

# One Church Many Locations

*"Then your light shall break forth like the dawn" Isaiah 58:8*



**A Plan for the Episcopal Church in Iowa**

YEARS OF OUR LORD 2008 - 2012

### **About the cover**

**The seal of the Diocese of Iowa** is a field of green with four ears of corn representing the vineyard and its productivity in which we find ourselves. It is in that field of green that we find the two great rivers, the Mississippi and the Missouri, which form our borders. Overlaying that vineyard is the cross, representing Christ at the center of all. Within the cross itself are five diamonds which represent the first five organized parishes in the diocese. The seal was created for The Rt. Rev. Elwood Haines, the Fifth Bishop of Iowa, and was first used in 1946. The artist is unknown.

Our thanks to David Annis, A+Project Graphic Design, for gifts contributing to the creation of the cover design.

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## Introductory remarks by the Bishop

### "Then your light shall break forth like the dawn" (Isaiah 58:8)

Ever since these words from Isaiah 58 were read at my Consecration in April 2003, they have represented my vision for the Diocese of Iowa. Christ's light which John says "enlightens everyone who comes into the world", thus takes many forms, but Isaiah reminds us that God seeks a people whose spirituality is reflected in concrete ways of manifesting compassion and love. We demonstrate our devotion to God by the way we treat God's people, and even our liturgical rituals are subject to that. As a directional guide for the ministry of the Diocesan staff, we have adopted a statement that we are "In mission with Christ through each and all." We extend this to our work in the Diocese and invite the Diocese to adopt this statement for ourselves.

Based on this premise, we now endeavor to fashion a plan of ministry action that can guide all of us in the Diocese. The foundation of the plan comes from the four strategic areas, which became evident from the extensive surveys undertaken in 2006:

- 1) Shared Ministry
- 2) Strengthening Congregations
- 3) Next Generations of Faith
- 4) Anglican/Episcopal Identity

These four ministry priorities are fleshed out in this document. They demonstrate a people who seek to work together as the Body of Christ, who want a balance between the natural centralized ministry arrangement which is united by the Episcopacy, and the demands of local witness and ministry which can only be met by a more decentralized sharing of resources. We are **One Church** in many locations.

Secondly, they state the obvious that such resources need to pay attention to the strength of the local congregation. Healthy congregations have always been a goal of the Diocesan staff in its ministry: whether through assisting with transitions, handling conflict, developing communication, connecting congregations, enhancing education and ministry development. We are **One Church in many locations**.

Thirdly, they are very clear that the Church exists for those who are not yet its members, as well as for those who are not its members at all! The next generations of Christ's followers are always around us, often waiting for the invitation to "Follow Me!" which Christ has commissioned His followers to offer. We often think of them as the young, but they are also the elderly, and those who are often middle-aged or people who have given up thinking God or the Church had anything of interest to present to them. The phrase "Next Generations of Faith" opens up to us the possibility that God has an intergenerational task of faith sharing and forming for us to engage.

Fourthly and finally, these are days when we have to restate the peculiarity of our Anglican and Episcopal tradition. We need to define this tradition, and we need to demonstrate how it is a meaningful expression of our love for God in Jesus Christ and of God's people and creation.

Our baptismal covenant stands at the heart of all of this, as does our catholic appreciation of meeting God in the mystery of sacraments. It is not about taking back the Christian identity from TV evangelists or evangelicals, but is about being ourselves who include evangelicals, charismatics, and various degrees of catholic often in the same congregation. Back to Isaiah 58 - the incarnational nature of our sense of mission is often our leading edge in participating in God's reshaping of the world, and God's restoring of humanity in Jesus Christ.

I pray that this plan offers a guide for our common ministry, and can be engaged at every level. It will create priorities for our common budget from 2008 onwards, and I hope it will be a plumb line for every Diocesan Commission and local congregation as you set forth your goals for the coming years. I trust it is a plan in which you see your words and your desires as Christian people, for it was created from your common voice.

Yours in mission with Christ through each and all,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Scarfe', written in a cursive style.

Alan Scarfe, Bishop of Iowa

## Notes

## Background

In 2005 Diocesan Convention referred a resolution to the Board of Directors seeking to alter the formula for congregational giving. The charge to the Board was to examine the “Asking” and make recommendations to Convention for any change. This included another charge from Convention that joined the examination of the “Asking” (now the “Stewardship Share”) to strategic planning for the diocese. The Board of Directors formed the *Task Force on the Asking and Strategic Planning* in response. This plan, *One Church, Many Locations* represents the second part of that charge.

