



Diocese of Western Anglicans

Proposed Missionary District

Summary Report

04.22.22

Introduction

The Diocese of Western Anglicans is requesting and filing application for the formation of a Missionary District with a mission focus on the work of evangelism and discipleship in the Northern Rocky Mountains and centered in Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and Utah.

The Diocese of Western Anglicans recognize that missionary district formation is governed by the ACNA Constitution and Canons as outlined in Title I, Canon 12. We anticipate that the formation of a missionary district in this region will facilitate the future development of a diocese-in-formation with the hope that a strong diocese in this region will serve the purposes of God's Kingdom and advance the mission of the Anglican Church in North America "to reach North America with the transforming love of Jesus Christ."

Outline of the Process

A. September 2020

Initial discussions were held by the Bishop and Western Anglicans Rocky Mountain Deanery Clergy regarding effectiveness in mission and structural constraints associated with reaching highly diverse cultures in the regions of our focus.

B. October 2020 – January 2021

The diocesan leadership explored optimization of missional response to the regions of our Diocese and introduced the plausibility of forming a missionary district in the Northern Rocky Mountains among Western Anglicans churches and any others that may wish to participate. The Executive Committee of Western Anglicans and the Rocky Mountain Deanery Clericus developed a comprehensive list of questions to address and committed to form a negotiating team comprised of 8 members (4 Western Anglicans leaders, 4 Rocky Mountain Deanery leaders-both lay and ordained) that would address these questions and seek answers to them. The Bishop spoke by phone to both Bishop Ray Sutton and Bishop Ken Ross about any hindrance that might result from the formation of a missionary district to serve the Northern Rocky Mountains. Bishop Sutton communicated that he does not have congregations in that region at this time, so saw no impediment to the work of the Reformed Episcopal Church. Bishop Ross has churches in Idaho and Wyoming, but saw no impediment to the Diocese of the Rocky Mountains should a missionary district be formed in the targeted four-state region.



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C. February 2021

The Western Anglicans Executive Committee and the Rocky Mountain Deanery Clergy affirmed the necessity of exploring the formation of a Missionary District. Both groups developed the questions that would guide the discussion. After receiving a request from the Deanery Clergy that the Diocese sponsor the proposed Missionary District and after consultation with Bishop Ray Sutton and Bishop Ken Ross on sponsorship, the Executive Committee of Western Anglicans agreed to serve as the sole sponsor.

D. March 2021 – December 2021

The Bishop engaged the Rev. Canon Phil Ashley as a consultant to ensure that the Negotiating Team understood the canonical guidelines and operated within them. The Negotiating Team met regularly throughout the year to discuss and decide what would best serve both the Diocese and the Missionary District as each question was addressed.

E. January 2022

An application for Missionary District formation with a Summary Report was prepared for review by the Western Anglicans Executive Committee and the Clergy and Local Churches of the Rocky Mountain Deanery. The region's Clergy proposed that the Missionary District be named the Yellowstone Missionary District due to its prominence in the region.

F. February 2022

The summary report and application will be reviewed, revised and/or affirmed by the Rev. Canon Ashley and then sent to the Western Anglicans Executive Committee and the Rocky Mountain Deanery Clergy. Both groups will review, revise and affirm the documents. They will then declare their intent to form and participate in the proposed Missionary District.

G. February - March 2022

The Rocky Mountain Deanery Local Churches will hold two meetings each to pray, discuss and vote on the formation of the proposed Missionary District. The first meeting will include the Rector and Vestry members of each Local Church. The second meeting will include Local Church members with a demonstrated commitment to their Local Church.

H. March - May 2022

The ACNA Provincial Executive Committee will receive the Summary Report and Application.

I. June 2022

Should the Provincial Executive Committee forward the Application and Summary Report to the College of Bishops with their approval, the College of Bishops will be given the opportunity to pray, review and decide on the formation of the proposed Missionary District.



