

DIocese OF MINNESOTA MISSION STRATEGY NETWORK (MSN)

THE NEXT 150 YEARS

Identity

We, the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota, are a communion of Christian congregations and other ministries, rooted in the breadth of the Anglican tradition, called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to share in Christ's ministry of reconciliation.

Purpose

Our purpose as the Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota is to seed and cultivate vibrant congregations of maturing Christian disciples, equipping and emboldening them to be Christ's heart, hands and voice in the world.

Guiding Principles

Spiritual transformation and theological renewal
Moving to a more collaborative style of organization and leadership
Moving to a decentralized network
Moving to resourcing and empowering the grass roots
Moving into an expanded imagination for diverse expressions of the church
Moving into a posture of innovation, creativity, mutual trust and risk taking

Goals

Goal 1: Spiritual Transformation and Fuller Participation in God's Mission
Goal 2: Renew Congregations in Context
Goal 3: Recreate the Diocese as a Network
Goal 4: Develop Effective Stewardship of Financial Resources

JUNE 9, 2008 UPDATE

Activities of the Past Couple Months:

Several "Stakeholder Leaders" of the Mission Strategy Network have helped facilitate discussions around the BCMS Report with various other networks within the Diocese. The Total Ministry Network, the Deacons Conference, many regional meetings, individual parish meetings, Lay Leader Training sessions, Clergy Conference, Council meetings, the Financial Summit, and Diocesan Staff meetings have all reported back impressions, questions and recommendations. Similar conversations will occur at the upcoming Minnesota Commission on Indian Work convocation. In addition, we've begun conversations with some of the clergy serving congregations in some of the smaller cities around the state (specifically Duluth, Rochester, and St. Cloud) to explore collaborative and learning relationships among those congregations. We plan to continue to work with these and other existing and emerging networks as the process unfolds; as we reported in April, we will continue to nurture, cultivate and align the energy that's stirring.

Emerging Implementation Strategy:

While interacting with these networks has been fruitful, we recognize the need for more direct and focused work on the four goals of the BCMS report. For the past two months the Coordinating Team has met regularly to discern what organizational design and implementation strategy would best serve the Mission Strategy process. We have decided to move the following direction:

- **Establish Task Teams for Each of the Four BCMS Goals.** Each team will begin work on one of the four goals in the BCMS report. We are asking the MSN Stakeholder Leaders to prayerfully consider which of the four task teams each of them would like to make their focus; we anticipate that many of them will lead the efforts of a task team (and we will also invite others from throughout the Diocese to help in this important work).
- **Consulting Coordinator.** The Coordinating Team and the Project Consultant, The Rev. Dr. Craig Van Gelder, have recognized the need for an additional kind of leadership, from someone who is more visible and can be in regular contact with the MSN Stakeholder Leaders and others in the Diocese. To that end, Craig Van Gelder has hired The Rev. Dr. Anne Miner-Pearson as a subcontractor, to work alongside him and provide the hands-on leadership that he cannot. The costs associated with Anne's work are covered within the existing consulting contract. There will be no additional expense to the Diocese. It will be a great addition to have Anne working with Craig in a more visible and accessible day-to-day manner. She will be in contact with all the MSN Stakeholder Leaders before the end of June and will begin to set up a regular process of staying in touch and helping to coordinate the work that is to be done, both with the Stakeholder Leaders and with others who join the various task teams.

Communication:

We recognize the need for consistent, regular, transparent, and accurate communication, both with the Mission Strategy Network members and with the rest of the Diocese. We are working on two communications goals:

- Sending an update to the MSN Task Forces at least once every two weeks.
- Constructing an MSN web presence that will create a space for people to interact, share their ideas, and fully participate in the MSN process and will facilitate posting materials in a structured easy-to-reference manner. We will have both of these communication tools in place later this summer.
- Posting a summary of activities, actions, and plans to the MSN web presence at least once a month, inviting feedback and interaction from the whole Diocese.

Plans for Fall 2008 through Spring 2009:

When the Mission Strategy Network met in early 2008, we recognized that there are natural cycles of energy and focus available in the flow of Diocesan life. The first cycle was planned for February through May 2008. While some good work was accomplished in that first cycle, it was not as fruitful as hoped, and we know that much work remains to be accomplished. The next cycle falls between August 2008 and May 2009; that is the time for each task team to begin concrete work on each of the BCMS goals.

For this next cycle of focus to be successful, our Consultant and Coordinating Team will engage in some important planning and preparation work this summer, using the BCMS goals and operational strategies as a framework for developing task descriptions, developing team guidelines, soliciting help from existing and emerging networks in the Diocese, building tools and templates and communication vehicles for the work, and communicating overall project plans and status.

We give thanks for everyone in the Diocese who has spent time this winter and spring furthering the work of strengthening relationships and cultivating trust among us all, and those who have studied well the BCMS Report. This is foundational to the ongoing success of our work.