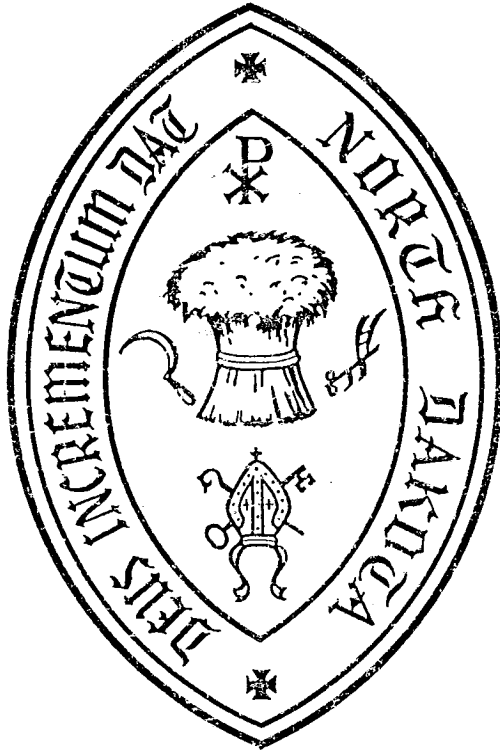


Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota

Mission, Goals, and Strategy

Adopted at Diocesan Convention
October 6, 1990
Grand Forks, North Dakota



God gives the growth. I Corinthians 3:7

I. WE BELIEVE WE ARE BOTH BLESSED AND CHALLENGED WITH THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES FOR MISSION IN NORTH DAKOTA

1. The God whom we worship, acting in history today as he has throughout the ages.
2. Holy Scripture, as the record of the mighty acts of God in history.
3. The missionary strategy of the early church, particularly the strategy of St. Paul.
4. The emphasis on self-determination, self-support, and self propagation taught by St. Paul, and more recently by Roland Allen.
5. The historic openness of Anglicanism to different cultures. (Most clearly seen today is the growth of the Anglican Church in Africa.)
6. The historic commitment of Anglicanism to the authority of Scripture, supported by Tradition and balanced by Reason.
7. A core of committed laity and clergy throughout the Diocese.
8. An increasingly unchurched population in the urban areas.
9. The historical acceptance, into the faith and fellowship of the Anglican Communion, of people with diverse cultures and backgrounds.

II. MISSION STATEMENT

We seek to be empowered together through the Holy Spirit for every member ministry in our changing world.

III. GOALS

1. Ministry

By the year 2000, it will be the norm for Episcopalians in North Dakota to think of themselves as ministers and servants of Christ in the world as well as in the Church as an institution.

This sense of ministry will come through focus on our Baptismal Covenant.

Empowerment for this ministry will come through trust in the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit.

So we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. 2 Corinthians 5:20

2. Local Leadership

By the year 2000, each congregation in the Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota will have its own self supported leadership team in ministry, utilizing traditional stipendiary clergy, licensed laity, and local priests and deacons, as appropriate to local situations, needs, and gifts.

Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Romans 12: 6-8

3. Evangelism

By the year 2000, parish and diocesan leaders will be able to explain and show how they are implementing appropriate strategies for evangelism, for sharing faith in Jesus Christ and including new people in the life of the church.

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." Matthew 28: 18-20

IV. STRATEGY

A. Theological Education For All Christians

1. The study of scripture will be a central emphasis for all members of the Church.
2. Everyone will be encouraged to grow in awareness of God and in ways of prayer.

3. Church school for youth will incorporate a focus on possibilities for mission and ministry.
4. Confirmation instruction will include exploration of personal gifts and ways of exercising them in ministry.
5. Ministry awareness training will be a standard component of our theological education program for adults.
6. We will make use of a broad range of media and educational delivery processes including theological education by extension (TEE).
7. Our theological education program will have local, regional, as well as diocesan wide expressions.
8. We will emphasize cross cultural awareness and appreciation.

B. Regional Ministry

1. The Diocese is divided into three Regions: West, Northeast, and Southeast. Each Region will offer regular opportunities for gathering for worship, study and fellowship.
2. Regions may have a seminary-trained priest as Regional Vicar, who, as Regional Vicar will be accountable to the Bishop.
3. The Regional Vicars will work with a Regional Council elected by the congregations within the Region.
4. Each Region will provide programs of Christian Education, Church School Teacher Training and Confirmation Instruction, and other training for ministry as needed, and assist such programs in the local church.
5. Vestries and congregations will be strongly encouraged to understand the regional nature of the priest's call and to call clergy who are willing and able to work in a regional pattern of ministry.
6. Cooperation with adjoining Dioceses may affect regional boundaries. In such situations close consultation with both Bishops will be essential.

