archdeacon Neil Kellett who was instrumental in getting this study up and running and on track. Special thanks are due also to Ms. Elizabeth Crisby for providing administrative support, to Diocesan Financial Officer Mr. Fred Evans for his financial insights, and to executive assistants to the Bishop Archdeacon Tom Moulton and Archdeacon Cy Pittman for their spiritual and administrative guidance.

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Commission on Parish Demographics

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter of Transmittal	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Tables, Figures & Exhibits	v
1. BACKGROUND	1
Why is it Important for the Church to Understand Demographics?	1
The Challenge for the Anglican Church	2
Overview of the Report	4
2. THE DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT	7
The Changing Environment	7
An Aging Population	8
Changes within the Diocese	9
Differences among Parishes	14
3. WHAT WAS HEARD	15
The Process	15
The Findings	16
1. Reflections on Demographics	16
2. Reflections on Parish Viability	17
3. Reflections on Alternative Ministries	17
4. THREE PARISH PROFILES	19
1. Parish of Shearstown (St. Marks)	19
2. Parish of New Harbour	20
3. Parish of St. Michael's (St. John's)	21
5. ALTERNATIVE MINISTRY MODELS	23
1. Traditional Single-Point Parish	23
2. Traditional Multi-Point Parish	24
3. Joint Project	24
4. Mission Church	25
5. Cooperative Ministry	25
6. Cluster Parish	25
7. Circuit Parish	26
8. Shared Facilities	27
9. Shared Ministry	27
10. Alternating Ministry	28

6. ACHIEVING FINANCIAL STABILITY	29
Financial Challenges	32
7. BOLD NEW STEPS ARE REQUIRED	33
Recommendations	33
1. Organization and Structure	33
2. Information	35
3. Leadership Development	36
4. Communications and Marketing	37
5. Finance	38
CONCLUDING COMMENTS:	
Are we alone in the challenges we face?	40
What has been Learned	40
How to get Started	41
What this will Achieve for the Diocese	42
A Final Word	42
BIBLIOGRAPHY	55

LIST OF TABLES, FIGURES & EXHIBITS

TABLES

1	Population and Attendance	11
2	Real Growth - Baptisms vs Funerals	12
3	Sunday School Attendance	13
4	Declining Lay Participation	14

FIGURES

1	Population Pyramid Eastern Diocese, 1971	10
2	Population Pyramid Eastern Diocese, 2001	10

EXHIBITS

1	Summary of Capital Assets by Parish	44
2	Average Weekly Attendance as a Percent of Parish Population, 2002	49
3	Identifiable Givers as a Percent of Parish Population, 2002	50
4	Summary of the Isthmus Ministry Project	51



Green's Harbour

1. Background

Global population changes brought on by changing demographic conditions, economic trends and migration patterns, coupled with increased religious diversification, decreased church attendance, and less reliance on the church for personal guidance and support, have converged to stimulate a discussion about local parish viability and sustainability. This issue is not unique to Newfoundland and Labrador, nor is it confined to the Anglican community. It is being debated in most other faith communities throughout North America and around the world. The most meaningful solutions will be found only when dioceses and local parishes are capable of understanding, accepting, and addressing these broader environmental issues that will ensure the long-term viability of local ministries. Hence, local parishes will need to be knowledgeable about these issues and trends.

Why is it Important for the Church to Understand Demographics?

In today's world, few social, cultural or economic institutions are unaffected by changing demographic conditions. Demography is the study of the physical characteristics of populations and how they change over time (Foote, 1996). Some of the physical characteristics of populations include age, gender, marital status, family size, education, income, occupation and location. Some of the processes which influence the composition of populations include fertility, mobility (migration) and mortality.

In a growing or even stable population, maintaining and sustaining parishes may not necessarily be a challenging task. However, early in the 21st century we find ourselves living in a complex and volatile global community where the pace of change is so rapid that it is difficult to predict future conditions or their consequences. Indeed, if one could predict the future, one would still have to deal with a vastly different world.

Today there are many forces, both internal and external to the church environment, that are converging to make the task of sustaining viable local parishes a challenging one. For example, a decrease in population, caused by exceptionally low birth rates and unusually high rates of out migration, has placed downward pressure on the numbers who are attending church on a regular basis. Also, the trend towards globalization has made many citizens—particularly those under the age of 35 and well educated—more mobile than ever before. Improved transportation systems, emerging technologies and increased opportunities lure young people away from their home communities and into the cities.

The Challenge for the Anglican Church

Currently, there are considerable assets held throughout the diocese. For the most part, these assets include churches, rectories and parish halls. Also included are various C.L.B. armories, the Diocesan Centre, the Lavrock Camp and Conference Centre and a teacher's residence. Currently, the total insured value of these facilities is in the order of \$51 million.¹ A summary of the capital assets for each parish and their insured values are presented in Exhibit 1.

Many of these facilities are no longer in use and have little or no program value for the church. In the meantime, if they are to have future value they will have to be maintained. With both weekly attendance and revenues down, the cost of maintaining these facilities becomes an ever increasing burden for fewer parishioners.

"The challenge for the Anglican Church today is to create an interest in mission within the general population."

Rev Samuel Koshiishi
General Secretary
Nippon Sei Ko Kai

This province has always maintained a younger population compared to other provinces in Canada. One of the highest birth rates in the world accomplished that. Even with rapidly declining births and high out-migration of our citizens, we still have one of

¹While the insured value of church properties is in the order of \$55 million, the actual value of these properties, if they were to be disposed of at some point in the future, will likely be much less. In the case of growing urban areas such as St. John's, Mount Pearl and Conception Bay South, church properties—although limited in their institutional or commercial uses—will likely benefit from high property demands should any unused church assets be put for sale on the retail market. However, in rural areas of the diocese the picture is quite different. Any sale of unused church assets in a small community with a declining population is likely to have little or no institutional or commercial value. That being the case, the total value of church properties is likely to be considerably less than the \$55 million insured value.

the youngest populations in Canada. This is why we will see continued decline in the younger age groups coupled with increases in the older age groups.

Migration out of the rural communities and into the towns and cities is part of a world-wide trend. People move to larger centres to seek opportunities for employment, lifestyle changes, improved services, social activities and educational opportunities, to mention several. In this province, out-migration continues to plague small towns leading to the withdrawal of businesses, municipal services and public services like schools. Against this backdrop, all old mainstream churches have had to reassess their place in many rural communities and examine new ways of delivering the Word of God.

One would think a rapidly aging population would present a financial opportunity for churches. If this is indeed true, why won't churches benefit financially? There are two reasons. First, most senior citizens exist on fixed incomes. If one is lucky enough to have a pension and retire at 55, living on 70 percent of his/her best income years may sound quite attractive. However, when the same person is 65 years old and living on a fixed salary for the previous ten years, the pension may not seem quite as attractive; and it will seem even less attractive in a further ten years. Second, by the fact that their salary is limited, if not fixed, as they get older they will be spending proportionally more of their income on health-related goods and services. Older people consume more health-related goods and services than younger people, and the proportion of the former will grow sharply in the decades ahead.

Overlaying these challenges is a growing apathy among youth and young adults toward the church. In light of the post-modern culture of today, reaching young people for the cause of Christ is becoming more of a challenge. Because youth comprise a smaller and declining proportion of the population and tend to be generally apathetic about the church, involving youth in the active life of the church will become increasingly more challenging.

“Another seed I want us to sow, and watch grow, is that of a determination to put more emphasis on our ministry to children and young persons.”

Bishop Donald Harvey

These challenges provide the backdrop for building the kind of diocese we want and need for the future. In working toward that future, we must identify and communicate clearly our **mission** (why we exist), **core values** (how we want to act), **vision** (what future we want), **goals** (what directions we will take to get there) and **challenges** (what barriers must first be overcome). Our spiritual guide for all this is our **covenant** (what we pledge to do to achieve our mission and reach our goals). Our covenant is our pledge to:

- worship and praise Almighty God;
- provide the means for spiritual growth;
- interpret the teaching of Jesus for our time;

- teach Christian doctrine in the Anglican tradition;
- proclaim the gospel message through witness and evangelism;
- challenge injustices;
- pray for and nurture our Christian community and the world;
- be faithful to our Anglican identity shaped by scripture, tradition, reason and experience; and
- be faithful, wise and responsible stewards of God's gifts of creation, redemption and empowerment.

If we ignore the challenges and fail to respond to them, we stand in danger of losing our church as we presently know it. Assuredly, as an Anglican congregation we will find it increasingly challenging to carry out our covenant; at least in the same way as we do now. It is not just our challenge, it is the challenge for every Anglican diocese in Canada and for other mainstream churches as well.

Overview of the Report

The report is organized into six chapters. Chapter two provides the contextual framework for the body of the report. It sets out the demographic and environmental issues that confront the church in this province and the eastern diocese in particular. Chapter three summarizes the findings of the consultations and interviews held by the commission. In an effort to provide some flavour of how demographics has effected different parishes in different ways, chapter four provides a short profile of three parishes: two rural and one urban. Each has circumstances and characteristics which makes them both similar and unique at the same time. Chapter five summarizes existing and alternative ministry models and discusses the potential effectiveness of each. Chapter six presents a financial summary and analysis of the revenues and expenditures of the diocese and sets out some of the challenges that will have to be addressed to ensure the long-term viability of the Anglican church in the region. Chapter seven presents a number of recommendations for consideration and provides some concluding remarks.

“What makes a church is the call of Jesus Christ, and our freedom and ability, helped by grace, to recognize that call in each other. The first reality is God’s action in summoning us together as a people...To accept the invitation, with all it carries of acknowledging what Jesus has done, is to be taken into Christ’s living Body, finding there a company of unlikely people who have received and answered the same invitation.

If that’s where the heart of the church is, then we might quite properly expect that it won’t always look the same or feel the same across the human world. We rightly say that we all need certain structures, in particular a ministry that is recognisable more than locally and that represents our continuity, as a focal part of the work involved in staying recognisable to each other.”

Dr. Rowan Williams
Archbishop of Canterbury



St. Luke's, Port de Grave

2. Demographic Context

The Changing Environment

Demographic factors have had, and will continue to have, a significant influence on the growth of the population of the province and the Anglican church. We examine briefly three of those factors, namely: fertility, migration and mortality. Fertility refers to reproductive performance of a group or region. The fertility rate is the number of live births per 1,000 females between the ages of 15 and 49 years in one year. A low fertility rate means a population may not be producing sufficient offspring to replace itself. In this province, the fertility rate has declined steadily from its peak of 5.9 (births per adult female) in 1957 (one of the highest rates in the world), to 1.2 in 2000 (one of the lowest rates in the world). With the number of births dropping and the average age increasing—a phenomenon observed by all those familiar with rural communities in this province—by 2005 the median age of the population of the province will be over 40 years (Kincora, 1998).

The result is that births have declined to dangerous levels—unless, of course, we feel that children are an economic drain on society and declining births is a benefit. The period from the late fifties to mid-sixties ushered in the *baby boom* with over 15,000 babies born each year. By 2000, the number of births had reduced to fewer than 5,000 births per year. Fertility is a complex product of economic, social, cultural as well as personal factors. It is not easily influenced by isolated policy interventions and will change only slowly over time. Thus, fertility levels are not expected to change significantly over the next 17 years and births are expected to continue falling even if fertility rates remain at current levels or increase modestly. Projections indicate that births will drop to fewer than 2,500 births by 2020 (Statistics Canada, 2001). No society can sustain or support itself when its most important resource—its people—is declining at these rates. Unless offset through migration, a continued decline of young people in this province will have devastating effects on provincial social systems, including the religious institutions.

Migration refers to the movement of people from one place of residence to another. After fertility, out-migration is the single biggest demographic factor affecting local parishes. While provinces like Ontario and Alberta deal with the influx of people moving into the province, this province is in the unenviable position of having to

deal with the out-migration of many of its young, well-educated citizens. In the last ten years alone, one-tenth of the population of the province moved to other locations in Canada and the world (Statistics Canada, 2002). The majority of those who left (95%) were under the age of 35 years. This overall trend toward high out-migration is not expected to change significantly in the future. While there will be periods when in-migration will be higher than in the past, it will likely be a function of specific industries and confined to St. John's and a few urban centres. High rates of out-migration will continue to negatively effect rural areas.

