**ANGLICAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

**DIOCESE OF THE NORTHEAST**

**The Most Rev. Brian R. Marsh, Bishop**

Date: May 8, 2020

To: DNE Standing Committee

From: The Very Rev. Canon Jeffrey Monroe, Canon to the Ordinary

Subject: Report on the Bishop’s Committee on Evangelism

In January of 2020, in response to the suggestion of the House of Clergy as expressed at their meeting at Synod, Bishop Marsh established the Committee on Evangelism. Members consisted of Fr. Jeff Monroe, Fr. Matt Mirabile, Fr. Brad Mathias and Fr. Gary Drinkwater. Fr. Merrill Perkins also participated in the effort. The Committee was asked to develop a parish self-assessment intended as guidelines to address how a parish or mission might define challenges that inhibit growth and potentially develop an outreach effort that openly proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ while also developing a welcoming atmosphere that helps a parish or mission family expand its membership. The self-assessment was designed to involve not only the clergy but also the lay ministers, vestry and congregation. It begins with prayer and asking our Lord to help parishes and missions to find the path to doing His will in all things.

The unchurched and in particular young people are looking for an environment in which they will find a new and worthwhile experience. Our younger generations are hungry for a connection they can count on in a world of disappointments. That is what we offer in helping them to know Christ and worshipping him in a timeless manner. The self assessment follows as distributed to clergy after a briefing at the last clericus. The Bishop approved the self-assessment

**First and foremost, the love of Christ and the joy of being part of a loving community should be evident in the clergy and the members of the parish community.** Those coming into your church should be made to feel as welcome as if they were coming to your home for dinner.They may feel uncomfortable coming there for the first time. They may be concerned they will feel pressure by overzealous persons trying to “bring them into the fold.” Maybe they are guilty because they have not been to church in years or “the roof will surely fall in.” In many cases they are disappointed in what they have seen happen in institutional churches or have lost faith in the church they may have grown up in. We must always remember that we are there to help everyone restore or grow in faith. God’s word and sacraments will open their eyes to the peace and love in knowing Christ. That love and faith should be reflected in each person as possible. As clergy, in our service to those entrusted to our care, we are to teach them God’s word, administer the sacraments and bring them in all ways closer to an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. This includes not just what we do, but also why in the practice of our religion. So, let us begin with a step by step approach to how we might open our parish family to those seeking and those who need to know Christ.

**Step 1-Internal Demographics and Profile**

Start with the following questions:

1. **Basics-Your Perception**
2. Is my parish growing?
3. Are we growing, losing ground or just stuck where we are?
4. What are the ages and what is the medium age of our parish?
5. How many younger people or children do we have?
6. What is our financial situation?
7. What is the average commuting time?
8. What is the best times for services and activities based on past attendance?
9. **How would you assess the state of your parish?**
	1. Is this a mission or parish?
	2. How long as your mission/parish been in existence?
	3. How long have you been at your current location?
	4. Do you own or rent the location?
	5. Do you have access outside of Sundays?
	6. How many services and meetings (Bible Studies, Morning Prayer, etc) weekly?
	7. What is your average Sunday attendance (ASA)?
	8. How long has your current priest/vicar been in charge of the mission/parish?
	9. Is it declining☐, stagnant ☐or growing☐?
	10. How often do you have visitors? Rarely ☐Monthly ☐Weekly ☐
	11. Do visitors return? Rarely Often Regularly
	12. Do visitors become members? Rarely ☐Sometimes ☐Often ☐
	13. Do you feel you know why it is in decline or stagnant? (answer on another sheet)
	14. On a scale of 1-5 how would you rate the level of enthusiasm?
	15. On a scale of 1-5 how would you rate the level of spiritual vitality?
	16. On a scale of 1-5 how would you rate the level of psychological health and wellbeing?
	17. On a scale of 1-5 how would you rate your engagement with the needs of the community?
	18. How would you rate the quality of relationships and interactions in the parish? Toxic? ☐ Poor? ☐Average? ☐Good? ☐Great?☐
10. **Pastoral assessment**
	1. How long have you been at your current pastorate?
	2. Is this your first pastorate?
	3. On a scale of 1-5 how would you rate your level of enthusiasm?
	4. On a scale of 1-5 how would you rate your level of spiritual vitality?
	5. On a scale of 1-5 how would you rate your level of physical and emotional energy?
	6. Do you feel your home life supports, detract or inhibit your ministry?
	7. How would you rate the quality of your relationships and interactions with the parish? Toxic? ☐ Poor? ☐Average? ☐Good? ☐Great?☐
	8. On a scale of 1-5 how would you rate your preaching?
	9. On a scale of 1-5 how do others rate your preaching?
	10. On a scale of 1-5 how would you rate your communication skills?
	11. On a scale of 1-5 how would you rate your organizational skills?
	12. On a scale of 1-5 how would you rate your pastoral skills?
	13. Have you taken a course in Clinical Pastoral Education or Spiritual Direction?
	14. What area of ministry do you think most needs to improve?

