



**PARKDALE MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL  
WEDNESDAY, Feb 18, Anglican Diocesan Centre, 135 Adelaide**

**Attending:**

**St. Anne's:** Lance Dixon, Nancy Mercey  
**Epiphany & St. Mark;**, Dorothy Peers  
**St. George the Martyr;** Max Woolaver  
**St. Mary Magdalene;** Brian Clarke, Eileen Morrison  
**St. Matthias;** Jeffry Kennedy, Paul MacDonald  
**St. Stephen in the Fields;** Christian Swayne  
**St. Thomas's;** not represented  
**Diocese of Toronto:** Bishop Philip Poole  
**Secretary to the Council:** Norah Bolton

Regrets: Roy Schatz, Anne Barcham, Ken Borrett, Harold Nahabedian, Sharon Chandler, Kevin Toyne

**1. Welcome, opening prayers and reflection: Bishop Poole**

Brian Clarke welcomed those present and asked the Bishop to open with prayer. We were asked to remember the families of Don Oulds and Maxine Smith in mourning and to be thankful for the work and witness of these two persons.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved by consensus

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

The minutes were approved with a correction in a surname. The representative from St. George the Martyr was Amy Tjing. (motion: Max/Nancy)

**4. Updates:**

a) Natural Church Development

Epiphany and St. Marks and St. Matthias will join in an introduction to NCD by the Diocese. St. Mary Magdalene has received feedback from the survey, made a presentation to participants and set a modest plan to develop awareness of its “minimum factor” or weakest area, in the coming year as well as building on its strength.

b) Lenten Study Groups

.A preliminary list of events was received and reviewed. There is a good variety of activity throughout the Deanery. St Thomas's will be contacted for additional information.

c) HBDI – the Group profile to date

A group profile of four persons who responded shows a highly homogeneous set of thinking preferences. People prefer to think in the same way. Fuller participation in the survey will show a more accurate picture. Members of the Council are encouraged to try the assessment. Individual results will be sent to participants for their own review when they follow the instructions attached.

## **5. Parish Plans and Visions for 2009**

**St Anne's** finds its new incumbent and family settling in well with the Jeremiah project attracting interest and support. The parish is showing new energy in a revitalized Christian Education program for children as well as a grass roots desire for a healing ministry with several volunteers. Renovations of the hall are proceeding for their new tenant, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) who will use the building on a five year lease and the parish will benefit from the improvements. The new Board of Management has met frequently and has determined its own operating principles.

**Epiphany & St. Marks** is attempting to grow its volunteer base and numbers. Out of the Cold participation has sparked some new enthusiasm and 30 are involved in direct service, financial contribution and cooking. There is a focus on stewardship of treasure, creation, and the environment with monthly topics highlighted and all committees have been gathered to work on this. NCD will be undertaken in the fall. Several events focusing on greening, appreciation of volunteers and use of gifts and talents are in progress. Rental agreements with a day care centre require a new lease. Youth membership is in transition, - some young people are university bound resulting in an attempt to develop new and younger servers. There is an opening to community within the Altar Guild who are visiting other places and welcoming new members. A key strength is a growing relationship with St. Matthias through events and joint participation in the ministry to CAMH shared by parishioners of both churches.

**St. George the Martyr** will see the current incumbency end on July 31 and there have been weekly meetings to deal with complex issues. There is good quality leadership including that of the wardens and givings are up 40% with improvement in core strength. Legal conversations with the Diocese are continuing. A Vestry dealing with non-financial matters has already taken place and a financial vestry is to follow in March.

**St. Mary Magdalene** faces significant changes with the retirement of the incumbent after a period of 25 years. It does not have a tradition of retirement; many previous rectors have left suddenly or moved to the Roman Catholic church, so retirement is new. A selection committee will be announced and approved at a coming vestry meeting. The Bishop observed that the Canons provide direction for the process of developing a vision for going forward. There is understandable sadness at the end of an era during which the parish has been transformed and made healthy, rooted in liturgy and well served pastorally. It is an emotional time but also one looking forward to the future. There will be challenges in a place with members with different congregations reflecting strong points of view and different theological perspectives.

**St. Matthias** strives to welcome those who are new or reacquainted with the parish as well as those familiar with its Anglo Catholic tradition. There is always the challenge of identifying and reassessing what we are called to do as well the challenge of an old building. Politics within the parish is minimal with little friction and it is a pleasant and safe place of sacred space for those of any race, orientation or gender.

**St Stephen in the Fields** is moving toward acceptance of a slightly similar version of a long term rental arrangement that was previously suggested by the diocese. It is helpful that the rental prospect is supportive of its ministry and mission. There is continuing fatigue but some energy around the “Bring a Friend to Church Sunday”. Drop ins do happen, but the overall number of members is not increasing.

**6. Request for Vestry Reports and Parish Financial Statements**

In anticipation of a review of financial information, two parishes submitted vestry reports. All are encouraged to do so once vestries have taken place.