The effects of out-migration have a greater impact in rural regions. In addition to the continued out-migration from the province, the trend of young people migrating from rural areas to urban areas to further their education and to find work is expected to continue. This out-migration of youth from rural communities coupled with low births means that many rural communities will not be in a position to sustain themselves. In many cases, services provided by local municipalities, schools and churches will have to be consolidated, reduced or even eliminated.

Historically, mortality in the province has been lower than the rest of Canada because the population has generally been much younger. Population aging over the past twenty years has been more rapid here than in Canada to the point where the death rate in this province (8.7 per thousand) now exceeds Canada's (7.3 per thousand). Even though the number of deaths has increased over the last 30 years, the mortality rate—as reflected in increased life expectancy—has declined. Thus, the people in this province are on average living longer. Life expectancy is expected to continue rising in line with historical trends both here and in Canada. However, as more people move into the older age groups the number of deaths will rise. All of these factors will have significant effects on local parishes.

An Aging Population

All of these trends point toward a rapidly aging society in this province. More youth out-migration from rural areas together with continued low fertility will produce a rapidly aging population, particularly in rural areas of the province. Such changes will produce shifting investment patterns by the business sector, a rural economic slowdown, uneven social demands (i.e., younger citizens demanding schools while older citizens demanding better health care) and increased demands of our religious institutions (if they are perceived as having a role). These factors will challenge politicians and policy makers who are trying to ensure the long term survival of many of our rural communities.

The reality is that most communities will survive over the next 20 years; beyond that the picture is unclear. Those that do survive will do so in a much different form. They will be bedroom communities; that is, they will be composed largely of senior citizens. There will be few or no children and few young working adults. The

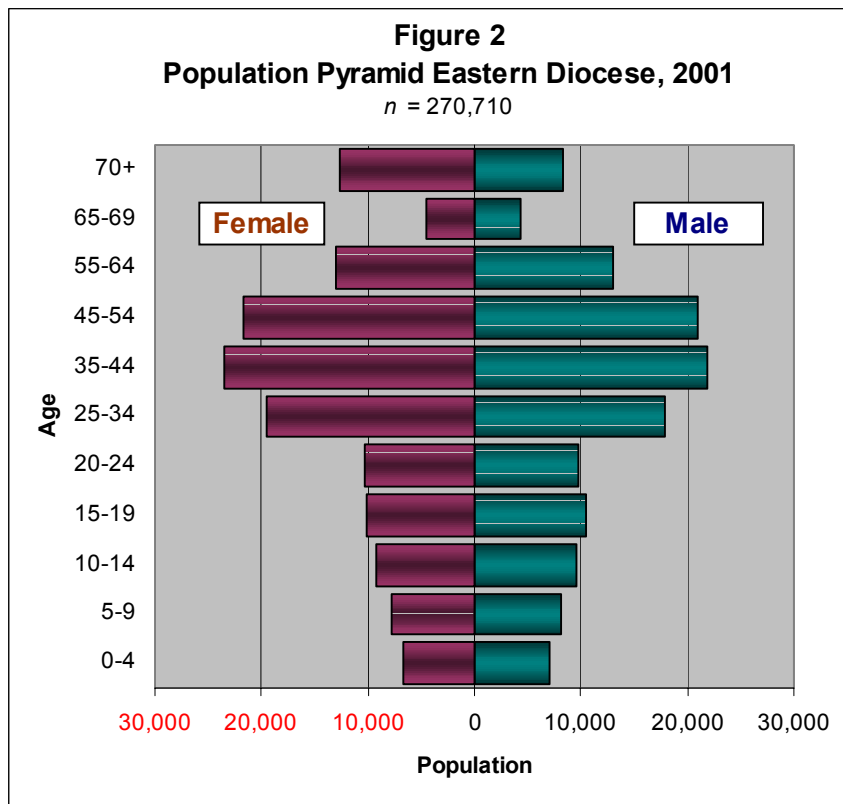
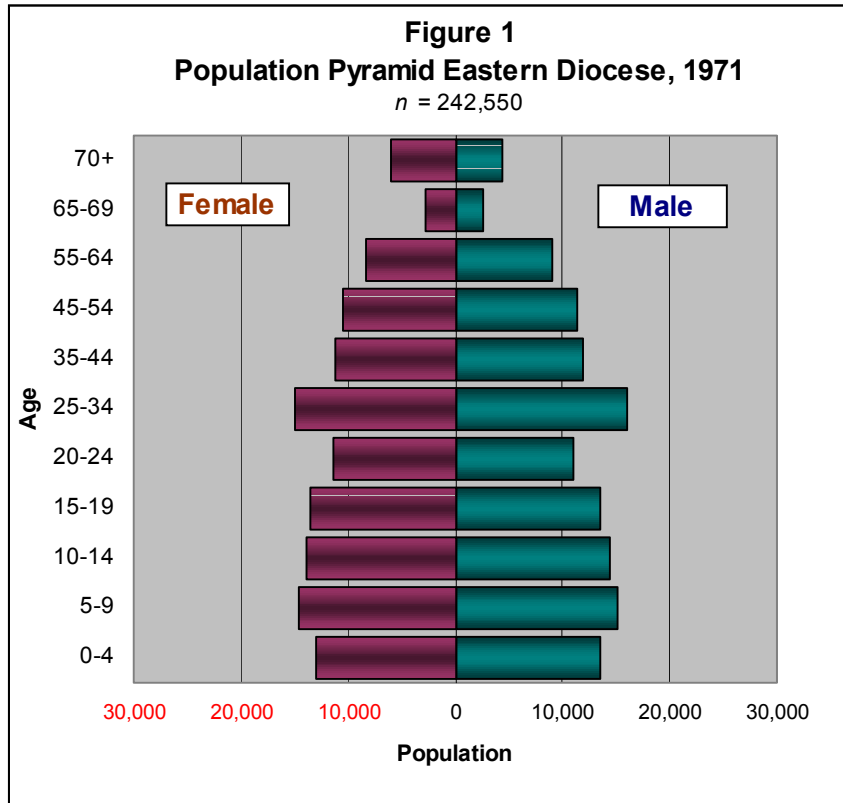
dichotomy for service providers is that while there will be increased fiscal pressures to consolidate municipal, educational and health care services, there will be increased local demands for these very same services to continue. The very same demands will be exerted on local churches. On the one hand, there will be fiscal pressures to consolidate parishes; on the other, there will be resistance to such change and even increasing demand on the part of local clergy to become advocates not only for maintaining parishes but for other local services as well.

Churches will benefit from an aging population. As people reach their fifties they tend to turn to the church; the very church they attended only occasionally—or not at all—in their adult lives. If churches are to be somewhat businesslike and engage in strategic thinking, they will recognize that there is a whole segment of the population that is vulnerable, marketable and growing. It won't be a cakewalk though. Older people tend to be on fixed incomes and spend more of their income on health-related goods and services.

Changes within the Diocese

In the last 30 years, the population of the eastern diocese grew over 28,000, or 12 percent. Almost 20,000 (16%) of that growth were females. The distribution of the population—broken down by various age groups and by gender—is presented in Figures 1 and 2 on the following page through the use of population pyramids. The pyramids show a significant (one could argue catastrophic) change in the age and gender makeup of the population between 1971 and 2001. Some highlights include: an increase in the total population of 28,160 (from 242,550 to 270,710); a decline of more than 44,000 in the age groups below the age of 25; a drop of over 26,000 (50 percent) in the 0-9 population alone; increases in all age groups over the age of 25; by 2001 almost 70 percent of the population was over the age of 25; big increases in females with over 41,000 more females in age groups over the age of 25 by 2001: over 100 percent increase in females in the 35-54 age group; and 114 percent increase in the female population over 70 years (seven percent increase in males).

These data point to a rapidly aging population; a sharp decline in young people along with a significant growth in the adult and senior age groups, particularly the elderly. While we are still feeling the effects of the baby boom, if these trends continue—and there is every indication they will—we will rapidly approach a position of negative population growth. By the year 2020, the population will be in rapid decline with only the senior population continuing to grow.



A number of other demographic indicators help show both what is happening and the real and potential effect these changes are having within the diocese. A brief discussion of several indicators follows.

Population and church attendance declining. Over the last three decades, the Anglican population in the region has shown modest growth. In 1971, the Census of Canada reported an Anglican population of 61,940 for the region and by 2001 the population increased five percent to 65,250; about 24 percent of the total population of 270,710 for the region.² One should note a significant difference between census reports and actual parish records. For example, we find that in 2001 parishes reported an Anglican population of 50,098 or 15 percent less the 65,250 reported on the census for the same year.

Table 1 presents data on selected indicators for the last five years. In that period, the Anglican population declined five percent and the total confirmed population declined 14.6 percent in that period. Much of that change can be explained by natural population change, high out-migration and declining church attendance.

Table 1: Population and Attendance				
Year	Anglican Population	Confirmed Population	Average Weekly Attendance	Marriages
1998	52,359	37,106	7,731	387
1999	50,866	36,534	7,631	390
2000	51,441	34,460	6,780	394
2001	50,098	32,793	7,098	330
2002	49,753	31,677	7,063	316
Change	-5.0%	-14.6%	-8.6%	-18.4%

Perhaps most challenging is the drop of 8.6 percent in average weekly attendance in such a short period of time. If this trend continues, it will mean parishes' ability to respond to the ever increasing needs of their congregation as well as to other pastoral needs in the diocese and in the broader Anglican community will be severely impaired.

²1971 Census, Statistics Canada, census subdivisions #1 and #10 combined.

Another indicator of change is the decline in marriages. In the last five years alone, marriages declined from 387 to 316, over 18 percent. The reasons for this are complex and have to do with changing lifestyle issues, middle-class norms, personal circumstance and religiosity. Regardless of the reasons, the impact it has on church is direct: fewer marriages equals fewer baptisms.

Real growth approaching zero. Historically, parishes have recorded many more baptisms than funerals because of the relatively young population and high birth rates.³ The change in the size of the population that results from this difference can be referred to as real growth.⁴ It is the high rate of positive growth that provided a cushion against high out-migration in the past. This situation has changed significantly in the last decade or two such that in 2002 there were only marginally more baptisms than funerals.

More recent trends are presented in table 2. Data show that the number of baptisms are down approximately 100 since 1999, while the number of funerals has remained relatively constant. In 2002, there were 86 more baptisms than funerals; down from 132 just five years earlier. These trends are likely to continue for some years, thus presenting additional challenges to parishes. As the baby bust continues, we will have fewer baptisms and as the baby boomers enter the senior ranks we will have

Year	Baptisms	Funerals	Growth
1998	686	554	+132
1999	734	521	+213
2000	729	594	+135
2001	714	518	+196
2002	639	553	+ 86
Change	-6.9%	0.0%	

³While baptisms are not a reliable indicator of births or fertility, in the absence of reliable birth data by parish, baptisms can serve as an alternative indicator of growth.

⁴Real growth is sometimes referred to as natural population change. In this case, positive growth occurs when baptisms out strip funerals; negative growth when there are more funerals than baptisms. Note, however, some jurisdictions may experience negative growth but still have an increasing population—Alberta is a recent example. These are caused by immigration and other factors.

increasingly more funerals. The result is that we will quickly move from positive growth to negative.

Fewer attending Sunday schools. What is important, and harder to get a reliable picture of, is the composition of the population—such as the age and gender of parish members. For example, we know from parish focus groups and various other anecdotal information that the proportion of young people attending church on a regular basis has been declining rapidly. Examination of one indicator—the number of students attending and teachers supporting Sunday school—shows significant decline in the last five years.

