



**MINUTES OF MEETING:  
PARKDALE MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL  
Tuesday, November 25, 2008: Church of St. Mary Magdalene**

**Attending:**

St. Anne's: Philip Cooper  
Epiphany & St. Mark: Dorothy Peers, Anne Barcham, Ken Borrett  
St. George the Martyr: George Lowe  
St. Mary Magdalene: Heather McGregor, Brian Clarke, Harold Nahabedian  
St. Matthias: Sharon Chandler, Paul MacDonald, Jeffry Kennedy  
St. Stephen in the Field: Christian Swayne  
St. Thomas's: Kevin Toyne  
Bishop Philip Poole: Diocese of Toronto  
Norah Bolton: Secretary to the Council

Regrets: Max Woolaver, Roy Schatz

**1. Welcome, opening prayers**

The Bishop opened with prayer

**2. Approval of Agenda**

The Agenda was approved (Kevin/Paul)

**3. Approval of minutes of previous meeting**

The Minutes were approved (Dorothy/Kevin)

**Business Arising**

**Consideration of Natural Church Development Program**

SMM has completed the assessment. Other parishes have yet to consider it. Christian Swayne spoke favourably about his experience with it in a previous parish as practical and easy to implement. The meeting was reminded that the Council had passed a motion in June to ask their parishes to consider it, - the parishes were free to pursue it or reject it. Several agreed to put consideration on a future agenda. (**ACTION: Parishes**)

**Sharing of Lenten Programs**

Jeff Kennedy reported that the matter was on the agenda of the next Clericus and would report back. (**ACTION: Kennedy**)

### **Sharing of information placement on Parkdale Blog**

Norah thanked ESM for sending notices and writing up the Pens Against Poverty Workshop. Any contributions are gratefully received and posted. **(ACTION: All; Administrator)**

### **Monthly event calendar**

There was consensus that such a calendar is a useful addition to the Parkdale Website. Available information from parish sites will be researched and mounted; additional contributions are welcome. Posting will take place the last week of the month for the month to come. The addition of an email for sending announcements should be added. **(ACTION: All, Administrator)**

### **4. Reports from Task Force Committees**

The Administration Group will meet in January and report. Programme and Evangelism have not met this fall. A report from Evangelism Group prepared last June needs to be circulated. **(ACTION: Task Force Committees)**

### **5. Changes in Out of the Cold**

St. Anne's continues to hold community dinners on the third Sunday of the Month (second Sunday in December); these are well attended both by neighbours and others.

After operating for eight years out of St. Stephen's, the program in the east end of Parkdale will be relocated to St. Thomas's; this parish already operates a weekly summer program on its own. The winter program operates from December to April with three teams now in place. A fourth team is needed. There was some support among other parishes to consider helping. There needs to be some clarity around tasks, number of volunteers and an orientation to the new venue. **(ACTION: Clarke, Toyne)**

### **6. The Jeremiah Project – update and reactions**

The Bishop has had some feedback since the announcement at the previous meeting. There may be a misperception that this project was landed on St. Anne's by the Diocese; this was not the case. Several events have converged to make the project happen parallel to the time that the PMDC has met and the St. Anne's wardens were consulted at all stages.

Some time ago a random incoming phone call requested use of the church and hall by a non-Anglican group. A conversation was held with the wardens, but for various reasons, the project died. Simultaneously the Parish of Streetsville was quickly outgrowing its physical plant and looking for the possibility of a church plant. The work of Duke Viperman at the Church of the Resurrection also was an example of expansion and the result ultimately became a church plant working group at the diocesan level. This group researched clergy and others who had a heart and capability for church planting and identified Lance Dickson, Associate Priest at Streetsville as a strong candidate along with a layman, Rob Crosby-Shearer. The latter two identified Parkdale as a possible venue and researched the area, the existing parishes, and made extensive use of the findings of the PMDC's work and report. There was a sequence of meetings with the

Wardens and Treasurer of St. Anne's, who wanted to try it. A special vestry was announced and the project passed by a vote of 43/0 with three abstentions. Rob Crosby-Shearer and his wife have moved into the rectory, which will be known as Jeremiah House. Bishop Colin Johnson has oversight of the project. The model is a monastic style of an intentional Christian Community who share common worship and a life of prayer and do missional work in the neighbourhood.

The St. Anne's current congregation will continue its life with no changes in their current pattern of worship on Sunday. Alternative forms of worship may emerge over time. There is an interest in an expansion of the Portuguese ministry currently served by Maurice François and a Hispanic ministry is a possibility. There is a substantial investment of dollars and resources coming from both the Diocese and Trinity Streetsville. The status of the parish will change to one administered under Canon 25 with a Board of Management. The result may look post denominational and it will be closely monitored. Philip Poole is personally excited about it. He also reminded that the project is following the pattern of threefold participation and approval, - the parish vestry, the Diocesan Council (which approved it unanimously) and the Bishop.