C. Local Leadership For Total Ministry

1. Total Ministry is an affirmation of the ministry to which each Christian is called in Holy Baptism. It is not intended to serve solely as a solution to the demographic problems of a scattered population and small congregations. In all cases, persons will be encouraged to offer themselves for Christian ministry in their secular vocations and in their personal relationships, as well as in a church context.
2. We affirm the crucial role of full time seminary trained priests and deacons as trainers and enablers of those committed to various roles in Total Ministry.
3. Seminary-trained deacons and priests will serve under the mentorship of the Bishop, or a senior seminary-trained priest named by the Bishop during the three years following their ordination to the Diaconate. A clear covenant is necessary between mentor and new clergy.
4. Total Ministry, fully implemented, requires a congregation to identify from within itself those people it will call to different ministry leadership roles in the church as an institution. Their purpose will be, through ministries within the church, to recognize and support other members serving Christ both within and outside the Church.
5. The Regional Vicar will have primary responsibility for offering and coordinating region-wide training for various ministry leadership roles using diocesan and other resources.
6. A ministry leadership team will be the norm. We will utilize Canon 9 as a component of Total Ministry. No Canon 9 Local Priest and/or Deacon will be ordained unless the local congregation participates positively in the process leading to ordination, and, at the same service, presents an appropriate number of others to be recognized or licensed for other roles of ministry leadership in that congregation.
7. Besides that of priest and deacon, other roles in a ministry leadership team may include, among others,

Catechist
Church Administrator
Lay Eucharistic Minister (serving as former Chalice Bearer or distributing elements to the sick and shut-ins)
Lay Preacher
Lay Reader
Lector
Pastoral Care (carefully defined, particularly if counseling ministry is involved)
Teacher
Youth Leader ,

8. The recognition of ministry of all kinds (out in the world as well as in the church) should take place during a regular service of congregational worship. Such a service might include the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows, Commissioning of Lay Ministers, A Form of Commitment to Christian Service and the Eucharist. It is suggested that this recognition be incorporated, when possible, in the service of ordination for a Canon 9 Local Priest and/or Deacon.
9. No congregation will be authorized to call a Canon 9 Local Priest and/or Deacon as Rector or Vicar.
10. All congregations may recruit and call up from their midst such Canon 9 Local Priests and/or Deacons and others commissioned, licensed or set apart for roles of ministry as may be needed to ensure the spiritual, pastoral, educational and missionary health of the congregation.
11. Except in emergencies, with the consent of the Bishop and advice of the Mentor or Vicar of the Region, no Canon 9 Local Priest will celebrate the Holy Communion in other than his or her own congregation.
12. Regional Vicars shall be responsible for maintaining liturgical, pastoral, and educational support services to congregations.

D. Native American Ministry

1. The Bishop and N.D.C.I.W. will develop strong resources of clergy leadership and other roles of ministry on the Reserva-

tions, as well as with Native Americans in urban centers of North Dakota. These resources in ministry are foundational for future development of Total Ministry of all Baptized people.

2. A long-term commitment of personnel and funding (at least five years) is required to allow stable work. Short term commitments may, in the long range, prove to be detrimental.

E. Stewardship

1. The Diocese of North Dakota commits itself to the National Church standards of tithing and substantial giving beyond ourselves as congregations, so that we may understand that all that we have and all that we are comes from God and is committed to the service of God in the institutional Church and in the community.
2. Even if 100% of the funding for a congregation is provided by the Diocese, the local congregation will be expected to meet, on a regular basis, its Fair Share giving for the work of the Diocese.
3. We commit ourselves to annual evaluation of and planning for church life and program.
4. It is appropriate to seek from the National Church special funding to implement this strategy. Such funding will be used for materials, training, and staffing as deemed necessary by diocesan leadership.