The four areas of focus herein are drawn from clear themes that emerged in surveys of members of our congregations, vestries and bishop’s committees, and all clergy, conducted in 2006. The surveys asked people to consider what they valued about their local congregation, how they thought the resources of the diocese could support their congregation, what they are doing themselves in terms of ministry, and much more. The surveys asked respondents to consider all settings—from local congregations to the Diocese. Results from the surveys, in addition to other resources such as demographic information for Iowa, informed the changes to the formula and they inform this plan.

The four areas of focus, in sum, are

**Shared Ministry**—just distribution of resources and ministry, both materially and spiritually.

**Strengthening Congregations**—support for the Church in her local settings.

**Next Generations of Faith**—reaching populations who have not heard of God’s love for them, or who might not believe it.

**Anglican/Episcopal Identity**—holding up the gifts we have in our tradition.

These four areas are ones that you have offered as being of most importance and could be used in a wide variety of ways—it could be useful in focusing local budgets to what you value as well as focusing the diocesan budget. It could help congregations assess their ministries—are there some that could be let go of? Some that could be started? It could be a guide for Chapters in establishing joint ministries amongst congregations.

It is meant to be a guide, based on our collective hopes and desires, on how we might best and most wisely serve God as the Episcopal Church in Iowa. As such, also included in this document is a worksheet for local congregations, the Board of Directors, commissions, and others to use to discern, within the framework of this document, what we are currently doing well, what energizes us, and what we may strive to do in answer to our call to ministry as **One Church in many locations**.

## Shared Ministry

### Definition

Ministry is not a solo act. It is Christ's choice that calls us into ministry. Thus, from the outset, we share in it with Him and everyone He calls.

### Biblical Foundation

The early Church was reported in Acts of the Apostles as "having all things in common." The Apostle Paul writing to the Philippians asked that they share a common mind, and bear one another's burdens, each counting the other as more important than themselves. He also offered an image of the Church as the Body of Christ or as Christ's temple, where each part had a unique function and yet could not function alone but in concert with one another. No part could say "I have no need of you" to another, nor could the whole be made up of only one part. "If all were an eye where is the hearing?" he asked. That same mind of the Christian was nothing less than the mind of Christ - the self-emptying, serving to death - the mind of Christ.

### Theological Foundation

Christians are baptized into Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. They are filled and anointed with the Holy Spirit of God. They are chosen by Christ rather than self-determining in their own choice of Christ. Once chosen they are called to be His disciples and do the works He did and even more than those. St. Luke writes in Acts that, having set out in order all that Jesus did in his lifetime, he is now setting out everything Jesus continued to do through His disciples. We are the extension of that tradition and process.

**Evaluative questions:** How is the shared ministry of the Church reflected in the life and working of this diocese?  
How are we supporting one another?

### Examples of what a congregation could do

- ❖ Actively participate in chapter activities to support interdependent ministries.
- ❖ Create a culture of discernment for ministry and ministry gifts at every level by offering discernment workshops.
- ❖ Encourage through transparency and incentive full participation in the Diocesan Stewardship Share by every congregation. Create ways to reward participation.
- ❖ Recruit clergy with a strong sense of ministry development of all the baptized.
- ❖ Congregations to share their successes.
- ❖ Be intentionally aware that the word "diocese" always includes us all.

### **Examples of what our diocese could do**

- ❖ Providing justly distributed representation of local communities and regional areas on Diocesan Board, Commissions and Task Forces. This includes consideration of younger representatives from a broad geographic spectrum.
- ❖ Creating ministry centers through our larger congregations both for developing the surrounding smaller communities of faith as well as offering them gathered times for ministry and mission resourcing.
- ❖ Provide budgetary resources for ministry at the Chapter level. One idea would be to work at developing a budget, which is 50/50 - 50% for the Episcopate and Convention agreed ministry, 20% for the National or oversees Church, and 30% returning to the regional level to be administered through Chapters, e.g., for localized ministry hires.
- ❖ Coordinate our growing theological education systems: E-Seminary, Ministry School and Retreat, Education for Ministry (EFM), All Commissions Day, pre-Convention workshops; and both broaden and streamline them to cover all aspects of ministry training, from acolyte, eucharistic ministers, evangelism, stewardship, vestry training at local levels, to broader formation processes - youth and children ministries training, ministry development teams and coaches, preparation for ordained ministry.
- ❖ Create a culture of discernment for ministry and ministry gifts at every level by offering discernment workshops.
- ❖ Continue the work begun in 2007 to refine the Episcopal visit schedule to include more prolonged teaching and sharing opportunities in local situations, and to touch base with each congregation in a calendar year with a personal visit.
- ❖ Encourage, through transparency and incentive, full participation in the Diocesan Stewardship Share by every congregation. Create ways to reward participation.
- ❖ Recruit clergy with a strong sense of ministry development of all the baptized.