**7. Reframing Continued**

Two discussion groups held conversations on the following reframed question

ORIGINAL	REFRAMED
Clergy act as solo agents	We need to learn how to use the clergy’s diversity of gifts

Initially we were asked to examine how we might get there and what a changed pattern would look like. Examples included using someone who was really good at Bible study in a deanery that also contained a person skilled in managing forms. (Everyone immediately expressed a desire to share this second person)

Responses from Group #1

- One model includes an allocation of 10 days of time for clergy per year to the Diocese. Clergy and parishes can ask for specific help from others on issues

where expertise and experience can educate or help resolve conflict. A specific example relates to a priest who successfully completed an amalgamation working with parishes who are thinking only of the negative impact of such a course of action

- Clergy can usually identify the gifts of others in their area; they learn these at retreats and days away; but sharing them is not built into the system. An interesting example involves a priest in western Canada who was previously a tractor salesman. He noted that the area tractor salesmen met weekly to share experience; they were in competition, but they also supported one another. When he started to work for the church he noted that there was no similar systematic approach or frequency of meetings
- Caregivers have trouble admitting they need help; an initial step would involve awareness and sharing of this.
- Pulpit exchanges within a deanery are possible; an added advantage of this is letting laity know that they are part of a wider body rather than thinking of themselves merely as congregations.
- Structural pairings were rejected as part of the Parkdale process but informal teaming appears to be more acceptable and growing organically
- NCD enforces the knowledge that gifts are disbursed among the whole Body of Christ including the laity; while clergy at one point could be grouped among the few professionals and highly educated members of their communities, that spectrum has broadened. It's not just clergy gifts that have to be recognized and used. Even small congregations can have rare gifts and all these need to be discerned. There is a good body of literature on this subject that we can draw upon. We also need to honour the volunteer activities of all our members that take place beyond those directly occurring in the parishes.
- The gifts of clergy bring a necessary and highly professional perspective to the community as a whole. Parishes need to recognize, encourage and share these gifts with the wider community. An example might be for clergy to serve on the Boards of other social, educational or health boards in their immediate neighborhoods. This has been frequent in smaller communities but less common in cities.

Notes from Group 2: (thanks to Dorothy as recorder)

- Learning to use the gifts of the clergy in more focused and helpful ways implied to us a more vigorous effort at team ministry.
- One person suggested that clergy gifts fall into three broad categories: Pastoral gifts, Liturgical/Worship Gifts and Administrative Gifts.
- If clergy could begin to do what they are good at and what they really enjoy doing, that could be quite liberating and invigorating. We all agreed that normal parish structures demand that the clergy person be all things to all people and this causes huge stress and often health problems ensue.
- Another person wondered if people in the pews really know and understand what the gifts of the clergy are. So there is some learning required along those lines. In fact we could be doing a better job of discerning gifts of everyone in our parishes - laity as well as clergy.
- The way people are taught in our colleges and seminaries assumes they will one day be in charge of their own parish. This raises all kinds of issues around security as well as insecurity and gaps in knowledge of how to work as a team, plan as a team, recognize and acknowledge each other's particular strengths and gifts and perhaps even willingness to admit that not everything is your cup of tea!
- Lance reminded us that we need a new way of doing ministry. Instead of thinking about the entrance to our church as being "my door", we need to start thinking about it as "our door". What are the gifts that I could bring to a team ministry?
- We thought a good starting place might be a regular system of rotating the clergy as preachers - pulpit exchanges but on a planned and regular basis.
- One of the foreseen difficulties is that parishes don't want to lose their clergyperson. Another way of looking at it is that they aren't losing but only gaining in the broader experience and wisdom and skill and talent of the additional people who enter their lives.
- One implication of a new team approach would be changing times of regular worship in order to accommodate the clergy involved.
- There was some feeling that not all parishes in our deanery configuration would be interested in a team approach and perhaps we should look at smaller groupings or pairings.
- Would there be a way of pooling our Honorary Assistants as well as clergy?

- How do we transform people to a new vision of ministry? We need to bring this conversation to clergy, congregations as well as to the Bishop. The new vision would involve gifts, ministry, outreach, buildings, money, all that we do in our distinctive but presently still separate corners of the deanery.
- And we all hoped that when openings occur in deanery parishes' search committees will seek people who have had experience or share a vision for team ministry so that we will have people in place with attitudes and skills to work in a collegial and consultative way to make things happen.

## **8. Future Agendas**

There will be a need to return to the plans of the task forces over the coming months as well as the tasks that we set ourselves in the 2008 report.

## **9. Other News**

We were reminded of the Housing Workshops sponsored by the Diocese and encouraged to attend. Registration can be done through the Diocesan website and the most convenient location is at St. Thomas's on April 18.

## **10. Date of next meeting**

Because of the heavy Lenten programming discussed earlier, it was the consensus that we should not meet in March. A date of April 21<sup>st</sup> was set and location for April will be announced and confirmed shortly. It also appeared that Tuesday was a better meeting date for most members.

## **11. Closing prayers and adjournment**

The bishop led closing prayers and the meeting adjourned at 9:30