



## Harvest Task Force Recommendations with Bishops Report

### 1) Equipping and Encouraging Engagement with Each ANiC Church

Your responses to the first question of the Harvest Task Force (HTF) survey revealed that while many of our ANiC churches are healthy and growing, a number of us are also struggling with a variety of significant challenges to our mission of being sent into the harvest. In thinking through and praying about these responses, the Church Development Committee (CDC), and the HTF are making two main proposals to help strengthen both our parishes and our mission work. The first seeks to address our churches through parish engagements, with a focus on congregational development. The second seeks to address the clergy with a focus on peer support. Both recommendations are meant to be diocesan-wide initiatives. Our hope is that through these proposals, our diocese will engage, encourage and equip both our clerics and our parishes and thus strengthen gospel mission.

#### **Proposal One: Parish Engagements**

HTF and CDC are inviting all parishes into a process of intentional and meaningful engagement for the sake of the harvest. As a diocese all churches covenant together to engage with archdeacons, and members of the CDC for the purpose of strengthening the local church and our harvest work. The plan would involve phone calls and at least one face to face connection each year. All churches would be encouraged to take part so that in some churches needs for mission can be identified and ideas of resources and initiatives shared. In other churches there will be strengths in mission that can be identified and shared with churches throughout our diocese. There are three aspects to this proposal:

1. We propose that CDC create resources to assist Archdeacons in their task of connecting with and encouraging clergy in their territory. Archdeacons would be encouraged to connect with their clergy on a regular basis (via phone calls) and an annual visit. The resources provided by CDC would support church development, care for clergy, and help with ways to reach outside the church with the Gospel of Jesus. These resources include written materials webinars, networking opportunities, themed questions, and helpful links.



CDC will add to the resources they provide as parishes share with Archdeacons and CDC members the initiatives and resources that have been fruitful in their mission work.

2. CDC will create an engagement questionnaire. By invitation, clergy and parishes will be encouraged to participate in the annual Parish engagement initiative. If the clergy wish to participate, the questionnaire will be sent to them prior to the Archdeacon's visit. In addition to the annual visit by the Archdeacon, a CDC member will be available to visit the Parish, if invited. For the Archdeacons who wish to participate in the annual parish engagement initiative themselves, the Bishop, or his designate will carry out the visitation.

3. Finally there were some issues identified in the Harvest Survey that can arise from affiliation with ANiC, such as parishes feeling cultural opposition and competition, or public relations hurdles related to our theology. We propose that these be forwarded by archdeacons to the House of Bishops and Diocesan Council for strategic planning consideration.

These parish engagements have the potential to be a very effective tool to strengthen our mission of bringing the Gospel of Jesus into the world around us. They begin with the rector of each church but can continue on to involve wardens and lay leadership of each church. They are a way to help one another in this mission work that God has given to us in our sharing of resources and in our learning from each other.

## **Proposal Two: Peer Leadership Circles**

Our second proposal seeks to address the need for relational encouragement of clergy in their harvest mission. We are aware through the Harvest Survey of feelings of isolation amongst clergy and churches because of the vast geography within our diocese. In some cases, clergy are several hours away from their nearest colleague. We propose to address this through "Peer Leadership Circles."

These Circles are informal, self-directed groups of three clergy who provide ideas, support, encouragement and prayer to each other. Those who meet together in these groups commit to each other for six-month terms to share knowledge, skills, and ideas on ministry and life issues. They are safe groups to bounce off ideas, get advice from other leaders and strive to learn new ideas together. They can also enhance skill and ability by setting individual goals and being held accountable.



Peer Leadership Circles begin when someone who wants to start a Circle contacts a second person to invite them. Together, the two then choose and invite a third person and to begin meeting together in person or by video conferencing. Several clergy have already begun meeting together in in these Circles and have been encouraged and greatly helped in their Gospel ministry.

The CDC will encourage Peer Leadership Circles in all our archdeaconries, as well as provide resources that bring focus to the meetings.

