

Comments from Ministry Fair March 1, 2008

FORMATION

Clergy

- Regularly scheduled regional lay formation events – culturally specific (LEM, LEV, Vestry and Stewardship) Local regional training availability; retreats for laity, clergy in reachable locations i.e. Inland Empire (7)
- Open up programs for minority groups, translations in other languages, ESL, Spanish/Chinese as a second language. Encourage non-English speaking congregations to offer ESL or comparable programs. This will aid members in education, employment, etc. (5)
- How to use the BCP - Involve parish lay in Diocesan activities – improve awareness & involve parish in wider church life (4)
- Prepare clergy & laity for different models of ministry as one-parish-one-priest model is falling away.
- Seminary study in English/Spanish/Chinese in the North of the Diocese
- Plan for recruitment/discernment of missionaries – Diocesan-wide as well as Parish-wide.
- Vocational conference for college-aged ordained and lay ministries
- Chaplains as Vicars – explore that concept
- Much more emphasis on equality between laity and clergy, honoring & respecting each other and teaching this to ‘old school’ Christians

Laity

- Lay teaching & development – acknowledge the value of ministry of laity (4)
- Adult Education - Adult classes / Bible Studies in every congregation (3)
- Once we have identified the right Lay Minister – how do we develop that leadership? (2)
- Sharing music, choirs, liturgies among parishes and with other denominations in a region. (2)
- Inter-parish partnerships, prayer groups for vestry, clergy and volunteers (2)
- LEV & LEM Training done on a Regional or Deanery Level
- Cursillo
- Recognize DOK as an instrument of formation
- Take education to the adults who come to the Episcopal Church from other backgrounds
- Create a CREDO style opportunity for laity
- Opportunities for spiritual formation as well as Christian formation.
- Re-growth of church guilds, groups as a means to re-invigorate a congregation re: service
- Teaching the New Reformation – helping congregations understand the emerging church and the Dynamics of Change
- More opportunities for Ministry Fair Formation - would like to choose more than 2 workshops
- EFM classes closer to me (Santa Maria)

Youth

- Youth Formation & Training youth to be leaders, vocational exploration (5)
- Youth & Young Adults – bible study groups, New Beginnings, Happening, Vocare (4)
- Get young people to form an association in the Diocese, maintenance and mission for young adults (2)
- Contemporary services - U2-charists, Rite 2 with upbeat youth oriented music (2)
- I would like to see more of our youth participating in programs – out of their own churches – sharing & in non-local, i.e. international for the experiences; programs and services geared towards grade-school children & their parents and how to bring more of them to church. (2)
- Catechumen – I have difficulty finding training materials for kids/adults in preparation for Baptism. I am inundated with stuff from non-Episcopal sources but little from my own church.
- Re-activate Christian Formation/Education - provide seminar/Education for Sunday School Teachers
- Encourage/ordain qualified people in their 20's
- Formation of a panel for discernment of youth ministers
- Web-based discussion boards – i.e. mySpace – Diocesan blog (one way to reach younger people), Diocesan Pod-casting of Daily Office Encourage cooperative education ministries in Deaneries
- We need the Diocese to help with our youth development program.
- Get parents to talk to their kids at home about Christ
- For teens not at risk – more for regular kids.
- Grow Children's Ministry
- More opportunities to teach VBS in low income areas.

Ministry

- What is the Diocesan Demographic / Urban Ministry strategy? Planting new churches in expanding population areas (i.e. in Irvine there are 200,000 people and 1 small Episcopal church) (7)
- Grassroots regional planning (outreach) (5)
- Develop plan for Urban Ministry, including revisiting plans for potential closure /sale of property, funds administered by program group (2)
- Strengthen the Hispanic Ministry resources - We have an abundance of Latinos in our midst – how do we reach out to them? (2)
- Is there a plan to find land in growing areas to start new churches?
- Music is very important in the Spanish culture – share music resources with the goal of building up the music program in congregations that do not have the resources
- Require MSF participation for seat/voice/vote at Convention
- Expansion of Chinese Ministry
- Activities that pair Seniors with youth – to maintain history and develop trust and understanding between generations.
- Singles Ministry

Other

- Making newcomers and guests feel welcome and accepted is an important part of church worship service. We do a good job once new people get to our door, but need help getting them to the door! (2)
- Develop High School on Conejos Valley property
- Get serious about seeing Christianity as post-denominational

