

LET'S CONNECT WITH OUR WIDER COMMUNITY

4. LET'S RESPOND AND GET MOVING!

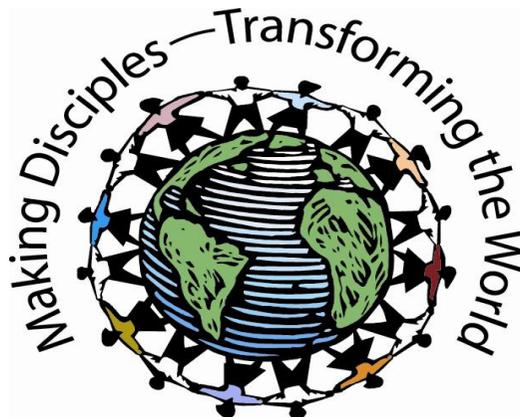
4.1 In response to the Life Line provided by God through God's people in this Diocese, our Synod has set up the opportunity for Ministry Units to be facilitated in their mission endeavours through the availability of the Ministry Development Officer and the Mission Companion process.

This facilitation includes a Presentation, this work booklet, A Toolkit for Mission which contains three bible studies, and the ongoing work of the MDO and Mission Companion.

To access this facilitation you are warmly invited to negotiate with the MDO who will work with you to set in place a Mission Plan that is applicable to your situation. Together your Ministry Unit and the MDO/Mission Companion will work ways forward for mission in your place.

4.2 You may however decide that your Parish Council will appoint leadership and set up procedures for you to honour our Mission Statement in which case the MDO can still be consulted for advice as the Parish takes responsibility for its own Mission Plan.

4.3 Either way, please inform the MDO so that the Diocese can be kept updated on the progress of our Diocesan Mission Plan 2012-14.



IN MEANINGFUL AND INTENTIONAL WAYS SO AS TO
INSPIRE TRANSFORMATION OF LIFE THROUGH FAITH
IN JESUS CHRIST.

MOVING FORWARD IN FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

In the midst of the financial turmoil of 2010-11 the Diocese also focused its passion and energy on the future Sustainable Ministry and Mission of our Diocese. The Ministry Development Officer engaged with over 20 parishes across the Diocese through the “Imagine Us” process which saw some 800 plus people throughout the Diocese participating one way or another.

The results of *“Imagine Us”* across the Diocese revealed seven common themes:

- Connect with the wider community
- Develop creative & diverse liturgies
- Empower small groups
- Increase ministry with other Churches
- Respond to Pastoral care and human need.
- Equip all God’s people for their vocation and;
- Increase our education & learning opportunities.

Bishop in Council responded positively to this vision of Mission for our Diocese and after careful and prayerful consultation, took to Synod in 2011 and inspired draft *MISSION STATEMENT* and *Plan* for the next 3 years giving focus to people’s desire to “connecting with the wider community” in mission.

So to enable us to live into the achievement of our Vision of being “Anglican people of faith embracing the Spirit of Christ in our time and place, we have determined that we will achieve this by living into our Mission Statement:

MISSION STATEMENT 2012-14

“We will encourage intentional and meaningful connections with the wider community, seeking to inspire transformation of life through faith in Jesus Christ.”

For Example: One parish has responded to its community needs by offering the programme “Mainly Music.” (This is A & B).

Over a period of time relationships have been built and there is a real sense of community that exists amongst those involved. (This is C).

They are now exploring ways in which to keep that community going, and connected with one another. (This is C).

Next they will be looking for ways of exploring faith and worship. (This is D & E).

One suggestion is starting “Messy Church.” (This is E). So they have moved from loving service to forming community. How are they shaping lives? (D). Are they leading people into a relationship with Christ? (D). Have they moved from a service of the Church, to worship in the Church? Will this worship be in the form of a new expression of worship or in the form of traditional worship?

How can your ministry unit offer both traditional and fresh expressions of worship? (Mixed economy).