Table 3 points out that the number of Sunday school teachers declined from 360 to 305 (15.3 percent) and the number of students attending Sunday schools declined by over 400 or almost 20 percent in five years. These data provide a significant challenge, not just for the future, but for the present. If we do not address the root causes and try to reverse the trend or, better, increase the number of young people

Table 3: Sunday School Attendance			
Year	Sunday Schools	Teachers	Pupils
1998	55	360	2,204
1999	53	361	2,138
2000	52	345	1,864
2001	50	312	1,703
2002	54	305	1,772
Change	-1.8%	-15.3%	-19.6%

involved in and assuming leadership positions in the church, we will face an even greater challenge in the next few years. Now is the time to be identifying, engaging, mentoring and nurturing our future leaders.

Decreasing lay participation. Declining lay participation in various ministries is a major challenge. While not a complete picture of lay participation, Table 4 shows that over the last five years participation by women’s groups has declined over 25 percent, men’s groups about 17 percent and youth groups 22.1 percent. If this trend continues, the number of adults and, more seriously, youth volunteering for leadership roles in the church will decline in staggering proportions. In short, parishes will have fewer individuals from which to draw for leadership responsibilities.

Table 4: Declining Lay Participation

Year	Women's Groups	Men's Groups	Youth Groups
1998	2,017	568	1,732
1999	1,824	559	2,003
2000	1,957	626	1,689
2001	1,540	507	1,454
2002	1,504	474	1,349
Change	-25.4%	-16.6%	-22.1%

We are rapidly approaching a *Catch 22* or at least the crossroads of one: just at the time when lay participation is declining, it is the very time when there is an increased need for lay participation to initiate and organize youth ministries, A.C.W. and A.C.M., the very programs that parishes need to draw upon for leadership responsibilities.

Why should we be concerned about the future of the Anglican church in this province when a large number of baby boomers is set to enter the senior ranks? In a word, by 2010 the diocese will have shrunk to a fraction of its present size. As the senior generation ages and dies out, they are not being replaced by baby boomers. Currently, seniors make up a significant proportion of the leadership, financial support and influence found in the church.

By 2020, most of the present leaders will be gone from power. Yet, there will be few baby boomers interested in replacing them and supporting the church. This is basically because baby boomers may have characteristics like “spiritually” and a need for “meaning in life” but not in attending or supporting an institutional church.⁵ The decline in parish attendance and support described above is a precursor to the type and scope of change that the diocese will experience in the next two decades. By 2020, the diocese may well end up with only a handful of facilities supporting an Anglican population a fraction its present size. A number of churches within the diocese will have to be closed and sold, or at least be put up for sale.⁶

⁵Rev. Ron Meacock, *The Demographic Shift*, published at the following address: www.tellout.com/shift.htm

⁶It is likely many church properties in rural and isolated communities in the province will have little real value in the real estate market.

Differences among Parishes

A more detailed picture of the types of changes taking place in parishes is presented in chapter 4. It is in that chapter that a more detailed analysis is completed for three parishes: two rural parishes and an urban parish.



Winterton

3. What Was Heard

The Process

The commission examined a number of options to obtain input from parishes and church members. The first option was to meet with the various deanery chapters. A second was to go to selected parishes to meet with clergy and laity. A third option was to meet with the deanery councils that included diocesan clergy plus lay representation from all the parishes. The first option would have included input only from the clergy. The second option would have included only some parishes. The commission chose to go with the third option which would allow input from clergy and laity alike. Since all the deanery councils were planning to have spring meetings, this was the option chosen.

The commission then considered the input required. Questions were selected and then modified to enable the commission to obtain the most relevant information possible within the available time frames. Attendees were asked to reflect on various issues as presented and provide feedback through straightforward and candid dialogue. The questions used to guide the discussion were as follows:

Reflections on parish demographics:

1. Demographics is about the people in your parish. How has the demographics of your parish changed over the past 10 years?
2. Describe some of the challenges that your parish is facing.
3. Describe some of the good things happening in your parish that we can learn from you to build on?

Reflections on parish viability:

4. Parish viability is generally measured by the number of members that attend church regularly in addition to the financial situation. Are there other factors that should be considered when determining parish viability?
5. Are there parishes in your area that you think are currently not viable but could be viable in another model?

6. Are there different ways that the diocese can relate to the parishes to help parishes to be more viable and to support new models of ministry?

Reflections on alternative ministries for the future:

7. What criteria constitutes successful ministry? Or, what is it you think about when you hear the term “successful Ministry”?
8. Are there other models of successful ministry that you have heard, read, seen or experienced that could work in your area?

Regional deans of the four deaneries were contacted and asked to place the commission on the agenda of their next deanery council meeting. It was decided that a minimum of three members of the commission would go to each of the deanery councils to introduce the commission and to facilitate the questions. Following a brief introduction, the members were divided into three groups. Each group was asked to discuss two questions to ensure that all the questions were dealt with. Groups were arbitrarily chosen to allow members of all the parishes to have input on at least some of the questions.

The Findings

The commission developed questions to fall under three areas of concern: demographics, parish viability, and alternative ministries. The findings of the consultations are discussed below.

1. Reflections on Demographics

There were four main challenges identified by all the consultations. These were economics, too-many buildings, need for increased visibility of clergy, and a need to reach out to the unchurched or fallen members. Economics included both the economic situation in the communities as a whole as well as the necessity of stressing the churches’ financial needs. Too many buildings exacerbated the financial problems, since there were insufficient funds to provide both upkeep and insurance. One of the major problems associated with the visibility of clergy was the increased amount of administration required which prevented clergy from carrying out their pastoral duties. Reaching out to the unchurched or fallen members had its own particular problems, since this desire to reach the fallen often allowed the fallen to manipulate the church for their own ends or to set requirements for their return.

2. Reflections on Parish Viability

There were a number of diverse opinions expressed on what criteria constituted parish viability and a successful ministry. Many of these revolved around the feelings expressed in the church—whether there was harmony, if everyone felt welcome, fellowship, a sense of godliness, an openness to different forms of services and ministry, and the worship services themselves. Other comments were more program oriented stressing education, lay ministry, teaching, adherence to doctrines of church, good preaching and effective communication. Good stewardship was mentioned only by Conception Bay Deanery Council, while financial commitment, but not necessarily self-support, was mentioned by Avalon East Deanery Council.

Overall, it was felt that although self-support and financial stability were important considerations in parish viability, they should not be the only considerations. A common comment was that the geography and isolation of a parish needed to be taken into consideration, especially in relation to parishes that were isolated from other churches and had a limited number of people to support the parish. A related comment was that the number of Anglican churches in an area in relation to other churches (i.e., United Church, Pentecostal, Roman Catholic, etc.) also needed to be examined. It was felt that the history and culture of a parish should also be considered. A strong outreach program was also felt to add viability to a parish..

3. Reflections on Alternative Ministries

Not everything in the parishes was doom and gloom since there are a number of good things happening even during these challenging times. In at least two congregations, the Anglican and United Churches are sharing buildings (Come-by-Chance, and Good Shepherd). Another congregation is sharing space with the Russian Orthodox Church. In many congregations the “Alpha” program is bringing new people to faith and involving these people in the life of the parishes. There is also a new sense of awareness of the importance of the laity in the church, particularly of lay leaders and enabling of lay ministries. Various other activities such as “Tea in the Crypt” (Cathedral), an improved music ministry (Foxtrap), Christmas Dinner (St. Thomas’), involvement of youth (a number of parishes) and visiting Clergy provided causes to celebrate in many parishes. Music and choirs were mentioned by all consultations as being one of the good things happening.

Other parishes are currently involved in different ministry models and spoke about them. In Whitbourne, the old rectory is used as a social centre and meeting place, and a hall is rented when needed. New Harbour anticipates closing two out of three churches and is waiting for a decision from the Bishop

or Administration and Finance to decide which two to close. Heart's Delight, which has four churches, has combined the four vestries into one. In this same parish, a new model of worshipping on alternative Sundays in one of the three smaller churches and the larger church was tried but although there was support for this occasionally, it was not welcomed on a permanent basis. The Isthmus Ministry, where seventeen congregations share three clergy, was also discussed. In Come-By-Chance the Anglican and United Churches worship in the same building on alternate Sundays. Three other churches rent their buildings to other denominations.

One of the main hindrances to enabling and bringing about changes was the need for improved communications between the diocese and parishes. When parishes are waiting to do something, such as closing one or more churches, and are unable to get a decision from the diocese to go ahead, it was identified as discouraging and disruptive. It was felt that the diocese needs to make decisions, particularly the hard decisions of closing and combining churches on a timely basis, and then follow through with these decisions. In particular, it was noted there needs to be more dialogue between the bishop and the parishes. In addition, the number of dioceses on the island should be discussed again since with improved communication and transportation three dioceses may no longer be needed. It was also noted that Queen's College was doing a poor job of training clergy with regards to preaching (e.g., stewardship, life-changing and commitment to Christ). It was also noted there is a need to revisit the methodology of setting the assessments so that parishes know what formula is being used and the reasons why. Finally, it was noted that while parishes recognized the need for change, many do not want to take the medicine and may need to have change thrust upon them.



St. Phillips

4. Three Parish Profiles

Examining the demographics of the province and the diocese does not give a sense of the kinds of changes that have been taking place in local parishes. To provide some flavour of how demographics has effected different parishes, we provide a short profile of three: two rural parishes and an urban parish. Each has different circumstances and characteristics which makes it unique. At the same time, similarities exist among all three.

1. Parish of Shearstown (St. Marks)

The parish of Shearstown was established in 1988 under a diocesan initiative to create some new parishes throughout the diocese. Prior to that, St. Mark's church in Shearstown was part of the parish of Bay Roberts. The new parish was responsible for the communities of Shearstown and Butlerville. There is one church building that seats about 180 people. It was hoped that a new parish of about 260 families would be able to support a salaried clergy and maintain itself.

There is a parish hall underneath the church that is used for Sunday school. There is also a parish hall in Butlerville that is used by the school and by the town for card games, usually held twice a week, and various other community functions. The total insured value of these properties, including the rectory, is \$509,000.

The population of St. Mark's has grown marginally from 1,300 to 1,350 in the last five years (3.8%). The parish enjoys an average weekly attendance of about 130 persons over the two services held each Sunday. This past year, it was estimated that 300 attended Christmas Eve services, and over 210 attended services on Easter day. While average weekly attendance grew 86 percent since 1998, it still represents less than ten percent of the Anglican population in the region (see Exhibit 2). With such a small percentage of the population of Anglicans in the area attending church on a regular basis, it suggests people are

either in the area and attending a church of another denomination or religion or not attending church at all, or have moved out of the region altogether.

The demographic changes affecting the parish show a similar picture to what is happening in other parts of the province. Baptisms were down 13.6 percent since 1998, while funerals were up 50 percent. In 2002, there were 13 more baptisms than funerals.

Currently, there are an estimated 250 identifiable givers—about 18 percent of the parish population—and 70 percent of that number contributed less than \$200 annually to the parish through envelope donations. While givings has increased 25 percent since 1988, the number of givers has decreased seven percent in the last five years. The parish recorded a total expenditure of \$68,191 in 2002 about 86 percent of which is derived from weekly givings. Currently, the parish is in arrears in payment of its assessment to the diocese in the order of about \$45,000.

There are two groups in Butlerville, a men's service club and an A.C.W. They mainly oversee a broad range of programs and activities taking place at the parish hall in Butlerville. Currently, while there are no functioning youth groups, there is a committed Sunday School that involved 50 children last year. On average, over 30 children attend services each Sunday.

The significant issue before this parish is one of sustainability. Its challenge is how to empower the congregation to contribute to the diocese in an equitable manner and to encourage all individuals to participate fully in the life of the church. It has been "the issue" since 1988 and is likely to be for some time in the future as well. The parish has asked the diocese for guidance in facilitating new ways of offering ministry to its members. To date it has received none.