ABUNDANCE

Relationship

- Explore & form urban / regional / parish partnerships – sharing financial & other resources, publish a list of needs and desires between parishes and missions, encourage inter-connectiveness, more info on combining small congregations (either Episcopal & Episcopal or Episcopal & Lutheran (16)
- Develop a realistic plan for every ‘assisted’ parish/mission that includes not only financial support but congregational development specialist. Help ‘struggling’ congregations develop a plan to be fully resourced for 5-7 years minimum. What is the financial future for smaller churches and those in transition? (6)
- Stewardship offerings to include multi-cultural setting applications. (4)
- Encourage neighboring churches to do more together – consolidate efforts – combine youth programs, field trips to Mexico, VBS, etc. (3)
- Needs to be a Diocesan sponsored / recommended / required program for every congregation to have a brother/sister relationship with another congregation – maybe another Episcopal Church but perhaps a Lutheran or other congregation – not just clergy to clergy but people to people – sharing special times of worship, service & fellowship with each other. Specific not general. (3)
- Concerning governance of Diocese – find a way to create participation of outlanders in diocese governance – candidates for community delegate, etc. are mostly from L.A. area – Diocese is too LA centered – create regional governance not just deaneries, enable outlander/LA dialogue
- Companion Diocese relationships – real focus and more structure
- Separate the Ecumenical from the Inter-faith Task Force
- Develop inter-denominational relationships with outside faiths – Jewish, Muslim, etc. – for the exchange of philosophies and beliefs – knowledge eliminates fear.
- We have a lot to share about the Good News! We need to find the right way to do it.
- Hold services in Spanish even we have congregations that speak English – teach everyone the Lord’s Prayer in Spanish so we can say it together when we gather as a Diocese.

Financial

- Funding / planning for compensation support for clergy and adequately fund campus ministry – fund chaplains as vicars (5)
- Financial and budget assistance - Share, share, share (wealth, and information) (4)
- Keep funds in areas of needs and crisis (2)
- Support (fund) expanding/enriching ministries with (higher) education (2)
- Expand school scholarship funds to Episcopal Preschools, include Iraq refugees in this project
- Place surplus in the stock market in stocks that are going up
- Put ‘teeth’ in our %-of-giving structure
- Diocesan stewardship staff (including bishops) must be pro-active rather than waiting to be asked
- Need to find a way to be better stewards of our parish activities – our pledges increase but our budget declines.
- Budget on the Mission – we need a plan with full compliance
- Diocesan financial support to young people attending missionary events.

COMPETENCE

Training

- Direct, ongoing training with wardens (esp. Senior/Bishop's Wardens), vestry and parish leaders (in crisis management, – teaching them to be proactive, rather than reactive in stressful times; job description and responsibilities). (7)
- More lay pastoral/hospice training for LEMs / LEVs – total congregation laity Baptismal Covenant Ministry Team (3)
- Revamp the Deanery system so that it actually accomplishes something - use it to be a conduit from Diocese to church, regional training, etc. (2)
- Create a Congregational Development process, increase membership by 20% (2)
- Hold class/workshop on Episcopal Anglican Polity, history relationship to increase understanding
- Competent retreat leaders
- Encourage and support groups of/for colleagues
- Classes to empower small congregations to ministry and step it up and how to build more participation
- Workshops on Prevention of Lay Burnout
- Training in music
- Training as a reconciler
- Educate general laity to accept the standards – ‘we have always done it our way’
- Holding all people in a congregation accountable to a direct, candid and respectful model of communication when problems arise – seeking to end entrenched systems of triangulation. Holding people to a biblical standard of communication and resolution, rather than saying “Well, some people will never change.”
- Get video of the four missionaries from the Diocese on the Website
- Team Ministry – demonstration
- Value Episcopal Liturgical Calendar – Celebrate and Promote

Spirituality

- Spiritual Direction – list of resources - Finding ways through new technologies (e.g. webcams) to make spiritual direction possible for people in remote parishes/missions (perhaps lacks something in intimacy, but might be better than 100 miles roundtrip drive). (6)
- A Diocesan course or guide for helping congregations assist their members in discerning/developing/employing their spiritual gifts for ministry – something that helps people connect their faith to action and new excitement for Christ. (Greater uniformity in how we do this for laity, as there is with those training for ordination). (2)
- Spiritual Direction Training
- Encourage parishes to use Spiritual Gifts Inventory to discover congregation's gifts
- Retreat opportunities for parishioners
- There needs to be opportunities for spiritual formation in addition to Christian formation. One will lead and sustain the other. Discernment committees need to be found for lay discernment of vocation and ministry. I tried to contact the committee that is in charge of this twice and received no response to my e-mail. This spirituality of work needs to be emphasized much more. People will come to church more if they see the church as a place to nourish them in their ‘ministry’ in the world rather than simply as an ‘institution’ that needs them to survive.
- Ecumenical prayer gardens in city locations to share with all who seek.