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Criteria for Commitment to Form the Missionary District

The parameters as outlined below will be followed and affirmed by all, helping the Diocese of Western Anglicans and the Rocky Mountain Deanery Clergy and Local Churches to demonstrate a high level of commitment:

- A. Every Rector must sign a Declaration of Commitment to Form the Yellowstone Missionary District and to participate in it.
- B. All Deacons and Presbyters who are not serving as Rectors or Clergy-in-Charge of Local Churches must also sign the same Declaration.
- C. Every Vestry of every Local Church in the Western Anglicans Rocky Mountain Deanery must pray and vote to form the Yellowstone Missionary District. The vote must represent a minimum 2/3 majority of the combined Rector and elected members of the Vestry.
- D. Every Local Church must call a special meeting of active members to discuss, decide and vote by a minimum 2/3 majority to form the Yellowstone Missionary District. An active member is defined for the purpose of this meeting as one who is:
 1. Listed on the Church's membership roll
 2. Actively worshipping the Lord a minimum of twice per month, either in-person or online
 3. A financial giver of record

The Diocese of Western Anglicans, including the members of the Negotiating Team, have agreed that the Yellowstone Missionary District will not be formed unless the Western Anglicans Executive Committee, the Clergy of the Western Anglicans Rocky Mountain Deanery and the Vestry and members of the Western Anglicans Rocky Mountain Deanery agree by virtue of the above-mentioned parameters.

The Priority of Mission

Western Anglicans Rocky Mountain Deanery beliefs on forming a Missionary District:

- A. First, since its inception, the vision of reaching the 4-state region has been a major goal.
- B. Second, the opportunity to focus the majority of clergy, lay leader and member energy toward this region, without having to also focus on the development of the diocese in other regions, would increase the advancement of the good work that is already being done.
- C. Third, given the current circumstances, the Clergy and Local Churches in this region have been able to plant several church plants and missional startups. With sole focus on this region, the people and systems in place would only become more fruitful.



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- D. Fourth, since its inception, Western Anglicans has provided a way forward in mission and ministry. Its current configuration, with mission thrusts in seven large states, increasingly challenges a clear and disciplined regional focus. Becoming a Missionary District would allow the Western Anglicans Rocky Mountain Deanery to more decidedly impact the region.
- E. Fifth, a fuller statement that provides rationale and motivation for the formation of the Yellowstone Missionary District is found in the accompanying appendices (*see Appendix 1 - Bishop's Notes on Rocky Mountain Deanery Clericus Discussion*)

The Diocese of Western Anglicans beliefs on forming a Missionary District:

- A. First, forming the Missionary District multiplies the church and fulfills our mission to reach North American with the transforming love of Jesus Christ.
- B. Second, the process we are undergoing to form a missionary district provides the Diocese of Western Anglicans with a process and template for the multiplication of dioceses as our other deaneries mature and reproduce. This is the vision of Western Anglicans and we are actively and systematically engaged in fulfilling it.
- C. Third, by forming the Missionary District, the Diocese is more able to focus its mission and ministry on the regions in Southern California and Arizona which are more highly urban and multicultural than is the case in the Northern Rockies. Forming the Missionary District enables these Local Churches to intensify their time and energy in those regions.
- D. Fourth, the available time, energy and effort required by the Diocesan leadership teams is better stewarded as the Diocese promotes growth and development in the southern Deaneries. This is particularly true of the Bishop, as travel within the Diocese is extensive.
- E. Fifth, while the Diocese enjoys wonderful relationships with the Clergy and people of the Rocky Mountain Deanery, fulfilling the mission to which the Lord has called us is the priority and the Diocesan Leaders support the Rocky Mountain Deanery in its efforts to expand Christ's Kingdom in the region.

Missionary District Appraisal

A. Motivation to Create a Missionary District

The Clergy and laity in the Rocky Mountain Deanery have a strong bond, which enables them to work together to recruit and develop like-minded and missionally-focused future clergy. This relationship strength undergirds decisions made at annual Next Steps Conferences to recognize and support newer church plants practically and tangibly in every way possible.



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Becoming a Missionary District will enhance mutual commitment and further the collective goal to build Christ's Kingdom, spread the Gospel to the cities and towns of the region and mature sufficiently so that a new diocese might be formed among us.

B. Advantages to Creating a Missionary District

The current Western Anglicans Rocky Mountain Deanery region (Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Utah) presents fertile ground for evangelism, as it is largely unchurched. Only 10% of its population identifies as Christian, with a Local Church connection. Advantages include:

1. Further the Diocesan 5-year Strategic Plan vision to build and grow multiple dioceses.
2. Foster greater responsibility and maturity by committing to plant Anglican Churches in the region, thereby modeling strength and health through multiplication.
3. Redirect time and financial obligations presently committed to Western Anglicans.
4. Free up resources to strengthen new missional startups and church plants (Bozeman, Moscow, Post Falls) and those in larger cities to thrive (Salt Lake City, Boise, Billings).
5. Devote more time and resources to lay-led missional startups (Gillette, Laramie).
6. Enable the Missionary District to receive a Missionary Bishop, with focus on this region.
7. Enable the Western Anglicans Diocesan Bishop to re-direct time and energy to the more geographically compact, urban and ethnically diverse Southwest Region of the Diocese.
8. By expanding the number of opportunities for church planting and growing the current Local Churches, the Diocese and the Missionary District will better retain its emergent leaders by providing more opportunities for internal transfer.

