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Set Sail Parish Toolkit for Planning and Goal-Setting

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Introduction

You might be thinking to yourselves, “We have these high-level goals for Set Sail – now what?” Now it’s your turn to do some planning!

This document should be viewed as a reference to support your congregation(s) or parish(es) in the strategic planning journey. The Set Sail strategic goals (included as Appendix A) that have been identified need to be translated into what makes sense at your local level; how they can be realized in your context. This will look different in each Archdeaconry and in each congregation, group of congregations, parish, or group of parishes. Any unit can work together to achieve the Set Sail strategic goals and it can be different per goal. The grouping that you use will be referenced in this document as your Parish Set Sail team. The Diocesan Set Sail leadership team includes the Bishop and Mission Archdeacons and Canons.

Navigators

A recommended first step is to identify Navigators for this process within each congregation or parish. While the Set Sail leadership team in each Archdeaconry will provide guidance for the process, Navigators can be used in parishes to support congregational activities. These activities will include identifying specific goals to align with the high-level goals, planning for activities, taking action to achieve goals, and reporting results.

It will be the role of the Navigators to:

1. Communicate updates and information between the congregation or parish and the Diocesan Set Sail leadership team about the process.
2. Answer questions within the congregation or parish about the process, and if they don't know the answer, liaise with their Rector, Mission Archdeacon, or the Bishop.
3. Work with the Vestry of the congregation or parish to set specific goals that align with the high-level goals.
4. Ensure that steps are taken within the congregation or parish to plan activities and take action. It is not the responsibility of the Navigators to do the work themselves, but rather to support the process. It is a Vestry responsibility to ensure that actions are planned and executed to achieve the specific goals.
5. Report results of activities back to the Diocesan Set Sail leadership team and more broadly.

Who makes a good Navigator? There are a number of qualities that a parish leadership team (Rector, Wardens, and Vestry) can look for when identifying a Navigator for their congregation or parish:

- ✓ Is preferably a lay person.
- ✓ Is excited by the prospect of refocusing our efforts in the Diocese back to our foundation – being followers of, and doing the work of, Jesus.
- ✓ Is willing to look beyond the usual activities of the congregation or parish for where they are being called, and encourage others to do the same.
- ✓ Is open to partnering with other congregations or parishes to advance this work.
- ✓ Has strong communication skills.
- ✓ Has time to give to this process (i.e. is not already at full volunteer capacity).
- ✓ Is comfortable with some technology requirements, which may include virtual meetings (such as on Zoom).
- ✓ Is someone that can work well with the Diocesan Set Sail leadership team, the Parish Set Sail team, the leadership of the congregation or parish, members of the congregation or parish, and partners.
- ✓ Can reasonably commit to working through the process until 2025.
- ✓ May be able to travel within their area to work with their Parish Set Sail team.

Checklist – Before you Identify Goals

It is strongly recommended that these steps be taken to ensure you are ready to Set Sail on your journey.

- ☐ Members of your congregation or parish have attended an introductory session with the Diocesan Set Sail leadership team.
- ☐ Your congregation has been made aware of the Set Sail strategic planning process.
- ☐ The Set Sail strategic planning process has been discussed with Vestry.
- ☐ Navigator(s) have been identified for your congregation or parish.
- ☐ The parish has been asked to pray for the process, that God's work will be done through Set Sail: Charting the Course for Christ's Church.

Once these steps have been completed, you are ready to identify specific goals!

If you have not yet discussed the process internally in your parish, the Set Sail website has resources available to support those conversations. Open dialogue may include reflection and discernment on the Bishop's vision of the four ships and the six strategic goals using the following questions:

- ✓ What is exciting about this process? What is concerning? Where is there opportunity for the Spirit to transform your parish in this process?
- ✓ What is speaking to you about the four ships? What is already happening in your parish for each ship?
- ✓ How can you make the six strategic goals real in your parish?

At any time, concerns can be brought back to the Diocesan Set Sail leadership team.

Suggested Approach to Identify Goals

There are a variety of exercises that you can use and approaches you can take to generate a set of specific goals that align with the high-level goals. If you have people on your Parish Set Sail team with skills or experience in this area, then they can drive the process. If strategic planning is new to you, here is a suggested methodology that you can use to identify goals.

1. Identify at what level you will undertake this exercise, and that may look different in each local context. Maybe it is a Vestry or Parish Council or even a group of Vestries who plan to work together. Perhaps it makes sense to gather some key leaders from your congregation(s). The goal-setting session will be a working session, so the group should be a manageable size.
2. Once the size and composition of your group has been identified, choose a location (meeting room, parish hall, even the nave of the church itself) which can comfortably hold the group (assuming the session will be in-person; if not, make appropriate online arrangements).
3. Set a time and format (in-person/online/hybrid), and communicate it to the group with sufficient notice. The time and format should be established to allow for broad participation.
4. Establish the scope of the session as planning for the first two ships for 2024. A similar exercise will also be needed with the second two ships for 2025.
5. Assign somebody to lead the discussion and drive the agenda for the session.
6. Assign somebody to capture notes for the session, or to gather the notes from the session depending on the format.
7. Gather supplies that might be helpful for the session: flip charts with markers, sticky notes, pens.
8. Set an agenda for the session. A sample agenda is given in Appendix B.
9. Hold the goal-setting session.
10. If multiple sessions are required to work through all of the goal-setting, steps 2 through 8 may be repeated as required.