## Strengthening Congregations

### Definition

Supporting the work of the Church in all its locations and ministries to the end that all live and work to the glory of God.

### Biblical Foundation

Although the “Church” is one, it is at its most visible and should perform most of its core mission at the individual and congregational levels. This is the Body of Christ; where faith meets works, and life-changing acceptance of God’s enduring love happens. It is also where Christ’s personal invitation to salvation and discipleship happens through the church. *Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many.*

I Corinthians 12:14

The Church needs the strengths and talents of all its members. *Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.*

I Corinthians 12:4-7

A key component of our looking forward and embracing our common baptismal call is doing all that is possible to have each of the many members of the body contributing his or her gifts, services and activities, as the Spirit chooses.

### Theological Foundation

Our grounding for the work of the Church through its various locations is to be found in the *Catechism*.

Q. What is the mission of the Church?

A. The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.

Q. How does the Church pursue its mission?

A. The Church pursues its mission as it prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love.

Q. Through whom does the Church carry out its mission?

A. The Church carries out its mission through the ministry of all its members.

**Evaluative Questions:** *In what ways have we demonstrated a renewed and expanded commitment to carrying out the mission of the Church?*  
*How are we strengthening congregations?*

### **Examples of what a congregation could do**

- ❖ Actively engage in new definitions of stewardship, including talent, dollars and property. This could include an assessment of how resources are spent that both aids ministry and impedes ministry.
- ❖ Improve ways of sharing programs and best practices among congregations, e.g., stewardship plans, youth development, leadership training, sharing of faith, newcomer welcome and incorporation.
- ❖ Participate in leadership skill development, e.g., comprehensive vestry training.
- ❖ Establish ways to support spiritual growth for members, such as Daughters of the King, Brotherhood of St. Andrew, Order of the Holy Cross, quiet days, etc.
- ❖ Provide opportunities for Christian formation/education for all ages, e.g. Education for Ministry, Journey to Adulthood, *The New Church's Teaching Series*, and via media.

### **Examples of what our diocese could do**

- ❖ Build the endowment so that fewer dollars are required from congregations to fund the Bishop and Diocesan staff, and more is available for local and regional ministry, as we work toward the 50/50 ratio.
- ❖ Focus ministry grants to be used as seed money for programs at the chapter or congregational level, primarily in support of new ministry initiatives.
- ❖ Establish a training program for vestry/bishop's committee members to build leadership skills grounded in scripture and Christian ministry. Hold sessions annually in each Chapter for incoming vestry members.
- ❖ Provide training on strength and scriptural-based strategic planning for congregations.
- ❖ Complete and support a congregational discernment process that is forward-looking and based upon realistic goals for congregations.

## Next Generations of Faith

### Definition

Sharing the Good News with every person. To share the ‘best thing’ ever—Jesus Christ. We evangelize people who may have no idea that God loves them and that God values every person.

### Biblical Foundation

We share what we have been taught—that all people are invited to know God’s love.

***We want to share God’s love**    Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*

Matthew 28:19-20

***We who know God’s love are a light to all**    I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. I am the LORD, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols.*

Isaiah 42:6-8

***There are other flocks who belong to the Lord**    I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.*

John 10:16

***All are God’s**    There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.*

Galatians 3:28

### Theological Foundation

- 1) God is outgoing—the Father reaching to the Son and sending him to us, the Son reaching to the Father and to us, the Spirit reaching back in love to both and to us--all in God reaching out and receiving in what the others give. We are made in the likeness of this giving/outgoing image, we are made to reach out in love.
- 2) Throughout his earthly life Jesus sought those who were not “in” or who were ignored by religious leaders and the State.
- 3) God’s message is for all humanity. There are other sheep that belong to our Lord whom we might not recognize—but they are invited too. We, as his voice and hands on earth, given

his Spirit, are given the privilege of seeking them out—just as God seeks us out—to let them know they have a good shepherd.

