



Anglican Diocese of Ottawa

SHAPE OF PARISH MINISTRY CONSULTATION: STAGE II

TOOLKIT FOR THE AREA PARISH OF THE VALLEY

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INTRODUCTION

First of all, thank you very much for providing information about your parish in Stage I. By now, you will have seen the compendium of profiles for every parish in our diocese, which provides us with a good look at the shape of our parish ministry today.

The SPMC team and Bishop Shane have spent a lot of time studying the information you and other parishes have provided, and toolkits have been prepared for each parish to help us think about what the shape of parish ministry might look like in the future.

This toolkit is meant to help you explore your own situation, and to share thoughts and ideas about the shape of parish ministry across our diocese. The information you and every other parish provides will help us generate concrete proposals to be reviewed and revised in Stage III, leading to important decision-making at our Synod this fall.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Select a group of people (including clergy, wardens and lay members of synod) and circulate the toolkit to them.
2. Please complete the toolkit in whatever way works best for your parish. If you intend to meet together, you may find it helpful to do Parts 1-3 in one session, and Parts 4-5 in a second session.
3. Pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This is important work.
4. Work through the toolkit one section at a time, and be honest and realistic as you think about your responses. Use as much space as you need when typing them out.
5. If there is a difference of opinion in your group, please tell us about it.
6. The deadline for submitting your toolkit responses is MARCH 15, 2022. Please email your completed toolkit to Heidi Pizzuto at heidi-pizzuto@ottawa.anglican.ca.
7. Your SPMC contact person will be glad to help if you have any questions.

PART ONE: Thinking about your parish profile

Make sure everybody has read your own parish profile in the compendium. Taking into account everything you see in your profile, ask yourselves these questions:

1. How does our profile, the words and the numbers, make us feel?
2. Do our answers and our statistics in the profile reflect the same reality? If not, which are more accurate?
3. What, if anything, surprises us?
4. What, if anything, worries us?
5. What, if anything, excites us?
6. What is God telling us?

PART TWO: Thinking further about your opportunities and challenges

You said in your profile that financial pressures and related building concerns (cost, accessibility) mean putting a balanced budget ahead of mission, and that your population is dwindling and aging. You wish to further evolve your Area Parish model through dialogue in working tables in the parish and changes to your governance and finance structures to make best use of time, resources and finances for enhancing ministry in such areas as worship and lifelong learning, outreach, social justice, and rental of your buildings.

You are in a region where:

- most congregations have experienced an aging or dwindling parish population and declining Sunday attendance;
- there is concern around an aging and increasingly limited pool of volunteers;
- buildings are generally in good shape and well-maintained, though not all are accessible;
- many congregations are facing financial pressures, particularly around the upkeep of their buildings;
- most of the congregations in the area are grouped into one area parish;
- there is an expressed need for more trained Licensed lay Readers, especially as some churches have non-stipendiary priests; and
- A variety of common ministry opportunities have been identified, such as ministry to children, youth and families; engaging with tourists; and making more use of lay leadership.

1. What would help address the opportunities you have identified?

2. What would help address the challenges you face?

PART THREE: Where are you headed?

Read through the descriptions in *Appendix A: Parish Ministry Situations*.

1. Which parish ministry situation best describes where you are now (*check one only*)?
 - a. Area Parish
 - b. Single-Point Parish
 - c. Multi-Point Parish
 - d. Pastoral Parish

2. What parish ministry situation do you think you will be in 4 or 5 years from now?
Please comment on your choice.
 - a. Area Parish
 - b. Single-Point Parish
 - c. Multi-Point Parish
 - d. Pastoral Parish
 - e. Amalgamation
 - f. Chapel
 - g. Disestablish

3. If you think you will be in a different situation 4 or 5 years from now:
 - a. Do you want to change?
 - b. Are you ready to change?
 - i. If not, what do you need to become ready?
 - ii. If you are ready, what are your next steps?

4. If you think you will be in the same situation:
 - a. What needs to:
 - i. Stop
 - ii. Stay the same
 - iii. Be changed or reoriented
 - iv. Be taken on
 - b. Do you want to make changes?
 - c. Are you ready to make changes?
 - i. If not, what do you need to become ready?
 - ii. If you are ready, what are your next steps?

PART FOUR: Thinking about parish ministry in our diocese as a whole

1. What aspects of parish work (e.g., liturgical, educational, administrative, property) could be centralized or supported in Ascension House (Synod Office), or regionalized? Please be specific.
2. All Christian ministry is rooted in baptism. The ministry of laity is essential to all aspects of parish ministry: liturgical, pastoral, educational, social, and missional, as well as administrative, financial, and property needs. Well-trained Licensed Lay Readers can fill extensive liturgical, pastoral, educational, and administrative roles. Healthy parishes, of whatever size, depend on skilled lay teams working collegially with clergy. What should we do to develop, equip, and support the ministry of laity in our parish ministries?
3. We currently fund the cost of providing priests for parish ministry through ECOPS: a system where parishes pay their share of the total diocesan cost of priestly services (excluding housing), based on the 3-year average of a parish's assessable income relative to the total net assessable income of all parishes. This system allows the bishop to appoint full-time priests to any parish based on their gifts, regardless of their seniority, but only if the parish is able to pay the amount assessed to it. Is there a more effective or desirable way of funding the cost of providing priestly services to our parishes? What would it look like?
4. It is well-established that an annual parish stewardship cycle is an effective way to encourage offerings, planned giving, as well as volunteer and lay leader recruitment. Our diocese has all the resources needed to help every parish develop and maintain an annual stewardship cycle, but less than 30% of our parishes have one. If an annual stewardship cycle was required of every parish, what resources would you need in your parish?
5. Please suggest anything else we could do to strengthen, enable, or develop parish ministry in our diocese as a whole.
6. Are you aware of other models of parish ministry that might work in our diocese? Please describe them (add links to websites if you can).
7. What are your thoughts about collaborating with other Christians to share space; or, where possible, to create ecumenical parishes or congregations? Is there an opportunity for this to happen in your area? If so, please elaborate.

