



**Minutes of meeting: PARKDALE MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL  
Tuesday, October 21, 2008: St. Thomas's Huron Street**

**Attending:**

St. Anne's: Philip Cooper  
Epiphany & St. Mark: Dorothy Peers, Anne Barcham  
St. George the Martyr: Max Woolaver, George Lowe  
St. Mary Magdalene: Eileen Morrison  
St. Matthias: Jeff Kennedy, Paul MacDonald  
St. Stephen in the Field: Christian Swayne  
St. Thomas's: Kevin Toyne  
Philip Poole; Bishop, York Credit Valley  
Norah Bolton: Secretary to the Council

Regrets: Heather McGregor, Brian Clarke, Eleanor Emmel, Catharine Dennison, Roy Schatz

**1. Welcome, opening prayers and reflection**

The Bishop invited those present to introduce themselves. He also asked for prayers for Audrey Forrester, a deacon who died recently, as well as those victims of a tragic murder who were members of the Church of South India. There was also a brief reflection on the gospel for the following Sunday.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved as circulated.

**3. Approval of minutes of previous meeting and business arising**

The minutes were approved with the addition of George Lowe's surname. (Motion: Kennedy/Toyne). Kevin Toyne offered to speak with any young members who might have reservations in joining the Council

**4. New initiatives: Bishop Poole**

**New Ministry**

Bishop Poole spoke about future plans for the Deanery. He reviewed the past three years. A commission and an informal review by the parishes themselves had come up with similar recommendations and the formation of the Council had followed. The consulting firm, Potentials had facilitated a comprehensive study including demographics, a review

of social services, parish profiles, questionnaires, focus groups and town hall meetings. News of the Council's activities were passed along through newsletters, reports to advisory boards and a deanery website. The findings revealed that the parishes were faithful, had some things in common and recognized the need for some fresh directions. There has been progress and accomplishment, combined with some frustration that more could and should be happening.

While these things were happening, there have been other parallel activities at the diocesan level and elsewhere. The findings of the study have provided a wealth of information for further action.

Concurrently the parish of Trinity, Streetsville has grown to its maximum capacity, with 600 in attendance each Sunday, extensive small group activity and an ESL program and other forms of social ministry. While they explored a church plant in Mississauga Valley they have become interested in taking an active role in urban ministry. Conversations have taken place with a Church plant working group in the Diocese that has been exploring the skills needed.

There has been a recognition that such entrepreneurial capabilities are rare among Anglican clergy. After some assessment one high scorer has emerged. A project has evolved to be known as the Jeremiah project because of its placement in the heart of the City.

The project involves the consent of several parties; the vestry of the parish concerned, the Diocesan Council and the Bishop. To date there have been continuing conversations with the wardens of St. Anne's, culminating in a special vestry. The parish agreed to be the location for the project by a vote of 47-0 with three abstentions. Diocesan Council is to consider the matter on October 23. The Church Plant group has recommended the project unanimously.

The Sunday congregation at St. Anne's will continue as usual for the time being and discern its own direction. A new incumbent will be joined by an intentional lay community, whose approach will be missional. The governance structure will be a Board of Management composed of eight members of which five will come from St. Anne's and three from the Diocese with expertise to move the project forward. There will be heavy investment in the project shared by the Diocese and Trinity Streetsville. It will start in January as a five year project and will be carefully monitored and tested. Bishop Johnson will personally oversee the project.

Questions were asked about whether the group reflected the neighbourhood. The response was that some members of the lay group will live in the rectory and others may buy or rent property nearby at their own expense. They are expected to work on the project six days a week and will be supported by two full time staff positions; they include the incumbent and a lay worker.

There was also some concern about the rest of the parishes. The response was that all will remain on the edges of the project and that there will be some learnings that could apply to some or all. One of the outcomes may be an influence on parish governance. A one sentence definition of the project is *A Strengthening of Ministry at St. Anne's Church with a New Style*. Its leadership has said that the current model will allow them to survive for only five years.

### **Proposal for urban ministry education**

The Bishop also announced his hope for a new program on urban ministry at the Toronto School of Theology. Discussions with the Principal at Wycliffe and the Dean of Divinity at Trinity were positive and his hope was for a laboratory approach to urban ministry based in a particular parish. Improving urban ministry is a growing issue in the Canadian church and he is lobbying for it to be based in Parkdale without a specific parish in mind.

Current field placements do not have an academic research component; nor do they make use of resident expertise and experience of persons like John Bowen and Simon Bell.

The group was asked to divide and discuss how they could imagine these initiatives working in Parkdale. Among the points made on reconvening were the following:

- Questions about the current courses in this area: the response was that there was one coordinated by Gerald Loweth who brought in others to lecture
- A case study approach, similar to those used in business models would be useful
- A need to think outside the box and look for new solutions and ways of interacting
- A need to allow students to take more risks and make some mistakes
- A need to prepare parishes for such initiatives
- A hands-on involvement of the Council with such a project
- Clarification whether participants are ordinands; the response was that some are while others are not; and some are non-Anglican
- A question whether four or five could work as a team in one location
- The attitude of a rector in locating such a program is key
- A support group for the team would be desirable.
- Parishes could possibly work together on such a project using the model of Niagara Diocese (i.e. Renewing Congregations through Liturgical Renewal)
- Exploration of what is happening in other seminaries would be useful
- In the longer term, there should be an option to major in urban ministry
- Working with gangs would be a good and demanding project
- Sending students out as door knockers would be an education in itself
- An emphasis on experiential learning is desirable

### **5. Shared ministry development with a focus on evangelism proposals passed in May:**

#### **Enrolment in Natural Church Development Program; status report of parishes**

St. Mary Magdalene approved its entry in June and is starting this program on November 1. Other parishes have yet to make a decision

**Sharing of Advent/Lenten Study programs; Clericus**

Fr. Jeff will put this on the agenda and report at a future meeting

**Other options for consideration (at no financial cost)**

**Monthly event calendar**

There was a generally positive response to this idea. (Please note: Attached to the minutes is a model based on information taken from Parish Websites; to be workable there will probably have to be additional information on the sites themselves, - and possibly a more anecdotal calendar on the Deanery website.)

**Other members of the council placing information on the Parkdale blog**

There was agreement, but no takers to date. The first feedback on the blog has been posted by a reader who is probably not connected to any of the parishes

**Inter-parish visiting by council laity – to help us learn to be better hosts**

This was accepted; it will require actual lay volunteers from the Council in the new year.

**Meeting as a council occasionally in other facilities in the deanery – like pubs**

This was acceptable; location TBA

**6. Update on 2007 statements of operations**

These were circulated for information

**7. News:**

**Renovation and re-dedication at SMM**

The event was successful and well attended. An article will appear in a future issue of the Anglican. The Bishop urged those who had not seen the changes to visit.

**Upcoming Advocacy Seminar at Epiphany & St. Marks – November 8**

The event will focus on hands on letter writing and other activities and will be led by Diocesan staff member, Murray McAdam.

**Other**

Kevin Toyne noted that the residential Youth Synod is seven months away – the last weekend in May - and asked all to encourage their young people 14 and over to attend. Max Woolaver noted a future event for the Centre for Spiritual Practice to be held on November 22. The Three Anglican Tenors will perform at St. John's Convent and more information is available from their website.

**7. Date of next meeting; Tuesday November 25 – location to follow**

The Bishop noted that one agenda item should be formal communication to Vestries.

**8. Closing prayers and adjournment**

The meeting closed with prayer and adjourned at 9:15.