**Step 2-What makes church attractive**

Ask-Why do people go to church? What would it take for me to go to church? What about the local church?

1. People have to be invited by someone

2. Maybe I have to be picked up by the person who invited me

3. Does the church have to be close to my home?

4. Is there at least one person that I know there?

5. Is the music is familiar and well presented?

6. Is there child care during service?

Are there personal needs or trouble in a person’s life?

1. Do they need to talk to a spiritual leader, or need advice on a family matter?
2. Is there death in family?
3. Is there a sickness in family?
4. Is the person lonely, depressed, angry, etc.
5. Family Marriage-myself or family member
6. Baptism-myself or family member
7. There has been curiosity stirring inside of my heart

What do I see or hear?

1. I hear good things from folks who attend
2. I see their church members and their ministers participating in the community events
3. I see a facility neat and well ordered
4. The front door has a “welcome all” look about it
5. The roadside sign is inviting and has good information in order to contact the church.
6. If I leave a message, someone gets back to me in a timely manner.

**Step 3-Getting Noticed**

1. Do people know where you are and what you offer?
	1. Is there good signage?
	2. Are your service times properly posted?
	3. Is your location evident and suitable for your mission?
	4. Do you use social media effectively and regularly?
	5. Is your web site up to date?
	6. Are phone calls returned as quickly as possible?
2. Is your church and parish hall welcoming?
	1. Is the exterior well maintained?
	2. Do your interiors look clean and polished or drab?
	3. Are there musty or unpleasant smells?
	4. Are your pews sturdy and comfortable?
	5. Is the interior lighting adequate?
	6. Are kneelers available and are they in good condition?
	7. Are prayer books and hymnals in good shape or are they worn and torn?
	8. Is the church interior or parish hall cluttered?
	9. Are the pew racks free of loose papers and trash?
	10. Are your bathrooms well marked and clean?
	11. Are garbage cans in buildings emptied?
	12. Are the Holy Water stoops clean and filled?
	13. Is handicap access adequate?
	14. Do we have enough supplies and materials in good condition?
3. Are people welcomed and made to feel comfortable?
	1. Is the spirituality of the parish attractive and contagious? Uplifting?
	2. Do you have greeters and ushers?
	3. Do the ushers meet people with friendly greetings at the door?
	4. Is there excessive noise near the door while people in the pews are trying to pray?
	5. Do the ushers introduce themselves and point out newcomers to the priest or deacon?
	6. Does the priest or deacon greet newcomers in the pews?
	7. Do the ushers get busy with personal conversations?
	8. Are guests invited to sign the guest register?
	9. Are guests invited to look around the church and is a tour offered?
	10. Is the bulletin easy to read and follow? Everyone get a copy?
	11. Are newcomers told about prayer books, hymnals and service booklets (missalettes) and how to use them?
	12. Are large print missalettes available?
	13. Are there enough prayer books, hymnals and missalettes available in pews?
	14. Do the ushers have someone from the parish talk with newcomers to assist them in following the service?
	15. Does the clergy or the ushers invite newcomers to communion and explain how it is done?
	16. Do the bulletins or missalettes explain who may come from communion?
	17. Are people welcomed to stay for coffee hour or after service activities?
4. How is the Liturgy?
	1. Is the rhythm of the liturgy smooth?
	2. Are the hymns recognized?
	3. Is the organ played too loud?
	4. Are the altar paraments and clergy vestments in good shape, clean and not threadbare or damaged?
	5. Is everyone at the altar properly trained?
	6. Do readers know in advance what they are to read and get a chance to practice?
	7. Can readers be properly heard?
	8. Is there sufficient light for readers to see what they are reading?
	9. Are hymns posted in obvious locations and posted correctly?
	10. Can persons in the pew follow the liturgy?
	11. If missalettes are provided, does the bulletin reference pages in the missalette or in the BCP or both? Is one or the other best?
	12. Are the sermons presented in a personal and uplifting manner?
	13. Are the prayers and parts or the liturgy done in a clear manner and the liturgy and prayers read with feeling?
	14. Is the pace of the liturgy too fast?
5. Are the parish efforts in focus?
	1. Is Word and Sacrament valued equally?
	2. Does the parish have a mission focus including facets of ministry and emphasis on ministry?
	3. Does the parish have regular Bible study?
	4. Is their regular Christian education classes such as inquirer classes?
	5. Are there extra-liturgical efforts such as Stations during Lent, outside masses in parks or the woods or rosary?
	6. Are there parish activities such as life circle groups, social gatherings, picnics, sports (local baseball or football), sports on TV parties, woodland retreats, etc.?
	7. Does the parish reach out to veteran’s organizations (American Legion, VFW), community groups or similar organizations?
6. Do you provide informational brochures and publications?
	1. Diocesan newsletters
	2. Daily devotionals (Our Daily Bread-RBC Ministries)
	3. The Witness of the Anglican Church
	4. Anglicanism-Frequently Asked Questions
	5. The Anglican Church-History, Doctrine and Worship
	6. Welcome to Our Church Brochure Pack
	7. Small Prayer Books (BCP)
	8. Other printed materials.
	9. Is the material displayed in an organized rack or on a neat table?
	10. Do the ushers know what is being offered? Is there too much material?
	11. Are there cards in pews or at door that a visitor can fill out with names, addresses, phone numbers and emails?
7. Follow Up
	1. Does the parish have a follow up plan?
	2. Does the parish have an email distribution list?
	3. Does the parish have a phone calling tree?
	4. Does the parish have a compiled mailing list and is it used regularly?
	5. Is there a parish member directory?
	6. Does someone make a follow-up contact call or email with newcomers?
	7. Do you provide a gift bag for newcomers?
	8. Other?