Financial & Administrative

- Manuel for Parish Administrators ('how to's' for anyone who may have to step in when necessary) (2)
- Require basic financial management/budgeting of all parochial clergy.
- A Diocesan strategy for under-resourced churches
- Workshop on legal responsibilities
- Explore ways to move beyond individual and congregational action and financial support and begin to look at ways to mobilize our government with its vast resources to live up to its obligation to the poor of the world
- Make clergy housing an issue – invest in modern real estate.
- Budget for “Draft” Convention - needs to be a Draft or re-named. Very difficult to have input now.

Communication

- Communication about resources for parishes needs improvement (2)
- Publication of Episcopal News or something that address what the church is doing and how we can encourage local parishes to be more involved
- Don't make people seeking promised help run in circles or beg to get what they've been promised.
- Respectful communication with/from diocesan staff
- What is said to clergy is not always passed on to laity

TRUTH / TRUST

Related to Bishops

- Bishops must be more responsive to clergy (3)
- Bishops need to be in congregation and Clericus meetings much more often. (2)
- Provide Annual Episcopal visitations to each mission & parish in the Diocese. (2)
- Define job description of Bishops
- Would like something like a real conversation with the Bishop as a pastor rather than polite check-in/simple greeting model.
- When Bishop retires, call for election of a 2nd Suffragan; let + Chet retire (if he wishes) shortly thereafter.
- Survey Diocese for skills to be included in profile, should a 4th Bishop replace Anderson.
- Do the Bishops engage Mutual Ministry Review of their work with clergy in the conversation?
- Where are the Bishops? I have been at St. Andrew's for 6 years and have seen the Bishop once.
- End to inappropriate terror tactics used by bishops and staff with clergy.
- Our parish is remote from the Diocese. More oversight would be a blessing.

Related to Clergy, Community, etc.

- Open the deployment process so that congregations are encouraged to search & clergy allowed to apply rather than going to Priest-in-Charge so often, clearer more accurate guidelines for deployment. (5)
- Belong to Diocesan parish standards of operations, accountability (3)
- Financial transparency (3)
- Policy / procedure for ordination that apply to all – consistency (2)
- More PR: what Episcopal Church has to offer – make it easier for people to find us who are seeking a welcoming church. The Episcopal Church is uniquely qualified to introduce Christ into intellectual dialogue in the media - information booth at the county Fair (2)
- A commitment to lay compensation - Pay employees justly! Highest priority!!! (2)
- Increased funds for clergy compensation - but use of worker priest, retired clergy, smaller parishes & missions (2)
- A goal setting/ministry consultation/check-in supervision for interested clergy without direct supervision in the parish
- We need trained facilitators for Mutual Ministry Review
- Yearly visits by Diocesan Reps. To vestry to discuss issues/ problems/successes
- Bi-vocational leadership

Other

- Advertising for the church in the community.
- Trust one another
- We've learned a lot about this in the past year at SMAA – what could the Diocese have done to help instill truth as a core value for incoming clergy?
- Being the mother of an autistic child, I know how hard it is to want to attend a parish when you don't know if they understand your child & accept him or her, and I would like to know how we can reach out to those families or at least to learn ourselves how to be more accepting if we are not used to special needs children.
- Encourage preschools to go to full day operation and meet the needs of working families.
- Encourage evaluation of preschool programs to meet the CA Dept. of Education Standards

SERVICE

Environmental Issues

- Specific ways to serve the local / Global community through the MDG's; Challenges to local congregations to commit to the 0.7% goal for financial support. We waste a lot of our resources by being inefficient with energy – with CFL's, insulation, we could sign up for Demand Management – solar energy together as a group, drought resistant plants (12)
- Move toward uniform greener services (i.e. overhead or projection of total services and music for services), cost savings through co-operation (copy supplies, copier purchases & repairs) also education, energy audits, assisting in greening individual churches regardless of economics (3)
- Cathedral Center Energy that models what we should all be doing
- Go Green –Discontinue bottled water
- More opportunities for information on social/cultural /ethical/green issues
- PowerPoint prayer & hymns to save paper
- Please do not encourage PowerPoint or other visual aids during worship – we can be green by eliminating the use of locally printed worship guides and return to using the Prayer Book. It is a beautifully composed product of modern prose.

Website/Computer

- Website enhancement – guidance – information, templates for formatting, forums, web-based fund raising – Corp sole, clergy compensation – centralized at Diocese, targeted to congregations (10)
- Recognition of youth - perhaps on the Website
- Web-site up-dated, web-site template for parishes
- Acquisition & training of multi-media hardware, software applications in the hymnals - hymnal/biblical studies for congregational/outreach where non-traditional can be used
- Non-web based resources are needed too.