F. Ecumenical Relationships

1. Our commitment to ecumenical relationships is based upon a commitment to maintain the effective presence of the Christian Church throughout the state. The Diocese will explore opportunities for joint ministry, especially in communities facing shrinking population.
2. Full attention will be given to ecumenical possibilities and to make arrangements for Episcopalians in communities without an Episcopal Church to become worshipping members of a local church while retaining full membership in the Episcopal Church.
3. In a rapidly changing world, we appreciate the need to be open to dialogue with people of other faiths and viewpoints.

G. Evangelism

1. Our evangelism will begin with our own renewal in faith and commitment to Jesus Christ. We will learn how to witness personally and with integrity.
 2. We will act in response to Jesus great commission (rather than in reaction to our individual or corporate worry over money or survival). We need to share the Good News for God's reasons rather than our own small ones.
 3. We will be clear about whom we are trying to reach in our local communities. We will be clear that the mission of the church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ. (BCP pg. 855)
 4. We will develop a variety of approaches to evangelism. Each community will explore what is appropriate for that situation.
 5. We will also pay attention to evangelism within our own four walls—to renewal, to raising our self image as the Body of Christ.
 6. Congregations will work on welcoming and incorporating new members, utilizing the Book of Common Prayer and liturgy evangelistically.
 7. We will approach evangelism intentionally as a long-term, sustained effort. (We will not trust in any quick fix.)
- H. This is a living, evolving strategy and may be modified at appropriate times.

V. SUMMARY OF COMMITMENTS FOR THE DIOCESE OF NORTH DAKOTA

1. A commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of all people. THE DIOCESE OF NORTH DAKOTA WILL NOT WITHDRAW INTO ITSELF.
2. A commitment to the vital presence of the Episcopal Church in the State of North Dakota during a period of rapid change. THE DIOCESE OF NORTH DAKOTA WILL NOT ABANDON NORTH DAKOTA.
3. A commitment to rely increasingly upon our own resources of faith, worship, talent, treasure and time. THE DIOCESE OF NORTH DAKOTA WILL BE INTERDEPENDENT WITH THE NATIONAL CHURCH.
4. A commitment to maintain active congregations in the whole of North Dakota, with appropriately trained clergy of proven ability and commitment. THE DIOCESE OF NORTH DAKOTA WILL NOT COMPROMISE THE ANGLICAN TRADITION OF A WELL TRAINED AND APPROPRIATELY EDUCATED CLERGY.
5. A commitment to sustain, nurture and build viable worshipping congregations in the communities and areas in which the traditions of Anglican faith and worship are needed and desired. THE DIOCESE OF NORTH DAKOTA WILL UPHOLD THE LOCAL CONGREGATION.
6. A commitment to raise up a fellowship of the followers of Jesus Christ in which each member of every congregation understands, accepts, and exercises that ministry to which each of us is ordained in Holy Baptism. THE DIOCESE OF NORTH DAKOTA WILL IMPLEMENT TOTAL MINISTRY.
7. A commitment to raise up and nurture in each congregation, regardless of its size, sacramental, pastoral, teaching, outreach and helping ministers. THE DIOCESE OF NORTH DAKOTA WILL TRUST LOCAL MINISTRY LEADERSHIP.
8. A commitment to the National Church standards of tithing and congregational outreach giving, so that we may understand that all that we have and all that we are comes from God and is committed to the service of God in the institutional Church and in the community. THE DIOCESE OF NORTH DAKOTA WILL BE A GIVING CHURCH.

9. A commitment to worship, social, educational, recreational and service programs and activities on a regional basis. THE DIOCESE OF NORTH DAKOTA WILL BE A REGIONAL CHURCH, INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS UNITED IN ONE BODY IN CHRIST.
10. A commitment to honor the spiritual heritage of Native Americans. THE DIOCESE OF NORTH DAKOTA WILL CONTINUE ITS HISTORIC INVOLVEMENT WITH NATIVE AMERICANS.
11. A commitment to work for social, economic, political and educational justice, particularly with Native Americans. THE DIOCESE OF NORTH DAKOTA WILL AFFIRM THE CAUSE OF JUSTICE.
12. A commitment to enable our Bishop to be the Chief Pastor, freeing the Bishop to move throughout the Diocese. THE DIOCESE OF NORTH DAKOTA WILL BE AN EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Baptismal Covenant - The holy relationship we enter into with Jesus Christ at our baptism, and which we reaffirm in confirmation. See Book of Common Prayer pages 302-305.