## **Conclusion**

These two proposals are a means to joyfully work together in our diocese to serve our Lord in fulfilling his commission to make disciples of all nations. They are both warmly invitational but require the engagement of all our parishes to be most effective in strengthening our Harvest work

## **2) Enhanced Role for AMMiC**

The Harvest Survey revealed that there is widespread support amongst ANiC churches for AMMiC's mission work and a desire to learn from them so that these churches are better equipped for harvest work amongst various ethnic groups. The survey also pointed to a need for ANiC to strengthen AMMiC's mission through greater autonomy in various aspects of its work. This has helped ANiC's leadership to discern that ANiC ought to shift our central vision to building multicultural churches that are Biblically faithful and Gospel sharing. Bishop Charlie will articulate this vision at our next synod. The two proposals below will serve to further this vision:

### **Proposal One: An Enhanced role in ANiC**

That there be an enhanced role for Bp Stephen and AMMiC to enable them to be an effective resource to ANiC's multicultural mission work. HTF proposes **hiring a part time missionary leader** to be a liaison linking AMMiC's resources to churches across ANiC, and to support Bp Stephen to allow him to carry out an enhanced role within ANiC. This will enable AMMiC to share visible ethnic minority ministry insights, strategies and other related training with ANiC parishes, clergy and lay leaders.



## **Proposal Two: An Enhanced Autonomy for AMMiC**

That AMMiC be provided with greater autonomy in five areas of its ministry to strengthen its Gospel work. The specific areas are:

**1. Ordination process:** The AMMiC Ministry Area bishop will be empowered to develop and design an ordination process that is better suited to assist in discernment and selection of clergy for ethnic minority congregations. This process will involve a committee that is similar to ANiC DOVE for candidates from ethnic minority contexts. It will also provide exceptions for ordination training, educational requirements and denominational background for ethnic minority ministry. A fulsome ordination policy of AMMiC will be drafted for approval by the Diocesan Bishop and Diocesan Council.

**2. Training of Vocational Diaconate and Lay Leaders.** This will be implemented through the formation by AMMiC of a school for lay leadership training and vocational diaconate. The purpose of this school will be to give proper training to lay leaders (e.g. lay administrators) and to raise up vocational deacons to assist the priest in charge, particularly in church plants, to share the heavy workload of a solo clergy at work. AMMiC has found that the increasing cost for ordained clergy in Canada makes it very difficult for visible minority groups to afford a stipendiary clergy. therefore, lay evangelists, church planters or non-stipend vocational deacons trained through this school can be the workable solution for the first stage of development in visible minority church plants.

**3. Appointment of Clergy.** It is proposed that the Diocesan Bishop will delegate the appointment of clergy in AMMiC church plants and parishes to the AMMiC Ministry Area Bishop. This will allow for more flexible planning and matching of needs of congregations.

**4. AMMiC Church planting committee.** The approach and discernment criteria for church planting and congregation building for ethnic minority congregations are at times different from mainstream congregation. Therefore, AMMiC has asked for the establishment of a separate church planting committee for AMMiC ministry and the authority to be given to the AMMiC bishop with AMMiC council to initiate, supervise and coordinate church plants for ethnic minority ministries. The AMMiC church planting committee will include one member to be designated by the Diocesan Bishop. This committee would work closely with the House of Bishops and Canon of Church planting in their quarterly meeting (see #3 church planting strategy below)



**5. Synodic Gatherings.** There is a ministry need for AMMIC to have specific policies and issues particularly relevant to ethnic minority ministries to be discussed and adopted at a gathering of ethnic minority churches. This forum would also provide a perceived less intimidating environment to develop leaders to participate and lead in such forums. AMMIC will continue to hold AMMIC Annual mini-conferences, which currently is mainly a training, discussion and education forum for AMMIC lay and clergy. However, AMMIC proposes that in the future, the AMMIC Ministry Area Bishop may decide to have more policy and strategy discussion and development at such AMMIC mini-conferences (eg. Church planting policy etc).

This autonomy in these five areas could be achieved by approval by Diocesan Bishop and Diocesan Council. There is no requirement to amend any canons to achieve them.

Our goal through these proposals is that the ministry and mission of Jesus' gospel which is for all cultures and ethnicities, will grow and flourish in all the churches of ANiC, and that the fruitful work of AMMiC will be strengthened to the glory of Jesus Christ.

### **3) Church Planting**

The HTF believes that church planting is central to ANiC's harvest mission. Our hope is that a movement of planting gospel-centred, distinctly Anglican churches would become integral to the fabric of ANiC. Therefore HTF proposes that ANiC will employ a coordinated strategy to identify, assess, and equip at least one church planter every year who has a developed plan for a church plant; with a long-term desire to see at least one church planter each year raised up in each region (West, East, AMMiC). There are four aspects to this proposed strategy:

#### **1. Quarterly House of Bishops Diocesan Church Planting Agenda Item**

To reach this vision, ANiC Bishops will invite the Canon for Church Planting to the HOB (House of Bishops) meeting four times throughout the year. This agenda item will be part of the regularly scheduled House of Bishops meetings, either in person or through video conference, and will facilitate a unified ANiC church planting strategy. The objectives for this significant agenda item will be:



- a) praying for God to raise up church planters,
- b) sharing about potential church planters and planting opportunities, that have been identified by bishops, archdeacons, clergy
- c) identifying strategic locations in Canada for future plants,
- d) making executive decisions about potential church planters and plants
- c) receiving reports from the AMMiC church planting committee and Canon for Church planting

## **2. Common Assessment**

The HTF acknowledge there will be different kinds of church plants. However, any expression of church planting should be led by a person who has been through the C2C Collective assessment, whether a deacon, priest, or lay leader. C2C happily works alongside ANiC to accommodate the assessment to our needs. For any assessment, we send at least one assessor from ANiC who has a connection to the potential planter. The normal assessment path is ideally with C2C, but we acknowledge alternate pathways, such as people with previous assessments or experience. Our bishops will use C2C as a resource for their discernment of church planters, and always make the final decision regarding a candidate's suitability for planting a church. Our hope is that ANiC will cover the C2C assessment costs (**approximately \$1200 for each assessment**).

## **3. Multiple church planting strategies**

The HTF embraces the multiple strategies for church planting. Therefore, we propose that once a church planter has been assessed and selected, a philosophy of ministry needs to be developed that expresses ANiC's theological vision, the context and location for the church plant, and the unique distinctive of the church planter. For example, some church planters will work closely with C2C Collective. Others may work with Explorers or AMMiC. Some will be funded more extensively through ANiC. Others may approach ministry bi-vocationally. These are decisions that our ANiC bishops would make in the context of the quarterly House of Bishops ANiC church planting agenda. The role of the Canon for Church Planting will be to help connect assessed church planters with the resources they need to be adequately prepared for planting in their unique context.



## **4. ANiC Funding**

Currently fund raising for church plants is taking place in ANiC through a group led by Ron Bales, with the goal of raising \$50,000/year. These funds are intended for new church plants and allocation of funds will be determined by the Bishops in consultation with the Canon and Council. The HOB with the Canon of Church Planting will evaluate church planting proposals and will decide which plants are put forward to the Council for funding.

These funds should not be split up but should be directed to one project per year, a new project. Our initial strategy preference will be for churches that plant churches, as the data shows that these plants have a greater likelihood of sustainability.

There are three dimensions to ANiC funding:

*Partnered:* A church planter is *partnered* with a parish (and sometimes beyond--for example C2C).

*Contributing:* When the parish and church planter are *contributing* to the fundraising process (from the Parish and personal fundraising) ANiC will also contribute from the church planting funds.

*Reducing:* Over time the expectation is that ANiC's contribution will *reduce*.

This proposal makes church planting central to our life together in ANiC and commits our time and resources to this endeavour as a top priority. It is a unified strategy which means that the leadership of ANiC will work together to carry out church planting. In this way this very fruitful means of evangelism and church growth can flourish and grow.

## **4) Bishops Workload Concerns**

The heavy workload that our ANiC bishops carry is of great and loving concern to the people of our diocese according to the Harvest Survey. Realistic and sustainable responsibilities for our Bishops is critically important for their effective leadership as our ANiC diocese carries out the Gospel mission that is at the heart of our vision. It is also vital to their health and well-being. Our bishops have met regularly throughout this year and recently gathered in an all-day workshop led by Bishop Ron Ferris on strategies to deal with this issue of over-work, and how to make the best use of their time for the sake of our Gospel mission. This part of the HTF report is unique in that it comes directly from our bishops in the form of a message to our diocesan family:



## **A Message from the Bishops About Workload Concerns**

We anticipate accepting the recommendations of the Harvest Task Force final draft based on their extensive work and surveys. We give thanks for their diligence, insights and wide collaboration.

We believe that adding complexity to the system of Episcopal ministry should only be seen as an interim measure.

Episcopacy, at its best, upholds the familial and apostolic character of the Church which is rooted in the New Testament (Ephesians 2:19-22). The emphasis should be on direct personal and family bonds, rather than on ecclesiastical structures.

## **Longer Term Recommendations**

Our recommendation for the longer term is a model of simple and direct episcopacy. The Diocesan Bishop unites the clergy and churches in a concentrated region or ministry. The Diocesan Bishop serves as the “immediate pastor” for all clergy and their families. This will ultimately require ANiC to move to multiple dioceses as we go into the future.