Mission

- Mission to the larger church – 4 worldwide missionaries, more training. Our world mission ministries are exemplary and should be show cased. (3)
- Evangelism -Many people I meet in my area don't even know what an Episcopalian is – I would love to see the Diocese (and the national church as well) tell our story in advertising; we need to stop letting the media define us. (3)
- School & University chaplaincy – missions, identify missionaries to serve as college chaplains, see campus ministry as mission field (2)
- Ask for volunteers from parishes – speakers for university chaplaincy events
- Have churches open at specific times for prayer – led by clergy / laity
- Home Eucharist
- Diocesan Bible Study via telephone conference call (include Alaska)
- Collaborative efforts – such as sharing parish administrators, office equipment, etc.
- Sharing information regarding events, service, what is going on within the deanery, and out of the deanery – so we can support each other.
- Teach Openness to Change

Society Issues

- Ministry in Daily Life – Recognition for young people services to church and community, something to honor / help those persons killed or injured in the any of the armed services (military, police, fire) (2)
- Teach specific strategies and tactics that are alternatives to violence – provide ways to deal with stress for both clergy and laity - partnership with existing violence prevention programs (2)
- Gang Intervention programs
- Suggested that our Diocese set out a resources center for chaplaincy for police or sheriff department, as I know this work is done individually among clergy themselves. If our Diocese can offer this link, we can gather our resources & help more clergy in their community to be involved with the enforcement team.
- Hunger Ministry – how to channel/organize companies in LA area (nationally) to meet needs
- Mission ministries like Episcopal Service Alliance should be revitalized
- Development of Diocesan wide Job Board
- A centralized information/opportunity source for service projects in the Diocese
- Deanery/regional service projects
- Identify and support congregations what can serve a sanctuary churches in the sanctuary movement.
- Support (in Spanish) the lower income people going through crisis – women, couples, grief counseling, providing ongoing mental health.
- More connections to other Diocese: Mexico, Palestine, Israel, Turkey, Native American Ministry, Africa, etc.
- More opportunities to help with missions: abroad & with natural disasters
- Serving Christ in the less fortunate

Other Overall Comments:

- Thank you for the chance for input.
- I have been in this Diocese for 3 year s and I have felt disconnected. This forum helps me to feel more connected.
- Greening the church – I know Peter Kreither is the Diocesan person responsible for this (I think) but I'm not sure what he's doing and I don't know where to find that out. More visibility I guess. I'm happy to help if you think it's a workable effort – or maybe it's already happening and I just don't know it.
- I worry/pray daily about our Bishop's health/wellness. The worst thing that could happen in this Diocese is for another Bishop to die while in office.
- I feel a sense of separation & isolation - most part of Diocese & Diocesan standards don't apply to me.
- We would like this in a T-shirt: Save me, Help me, Don't Hurt me, Don't Lie to me, Teach me to do these things
- We need to think about who God is in the 21st century – words we use are not helpful! Talk about Bishop Spong – 'Change or Die' – it's true. 'Who or What is God?' I personally love the poetry of our liturgy but I can't convince my neuron-scientist son. I'm an 84 years old life long Episcopalian.
- Please listen, just listen and then incorporate our ideas into your plan – could we actually have a shared vision plan and / or a shared episcopate?
- "I feel as though the Bishop asked people to brainstorm; an appropriate response would have been to listen and reflect. Instead the Bishop responded to each and every comment by saying, essentially, that the Diocese already does whatever that person suggested, implying that 1) that person's idea is redundant, so it was stupid of them to share 2) there is nothing new that the Bishop has to learn from anyone. Not to mention that he always uses 'the fact of life is...' which is incredibly condescending. I feel as though we weren't listened to , weren't heard, so brainstorming was a waste of time."

List of people who signed the purple sheets:

Allen Stout	Julie D. Bryant +
Amy Sisson	Julie Morris +
Andronetta Douglass	Karen Adelseck
Annette Graw	Kathryn Hauser
Barnabas Ng	Kim Knigge-Sharp
Berta I. Moran &	Kris Mitchell
Bob Bland	Larry Allan Kisby
Carrie Childress	Larry Steele
Celeste Rothstein	Laura Geisel
Clyde Doyle	Lizz Beitzel
Corona del Mar	Marie Gibson
David Star +	Mauricio Courea
Deborah Dunn +	Melissa McCarthy +
Dot Hallinan	Michael Cunningham +
Ernie Whitaker	Michael Strong
Evelina Fradejas	Nancy Claxton
Evelyn J. Davis	Pat Hyland
Fr. Gerardo Brambila	Patricia Scott Terry
Franna McClelland	Peter Haynes +
Garrett Mettler +	Peter Rood +
Gary Commins +	Rich Hope
Gayle McKinney	Robert Moon +
German A. Moran	Ross Bower
H. Mitchell +	Sara Lee Macdonald
Harry Childross	Steve Douth
Helena Chan	Tom Callard +
Jack Garcia	Valerie K. Ward
Jan Jones	Will Crist
Jeff Wilhelm	Wilson J. Diamond
Jessica Alvarado	
Jim Seipel +	
John Pryor	
Joshua Ng +	