**Evaluative questions:** *How have we stretched beyond ourselves to connect with, welcome, and/or serve new groups or individuals?*  
*How are we engaging the next generations of faith?*

**Examples of what a congregation could do**

- ❖ Innovative ministry with other groups... Some groups we might reach out to are:
  - New immigrants to Iowa
  - Youth (teens)
  - Young Adults (20's & 30's)
  - “Boomers”
  - The Unchurched
  - Seniors
  - Others... prisoners, homeless, those with mental illness...
- ❖ Intentional invitation to involvement in congregational ministry, by a wide variety of groups--especially when focused on their particular group.
- ❖ Learning to share your faith story.
- ❖ Emergent style congregations or worship services (e.g., Solomon's Porch) in areas with large number of 20's & 30's.
- ❖ Establish storefront or home churches.
- ❖ Young adult-led (with clerical assistance) campus ministry, parish-based or stand-alone.

**Examples of what our diocese could do**

- ❖ A standing Diocesan Evangelism Commission.
- ❖ Identify and support church plant(s) in areas of potential (could be high-growth areas, or underserved areas or populations).
- ❖ A Spanish Language missionary.
- ❖ Transformation of ministry grants to support unique evangelism initiatives.

## Anglican-Episcopal Identity

### Definition

The Episcopal Church is an expression in the United States of the worldwide Anglican Communion, marked by comprehensiveness and founded on the balance of scripture, tradition and reason. Each member of the communion bears witness to our own local expression.

### Biblical Foundation

*But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, beloved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this he called you through the gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, stand firm and hold to the traditions (or teachings) that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.*

*Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.*

2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

*I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you. For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.*

2 Timothy 1:5-7

### Theological Foundation

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that ***things which were cast down are being raised up***, and ***things which had grown old are being made new***, and that ***all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made***, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The whole church, that wonderful and sacred mystery, is all of us living into our baptismal vows. The above prayer calls out to us from the heart of our Prayer Book in the Easter Vigil (BCP 291), and again in our ordination services for Bishop (515), Priest (528) and Deacon (540), all icons for ministry for members of the body. We can each see represented in our lives the ministry functions of oversight (episcopos), that of teaching and pastoring (presbyter), and of servanthood (diakonia). Together and individually, as the church, as the body, we are called to be Christ in the world.

We recognize that it is out of our gifts that we are called into the world and called to restore a balance in our world. Our Anglican heritage gifts us with a foundational balancing and interconnectedness of scripture, tradition and reason as the sources that mediate Christian faith, inform the understanding of that faith, and shape the order and discipline of the church. Our tradition within the church holds many riches, treasures to be celebrated. Some have been tucked away perhaps and could well be revisited for a fuller appreciation of the breadth of what we have to offer in and through the Episcopal Church. We are reminded, though, that *reason* as understood by Richard Hooker and early Anglican tradition is a practical wisdom, a participatory knowledge -- To know something was to experience it, to share or participate in something.

From The Baptismal Covenant:

<i>Celebrant</i>	Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?
<i>People</i>	I will, with God's help.
<i>Celebrant</i>	Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?
<i>People</i>	I will, with God's help.
<i>Celebrant</i>	Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?
<i>People</i>	I will, with God's help.

*Book of Common Prayer* (p. 305)

**Evaluative question:** *How do we demonstrate clear expressions of Anglican/Episcopal faith?*

**Opportunities for our Church in Iowa to explore and embrace, expand and reach out from within our Anglican-Episcopal identity individually and corporately:**

**Understanding the tradition – Education**

**Evaluative question:** *How and where do we articulate our Anglican-Episcopal faith?*

**Examples for Congregations and the Diocese**

- ❖ Opportunities for continuing education of clergy.
- ❖ Opportunities for continuing education of laity.
- ❖ Web-site set-up with common theme and Anglican-Episcopal identity focus.
- ❖ Participate in conversation with others interested in the pursuit of unity in the Anglican Communion.
- ❖ Liturgy & Music Committees (diocesan and congregational) explore an appreciative inquiry of Anglican-Episcopal practices and services, including home traditions.
- ❖ Use of Anglican-Episcopal resources, e.g., *The New Church's Teaching Series* and via media.