2. Parish of New Harbour

The parish of New Harbour is located on the eastern side of Trinity Bay near Whitbourne. It has churches at three sites: New Harbour, Dildo, and Old Shop. In addition to three church buildings, it maintains a parish hall and a rectory. The total insured value of these properties is \$902,000.

The population of New Harbour has dropped from 950 to 750 in the last five years (-21.1%). The parish serves about 320 families with an average attendance of 100-110 on a typical Sunday. About one-third of this number are men. At Christmas the number attending church grows to 200, while about 175 attend services at Easter. Average weekly attendance in the parish is 80, down 15.8 percent in the last five years. This represents 10.7 percent of the total population (see Exhibit 2). Again, the reasons for this may have more to do

with out-migration and people choosing not to attend a church at all, than with people leaving the church in significant numbers.

The demographic challenges facing the parish are different than those in Shearstown. Baptisms are down 46 percent since 1998, and funerals are down modestly as well. In 2002, the parish experienced negative growth; that is, there were more funerals than baptisms (in this case two more).

Currently, there are an estimated 250 identifiable givers—about 34 percent of the parish population. The budget for 2003 is \$80,000 with \$64,000 of that amount coming from regular envelope givings.

Functioning groups within the parish include: three A.C.W. groups with a total of 60 members, a C.L.B. company with 12 young people, a Bible Study group with 15 members, and a parish choir with 20 singers. There are two Sunday schools with a total enrollment of about 60 children.

A significant challenge identified by the parish is the high number of young people who are leaving the area every year. This issue has progressed to the point where the vestry is considering combining congregations and reducing the number of buildings. The challenge is exacerbated by the high cost of running and maintaining the buildings and property it owns. Now, the challenge for the parish is: “Will there be enough people for it to survive as a Parish?” From the rector’s perspective, the best and most effective support the diocese could provide to the parish at this time would be for the Synod office to give more direction on how to address some of the tough issues the parish is confronting.

3. Parish of St. Michael’s (St. John’s)

The parish of St. Michael and All Angels is located in central St. John’s on LeMarchant Road at St. Clair Avenue. It operates a large church building that can seat about 300, a chapel, a parish hall, offices and a rectory. It is considered to be urban in nature, but has a catchment area that reaches 70 kilometres outside the city. A key aspect of parish life is the traditional “Anglo Catholic” style of worship which it has maintained throughout its 150 year history. The parish is comprised of about 260 contributing families, 70 percent of whom are over 60 years of age.

The demographics of the parish has changed significantly in the past 20 years. The parish no longer has a significant representation from the neighbourhood. It is estimated that half of the vestry has changed in the past 20 years and that about 40 percent of the weekly congregation is comprised of men. In the last five years, average weekly attendance declined seven percent. While 130 attend church on average every week, it represents almost 20 percent of the

Anglican population of the parish (see Exhibit 2). These numbers swell to over 300 at Christmas. The octave of Easter enjoys a congregation of about 220 persons.

Baptisms are up 45 percent since 1998, and funerals are up 29 percent over the same period. However, in 2002, the parish experienced negative growth; that is, there were six more funerals than baptisms.

Currently, there are an estimated 265 identifiable givers—about 38 percent of the parish population. The number of identifiable givers grew six percent in the last five years; a good sign in that the number of identifiable givers for the diocese dropped more than four percent in the same period. The total 2003 budget is \$180,000, with 67 percent or \$120,000 of that amount being derived from weekly envelope givings.

Functioning groups in the parish include a men's group with approximately 30 members, a servers guild with 12 members, an A.C.W. with 12 members, a C.L.B. company with 50 members, a food bank with 20 volunteers, and a craft group with eight members. There is a Sunday school with a regular enrollment of about 20 children, which is about half the size of the school in 1983.

One of the changes in the culture of the parish is that the congregation is now much older, more focused and committed than it was 20 years ago. It is suggested that there is now more openness about real problems and challenges than there was at that time.

Challenges facing the parish include: property management, maintenance costs, and community outreach. Twenty years ago, in addition to financial concerns, issues included construction of a new hall, modernizing worship, and challenges facing and concerning women. Future challenges for St. Michael's include re-inventing the parish as a community, congregational development, and better utilization of space. From the parish's perspective, the most important thing the diocese could help with would be to reduce its assessment.



Harbour Grace

5. Ministry Models

As a result of demographic changes in the province and, indeed, the country, many rural communities are finding their populations shrinking and, as a result, their membership rolls, attendance, and financial resources are slipping as well. Some are no longer able to fully support clergy, carry out desired mission programs, maintain needed upkeep and insurance on buildings and equipment, or even attract a large enough congregation for meaningful worship services. Sometimes these situations are accompanied with despair. For many parishes alternative forms of ministry, such as merging two or more congregations from the same or different denominations, sharing facilities or closing buildings, provide the only hope for continued existence. The following is a brief description of a number of alternative ministries, as well as comments on their adaptability within the diocese.

1. Traditional Single-Point Parish

A traditional single-point parish is a single congregation in one building. Depending upon the numerical size and financial health of the parish there may be one or more full-time or part-time clergy responsible for the operation and ministry within the parish.

Currently, the only single-point parishes in the diocese are located in more urban areas such as St. John's, Mount Pearl, Conception Bay South, Carbonear, and Shearstown. As well, there are part-time parishes in Bell Island and Petty Harbour, both of which presently are looking for part-time clergy. Single-point parishes face challenges. Typically, there are churches of other denominations located in the immediate area, and there are shrinking numbers attending church on a regular basis. Because of their size and proximity of the congregation, single-point parishes tended to be more financially viable than smaller, sparsely populated parishes. However, single-point parishes should not be exempt from any activity examining the financial health of the diocese.

2. Traditional Multi-Point Parish

A traditional multi-point parish is composed of two or more congregations of the same denomination having a common clerical appointment. Usually the congregations are in close enough proximity to allow the pastor to "preach" at each location every Sunday. The congregations share certain events, but the shared activities are the exception rather than the rule. They are sometimes artificially created to meet economic and/or convenience requirements. Currently, this is the most common alternative ministry in this diocese. Up to fifteen years ago there were many more multi-point parishes but in an attempt to improve ministry to these often smaller communities, a number of these, such as Carbonear-Bay de Verde, Shearstown-Bay Roberts, and Portugal Cove-St. Philips, were split into separate parishes. From a financial perspective, these splits were, for the most part, unsuccessful. Although ministry may have improved, most of the smaller points were unable to be self-supporting. In addition, many members understood from comments made when they separated that the diocese would always support them financially if they were unable to do so themselves.

When congregations—some of which may be miles apart—are arbitrarily joined together in a multi-point parish, it takes a lot of effort for them to work together. However, splitting parishes or congregations may cause even more problems when other alternatives might be available and appropriate. The parish of Bay de Verde-Grates' Cove, which for thirty years was part of the parish of Carbonear, has had some success as a separate parish. However, given the current economic situation, it is not likely to be fully self-supporting for some time. Yet, combining it once again with the parish of Carbonear is not a realistic alternative either.

3. Joint Project

Joint projects are often formed through the pooling of resources to accomplish a task or project which an individual congregation cannot manage alone. A joint project might include the development of a common cemetery for all faiths. Other examples could include mission projects, food banks, shelters for abused and needy individuals and families, etc. Often, but not always, these would be inter-denominational. In most cases, the partnership would not involve shared clergy, but would have a shared sense of ministry by the congregations involved. Projects could be of limited or indefinite duration, depending on the will of the participants. Joint projects in St. John's currently include the Emmaus House Food Bank, the cemeteries, and some other social programs.

4. Mission Church

A mission church is one built and supported by a larger, successful congregation to nurture and build a struggling smaller congregation, usually within the same denomination. Frequently, a lay person is responsible for the congregation with other churches of the same denomination providing specialized clergy resources when needed (e.g., weddings, funerals, sacraments, counselling, etc.). Usually the clergy involvement is limited—monthly rather than weekly for communion, etc. Laity may be involved in the larger congregation as well. Each congregation usually has a separate identified ministry, with the smaller church being one of the ministries of the larger church. In some situations, a clergy may be placed in the mission church, however the larger church is not expected to provide financial support for this.

Although they are no longer referred to as “Mission Parishes”, a number of parishes in Labrador are *de facto* mission parishes, as are several parishes on main island part of the diocese. Unless other alternatives for ministry are found there will continue to be a need for mission parishes particularly in more isolated areas of the province.

5. Cooperative Ministry

In a cooperative parish, two or more congregations share mutual ministry but not necessarily clergy assignments. Cooperatives usually share resources or programs and focus on providing a variety of avenues for involving the laity in ministry. Cooperative models can be built along denomination or inter-denominational lines. Often a single denominational cooperative involves sharing one or more clergy, but the principal defining elements are the activities for involvement that bind the cooperative together.

The Alpha and Youth Alpha movements have led to a number of cooperative activities between Anglican parishes and parishes of other denominations on the Avalon Peninsula. Priests and lay people from different parishes and denominations provide the training that is offered in one location to a number of parishes, pastoral charges, and congregations.

6. Cluster Parish

In a cluster parish, multiple congregations share specific ministries and share one or more ordained clergy. Clusters are often, but not always, defined by specialization among congregations, with individual units having their own

specific areas for concentrating in ministry. Activities, like worship services, special programs (e.g., Christmas, Easter, etc.), and other scheduled events, are coordinated. Through economies of scale, programs typically beyond the ways and means of individual parishes can be offered. Cluster parishes usually are built by single denominations, however inter-denominational versions exist.

The Isthmus Ministry has been a successful new venture as a cluster parish (see Exhibit 4). At present, the Ministry includes seventeen congregations and three clergy. Further investigation is needed in a number of areas of the diocese to determine if similar cluster parishes might provide more effective and efficient ways of providing ministry.

Several other areas have characteristics where successful cluster parishes may work. One such area is Carbonear/Bay de Verde. Although it would be neither wise nor desirable to join these parishes together at a multi-point parish, it might be possible to form a cluster parish with one clergy at each end, while the Bay de Verde clergy might also be responsible for Hospital Chaplaincy and/or youth work in the parish.

Another area where a cluster parish may work is Battle Harbour/Cartwright. With improved roads in the region, different clergy with different skills can provide support to all congregations, while at the same time provide collegial support to each other. Cluster parishes are an effective way of providing ministry to a large area, with multiple points, and with fewer, or in some cases, more gainfully employed clergy.

7. Circuit Parish

A circuit parish is defined by clergy visiting several congregations on a rotating basis. It is most common in a single denomination form, but also seems to meet the need for a community option in areas which are largely under served by traditional churches. The principal connection between the congregations is the shared clergy. Congregations in close proximity frequently have shared ministry among the participating congregations. Occasionally, a circuit may be served by multiple clergy assignments with clergy resources applying various gifts and talents for ministry to meet specific needs. In some deaneries, a circuit visitation is established when a parish is waiting for a new rector.

8. Shared Facilities

Shared facilities are established for two or more congregations of the same or different denominations to share and coordinate the use of the same building and equipment, while, at the same time, keeping their worship, fellowship and programming separate. St. Lawrence, in Portugal Cove has a new building and currently, St. Philips in the next community is also building a new church. At one time, these parishes were part of a multi-point parish. Their determination to continue to exist separately, in spite of the economic situation, is cause for concern. One of their options might be to investigate the possibility of another denomination sharing their facilities to help subsidize the costs of upkeep and insurance.

9. Shared Ministry

One option some congregations in other parts of the country and around the world have used successfully is shared ministry.⁷ Under a shared ministry arrangement, two or more churches of different denominations enter into a partnership agreement to come together to serve as a single congregation. Individuals continue to hold membership in their respective denominations, but only one membership role is kept. In some instances, especially where membership is low and resources are stretched, shared ministry may be the only means of continuing. In fact, shared ministry was originally developed as an emergency measure to support struggling churches in isolated areas.