C. Disadvantages to Creating a Missionary District

1. The Missionary District will require, in its early development, more time and energy devoted to organizational development, which is currently provided by the Diocese. This will provide opportunity for under-involved leaders to contribute their gifts.
2. The redirection of funds from the Local Churches of the Missionary District to support the mission and ministry of the Missionary District will require short-term adjustment by the Diocese which is expected to be overcome by planting and growing Local Churches in the southern region of the Diocese. The Missionary District will also incur costs for the Missionary Bishop, which are manageable, but new.
3. The Missionary District faces a systemic challenge of raising and developing more church planters within the region and will recruit actively in the province, at least in the short-term.



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4. There is great affection and mutual joy enjoyed by the clergy of the Diocese which will be impacted by the formation of the Missionary District. While the raising of new leaders is ongoing, both groups will experience short-term loss of leadership and expertise.

Growth Goals

In the current season, the Missionary District expects to focus on missional, relational, and financial goals that address local church culture and define metrics for reproduction.

A. Missional Goals

1. Plant a minimum of one new church per year.
2. Each Local Church grows measurable in personal discipleship and spiritual maturity among its members:
 - a. Disciples are actively apprenticing new disciples of Jesus
 - b. Local Church leaders are multiplying missional communities
 - c. Clergy and laity are forming more missional leaders and sending them to the harvest
3. Each Local Church is increasing its Average Sunday Attendance by 10-20% annually
4. Each Local Church will be committed and growing toward financial viability according to Missionary District Parameters
5. Every current Local Church will commit to establish a missional community, missional startup or church plant on a rhythm of every 2-3 years
6. Every member of every Local Church will be trained to pray Luke 10:2 faithfully and will be able to testify of the Lord and His faithfulness to send laborers into the harvest
7. Develop a Missionary District plan of succession for Episcopal leadership
8. Motivate and guide church plants in their growth so that each one transitions to Congregation status within 3-5 years of inception
9. Actively develop a pipeline for church planting and work with the Province on helpful methods of recruitment for the Missionary District
 - a. The Missionary District will purchase a house in Ambridge, PA to house seminary students and utilize Trinity School for Ministry for clergy training
 - b. The Missionary District will establish student internships with Trinity (TSM)

B. Relational Goals

Continue to:

1. Strengthen relationships within the Missionary District among clergy and lay leaders
2. Maintain strong ties to Western Anglicans



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3. Commit to continue fostering relationships at Synod and other diocesan gatherings
4. Maintain and strengthen relational ties through training opportunities at diocesan and at the Missionary District level
5. Establish healthy communication through strong partnering relationships with all ACNA churches of other dioceses within the region

C. Financial Goals

Become a self-sustaining (self-governing, self-funding, self-reproducing) diocese which has the capacity to:

1. Fund a full-time bishop within 5 years
2. Have every new Local Church committed to the ACNA 10-10-10 principle
3. Fund new missional startups and church plants throughout the Missionary District by
 - a. reaching the population of the region with the Good News of Jesus (*see Appendix 2 – Missionary District Strategic Planting Opportunities*)
 - b. developing a financial plan to support its church planting vision

5-Year Growth Projection

In an attempt to remain accountable to the goals that we have set, we will reassess annually our progress with the expectation that within the next five years we will see:

- A. the existing missional startups (Bozeman, Moscow and Post Falls) become:
 1. reproducing congregations (minimum 75 ASA) according to current Diocese Guidelines
 2. fully able to financially support full-time clergy who are effective in mission and ministry
- B. the establishment of 10 new missional startups that will mature into church plants and congregations during this time
- C. the funding raised within the Missionary District to support 3 new Church Plant Interns according to Diocesan Guidelines

In 2028, we will be ready to become a Diocese-in-Formation and expect to make application at that time. If the Yellowstone Missionary District is granted Diocese-in-Formation status in 2028, we will continue and expand our development, becoming a Diocese in full standing by 2033.