## **Global connections within the Communion**

**Evaluative question:** *How and where do we see ourselves in partnership with the Communion?*

### **Examples for Congregations and the Diocese**

- ❖ Continue and celebrate companion diocese relationships; explore sister-parish relationships, or those with other dioceses.
- ❖ Support participation in regional, national, and worldwide ministry by laity and clergy and bishop – especially mission work of young people.
- ❖ Pray daily for members of the Anglican Communion.
- ❖ Recognize non-traditional parishes and practices within the Diocese, and how they relate and fit into the big picture.
- ❖ Continue to practice and extend hospitality to others who differ from us within this communion.
- ❖ Commit ourselves to study ways of reconciliation.

## **Build ecumenical relationships toward greater unity**

**Evaluative question:** *How and where do we see ourselves extending from a place of informed distinct identity as we relate to those of other faith traditions?*

### **Examples for Congregations and the Diocese**

- ❖ Support relations with other judicatories.
- ❖ Other relationships – such as Iowa Religious Media Services, ecumenical clergy associations, etc.
- ❖ Continue to emphasize opportunities for common worship and mission with ecumenical partners, in particular Lutheran (*Called to Common Mission-CCM*) and Methodist (*Interim Eucharistic Sharing*) partners.
- ❖ Shared education, youth, and service activities with Lutheran and Methodist partners.

## **Deed-based Evangelism**

**Evaluative question:** *How and where have we actively sought justice and peace among all people, respected the dignity of every human being, and represented Christ in the world?*

### **Examples for Congregations and the Diocese**

- ❖ Explore the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and where we are being called into the world to be the Good News of justice and peace, to help realize a vision of the human community, like those great visions of Isaiah with every person fed, no more strife, the ill healed, prisoners released.
- ❖ Become knowledgeable of and participate in the work of the Episcopal Policy Network, etc.; become more vocal in public discussion and policy, particularly around peace and justice issues.
- ❖ Contribute to MDG Fund from which MDG grants are awarded (also known as International Development Grants).
- ❖ Choose local MDGs and join in specific opportunities for leadership work with another local Anglican church, e.g., St. Paul's Indian Mission.
- ❖ Get involved personally and corporately in the *Cool Congregations* initiative.

## Notes

## Appendix A

### Strategic Planning for a Congregation

This is an overview on basic steps for strategic planning, and in particular utilizing the lens of the Diocese of Iowa's overall strategic plan *One Church, Many Locations*.

There are many ways to take up the project of developing a strategic plan. What is offered here is only a suggestion. The resources listed at the end of this section offer more in-depth details. Important is to know that "strategic planning" itself can (and should) be flexible, and need not be laborious. It can, in fact, be fun.

Strategic planning offers a congregation some specific gifts:

- *real reflection on what gifts and charisms a particular body of Christ has.*
- *real reflection on challenges facing a particular body, and how these might be given to God as opportunities.*
- *focus on specific hopes and goals on where a body might be going, based on the gifts and challenges, and sets a time frame for these hopes.*

And, within the context of the Diocese of Iowa's *One Church, Many Locations*, strategic planning will offer the Episcopal Church in Iowa ways to best share ministry, resources, ideas, dreams, to glorify and serve God while at the same time maintaining local congregational flavor.

Strategic planning really involves a few simple steps.

#### **1. Begin all things with prayer – all gatherings, all visioning, all works.**

#### **2. A group with the enthusiasm and the charge (authority) to do the work.**

Typically, the cleric and vestry or bishop's committee. Others with gifts for this kind of work should also be invited to take part. This group will set out the course of planning, coordinate tasks, and shepherd the project.

#### **3. Sharing information.**

This involves thorough pre-planning publicity for the entire congregation in all the usual places (parish newsletter, Sunday bulletin, parish e-mail list, and so forth), in addition to regular updates on the progress of the strategic plan as it is being put together.