Checklist – Once your Goals are Set

It is strongly recommended that these steps be taken to build awareness of what is happening with Set Sail and position your efforts for success.

- ☐ Communicate goals that have been set from the goal-setting process to your parish. That may be through a variety of communication tools including email, a bulletin insert, a special handout, social media, and in-person opportunities such as congregational meetings, sermons, and worship service announcements. The goal is to communicate as broadly to parishioners as you are able so that people feel engaged, and using several different methods to reach people is preferred.
- ☐ Complete the *Set Sail Planning Template* worksheet and return it to the Diocesan Set Sail leadership team via Church House.
- ☐ Talk about your goals! Assess progress as a regular part of Vestry meetings, annual and other congregational meetings, and Archdeaconry gatherings. Goals should be consistently part of parish life.
- ☐ Make plans and take action to achieve your goals. This will be very specific to each identified goal. If resources are needed to support your parish in completing the goals, please get in touch with the Diocesan Set Sail leadership team.
- ☐ Once you have completed any or all of your goals, tell your stories! Be creative with your storytelling: use videos, interviews, photos, poems, music, artwork, prayers, social media posts, Anglican Life articles, or whatever works for your parish to share your experience with Set Sail.
- ☐ Report back to the Diocesan Set Sail leadership team through Church House. What actions have you taken to achieve your goals and what outcomes have been realized? We want to know how you have been inspired throughout this process and how the Spirit has worked in your parish. There will be additional resources available to support reporting and measurement as the process unfolds.

For more information and resources, please visit:

https://anglicanenl.net/set-sail-strategic-plan/

Or scan the QR Code

Appendix A – Set Sail Strategic Goals

In 2024, parishes will be asked to prioritize the first two "ships" of the vision (Deepening Relationships and Transforming Discipleship) so that individuals can continue to grow and develop who they are as faithful Disciples. With that foundation firmly rooted yet always evolving, goals for 2025 will address the actions of the last two "ships" of the vision (Renewing Stewardship and Engaging Partnerships).

By the end of 2025, the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador will endeavour to achieve the following goals as we ***Set Sail: Charting the Course for Christ's Church.***

Goals for 2024

Goal #1
To invite every baptized person to renew their own personal faith through regular examination of the Baptismal Covenant.

Goal #2
To further develop our congregations as inclusive, supportive, and non-judgemental communities of faith as we continue to seek and serve Christ in all persons: those already identifying as part of our faith communities; those looking for connections with our faith communities; those against whom wrongs have been done in the name of our faith communities; and the broader community outside of our faith entirely.

Goal #3
To enable every baptized person to explore and express their faith by entering and entering again into the fullness of their discipleship of Jesus, and lead others to do the same.

Goals for 2025

Goal #4

To renew our understanding of the true, holistic nature of our stewardship and responsibility to all of God's creation both individually and together as faith communities.

Goal #5

To examine our current environmental footprint in light of the ongoing climate emergency and take action to tangibly reduce the negative impact we as individuals and faith communities are having on God's creation.

Goal #6

Recognizing God in and through others, to partner together across and outside our faith communities to support and engage in shared work, witness, and ministry, and help bring dignity to every human being.

Appendix B – Sample Agenda for Goal-Setting Workshop

1. Opening Prayers and Scripture
2. Meeting Setup
    a. Complete introductions if needed (i.e. if there are members of the group who may not know each other).
    b. Establish a parking lot for the session: A "parking lot" is a holding area for thoughts or questions that are important to retain for a future conversation but don't need to be discussed at present. It is critical to capture these thoughts so that people trust their contributions aren't being disregarded.
3. Review Vision and Goals
    a. Review the Bishop's vision of the four "ships" along with the six strategic goals with the group.
    b. Facilitate an open dialogue on what speaks to the participants from each of the ships and goals.
4. Goals Deep Dive
    a. For each of the goals, conduct an individual exercise for participants to independently identify:
        i. What is already happening in this area?
        ii. What is working/not working/needs improvement?
        iii. If nothing is happening already, what would you like to see happen?

    You can use sticky notes for this exercise (a single note per comment) so that they can be grouped.

    This exercise needs to be one of respectful honesty on what is not working or could be improved, and hopeful aspiration for what could happen. It is important to keep aspirations realistic and achievable.
    b. For each of the goals, ask participants to report back on their individual exercise to the group.
    c. Categorize individual responses by theme under each goal.
5. Identify Priorities
    a. Where there is strong alignment and clear work to be done, a path forward for a specific goal may emerge. Specific goals for each strategic goal may address:
        ✓ Existing strengths that can be reinforced or enhanced.
        ✓ Known gaps that should be filled and are realistic.
        ✓ Areas for improvement that would strengthen the response to a strategic goal.
    b. If no obvious priorities emerge for a goal, ask participants to individually rank each of the themes that were identified under the goal. The result of this ranking will provide the priorities to be pursued. Look for where the Spirit is leading.

6. Set Goals
    a. Assuming that 2-3 priorities were identified, some effort among the group may be put towards framing actual goals from these priorities.
    b. If the focus moves to wordsmithing or if the task seems too big for a larger group, then an individual or small group may be designated to take the goals away to be finalized for the group's review.
7. Session Summary and Next Steps
    a. Summarize the findings from the session.
    b. Provide clarity on what will happen next, any action items that are required, and who is doing what.
8. Closing Prayers