In shared ministry there is usually a formalized agreement which spells out areas of cooperation, including the allocation of resources and specialization of ministry. In this model, when clergy leave, rather than seeking a person from the other participating denomination, or denominations, the best person for the position is chosen regardless of their denominational affiliation. Also, the clergy is responsible for the sacraments of both denominations and is accepted as a full member of both or all denomination. Particularly in the Anglican church, this includes a special license being given to any non-Anglicans to celebrate the sacraments.

In February 2003 in Vancouver, an ongoing dialogue was begun between the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada to discuss, among other things, shared ministry. The mandate of the dialogue is to:

“identify and address issues affecting our relationships. The major task of the first meeting was to identify the most significant areas of

⁷See the Ecumenical Shared Ministries Roundtable, January, 1999.

mutual interest and concern. These were named as core theological affirmations, sacramental theology, missiology and witness, shared ministries, and indigenous issues and relationships. Central to the dialogue team's work is the impetus toward deepening each community's understanding of the other. To this end, perceptions, stereotypes and history are being explored.”⁸

The time is right for this diocese and the Newfoundland and Labrador Conference of the United Church of Canada to talk about some of the issues and concerns that the two bodies have in common as well as about ways in which they can work together. At present, both churches are involved in an alternating ministry in Churchill Falls, a shared ministry at Memorial University of Newfoundland, and a shared facility in Come-By-Chance.

Further investigation of the possibilities for additional shared ministries within the diocese needs to occur. For example, there are a number of areas in the diocese—notably Bell Island, Labrador City, Happy Valley/Goose Bay, Spaniard’s Bay, Old Perlican/Bay de Verde, Hant’s Harbour/New Melbourne/Winterton and Heart’s Content—where the establishment of shared ministries would be effective alternatives. This would be a challenge, however, as it would require an acceptance of each others’ orders.

10. Alternating Ministries

Alternating ministries are similar to shared ministries, and are considered by some to be the same. However, in an alternating ministry, clergy automatically change after a set period of time. The types of services are determined by which denomination is responsible for supplying the clergy at that time. Clergy automatically alternate by denominations, and the incumbent is accepted only by their denomination and not by the other denominations involved. Churchill Falls is currently the only alternating ministry in Canada, although there are many shared ministries across the country.

⁸Press release from the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, February 19, 2003. Refer to:
http://generalsynod.anglican.ca/stories/news.php?newsItem=2003-02-20_a.ans.



St. George's, Whiteway

6. Achieving Financial Stability

The major component of the total revenue for the diocese (\$1,099,000) comes from the assessment applied to individual parishes. Other income (\$101,500) is derived from investments, a grant from General Synod and interest on Glebe land investments. Total revenue for the diocese amounts to approximately \$1,200,500.

Currently, the amount owing from parishes is in excess of \$400,000, and this amount is increasing annually. In 1996, the amount owing from parishes was \$212,000. In addition, several parishes in Labrador have had their arrears forgiven. This represents about \$75,000 of anticipated income which had to be written off.

More than one third (14 out of 37 parishes) have large amounts owing, some as much as \$30,000. This means that the diocese is operated by the contributions from two thirds of the parishes. This is seen as grossly unfair by those who are making their assessments, and is not seen as showing good stewardship. Those that choose not to pay, for whatever reason, are seen to be doing so because there are no consequences for not paying. The commission heard on numerous occasions, that the first thing that should be done to restore the sound financial health of the diocese is to hold the delinquent parishes accountable for their responsibilities, and, at the same time, show the parishes that are honouring their commitments that their efforts are appreciated.

Meanwhile, being asked to pay more because of the deficit is penalizing parishes that pay their assessments. At the same time, having to pay less is perceived as rewarding those parishes which are not paying their assessments. Admittedly, it is not possible to force delinquent parishes to pay their assessments, when it is beyond their control to do so. However, ways have to be found—other than threats—to enable these parishes to maintain their ministry and be able to pay their dues at the same time. For this to work, parishes themselves have to be involved in and take ownership of the development of solutions.

Failure to act immediately on this matter will only aggravate the situation, and in just three years the diocese will be in a severe deficit position. In five years it could be facing bankruptcy.

The following summarizes the revenues and expenditures for the diocese in 2003.

REVENUES:

Parish Assessments	\$1,099,000
Investments, interest (Glebe land) and grants	101,500
TOTAL REVENUE FOR 2003	\$1, 200,500

EXPENDITURES:

OUTREACH:

Assessment to General Synod	
Office of the Primate	
Financial Development	
Partnerships overseas	
Ministry to the deaf	
Anglican Life	
Hospital chaplaincy	
University Chaplaincy	
Grants-aid to parishes	
Summer Chatechist	
Travel to Northern Labrador	
Subtotal Outreach	\$543,800

PROGRAMS:

Funding for various programs and related committees	
Post-confirmation	
Stewardship/Planned giving	
Lay Ministry	
Anglican Fellowship of Prayer	
Archdeacon of Labrador Initiatives	
Diocesan Archives	
Subtotal Programs	\$57,950

MINISTRY SUPPORT:

Primarily to cover costs of training and professional development	
Queen's College	
Lay Education	
ACPO	
Clergy conferences	
Continuing education	
Contribution to Provincial Synod	
Additional compensation for clergy in Labrador	
Labrador planning and strategy	
Subtotal Ministry Support	\$74,330

CLERGY WELLNESS:

Moving costs between parishes	
Severance fund	
Short-term disability fund	
Health care plan	
EAP program	
Clergy shelter fund	
Subtotal Clergy Wellness	\$105,100
ADMINISTRATION:	
Support staff for synod office	
Office expenses in support of parishes and clergy	
Postage	
Telephone	
Paper supplies	
Diocesan standing committee	
Sessions of synod	
Administration of Territorial Archdeacons and Regional Deaneries	
Subtotal Administration	\$ 252,550
BUILDINGS AND MAINTENANCE:	
Diocesan offices, Lavrock Centre	
Subtotal Buildings and Maintenance	\$52,500
EPISCOPAL OFFICE:	
Operation of the Episcopal office, Lambeth Conference	
Subtotal Episcopal Office	\$115,125
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TOTAL EXPENDITURES FOR 2003	\$1,201,355
TOTAL SHORTFALL	(\$855,000)

FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

Following extensive dialogue and consultations, the commission reached several conclusions relating to the financial position of the diocese and, indirectly, the financial viability of parishes. They include the following:

- Only about two thirds of parishes are giving full financial support to the diocese. This not only puts a severe financial strain on the resources of the diocese but is perceived by many as being grossly unfair to the parishes who are showing good financial stewardship.
- Some parishes are not remitting payroll monies thereby causing additional strain on the diocesan budget. These funds are deducted from the parish payrolls of clergy and staff and thus are not considered the property of parishes.
- The revenues collected from parishes is enough to cover current commitments and maintenance costs only. While revenues are decreasing, operating costs continue to rise. If this trend continues, the end result is obvious: in the near future the diocese will be in a deficit position and possibly face bankruptcy.
- As a consequence of these challenges, the diocese is restricted from developing new initiatives or programs and is limited in its efforts at improving ministries. This is particularly important now as there are costs associated if the diocese wishes to move forward with a new paradigm (as recommended in this report). In the future, the diocese will have to be vigilant in holding parishes accountable for their financial commitments. Yet, at the same time, it will have to communicate honestly and openly with parishes to ensure everyone has a complete picture of why assessments are important, how they will be used, and what benefits they will bring to both the parish and the diocese.



St. George's, Brigus

7. Bold New Steps are Required

Over the past decade, there have been numerous studies and reports on the status of church finances, parish viability and future directions. Issues have been studied and debated nationally and locally by all the mainstream churches, including the Anglican church worldwide and the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador. What the commission heard in its discussions included many of the same things which are being discussed by other dioceses and churches throughout the country, namely: what to do when traditional parish models are no longer viable; how to ensure viable and sustainable ministries throughout the diocese; what kinds of resources and structures are necessary to support and help grow local congregations; how to increase attendance, particularly among youth; how to increase givings to support and enhance the mission and ministry of the church at the local, diocese, national and international levels; and how to improve communications, particularly between the local parish and the diocese.

These issues form the underpinnings of the recommendations of this report. The commission made a deliberate attempt to keep the list of recommendations short. In the end, the action plan which follows this report has to be manageable, achievable and timely.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Organization and Structure

In the past, we tended to look at local churches from the perspective of *parish viability*. That is, we started by asking the question: “Are there sufficient numbers attending church on a regular basis to sustain the local parish ministry and is the parish meeting its assessment goals?” We then examined the local

parish in relation to how well it performed in relation to those standards. Measuring all parishes in relation to how well they perform against traditional single-point or multi-point parish models undoubtedly will lead to the conclusion that many parishes are not viable. This top-down approach to restructuring seldom works effectively or successfully. On the other hand, few local congregations will voluntarily agree to give up their autonomy and status as a single-point or multi-point parish.

A more effective model is to start from the premise that every congregation is viable. From that perspective, we begin with the question: “What is the most effective and sustainable ministry model for this particular congregation?” That way the goal of the diocese is to find an effective ministry model for every congregation—one that will sustain itself for the long term. To achieve that goal, we build *ministry plans* around every congregation. That does not mean building a separate and distinct plan for every congregation, but it does mean involving every congregation in the development and implementation of an effective and desirable long-term plan for the local community.

Recommendation 1. That the Bishop establish a *Ministry in Action Commission* charged with the task of working with the diocese, parishes and deaneries to establish functional, sustainable and healthy models of ministry. The commission would become a standing committee of Diocesan Council and be comprised of five to seven individuals who would possess the necessary skills and acumen to deal objectively with congregations, parishes, and deaneries. The mandate of the commission would be to:

- 1) investigate and recommend an appropriate ministry planning model for implementation by the diocese and all parishes;
- 2) consult with parishes, the Diocesan Council and other designated committees, regarding appropriate ministry models for different congregations;
- 3) recommend appropriate ministry models for each local area throughout the diocese;
- 4) oversee the ministry planning process and make recommendations for improvement;
- 5) advise the Bishop on appropriate structural or other changes that will help advance ministry development throughout the diocese; and
- 6) establish a appropriate and achievable timelines for the ministry planning model.

Recommendation 2. That, under the leadership of the Ministry in Action Commission and in collaboration with parishes, the diocese

develop a *diocesan ministry plan*, taking into account parish needs, capacities and interests, as well as those of the diocese. The plan will be submitted to the Bishop by December, 2004 and shared with parishes to assist with and support them in the development of their individual ministry plans.

Recommendation 3. That, by next Synod, each parish, or community of parishes (as determined by the Ministry in Action Commission), develop and submit to the diocese a three to five year *ministry plan*. The plan should follow a uniform process and structure giving consideration to the following:

- spiritual needs and health;
- demographic conditions;
- leadership requirements;
- communications; and
- financial status.

Recommendation 4. That, in light of the renewed and ongoing dialogue between the Anglican and United churches at the national level, the diocese initiate a dialogue with the Newfoundland and Labrador Conference of the United Church of Canada toward the identification and establishment of shared ministries between the two churches.

2. Information

Information about who we are and about how we are doing is a critical measure of future success. The framework for successful ministry planning should have all the essential elements that will satisfy the dual goals of strengthening local congregations and producing relevant, consistent and timely information. The diocese can then be in a position to objectively and accurately assess their plans against clearly articulated expectations.

The commission found significant gaps in the type, scope, timeliness and quality of data collected from parishes and reported by the diocese. Churches, like other social, business and financial institutions, must use valid and reliable data about itself, its members, other similar parishes, the environment and how it is doing to form the basis for informed decision-making. The diocese needs to strengthen its data collection capacity, and parishes need to take steps to identify, collect and analyze critical information to inform its mission and plans.

Recommendation 5. That an investigation of the long-term information requirements of the diocese be completed. The review would

analyze existing data, identify gaps and needs, develop a structure and process for collecting and analyzing new data, and recommend a vehicle for disseminating information to congregations. Information needs to be valid, reliable and timely. The information would also form the basis for regular reporting to Synod.