#### **4. Gathering data.**

*From Within:* data such as membership demographics, Sunday attendance trends, number of pledging units, parish financial history and current state, physical plant situation, et cetera. *Interviews with a representative number and cross section of the congregation* (long-time and new members, all ages) can be helpful. Alternatively, a parish survey can be administered. Interviews and surveys should ask a variety of sorts of questions. Possibilities include such as "What brought you to this parish?" "How far do you travel to get here?" "What is your greatest hope for St. Swithin's?" "What is your greatest fear?" Some of the resources

below will assist in the design of such instruments, and assistance is also available through the diocesan office.

*From Without:* What are the demographics of the community your parish is in? What sorts of service organizations exist, other faith communities, and so forth.

A good resource for getting started on information from within and without can be found at this page on the Episcopal Church's web site:

[http://www.episcopalchurch.org/growth\\_60791\\_ENG\\_HTM.htm?menupage=50929](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/growth_60791_ENG_HTM.htm?menupage=50929)

Here, you will find a database that has some parochial statistics for your own congregation (average attendance, baptized members, and giving over the past ten years), as well as very good demographic information for your community, from a resource called Percept.

### **5. What is the Spirit saying?**

Next is to put the data together into some form that will offer a picture of the gifts and assets of a congregation, challenges and edges; as well as history, hopes for the future, fears and values; also important is to view these within the actual context in which a congregation lives.

Now consider: What is most important? What themes are strongest? Is there a parochial vocation emerging? How will these come together to carry your congregation into the future? Don't edit, or filter, generate ideas!

### **6. Narrow it down, and try the lens of *One Church, Many Locations* (See Appendix A, Worksheet for Strategic Discernment).**

It can be overwhelming as well as exciting to find all sorts of gifts, projects, challenges to take up—perhaps one of the hardest things is to choose from this bounty just a few goals that can realistically be done or used as a guide over a few years.

*One Church, Many Locations* can be a first step in narrowing down a bit. What themes from your data are in harmony with the ones from each of the four themes from the diocesan plan (which came from a similar process, and which surveyed members from across the diocese as part of the data gathering)? Where do your congregation and the diocese speak together?

Another step is to find where the most energy is for the remaining goals. This can be done with simple voting, working toward consensus, or any other means.

### **7. Share it and use it, and check-in with it.**

Having kept the parish informed of the progress, now that the plan is established, the next step is sharing it with everyone. Again, through the usual means of communication. A time for a forum, for questions and answers, is a good idea to give everyone a chance to take part.

Hopefully the process of putting together the plan will be as meaningful as developing it and implementing it. Hopefully, too, you will find a mixture of things in your plan. Some things lofty and challenging, others nuts and bolts and simple.

A strategic plan, too, should be checked in with regularly—once or twice a year. Does it need to be revised? Are there things on it that would be better to start next year? Have

circumstances changed? The plan is meant to be somewhat fluid, to respond to real circumstances. It is not meant to lock a congregation into set never-changing outcomes. Some goals on it will be met, others perhaps not (but they will have stretched you!).

God bless the work!

### **Bibliography of some good resources.**

From Alban Institute ([www.alban.org](http://www.alban.org)):

*Holy Conversations: Strategic planning as a Spiritual Practice for Congregations.* Gilbert Rendel and Alice Mann. Herndon: Alban Institute, 2006

*The Practicing Congregation: Imagining a New Old Church.* Diana Butler Bass. Herndon: Alban Institute, 2004.

*The Power of Asset Mapping: How Your Congregation Can Act on Its Gifts.* Luther K. Snow. Herndon: Alban Institute, 2004.

*The Once and Future Church Collection.* Loren Mead. Herndon: Alban Institute, 2001.

*Discerning Your Congregation's Future: A Strategic and Spiritual Approach* Roy M. Oswald and Robert E. Friedrich, Jr. Herndon: Alban Institute, 1996.

### **A few web sites of some interest:**

Center for Congregations  
<http://centerforcongregations.org/index.aspx>

Resources for American Christianity  
<http://www.resourcingchristianity.org/>

Practicing Our Faith (has some really great ideas)  
<http://www.practicingourfaith.org/>

Statistical Data from the Episcopal Church, Growth & Development  
[http://www.episcopalchurch.org/growth\\_60791\\_ENG\\_HTM.htm?menupage=50929](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/growth_60791_ENG_HTM.htm?menupage=50929)

And remember your support at the diocesan office! Call on us.

Worksheet for Strategic Discernment

*Parish Mission Statement*

Shared Ministry – just distribution of resource and ministry

What	Leadership	Resources	Time Line

How will we know if we're succeeding?

