

**Episcopal Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania**  
**Strategic Plan**

- GOAL 1: Strengthen Congregations
  - Objective A: Assist congregations to discern God's preferred future for them so that by 2017, all congregations have a vision and plan.
    - Facilitate processes to identify congregational core values (deacons to be involved in communicating the importance of this)
    - Provide support and follow up for congregations to ensure that core values are being integrated into the mission communications of the congregations
    - Each congregation to set date for plan completion
    - Conduct congregational viability assessments
      - Create a working definition of viability based on best practices from other areas
      - Identify appropriate assessment tools
      - Facilitate assessments
      - Provide follow-up support to congregations
    - Support prayerful, creative restructuring of congregations, including new models
  - Objective B: Support inter-congregational approaches to mission and ministry.
    - Sponsor regional conversations to share ideas, programming, outreach, Christian Education opportunities, etc.
    - Continue unified diocesan outreach projects, including mission trips, local projects, and fundraising efforts
  - Objective C: Assist congregations with implementation of new ministry initiatives.
    - Provide resources for community needs assessments to congregations
    - Develop new ministry workshops for presentation to individual deaneries
    - Celebrate new ministry initiatives
    - Continue to support the work of FAB (Formation Advisory Board)
    - Identify positions for development of new clergy and lay professionals to support congregations
  - Objective D: Offer support to congregations for capital, planned giving, and stewardship (with an emphasis on tithing) campaigns.
    - Consider diocesan membership in TENS
    - Provide training in stewardship, planned giving and legacy giving/estate planning for clergy
    - Identify resource people in diocese for stewardship
    - Identify resources for capital and planned giving campaigns
    - Try new model of interdependent capital campaigns among congregations
    - Provide opportunities for congregations to share fundraising methods
  - Objective E: Conduct facilities and deferred maintenance assessments by the end of 2015.
    - Continue Church Insurance sponsored safety inspections

- Create a diocesan facilities team to facilitate
        - Providing assessments
        - Providing follow-up to safety inspections and determine investment priorities
      - Provide list of preferred contractors/ purveyors with specific competencies
      - Provide training and support for Junior/Property Wardens
    - Objective F: Structure legal and other professional assistance.
      - Develop guidelines for when legal and professional services should be utilized (including determination on when it needs diocesan involvement and/or use of the diocesan chancellor).
  - GOAL 2: Form Outstanding Clergy and Lay Leadership.
    - Objective A: Develop standards for and offer clergy formation and continuing education
      - Develop minimum standards for continuing education
      - Continue to provide current trainings (such as Safeguarding, anti-racism, Title IV) and educational opportunities (such as convention or Mission Conference)
      - Work with congregations to increase awareness of need for clergy vocations
      - NWPA Institute continue to assess and provide education
      - Provide opportunities to develop a college of presbyters and council of deacons
      - Continue to offer two clergy retreats per year
      - Create structure to share continuing education experiences
    - Objective B: Develop standards for and offer lay leaders formation and continuing education.
      - Continue to provide current trainings (such as Safeguarding, anti-racism, Title IV) and educational opportunities (such as convention or Mission Conference)
      - Work with congregations to increase awareness of need for lay vocations
      - Develop regional informational meetings for those thinking about vocations
      - Encourage wider participation in Institute courses
      - Develop lay licensure standards and classes
      - Develop survey to identify common concerns of lay leadership
      - Offer Vestry/Bishop's Committee training and resources
      - Offer training opportunities and support for treasurers and other administrators
      - Offer spiritual retreats and development opportunities (including sharing existing outside opportunities) for laypeople
      - Create structure to share continuing education experiences
    - Objective C: Provide coaching and mentoring for clergy and lay leadership.
      - Train clergy to be mentors
      - Train lay leadership to be mentors
      - Train clergy and lay leaders to develop leadership within the congregation through coaching and mentoring
  - GOAL 3 Equip Evangelists

- Objective A: Create prayer networks to support evangelism efforts.
  - Identify intercessors/people in congregations who are willing to intentionally pray for evangelism efforts
  - Create networks for prayer that include a mechanism to bring them together for common praying times and for follow-up
  - Share success stories
- Objective B: Teach clergy and laity how to share their faith to reach others.
  - Provide training on how to share one's personal faith story
  - Create space at diocesan events to share faith stories
  - Collect and archive faith stories from around the diocese and make them available
- Objective C: Increase awareness and understanding of the Episcopal Church in Northwest PA.
  - Review and revise previous communication plan
  - Identify target demographics
  - Provide resources for advertising to target demographics
- GOAL 4: Foster systems that support long-term health and vitality
  - Objective A: Increase communications and connections within the diocese, including the use of social media and other newer technologies.
    - Communicate strategic plan to congregations (facilitate internal awareness of what we want to do)
      - articulate the theology that is basis of the plan
    - Maintain timely news alerts about congregational events
    - Facilitate a network of Senior and Bishop's Wardens
    - Update and capitalize on the website to make less cumbersome and to use as a source of connections and information
    - Provide more celebration and communication about congregational successes and failures
  - Objective B: Build capacity to plant new churches by 2017 and implement by 2020.
    - Explore potential locations based on previous analysis
    - Explore potential models of church planting
    - Identify gifts necessary for church planting in this region
    - Develop a detailed plan to implement new church plants/restarts by 2017
  - Objective C: Raise funding and other resources to support mission strategy.
    - Create a robust annual fund
    - Explore diocesan capital and planned giving campaign
    - Actively seek grant funding
  - Objective D: Determine resource allocation based on congregational vitality and potential.
    - Create a set of standards and thresholds
    - Utilize congregational assessment data
    - Identify positions for development of new clergy and lay professionals to support congregations