3. Leadership Development

Leadership development is a cornerstone to successful change. If the diocese is to seize the opportunities presented to it and tackle the challenges that lay in its path, it must ensure that the right people with the right skills are positioned to assume leadership roles in the future. There are three strategic focuses to effective leadership development: *current leaders* who need to further develop their skills, talents and interests; *potential leaders* who, with the right training, could assume new roles and responsibilities; and *clergy* who need ongoing professional development opportunities.

While the nature and scope of education and training requirements will vary from parish to parish, there are needs unique to all parishes in the entire diocese. For example, governance, stewardship, vestry development, youth leadership, communication, and lay ministry are areas where a concentrated education program needs to be developed, resourced and implemented.

An on-going challenge for the diocese, and indeed the church at large, is that of *youth development*. Regular efforts are being made to develop and implement programs to “look-after” youth. However, the majority of parishes are struggling with how to deal with this important yet largely disenfranchised group. *Youth need to know that they are not just important to the church, but have an important role and say in its future.* Until parishes take the responsibility for providing a meaningful role for youth, such as participation in worship services, and opportunities to get together on a regular basis, youth will continue to feel marginalized in the church.

Recommendation 6. That, because youth are the cornerstone for future growth of the diocese, a comprehensive *youth development plan* be developed to serve as a blueprint for parishes and deaneries in involving youth and implementing meaningful youth programs. That the diocese re-establish the *Diocesan Youth Committee* with a specific mandate to prepare and submit a youth development plan to the Bishop for action.

Recommendation 7. That, because seniors are the fastest growing age group with the highest needs in the diocese, an *Advisory Council on Senior’s Development* be established to study and advise the Bishop on

how to better serve the spiritual and other needs of seniors throughout the diocese.

4. Communications and Marketing

The value of good communication within an organization is seldom recognized until it is missing. Few organizations—the Anglican church included—have the requisite skills or abilities to monitor, anticipate and respond to policy challenges, congregational needs, diocesan responsibilities and media enquires. Typically, poor communication comes to the surface when an organization is forced to react to a comment or event which may have extraordinary consequences for some of its members or may be of public interest (e.g., how churches have responded to the issue of gay marriage).

Equally as problematic, however, is the case where excellent initiatives are taking place, such as some of the youth development strategies in some of our parishes, yet no one knows anything about them. All churches need to promote their activities in a proactive, positive and professional way. The sad truth is that most don't market themselves poorly—they don't market themselves at all. Many feel they cannot afford it, others feel it won't be worth the effort, and still others feel it's not their role. In reality, all churches do market themselves. Any message communicated is marketing: our church buildings, the signs out front, dialogue with others, etc. The Anglican church and this diocese can move toward more effectively presenting the message of the good news.

Finally, good two-way communication between the diocese and local congregations is critical. On numerous occasions, the commission heard that parishes want and need regular and timely feedback about how they are doing, about their plans and how they fit with other parishes' plans and those of the diocese, and about how the diocese can help in the parish in achieving its plans. Parishes want feedback that is both timely and meaningful and they see a void in the feedback that currently is being provided by the diocese.

Recommendation 8. That the diocese initiate a study to identify and interview a sample of Anglicans between the ages of 25 and 54 who attend church only occasionally and are not committed to a congregation. The study will find out, among other things, what they look for in a church, why they are not committed to any particular congregation, what role, if any, do they see for the church in their lives, and what attributes and initiatives will draw them into the church. This research can then be used to form the basis of a communications plan for the diocese.

Recommendation 9. That the diocese develop and implement a comprehensive communications plan that includes the following:

- a process for keeping local congregations informed about the business and concerns of the diocese and the diocese informed about parish needs and issues;
- a strategy for communicating the diocese’s vision, plans, programs, services and needs to the entire congregation—many of whom may not belong to a parish;
- a strategy for communicating all aspects of the parish ministerial planning process, including responsibilities, expectations, resources, feedback mechanisms, timelines and milestones; and
- a recruitment strategy which targets: Anglicans who are regular church goers (*this is who we are and what we do*), Anglicans who are not committed to a particular congregation at this time (*this is how we can help bring faith and spirituality into your active life*), and, others who may wish to examine the Anglican faith (*this is what the Anglican church is and how it contributes to the spiritual life in our community*).

5. Finance

It is difficult to have a discussion of the changing demographics within our diocese without examining the implications these changes are having and will continue to have on the finances of the diocese. The relationship between income and costs is understood by most. Parishes cannot continue to operate if revenues fall short of costs. The diocese is subject to the same principle. The diocese will not be able to continue indefinitely if it continues to subsidize parishes who cannot or choose not to make their assessments.

At the end of the day, the issue is not about parish viability, it is about *church viability*. If the church is not viable in one parish, then it is only a matter of time before it will no longer be viable in any parish. It is in everyone’s interest that every congregation be acknowledged and supported through a relevant and sustainable ministry for the area.

The solutions will not come easily and they will require the concentrated efforts of clergy and laity. What is certain is that immediate action is required and creative thinking has to go into finding and implementing solutions. Finding the right solutions begins with a vision; a vision in which everyone has access to their church. While no one will lose their church, it may mean that in certain communities the church will have to be redefined, introducing new ministry models that can ensure the church will live on for many years.

Recommendation 10. That work begin immediately on the development of a comprehensive financial strategy for the diocese by:

- examining present assets and identifying ways to make better and more profitable use of them (e.g., selling assets, dispersing assets, sharing assets, renting assets, making more efficient use of assets, etc.);
- noting that where unused and unessential assets exist, every effort be made to sell those assets and use the revenue for one-time expenditures (e.g., contribution toward the diocese’s commitment to the settlement fund).
- examining the existing parish assessment structure and, following extensive consultation with parishes, developing a new assessment structure that takes into consideration fairness and equity, parish and diocesan needs, mandates and responsibilities, and accountabilities;
- examining new and creative ways of increasing givings, such as: debit systems so people can make weekly contributions directly from their bank accounts and incentive/partnership programs (e.g., credit card air miles program).

It is not the mandate of this commission to examine existing structures in the diocese (e.g., Stewardship Committee, Ways and Means Committee, Anglican Charitable Foundation, etc.). These committees serve important roles in the operation and success of the diocese. However, the link between operational goals and their implementation is not always direct or effective. For example, there is often a poor correlation between parish assessments and diocesan revenues. Neither is there a correlation between submission of parish assessments and parish wealth. What is missing is an accountability framework.

“Accountability is the ownership of responsibilities combined with the obligation to report on the

Recommendation 11. That accountability framework be developed and introduced which would establish a negotiated set of reasonable and achievable commitments both of the parish to the diocese and of the diocese to the parish; set clear consequences for failure to meet those commitments on the part of the parish or the diocese; prepare a formal agreement (e.g., Memorandum of Understanding) that clearly spells out negotiated commitments and their consequences to the congregation and to the diocese; and develop a strategy for determining when and how the consequences would be exercised and an alternative course of action implemented.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Are we alone in the challenges we face?

Absolutely not. The changes described in this report are not unique to this diocese, to this province, or to this country. It is the scope and magnitude in which they are occurring here which make the changes taking place here unique. Few areas in the world have experienced extreme birth declines coupled with high out-migration that have occurred in this province. However, diminishing church attendance, decreasing numbers undertaking leadership roles and declining financial support are common challenges facing all but a few mainstream church parishes in North America.

Yet, religion in the western world is remarkably stable, and has been for many years. Despite all the pronouncements from pollsters and others over how secular our society has become, that is only true about basic political institutions—and sometimes only superficially so.⁹ Even as everything else changes around us, the basic religious and theistic beliefs change very little, and even then only slowly. The promise of secularization which was anticipated by reformers and humanists in the past century has not come to pass.¹⁰

What has been learned

There is little doubt, for the Anglican church in this diocese to survive in the next decade or two it must undergo some major reorganization or right-sizing. In so doing, we can avoid common pitfalls by following what the research, others' experiences and our consultations told us. Here are some lessons learned:

- planning is critical—different parishes frequently require different solutions;
- develop a process for input;
- develop policies for guiding decisions;
- information and analysis are crucial;

⁹See Michael Adams, *Sex in the snow: Canadian social values at the end of the millennium*.

¹⁰An excellent book which discusses current trends in American religion is: *Shopping for Faith: American Religion in the New Millennium* by Richard Cimmino and Don Lattin.

- good communication is critical—people need to know the process for input, why decisions were made, the consequences of those decisions, and what the future will look like;
- planning one’s future cannot be delegated—it’s everyone’s responsibility;
- don’t focus on money and finances — they are seldom the problem;
- there is no one right way of doing it—tailor the process to the local needs; and,
- it’s not the answer to all the problems in the parish—but it is the logical process for identifying and addressing many of the problems.

How to get started

We can also draw upon the experiences of others to help get started. We know, for example, that successful planned change is a partnership between the leadership of the organization [in this case the church] and the local membership. It is neither a bottom-up nor a top-down process. What follows are some of the things that can be done to get started. First, we start with what we have by identifying the strengths and talents of the people available to us and assembling the reports and data that have already been prepared.

Establish a working group to lead the process. Here it is important to try and match the skills and talents to the challenges and tasks. Clearly define the roles and responsibilities. Challenge everyone to become involved and take responsibility for the future of the church. While this is not always easy, if we do not openly invite people to take part, we will have little buy-in at the end.

Consultation is critical. There are many ways to consult: interviews, meetings, focus groups, questionnaires and observation. All have the ability to enlighten and give direction. However, opinion without context offers little in the way of help. The challenge is to get people thinking critically and globally their communities, congregations and church. At the end of the day one has to distinguish between uninformed opinion and reasoned counsel and advice.

“No data?” he answered. “It is a capital mistake to theorize before you have all the evidence. It

Information is critical. Identify information gaps and then collect and analyze information where it is feasible to do so. Simple information such as an age/gender breakdown of the congregation attending church can inform us about what strategies to use. If, for example, 50 percent of the population is over the age of fifty and 70 percent of that population is women, it tells us a great deal about who we are successfully attracting to church (our strengths) and who we are not (our challenges). If that

information is not readily available, it identifies a gap that may need to be addressed. The goal is to use data to give direction and help make informed judgements.

Finally, set reachable goals, time lines and milestones. When setting time lines, allow ample time to complete tasks. At the end of the day, it makes no sense to establish a framework for change which is not achievable in a reasonable period of time.

What this will achieve for the diocese

Taking a planned approach to our future will achieve a number of things; none the least is the engagement of many individuals in the development and implementation of the solution. But there are other real benefits. The end result will:

- more clearly define the parish and diocese of the future;
- ensure the presence of a vision and action plan;
- ensure there is a strong connection between the diocese and local parishes and the action plans are compatible and complement each other;
- provide a platform for setting directions and priorities;
- ensure strategies are in place to achieve financial and ministry goals; and
- provide a vehicle for communication of ideas, expectations and priorities to parishes, and of issues, advice and support to the diocese.

A Final Word

With a concentrated effort it is possible for many of our parishes not only to survive but to flourish. But it is also quite possible that many of our parishes will not. Successful congregations will be those which, among other things, focus on adventurous programming, offer vibrant music, are family orientated and appeal to children and youth.

We have two options. We can ignore all of the dynamic changes taking place around us—both inside and outside the church—and do nothing. While this may be the easiest option to pursue for now, in subsequent years it will leave us with less influence of our internal affairs; much less our external environment. The consequences of doing nothing means that we are simply deferring the decision to someone else. In the meantime, we may have missed opportunities, we may exacerbate the problem, new unforeseen challenges may arise, and solutions may come at a much higher cost. Each of these has enormous repercussions.

Thankfully, we have a second option. Suffice is to say that we have a responsibility to act. We can view these changes as challenges and approach them in a positive and planned way. Through this approach, we will have more control of our future and

should be able to influence our future in a positive manner. The benefits are numerous: it will help clarify future direction by setting clear goals, it will help make today's decisions in light of their future consequences, it will help focus resources on the highest priorities, it will help maintain continuity, and, most importantly, it will help get everyone moving in the same direction. This is the approach taken by this commission.