Strengthening Congregations – support for the Church in her local settings

What	Leadership	Resources	Time Line

How will we know if we're succeeding?

Next Generations of Faith—reaching populations who have not heard of God’s love for them

What	Leadership	Resources	Time Line

How will we know if we’re succeeding?

Anglican/Episcopal Identity – holding up the gifts in our tradition

What	Leadership	Resources	Time Line

How will we know if we’re succeeding?

**Worksheet for Strategic Discernment - Check-in**

Shared Ministry			
What	Activity	Status & Notes	Next Steps

Strengthening Congregations			
What	Activity	Status & Notes	Next Steps

Next Generation			
What	Activity	Status & Notes	Next Steps

Anglican/Episcopal Identity			
What	Activity	Status & Notes	Next Steps

## Appendix B Additional Examples/Ideas for Discussion

### **Shared Ministry**

#### Congregations

- ❖ Congregations provide and participate in justly distributed representation of local communities and regional areas on Diocesan Board, Commissions and Task Forces. This includes consideration of younger representatives from a broad geographic spectrum.
- ❖ Develop chapters as viable places of interdependent ministry in a given region. Use the county map as a Chapter's mission field.
- ❖ Develop web-site as a tool to connect and draw the many e-connected.
- ❖ Continue to emphasize the importance of learning from one another in such projects as Synagogy.
- ❖ Congregations to explore the development of multiple points of mission beyond their usual constituency.

#### Diocese

- ❖ Building on the Cathedrals as icons of local community representation, and yet as centers for offerings which gather us in larger communities.
- ❖ Explore how can we create a diocesan cathedral council of advice.
- ❖ Emphasize in the Diocesan staff a high degree of ministry versatility to respond to the shifting needs of the Diocese, but also consider ministry specific experts (e.g., Spanish-speaker, high-tech person) for a particular ministry cycle. Expect staff to have a comprehensive vision of their ministry as resource people with capacity to engage communities at any end of the Diocese in shared ministry.
- ❖ Offer diocesan assistance to develop web-sites at every congregation.
- ❖ Establish a diocesan-wide system for centralized supply of resources such as office supplies, clustered administration where possible.
- ❖ Continue to emphasize the importance of learning from one another in such projects as Synagogy.
- ❖ Consider opportunities for traveling Board or Convention.

- ❖ Explore the combining of local congregations under a single parish structure with multiple locations for mission.

## **Strengthening Congregations**

### Congregations

- ❖ Fully support the diocesan budget as a part of the shared ministry of the Church.
- ❖ Honor and use the skills of all members.
- ❖ Within two years, start at least one new activity that supports and grows the faith of members within the congregation.
- ❖ Within two years, start at least one new ministry that will show God's love to others outside the congregation such as a prison ministry, mentoring program, support for the homeless.
- ❖ Revive Cursillo Movement in the Diocese of Iowa.

### Diocese

- ❖ Transfer the work of the Bishop's Advisory Group on Stewardship to the Stewardship Commission of the Board of Directors.
- ❖ Provide more opportunities for co-ministry between the Bishop and congregations and between congregations. (*See also Bishop's Visitation under Shared Ministry*)
- ❖ Continue to provide leadership and training for ministry teams in local congregations.
- ❖ Provide for, encourage, and establish expectations for continuing education and renewal for parish priests and the ministry of the baptized.
- ❖ Expand Christian formation to include adults in a lifelong faith journey. This includes supporting and expanding such efforts as e-Seminary and the Ministry School and Retreat.
- ❖ Establish new goals and regular meetings for the Property Committee based upon developing best practices, consulting with congregations to evaluate and use their buildings more effectively.
- ❖ Develop a clergy/congregation conflict/abuse-prevention training for mandatory use.

## **Next Generations of Faith**

### Congregations

- ❖ Look for opportunities to practice radical hospitality, e.g., Angel Food Ministries, etc.
- ❖ Set goals for one-on-one conversations on faith.
- ❖ Initiatives with immigrants, such as ESL where there are such needs; assistance in citizenship and immigration issues.
- ❖ Spanish language (or other language) services in congregations or parallel congregations.