Body of Christ - A metaphor used by St. Paul in I Corinthians 12. It refers to the people of God, the Church.

Ecumenical Relationships - The word "ecumenical" refers to "household", or "God's house". We try to cooperate the spreading of the good news of Jesus Christ by working with other christian groups.

Evangelism - Literally means "good news". Archbishop William Temple defined it thus: "The presentation of Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, in such ways that persons may be led to believe in Him as Savior and follow Him as Lord in the fellowship of His church."

Fair Share Giving - Since the Diocese of North Dakota belongs to Coalition 14, and through it receives substantial base budget support, we have entered into the covenant of giving a percentage of our church income for work beyond the local church. The Coalition 14 norm is 25 percent of a congregation's net disposable income. We have been endeavoring to approach that norm over the past 15 or 20 years. Fair Share giving is a congregation's contribution to the diocesan budget.

Licensed Laity - A Bishop may license people for particular ministries which do not require ordination. See National Canons Title III, Canon 3.

Local Priest - Under National Canons Title III, Canon 9, Dioceses with congregations in communities which are small, isolated, remote, or distinct culturally may ordain people to minister the sacraments in their home community. This local sacramental ministry does not stand alone, but is carried out in the context of other local ministries.

Ministry - The original Bible word for ministry was "service". Ministry means offering our gifts and talents in service of the Lord. All of us are ministers--in the world and through the Church.

Ministry Awareness Training - A program of guided individual reflection and small group sharing designed to help us be more aware of the wide possibilities for ministry, our own talents which might be offered in God's service, and also immediate and specific opportunities for this service.

Mission - From a Latin word which means "to send". In Matthew 28, Jesus sent the apostles into the world for particular purposes and in specific ministries. Following the apostles, we, the Church, are sent to carry out God's will in His world.

Theological Education by Extension (TEE) - A program of serious study of scripture, theology, church history and other subjects which may be carried out through guided study at home, with periodic meetings with other people pursuing like studies for dialogue, mutual stimulation, and application of learnings to daily life. An advantage of this type of education is that it doesn't require a person to quite their job, sell their home, and move away to a seminary in order to receive quality education.

Appendix 1

Reflections on North Dakota Demography and Diocesan Realities

1. Overall population growth in the state will not take place.
2. The migration of our most able young people out of the state will continue.
3. The rural communities will continue to lose population.
4. Although some of the urban areas may show growth, that growth will be based on shrinkage in the rural areas.
5. The Red River Valley, particularly in the Fargo area, will be the principal economic growth area.
6. Bismarck's growth is largely dependent upon governmental growth.
7. There may be increased growth in a few recreational areas.
3. There will be significant resistance to closing and/or consolidating educational and service centers throughout the state.
7. There is a potential for diversification from the agricultural and ranching economic base, along the rail and interstate routes.
10. Accomplishing that potential requires a major shift in political vision and strategy.
11. Resistance to such a shift, based upon the separation between the eastern and western parts of the state, and the religious and ethnic heritage, make that shift unlikely to occur.
12. If a shift in political vision and strategy is not feasible, it is likely that key educational resources, particularly at the University of North Dakota and North Dakota State University, will continue to leave the State.
13. As rural shrinkage increases, the religious and ethnic heritages will weaken and will become conservative political forces resisting change.
4. The resistance to change will accelerate the process of shrinkage in these rural areas.
5. The movement to the urban areas will be marked by the loss of the religious and ethnic heritages which build community.
6. The urban churches will become smaller, generally attempting to replicate in the cities the heritages of the rural areas. These attempts will provide further conservative resistance to significant political change.
7. The Episcopal Church in the Diocese of North Dakota has not come to grips with the withdrawal of Scots/English settlement, and the predominately German, German-Russian, and Scandinavian settlement of the state as the railroads were being built.
8. The Episcopal Church membership in the Diocese of North Dakota is significantly smaller and older than the present records indicate.
9. The Episcopal Church in the Diocese of North Dakota remains dependent upon "seminary trained priests" and support from the National Church and Coalition 14.

20. Several of our urban churches are deeply dependent upon endowment and large pledges.
21. Significant additional funding resources can not be anticipated from outside of the Diocese.
22. The Indian Reservations will continue to be dependent upon Federal policies.
23. There is a strong historical tradition of Anglicanism on several of the Reservations.