3. LET'S PLAN TO IMPLEMENT A MISSION PROJECT

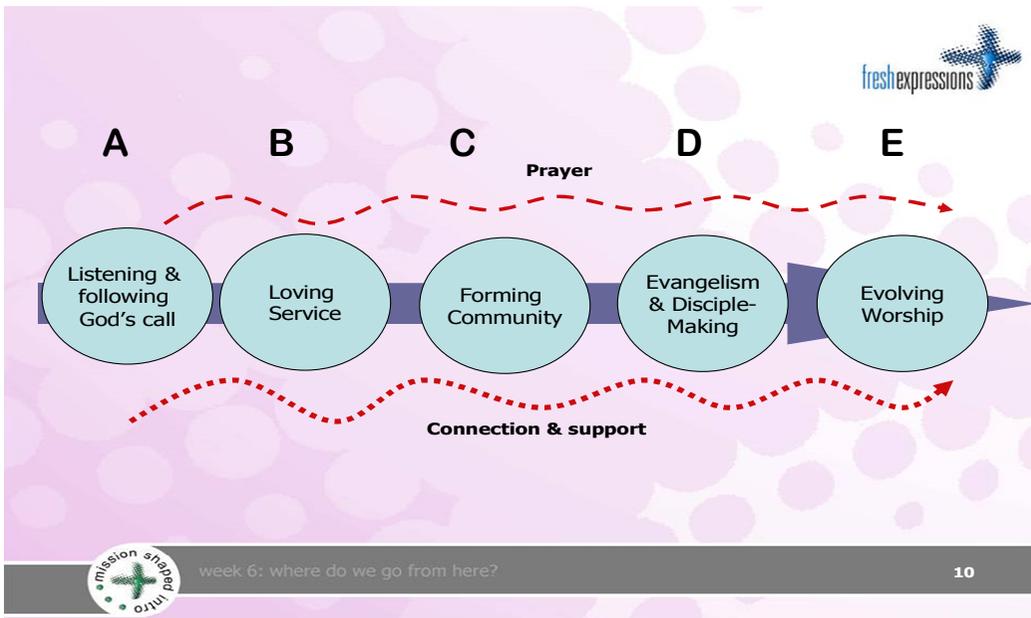
“Imagine Us” shows us that we are connecting to the wider community by responding with acts of loving service e.g.

- | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|
| Op Shops | Soup Kitchen | Fete's |
| Court Care | Toy library | Garage Sales |
| Schools | Play Groups | |

How do we move from providing “Loving Service” to establishing intentional and meaning relationships that will inspire transformation of life through faith in Jesus Christ?

If our aim is to build a link between a service of the Church—to worship in the Church or in a new expression of Church, how might we begin to do that in your Ministry Unit?

If you are to take just one “act of Loving Service” and intentionally work with it so that relationships could be strengthened; built upon; and a sense of belonging created, what would be some of the things that you would need to do?



1. LET'S GATHER THE INFORMATION WE NEED TO CONNECT?

Connecting with the people of our neighbourhood and the wider community begins by understanding who lives there:

1.1 For statistical information we can check out:

- ABS data www.abs.gov.au
- NCLS Community Social Profile
- Local Council, Mayor, other professionals or agencies
- Town Planner – Local Library – Historical Society

Question: Do you have people in your parish that can gather this kind of information? If so set a date and time to begin the gathering of this information.

1.2 For local stories we can engage with the people who make up the community, listening to their stories; their experiences of this community; the stories of local groups; councils; or any focus group.

- E.g.
- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Local Council | Cancer Council |
| Pre – Schools Facilitators | Hospital groups |
| Local MP's | Unemployed people |
| Homeless people | Business people |
| Indigenous people | |

Question: Who in your Parish can gather information about the community this way?

1.3 Studying people as they travel around the community discovering their gathering points; their apparent yearnings

Question: Who has that intuitive mind who can identify and gather this information?

1.4 *Making sense of these findings and reflections*

Collate your information into a single document.

Look for recurring themes.

What are key needs in your community which are not being met and which excite your ministry unit?

Can we scratch where the community is itching?

What contribution to the community could we attempt?

What might the community be looking for from us?

Can we partner with other organisations to respond to this particular need?

Are there ministries which we are currently undertaking that we should consider putting into recess?

Can we sustain this new undertaking?

1.5 *For any new ministry initiative which you may consider, the following questions need to be addressed:*

Who has the gifts, skills, passion to undertake this ministry?

Have these people the availability, and willingness, to be involved?

What other support do they need e.g. space, finance, training ?

Is there an opportunity to recruit a person from somewhere to undertake this?

2. **LET'S PREPARE OURSELVES FOR INTENTIONAL & MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS WITH THE WIDER COMMUNITY, SEEKING TO INSPIRE TRANSFORMATION OF LIFE THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.**

2.1 Every healthy Ministry Unit needs to be connected to its community in at least two ways:

- By one or more mission activities through which church members are in a relationship with those beyond the church in ways that give expression to the presence of God.
- By providing or addressing those qualities and activities which people are looking for when they do come to us.

2.2 *Now you have tackled the mission activities beyond the Church so now the questions is:*

How do we give expression to the “presence of God.”

How can people see the transforming work of God in you and in your community of faith?

What values does your ministry unit need to embrace so that your “Christ-likeness” shows?

What do we need to address in our public worship services to Accommodate people from beyond the Church?