### Diocese

- ❖ Ministry to serve older individuals, perhaps our most growing mission field in Iowa. Demographics again. (e.g., Work being done in Boston to help older individuals live at home as long as possible).
- ❖ A Diocesan Commission to Older Adults.
- ❖ Youth ministry—continue the work being done to develop Youth ministry diocese-wide. Perhaps focus some funds to allow for parish-based youth support (as opposed to mostly diocesan—i.e. ministry grant or staff support at establishing things like after-school programs, or day care/school/tutoring, et cetera).
- ❖ Develop ways to raise awareness of multiculturalism at the parish level (e.g., utilizing existing/developing additional Godly Play materials), and develop ways to explore how that awareness affects our relationships with the local community.
- ❖ Hold a diocesan-wide bishop-led mission in Eastertide.

## **Anglican/Episcopal Identity**

- ❖ E-Seminary supports delivery of diocesan-wide Anglican-Episcopal educational season or emphasis.
- ❖ Develop new clergy, including support for seminarians.
- ❖ PR material – with Anglican sound-bites.
- ❖ Establish an active task group (diocesan and congregational) for intentional development of PR material, Anglican sound bites, web-site set ups, and continued focused conversation.

- ❖ Consider partnering with others and Commission on One World-One Church to make available, particularly to those in our companion diocese of Swaziland, e.g., chlorinator units and, through those, clean water; education for AIDS orphans; refugee organization.
- ❖ Continued focus on Katrina Relief – set goals of four diocesan visits per year facilitated by congregations.

## Appendix C

### Explanation of Survey Process

The Diocese was surveyed in three ways. First, a laity survey was sent to a sample of the *Episcopal Life* readership with addresses in Iowa. The sample size was 13% of the entire membership of the Diocese, and there was a 20% return, with 64.5% of the congregations represented by at least one respondent. At the same time a survey was sent to all the clergy, with a response of 56%. Another survey was sent to each member of every vestry or bishop's committee for every parish. Eighty-four percent of the congregations had responses from at least one vestry or bishop's committee member. The total response for the vestry/bishop's committee survey was 59%.

Demographically, survey respondents can be categorized as follows: 58% were female and 42% were male; 31% were lifelong Episcopalians, including 37% of the clergy; 97% were over 41 years old, with only one respondent under 21, and 37% over 65. Seventy-seven percent of the clergy and congregational respondents were over the age of 56 (the Bishop's age), while only 56% of vestry respondents were that age. Thirty-two percent were between the age of 41 and 55.

When asked to rank specific activities as to their importance in addressing mission, worship was the highest priority, followed by pastoral care and building a community of faith. Evangelism was ranked the lowest priority on all the surveys. Clergy ranked outreach a little higher than the ranking of congregational members or vestries. The bishop was seen primarily as the spiritual leader and chief pastor, with the lowest importance being given to program expertise. Clergy expected a more prominent role for the bishop in addressing social issues than that expected by the congregation or vestries. As for the role of the bishop's staff in the Diocese, administration had the highest ranking, with congregational development and program expertise ranked second. In their own survey, clergy saw themselves as primarily spiritual guides followed by liturgical leader and pastor. None of the clergy submitting surveys viewed administration as their primary role.

There was a large number of responses to the open ended questions, and these provided much of the information used in the development of the strategic plan. Thematically these responses centered around the need for congregations to grow, the need for clergy, and a greater commitment to living out our lives in Christ. Based upon these themes, the strategic planning task force identified the four areas that comprise the focus of the plan as presented in this document.

## Appendix D Resources

Education for Ministry (EFM)

E-seminary

Ministry School and Retreat

Journey to Adulthood (J2A)

Godly Play

*The New Church's Teaching Series*

via media

Solomon's Porch

Lutheran-Episcopal *Called to Common Mission* (CCM)

*Interim Eucharistic Sharing* with the United Methodist Church

Millennium Development Goals (MDG)

MDG/International Development Grants

Episcopal Policy Network

Cool Congregations

Cursillo

Bishop's Advisory Group on Stewardship (BAGS)

Spanish language services

Iowa Religious Media Services (IRMS)

Synagogy

Angel Food Ministries

For Resource updates and contact info: Visit [www.iowaepiscopal.org](http://www.iowaepiscopal.org) or the Diocesan Office

***The above list is not, by any means, exhaustive. We hope you will share with us those Resources that you find most helpful, so that those might also be shared more broadly with others throughout the Diocese of Iowa.***

## Notes

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