Several comments came from the subsequent discussion

- There was some sense that the parish as a whole was not part of the ongoing conversation until it was a fait accompli
- Timelines mean that decisions often have to be made before people feel informed and comfortable with significant change
- The relationship between the Council as helpful agents to the Jeremiah Project is not clear and will need to evolve
- A summary prepared by the wardens and a recruitment document for the project both add to clarity and understanding and should be distributed to the council (**ACTION: Administrator**)
- The new rector of St. Anne's will become a member of the Council and will provide input as a means of sharing the learning
- The project is a very different way of working
- The parallel activities and morphing out of personnel, conversations budgets, approvals, parallel visions created a process of synergies coming together that have made it impossible for everyone to be on the same page
- There have been feelings expressed by some of the smaller parishes that the Diocese hoped that smaller parishes might close and their parishioners would go to St. Anne's. The Bishop assured that this was not the case. At the same time the fact that some parishes are not going to make it over the long term is a reality. Most parishes in the Diocese that have closed have done so voluntarily. The question that arises is how long the parishes of the Diocese can support others with major league debts.
- One member responded that this change seemed like the second instance of a major change by the Diocese, the first being the interest of a developer in St. George the Martyr; the Bishop's response was that in that instance, the parish was approached first and the incumbent informed the Diocese. On an ongoing basis

- the Diocese gets proposals from developers, but it has never initiated proposals in the other direction.
- We need to think of the churches of Parkdale as a portfolio and learn to think and speak as a deanery; we have a good deal of learning to do here.
  - One member expressed the view that the Diocese has not shown enough support for urban ministry and we are on our own to make it or close; it sometimes feels as though the Diocese is a spectator that rather wishes some of the smaller parishes would fold.
  - Most clergy do not have the time to launch new projects
  - We aren't good at thinking about moving in new directions; an assessment of the Council's thinking is possible (**ACTION: Administrator**)
  - Diocese bashing has been a popular sport in Parkdale parishes; but 50% of the problems are of our own making. The Bishop and the Diocesan Council have been patient but many opportunities have slipped through our fingers. If the Council had done its work, we could have a role in trying to make a difference in the Deanery
  - We are not clear on the Deanery's role or a shared vision for it
  - There have been financial resources from area council announced as available but we have not taken advantage of them. \$30,000 is unused in this year's budget
  - In the same way that the Jeremiah has some dedicated financial resources, the Council needs some as well. There needs to be commitment to share both the responsibilities and the benefits by at least some of the parishes. Some funding will die at year end but there is some carry forward in Faithworks Funding that could apply is two or more parishes cooperate.
  - There is not clarity around what a "support" person might do. A person who does clerical administration may not be as valuable as a person who takes a more active role in coordinating joint action. A job description needs to be developed ASAP with the possibility of making an application by the first week in December. There is also the possibility that an appointment could be handled through the Diocesan Office as a Bishop's appointment. (**ACTION: Administration Task Force via Email, Administrator**)

## **7. Urban Ministry Project – update and reactions**

The Bishop reported that conversations around a program in urban theology with a hands-on and research component are continuing with Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges. Structure options include 120 hours over a three month term or 6-8 hours on a weekly basis. There is hope for 4-6 students working as a team and a need for supervision, location and parameters.

Comments in the ensuing discussion included:

- Parkdale provides a rich field of examples for study and research
- All parishes are accessible by reasonable public transit
- The use of social networking technologies used by the young provide opportunities for research and feedback

- The students need to be free to bring their own skills and understandings rather than simply to adapt to local practice
- The three southern parish might provide a useful starting point

The project will not start until September 2009. It will be revisited by the Council early in the year.

#### **8. Property – Update and Reaction**

Time did not permit discussion

#### **9. Telling the Story – what will be communicated to the parishes**

Dorothy and Anne volunteered to write a document for use at annual vestries and Norah agreed to help. Kevin expressed concern that the message of it be useful going forward and agreed to help edit it to that end.

#### **10. News and Upcoming Events**

Flyers were distributed for The CBC presentation of A Christmas Carol (SGM) on December 7; Flyers for a conference jointly sponsored by Potentials and Emmanuel College promoting congregational development (January 31, 2009) were taken away with a request to encourage laypeople and parish teams to attend; Wreath making (SM) and parish bazaars (SMM Nov 29) and (SM Dec 7) were announced.

#### **11. Date of next meeting; Tuesday, December 16 – Location TBA**

The communication document will be reviewed and considered.

#### **12. Closing prayers and adjournment**

The meeting ended at 9:30 pm