In light of the demographic changes described in this report, the role of the church, if it is to survive and thrive, must evolve. In some cases, it has to strengthen what it currently does well, and in others, it has to investigate new roles and embark on new paths. **The end result must be action.**

EXHIBIT 1

Summary of Capital Assets by Parish

Exhibit 1: Summary of Capital Assets by Parish

Parish	Insured Value					Subtotal	Total	
	Church	Parish Hall	Rectory	Clergy House	Other Bldgs			Contents
*ALL SAINTS	549,000	549,000					1,098,000	1,098,000
ARNOLD'S COVE	330,000		143,000				473,000	
<i>North Harbour (X)</i>	55,000						55,000	
<i>North Harbour (NEW)</i>	35,000						35,000	563,000
ASCENSION	1,320,000		116,000				1,436,000	1,436,000
BATTLE HARBOUR	250,000		100,000				350,000	
<i>Port Hope Simpson</i>	50,000						50,000	
<i>Williams Harbour (X)</i>	6,000						6,000	
<i>Fox Harbour (X)</i>	20,000						20,000	
<i>Lodge Bay (X)</i>	70,000						70,000	
<i>Charlottetown (X)</i>	35,000						35,000	
<i>Pinsent's Arm (X)</i>	35,000						35,000	566,000
BAY ROBERTS	1,100,000	116,000	151,000			25,000	1,392,000	
<i>Coley's Point</i>	880,000	138,000			125,000		1,143,000	2,535,000
BAY DE VERDE	144,000	58,000		46,000			248,000	
<i>Grates Cove</i>	87,000						87,000	
<i>Grates Cove (X)</i>		29,000					29,000	
<i>Caplin Cove (X)</i>	2,000						2,000	366,000
BELL ISLAND	435,000		147,000				582,000	
<i>Lance Cove</i>	165,000						165,000	
<i>Lance Cove</i>	75,000						75,000	
<i>Wabana (X)</i>					380,000		380,000	1,202,000
BRIGUS/SOUTH RIVER	116,000						116,000	
<i>Burnt Head</i>	300,000						300,000	
<i>Makinsons</i>	165,000						165,000	
<i>South River</i>	194,000						194,000	
<i>South River (X)</i>		87,000	110,000				197,000	972,000

Exhibit 1: Page 2

Parish	Insured Value					Subtotal	Total
	Church	Parish Hall	Rectory	Clergy House	Other Bldgs		
CARBONEAR	231,000	220,000	87,000			538,000	538000
CARTWRIGHT (X)	165,000	44,000	83,000			292,000	
<i>Black Tickle (X)</i>		44,000				44,000	336000
CATHEDRAL	7,500,000	295,000	193,000	231,000	347,000	8,566,000	8566000
CHANCE COVE	165,000					165,000	
<i>Little Harbour</i>	110,000					110,000	
<i>Fairhaven (X)</i>	58,000					58,000	333000
GOOD SHEPHERD	1,100,000					1,100,000	1100000
HARBOUR GRACE	1,265,000	200,000	116,000			1,581,000	
<i>Harbour Grace South</i>	231,000					231,000	1812000
HEART'S CONTENT	330,000		138,000			468,000	
<i>New Perlican</i>	200,000	50,000				250,000	
<i>Winterton</i>	341,000					341,000	1059000
HEART'S DELIGHT	275,000		105,000			380,000	
<i>Cavendish</i>	88,000					88,000	
<i>Green's Harbour</i>	58,000					58,000	
<i>Islington</i>		81,000				81,000	
<i>Whiteway</i>	58,000					58,000	665000
RANDOM SOUTH	220,000		100,000			320,000	
<i>Long Beach</i>	116,000					116,000	
<i>Great Heart Ease (X)</i>	87,000					87,000	
<i>Queen's Cove (X)</i>	87,000					87,000	610000
HOLY INNOCENTS	550,000					550,000	550000
LABRADOR WEST	990,000	46,000	116,000		77,000	1,229,000	
<i>Wabush</i>	462,000			55,000		517,000	1746000
LAKE MELVILLE	809,000		130,000			939,000	939000

Exhibit 1: Page 3

Parish	Insured Value					Subtotal	Total
	Church	Parish Hall	Rectory	Clergy House	Other Bldgs		
NEW HARBOUR	300,000		116,000			416,000	
<i>Old Shop</i>	165,000	46,000				211,000	
<i>Dildo</i>	275,000					275,000	902000
NORMAN'S COVE	330,000		165,000			495,000	
<i>Chapel Arm</i>	165,000	165,000				330,000	825000
*PETTY HARBOUR	231,000					231,000	
<i>Bay Bulls</i>	110,000					110,000	
<i>Aquaforte (X)</i>	55,000					55,000	396000
PORT DE GRAVE	462,000	110,000	116,000			688,000	
<i>North River (X)</i>		46,000				46,000	
<i>North River</i>	116,000					116,000	
<i>Hibbs Cove (X)</i>	24,000					24,000	
<i>Bareneed</i>	231,000	87,000				318,000	1192000
PORTUGAL COVE		1,100,000	100,000			1,200,000	1200000
POUCH CV/TORBAY	578,000		116,000			694,000	
<i>Torbay</i>	660000	220,000				880,000	1574000
ST. AUGUSTINE'S	1,494,000					1,494,000	1494000
ST. JOHN THE EVANG.	578,000		110,000			688,000	
<i>Topsail (X)</i>	17,000					17,000	705000
ST. MARK'S	924,000					924,000	924000
ST. MARY'S	2,599,000		185,000			2,784,000	
<i>Shea Heights</i>	100,000					100,000	2884000
ST MICHAEL'S	1,502,000		202,000			1,704,000	1704000
ST. PAUL'S	1,100,000		92,000			1,192,000	
<i>Goulds (X)</i>	87,000					87,000	1279000
ST. PETER'S	1,100,000					1,100,000	1100000
ST. PHILIP'S	336,000	165,000	139,000			640,000	
<i>St. Phillips (X)</i>		171,000				171,000	811000

Exhibit 1: Page 4

Parish	Insured Value						Subtotal	Total
	Church	Parish Hall	Rectory	Clergy House	Other Bldgs	Contents		
ST. THOMAS'	2,585,000	935,000					3,520,000	3520000
*ST TIMOTHY (X)	29,000		55,000				84,000	
<i>Rigolet (new)</i>			44,000				44,000	128000
SHEARSTOWN	330,000	69,000	110,000				509,000	509000
SPANIARD'S BAY	550,000	220,000	138,000				908,000	
<i>Tilton</i>	165,000						165,000	1073000
SUNNYSIDE	116,000						116,000	
<i>Hillview</i>	64,000						64,000	
<i>Hatchet Cove</i>	64,000						64,000	
<i>Sunnyside (X)</i>			87,000				87,000	
<i>North West Brook (X)</i>	69,000						69,000	400000
UPPER ISLAND COVE	700,000		92,000				792,000	
<i>Bryant's Cove</i>	144,000	110,000					254,000	
<i>Bishop's Cove</i>	174,000						174,000	1220000
WHITBOURNE	174,000		116,000				290,000	
<i>Blaketown</i>	116,000	58,000					174,000	
<i>Dunville</i>	185,000				58,000		243,000	
<i>Markland</i>	87,000						87,000	
<i>Placentia (X)</i>	116,000						116,000	910000
TOTALS	40617000	5401000	3818000	332000	929000	25000	51122000	51122000