Each Diocese needs to be large enough to have numerical and financial substance, but small enough that the Diocesan Bishop is the “immediate pastor” to all clergy, their families, theological students, and can relate personally to key lay leaders. Presently ANiC has 230+ clergy, and it is no longer possible for the Diocesan to be familiar with all of them and their families. Once a Diocese becomes larger than about 50 parishes, it becomes difficult for the Diocesan Bishop to connect with people in a personal way. This reduces inner satisfaction for the Bishop, and reduces pastoral effectiveness in advancing the work. The Bishop also needs to know the communities, and to connect with and act on opportunities for new church growth and evangelism.

## **Moving into the Immediate Future**

During the interim period, expectations and established patterns will need to shift. A key understanding in that shift is the concept of “immediate pastor”. For the interim period, we will move further towards a system of “Area Bishops”. The workload has already moved us into that pattern to a considerable extent.

In our Province, only a Diocesan Bishop carries non-delegated episcopal authority. The Area Bishops continue to be Suffragan Bishops under the Canons. The “Area Bishop” term identifies them as having been given an ongoing responsibility by the Diocesan for a





specific sphere of ministry, and as having been delegated by the Diocesan to be the "immediate pastor" for all of the clergy in their area."

The Area Bishops will thus become the designated "immediate pastor" to all clergy, clergy families and theological students in their respective areas.

All appointments, licensing, ordination decisions, and disciplinary matters will be worked at collegially by the Bishops, under the authority of the Diocesan, but administered fully by the Area Bishops.

The Diocesan will retain the right of visitation to any ANiC Parish, but the normal expectation is that the "Visitor Bishop" is the Area Bishop.

Our preference is to work informally at the Area Bishop system with the support of Synod and Council. Our hope is that we can move forward to multiple dioceses before too long, and thus would prefer not to enshrine this more complicated pattern of Episcopacy into the Canons.

## **Workload Concerns**

We heartily endorse **the engagement of a part time Executive Archdeacon**. This position could substantially reduce our Diocesan's workload, as well as advance the overall mission of the Diocese.

The Bishops have spent time reviewing their Time Management Practices, weighing carefully expectations along with the limitations of time, distance, weather, their family needs, vacation, study, and rest. We will continue to live in mutual accountability to one another, and to review our workloads together annually. We will further explore utilizing our retired bishops as opportunities emerge.

The work of the Bishop is "the daily care of all the churches" 2 Corinthians 11:28. It involves parish support, clergy support, preaching, teaching, leading worship, making appointments, selecting and mentoring leaders, administration, governance, collaboration, as well as maintaining relationships with ecumenical partners, the wider church, and the community. The Bishop guards and garners unity at all levels, and seeks to advance the mission of the church. All of these tasks require perpetual travels, and all for the sake of the Gospel.

This work regularly requires extensive time beyond a normal 40 hour work week. We exhort one another to take the full allotment of 5 weeks holiday, to aim for a 5 day work



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week, to take “days in lieu” when conferences and travels erode time off, and to take generous study time. The Bishops seek to model for their clergy our ANiC policies, and the best clergy care practices.

The Bishops have a particular ministry to link the work of our Diocese with the Province and the Global Anglican community. It is appropriate for a tithe of each Bishop’s time to go to each of these commitments. Normally this would leave 80% of time for Area duties and concerns. All of the Bishops expect to make adjustments to honour this balance.

The 52 weeks in a year are normally divided as follows: parish visits and routine meetings and administrative duties 34 weeks, holidays 5 weeks, study and conferences 4 weeks, Provincial work 5 weeks, International work 3 weeks, theological schools 1 week, = 52 weeks. Each component involves extensive travel. Although an annual cycle is best, occasionally an 18 month cycle may be necessary.

The workload for the AMMiC Area Bishop is increased by serving 20% of time as Rector of Good Shepherd Vancouver. On the other hand, this dual role has been strengthening for mission, and all of the Bishops wish it to continue. The parish has been foundational for the overall work of AMMiC: fostering 2 church plants, providing many leaders, giving 80% of external donations, and hosting many mission activities within its walls. We rejoice at the proposal for an AMMiC Mission Director to work alongside the AMMiC Area Bishop, both to strengthen and expand AMMiC, and to aid all of our churches in their mission to reach visible minorities.

The Bishops affirm and commit to their present pattern of weekly conference calls and face to face meetings about every 8 weeks.

Although we wish to enhance and strengthen the role of our Archdeacons, we also recognize that they are most often busy Rectors. They often already commit more than a tithe of their professional hours to diocesan work. To assist them with pastoral care we would like to explore further the possibility of a Pastoral Chaplain in each Archdeaconry linked both to the Archdeacon and to the Clergy Care Director. We hope to collaborate further with the clergy to develop this possibility.