Strength of Available Resources

The Rocky Mountain Deanery strengths include:

- A. Relationships with one another as clergy
- B. Shared vision for reaching the lost within our Deanery,



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- C. Commitment to one another and to new clergy who seek to plant or join our Deanery,
- D. Vision to grow each individual congregation,
- E. Planting additional congregations throughout the Deanery.

The Diocese of Western Anglicans strengths include:

- A. Functioning in the median range of dioceses in the ACNA in regard to ASA
- B. Currently 60% growth in the number of new works since 2015
- C. Growth in ASA is modest and committed to its improvement through Strategic Plan
- D. Growth is expressed in two ways:
 - 1. Stable churches that are not growing but trying to grow
 - 2. Churches that are growing
- E. Every Deanery has increased its level of participation in Diocesan and Deanery life and mission
- F. Every Deanery has organized systems designed for growth and development

Impact on Western Anglicans

Financial

A completed preliminary analysis estimates that the formation of the Missionary District will have no permanent negative financial consequences for the Diocese. This formation will have a short-term financial impact, as funds from Missionary District Local Churches are reallocated to the region. (see *Appendix 3 - Diocese & Missionary District Financial Analysis*)

Governance – Best Practices

Ideally, the Missionary District will team with a retired bishop who shares the church planting missional orientation of the Northern Rockies Deanery. Western Anglicans is in negotiation with Bishop Mark Lawrence about serving as the Missionary Bishop. If Bishop Mark declines, then the Missionary District will seek another retired bishop; or in the alternative, the Bishop of Western Anglicans will appoint a Vicar General to work under his supervision.

A. Strategic Plan

A Strategic Plan will be developed and implemented using the Western Anglicans 5-year plan as a model and will contain “SMART” Goals and accountability measures to promote effective mission and ministry.

B. Advisory Council

A non-governing Advisory Council will be formed to provide needed wisdom, guidance and support as the Missionary District develops. Ideally it will be comprised of influential representatives from the ACNA, AAC, AGMP, clergy and laity.



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C. Governance Team

A Governance Team, functioning as a proto-Executive Committee with authority subordinate to the Western Anglicans Executive Committee, will be formed to govern. Using the Deanery Manual governance section, the Governance Team will submit a draft governance document to the Western Anglicans Executive Committee for approval. This group will report to the Western Anglicans Executive Committee and to the Bishop, through its Missionary Bishop/Vicar General.

D. Missionary District Executive Committee

The Missionary District will not form a Missionary District Executive Committee until it is approved by the Province as a Diocese-in-Formation.

E. Relationship to Western Anglicans Executive Committee

A member of the Western Anglicans Executive Committee or a person appointed by the Bishop will serve on the Missionary District Governance Team to facilitate communication. A Missionary District representative will not serve on the Western Anglicans Executive Committee, although a liaison could be made available to provide updates on activities and issues of interest.

F. Missionary Bishop

A Missionary Bishop will lead the Missionary District Governance Team, serve on the Missionary District Advisory Council, and report, as needed, to the Western Anglicans Executive Committee. (*see Appendix 4 – Missionary Bishop – Ministry Description*)

G. Constitutions and Canons

The adoption of the Missionary District Constitutions or Canons will be deferred until Diocese-in-Formation status is granted.

H. Next Steps Conference Synod Functions

The number of delegates is determined by the Western Anglicans Constitution & Canons. For Canons Changes, the Annual Next Steps in May will tabulate votes by delegates and the Annual Diocesan Synod will tabulate votes in October with combined votes determining the outcome and adjustments taking place after the Diocesan Synod.

Mission and Ministry Relationship

The parameters for making these decisions are guided by the primacy of either “coherence” or “context”. By “coherence”, the primary concern is ‘uniformity’ and ‘unity’ with the Diocese. By “context”, the primary concern is ‘local’ and ‘regional uniqueness’ with an awareness of stages of development. (*see Appendix 5 - Mission and Ministry Relationship Details*)



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Organizational Structure

The Rocky Mountain Deanery currently has a functioning Deanery Council that meets monthly. As the structure for the Missionary District continues to develop, it will increasingly adapt to its context, becoming less reliant on the structural support of Western Anglicans. The Organizational Structure addendum details the structural support that Yellowstone Missionary District and Western Anglicans have agreed to during this transition. (*see Appendix 6 – Organizational Structure*)