EXHIBIT 2: Average Weekly Attendance as a Percent of Parish Population, 2002

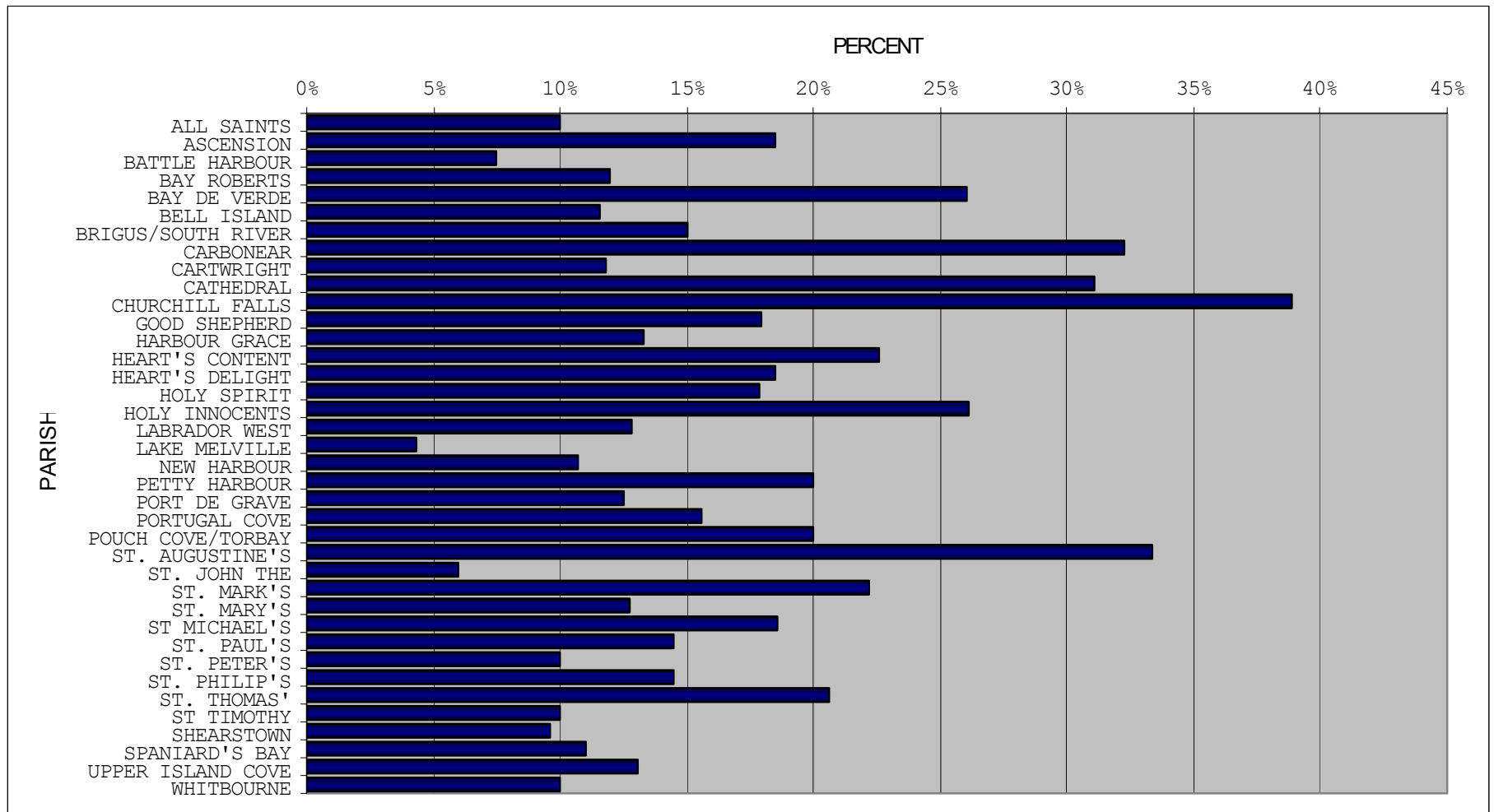


EXHIBIT 3: Identifiable Givers as a Percent of Parish Population, 2002

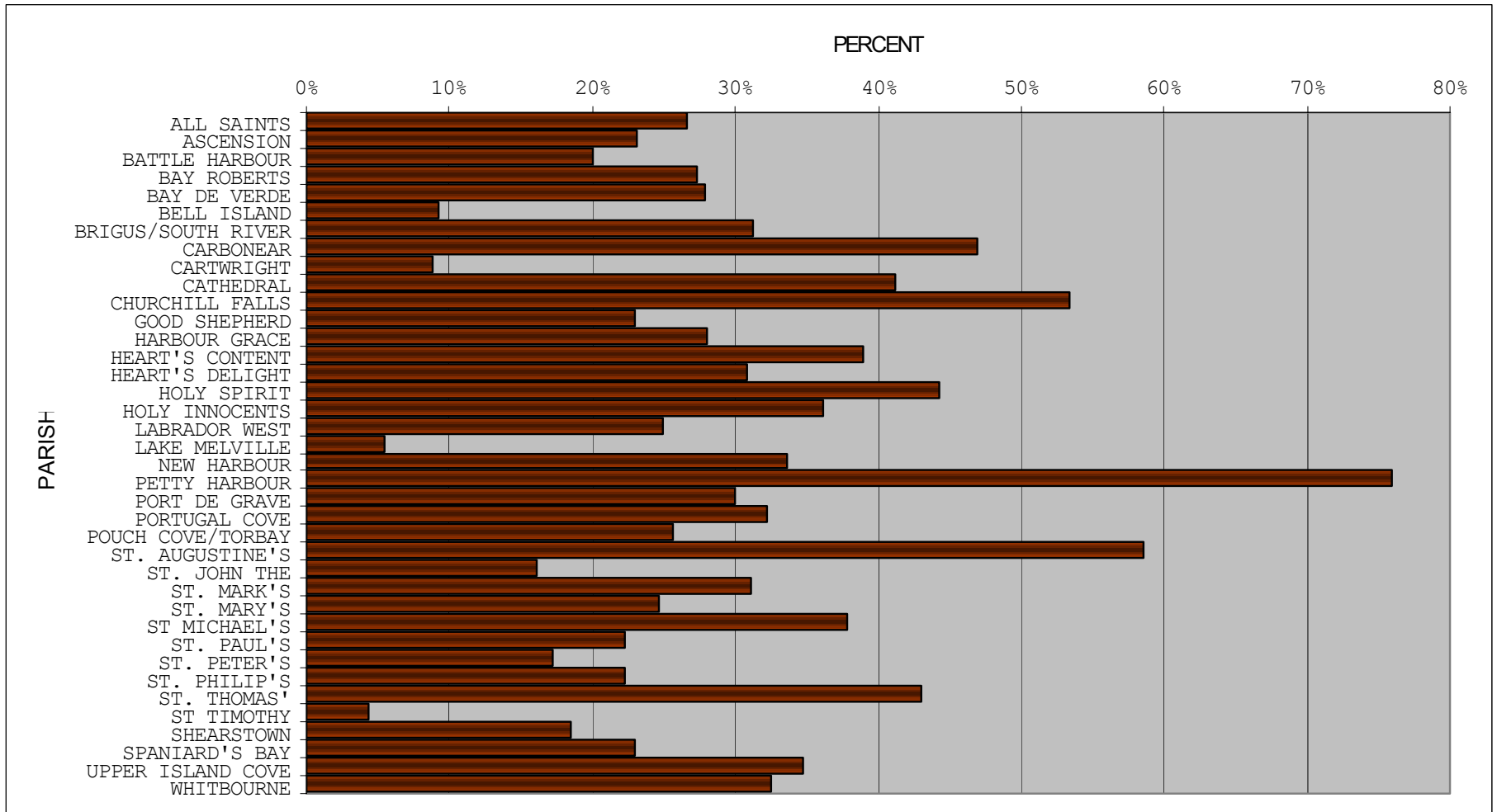


EXHIBIT 4

Summary of Isthmus Ministry Project

Isthmus Ministry Project Ad Hoc Sub Committee Report – August 2001

Background

The declining Anglican population of the five Parishes of: Norman's Cove, Chance Cove-Little Harbour, Arnold's Cove, Sunnyside, and Random South presented a functional challenge to the Diocese of eastern Newfoundland and Labrador in the mid 1990s. The financial problems caused by reduced income had made three of the five parishes not able to function independently. Discussion began on the concept of bringing parishes together to share responsibilities and benefits. The initiative was promoted by Diocesan staff who encountered mixed a reception to the concept. There were significant variances in the range of issues facing each of 16 congregations of the five parishes.

The result was the trial establishment of the Isthmus Ministry Project in 1997 where the Parishes of Sunnyside and Chance Cove paid for ministry from the three parishes of Norman's Cove, Arnold's Cove and Random South. The Parish of Random South would continue to receive a Grant in Aid. The administration was to be guided by a Management Committee. Eventually a part time supplementary position was established to assist in the conducting of services and to conduct pastoral visiting.

In the Spring of 2001 Mr. Eldridge Thorne of Norman's Cove presented review of the project that suggested that the project would harm each Parish's viability within three to five years. This was opposed to a movement being put forward by several people within the region of moving the project to a one parish structure. It was decided to not proceed with the regular Annual meeting of the Five Parish Councils to assess the project until an opportunity had been given to consider the issues Mr. Thorne had raised.

The Management Committee struck an ad hoc Sub Committee. It was chaired by The Reverend William Strong and included Mr. Harvey Jackman, Mr. James Peddle, Mrs. Delilah Snook and Mr. Thorne as members. Meetings were held that reviewed the scope of issues that challenged the viability of ministry in the region and how to best proceed. It was agreed to focus on the establishment of a viable administrative model would be the important first step that would be fair and equitable to all concerned.

The Sub Committee is pleased to support the Isthmus Ministry Model by the establishment of a two year experiment that would establish a one parish model called the Parish of the Isthmus. The basis of this proposal is found in the desire to treat all congregations fairly, equitably, and based on the same criteria. The financial cornerstone of this concept is found in the concept of viability based on the annual average of envelope givings. This is believed to be the only fair method of moving to a one parish structure. Therefore, the viability of the parish of the Isthmus and the delivery of ministry in any form in the region will have to proceed on this criteria and its acceptance by the congregations involved.

Reasons to support the proceeding with this experiment would include:

- 1) Organizational Integrity - To enable the 16 congregations to function within the Diocese with full integrity in that all would be treated by the same criteria and with an appropriate level of service to service the spiritual needs of all concerned.
 1. The one parish model would give an administrative structure and would respond to the matter designating pastoral responsibility of each member of the Ministry team.

2. The single parish structure would enable the disbanding of the Coordinating Committee. It would remove the requirement of financial administration to be provided by the Diocese and would make the Isthmus to be administratively self-contained.
- 2) Financial Responsibility - The establishment of a One Parish Model would remove the requirement for a Grant In Aid for any of its members and there by enable all congregations to focus on the task of "Proclaiming the Kingdom" to their various constituents. This administrative model would facilitate the measurement of support to enable ministry in the region to continue. The financial responsibility of each congregation would be able to be clearly established and the fiscal realities that enable
 - Professional services to be provided would be able to be established fairly and equitably. The one Parish structure would enable the Isthmus to be seen in context by the Diocese and other parishes in an identifiable fashion.
- 3) Vision, Needs, and Viability - A single parish model would facilitate the establishment of services and programs that would be directly tied to: desires, suitability, and financial ability of the congregations involved. It could be argued that the current structure coordinated in cooperation with the Diocese obscures bonafide need and responsibilities for particular congregations. The future of ministry in the region, in any administrative arrangement will be directly related to the regular weekly givings. At present it can be stated that low level of donations being received by the Parish of Arnold's Cove could be seen as an impediment to Church activity in the whole region.
 - A single parish structure would at least provide for a clear vision of the situation in a fair fashion and would encourage increased support in a justifiable rational basis. A single Parish Structure would be more sensitive and responsible to the important issue of the closure of church buildings along with amalgamating organizations and congregations.
- 4) Alternatives - The Alternatives of proceeding with a single parish currently offer less stability and viability of programs than the proposed model. The original model of five parishes cannot be maintained or returned to. The current administrative was implemented as a compromise to enable the project to be started. The weaknesses of this model have become clearly apparent to all concerned.

Implementation: The Sub Committee recommends that implementation of the single parish model would require Diocesan approval. It would then be presented to the 16 congregations on a regional basis, then to a meeting of the five parish councils, prior to implementation. It is thought that such a process could be achieved to facilitate this development for the 2002 fiscal year.

The Reverend William Strong, Chair
August 15, 2001

PROPOSAL

"That the three parishes of Norman's Cove, Arnold's Cove and Random South, agree to form a single "Parish of the Isthmus" which would consist of three pastoral units, each with its own resident priest, as outlined on Schedule "A"

Schedule "A"

<u>Pastoral Unit - Area 1 Rector - Archdeacon Illiffe Sheppard</u>	
Church of the Good Shepherd, Norman's Cove	146
St. John the Baptist, Chapel Arm	100
St. Andrew, Little Harbour	55
The Ascension, Chance Cove	55
Epiphany, Fairhaven	<u>8</u>
	364
 <u>Pastoral Unit - Area 2 Rector - Rev. William Strong</u>	
St. Michael, Arnold's Cove	212
St. Paul, Come By Chance	29
St. Matthew's, North Harbour	26
St. Andrew, Sunnyside	66
All Saints, North West Brook	<u>9</u>
	342
 <u>Pastoral Unit - Area 3 Rector - Rev. Edward Mercer</u>	
St. Mary's, Hodges Cove	82
St. Aiden, Queen's Cove	14
St. Mark, Long Beach	19
St. Alban, Gooseberry Cove	70
St. Michael, Hillview	23
St. Stephen, Hatchet Cove	<u>15</u>
	223
TOTAL	929

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

PASTORAL ISSUES:

- Due to geographical size, the Parish of the Isthmus will consist of three pastoral units, each with its own resident clergy responsible for his/her pastoral unit.
- Church members will identify with the clergy in his/her pastoral unit.
- Supplemental ministry to continue, details to be worked out.
- Continued assistance of lay ministers is necessary.
- Clergy and lay readers will work primarily in their pastoral unit, but not totally limited to it, when a specific need arises.

ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES:

- There will be one Parish Council made up of two representatives from each congregational vestry.* (Modified to be one voting member and one alternate)
- Parish council will meet five times per year.
- Congregations will retain their vestries to oversee local congregations, and to report to parish council.
- Each clergy will be held accountable for the efficient operation of the congregations within his/her pastoral unit, having regular vestry meetings and reporting to parish council.
- Present "support group" will not be needed.
- Number of members in each congregation will be determined in such a way to facilitate the distribution of total budget cost (parish assessment) fairly among all congregations, e.g. number of actual givers for 2000.
- A trial run of two years be adopted.

FINANCIAL ISSUES:

- As per the constitution, parish assessment will have first claim on all congregational funds.
- As per the constitution, stipend and synod assessment will take first and second claim on all parish funds.
- Clergy will be paid bi-monthly.
- Present "grant in aid" from the diocese will be discontinued.
- What do we do with a congregation like Fairhaven, who pays little or no parish assessment, or any others who are unable to pay the full assessment?
- All funds in existing parish accounts will be left there and considered "frozen" for two years and will remain the property of the congregations within the existing parish.
- Parish will prepare an annual budget, and issue quarterly reports to be distributed to all vestry members.
- Items to be charged against parish budget will be clearly defined before the expense is incurred.
- All congregations will prepare an annual budget and issue quarterly standard reports to be delivered to all church members.,
- Rectories will remain the property of the "old" parish councils.
- Parish will assume responsibility for maintenance of the three rectories and equipment.
- Each pastoral unit will have a rectory committee to oversee minor maintenance \$50.00 or less. Repairs in excess of this amount will require prior approval of parish council.
- Rectory at Sunnyside remains the responsibility of the "old" parish.
- Travel claims for lay ministers and committee members will be paid monthly at the diocesan rate, from parish funds.
- Lenten and Advent folder income will remain in the congregation.
- Parish assessment will be received by the parish treasurer, by mail, from each congregational treasurer no later than the 15th of the current month.
- All "flow through" moneys, like PWRDF, Queen's College, Anglican Life, etc. will be remitted to the parish treasurer monthly.
- Standard forms will be prepared and used for all travel claims and monthly remittances forwarded to the parish treasurer.

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