PART FIVE: Looking at other parishes

Look through the compendium at other parish profiles.

1. Are there any parishes that draw your interest? Why?
2. Are there any parishes that you might like to speak with? Which one(s) and why?
3. (*OPTIONAL*) Thinking about the various parish situations described in Appendix A, do you see places that ought to explore moving to a different situation? Please list them here as follows:

Parish / Different situation to explore / Reason

APPENDIX A: Parish ministry situations

Area Parish

A self-supporting parish comprising a number of churches across a large geographic area, with a full-time incumbent and a number of associate incumbents, who serve the parish as a whole, and work as a team with lay leaders to provide pastoral leadership and ministry to every church (see Appendix B for a fuller description).

Single-point Parish

A traditional, self-supporting parish, with one church and a full-time incumbent (sometimes with an associate incumbent or assistant curate).

Multi-point Parish

A traditional, self-supporting parish, with two or more churches in a geographic area and a full-time incumbent.

Pastoral Parish

A smaller, self-supporting parish that cannot support a full-time incumbent, but has sufficient members and financial resources to provide for some aspects of pastoral care and liturgical leadership, as well as their administrative and property needs, and to meet their Parish Fare Share and Insurance commitments. There is a need to develop a common protocol for pastoral parishes. Currently, each situation is managed at the discretion of the Bishop.

Amalgamation

An amalgamation is when two (or more) existing parishes merge to become a single parish, often in one building and possibly with fewer clergy. After careful conversations and mutual discernment, and with the consent of the incumbents and churchwardens of the parishes, the Bishop may authorize an amalgamation with the approval of Diocesan Council. (*Bylaw 5.01.7-9*)

Chapel

When a congregation no longer has the people or resources to continue, they may apply to the Bishop for designation as a chapel. The chapel would have a sponsoring body that is responsible for it. Remaining members of the congregation would receive pastoral care from a designated priest, and some worship services over the course of a year—understanding that priestly services are limited, and require the approval of the Bishop and Sponsor. (*Bylaw 5.01.22-31*)

Disestablish

When the time to close has come, a Vestry can resolve, by at least a two-thirds majority, that a church be disestablished. With the approval of the Bishop the church is closed, and all assets accrue to the central funds of our diocese. Sometimes a congregation will elect to disestablish with the intention of transferring their members or their assets to another parish. Alternatively, the Bishop may, with the approval of Diocesan Council, invite a Vestry to voluntarily disestablish. (*Bylaw 5.01.10-19*)

APPENDIX B: Becoming and being an area parish

1. An area parish comes into being after several parishes or congregations have discerned a willingness to work together in a new way, as partners in ministry and mission. By sharing the human and practical resources of several congregations, an area parish benefits from the leadership of a team of clergy, and is stronger, sustainable, and more capable of having a greater impact in the wider community.
2. When the clergy and lay leaders of several parishes or congregations indicate to the Bishop that they are willing to explore the possibility of forming an area parish, the Bishop becomes involved in the discernment. Discussions with the Bishop (including members of the Bishop's Senior Staff) will consider the pastoral, missional, administrative and financial dimensions of becoming an area parish, being sure that the advantages, opportunities and challenges are clearly understood.
3. If discussions lead to the point where the leadership of the parishes or congregations agree to a statement of intent, outlining the approach they will take to shaping the ministry and mission of the proposed area parish, the Bishop will ask that the vestries of each congregation pass identical motions saying they wish to form an area parish.
4. With the approval of the vestries, the Bishop will take advice on what name should be given to the new area parish, and will seek to appoint a clergy team to the parish as a whole, comprising an incumbent and one or more associate incumbents.
5. With the appointment of the clergy team, the clergy and lay leadership will continue to develop how best to manage all aspects of the new area parish—with a view to finding efficiencies through working together. Congregations will explore new ways of collaborating to serve their shared geographic area more effectively, while ensuring that ministry is carried out in sustainable ways in terms of both human and financial resources. Eventually, they will engage in multi-year planning.
6. While the scheduling of services, providing pastoral care, teaching and opportunities for fellowship, and reaching out in mission to the communities within the geographic area are extremely important tasks, there are some key administrative requirements that must be met by a new area parish within its first few years—at a pace that makes sense for all—such as choices about how property and finances will be managed, and basic elements like a central council, mailing address, bank account with signing officers, and a protocol for issuing tax receipts. At this time, the protocols for area parishes are still being developed.
7. Becoming and being an area parish is an exploration in faith. Apart from some key administrative requirements, the clergy and people of area parishes are encouraged to discover what works best for them, and for their ministry and mission in their communities. Our diocese is committed to creating opportunities for area parishes to learn from one another as time unfolds.