**Step 4-Setting Goals**

Setting Goals and involving parish members is a critical means of staying focused on your objectives to grow as well as measuring your progress. It also helps you to understand what may work and what doesn’t. Remember, in all things prayer is essential and trusting that God leads you in all things. You should not undertake this without prayer. Depend on God and seek His will and He will as was said in Acts “grow their numbers daily.” Our primary goal is always to preach, teach and live the Gospel, not just fill the pews. If those who come find a means to develop a deeper relationship with Christ, then you will have succeeded.

Here is an example of an edited plan for a parish in New Hampshire based on the desire to bring the Gospel to the unchurched or to those who have left the church, and who it is hoped can be brought back into the family.

**GROWTH OBJECTIVES**

**Philippians 3**

**12 “**Not that I have already obtained…***But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus***. **15**Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. **16**Only let us hold true to what we have attained.”

Our Mission: Our Anglican Church provides traditional conservative Christian worship and teaching to bless the lives of members and all with whom we interact.

Key Concepts for our year:

* Don’t Overthink It – if we have clarity from the Holy Spirit, let’s obey.
* Look “forward’, look for the Good in things and people.
* Stay in the Scriptures, stay close to Christ.

Areas of Focus:

* Attract New Families to our parish.
	+ Increase our community awareness and involvement
	+ Expand on our Christmas Soup and Sandwich event
	+ VBS – summer
	+ Social Media and Advertising – specific to families
	+ Invite people (Updated signage on Sundays)
	+ Intentional posture within the Parish to reach ‘outward’
* Engage our current members
	+ Mid-Week Services in Summer ’20
	+ Men’s Breakfast – Saturdays, monthly
	+ Once a Month church event (I.E. Cookout, Christmas Party, Alpha USA)
	+ 5 Week – Seeker Study Training (LifeGroup seeds)
	+ Study Series – Digging Deeper / The St. Benedict Option or “Finding Faith in a Modern World”
	+ Ladies Bible study – continued
	+ Integrate Prayers of the People into a daily life habit
	+ Discuss ways to grow beyond the Christmas Bazaar each year
* Raise up new leaders
	+ New Acolytes (Men and Women)
	+ Start new ministries with new leaders
		- (I.E. – Hiking ministry on weekends – led by parish member)
		- Alpha USA – facilitators – Clergy and volunteer
		- Men’s Fellowship – two men church volunteers
		- VBS – two women church volunteers
* Attract youth and young adults
	+ Recruit Interns and Students
	+ Host VBS and partner with other local churches
	+ Take Youth to summer festivals and concerts
* Life programs address: Debt support, Technology Primer, Divorce Care, Addiction support
* Hosting Vet and recovery programs weekly at church or American Legion two programs available; one is specific to Vets.
1. **Reboot\***: To run the course, you need at least one facilitator who is a veteran or a facilitator and a veteran. I would recommend that one of them is a member of your parish. Ideally, it creates a great entry point into your church community. The VFW can support the effort by spreading the word, but not much else. You will have to purchase the program which provides course materials, access to support online, graduation certs and t-shirts. You will also receive a leader book and course outline. You will develop a team, promote the course, follow up with inquirers and launch. You will be hosting at the church, but it could be somewhere else. Each night of classes you will provide a meal, show a video, and go through the workbook.

The leaders/facilitators should have some basic understanding of trauma, addiction and PTSD - but it is not necessary. Again, if one is a vet and the other a clergyman who understands some basic psych and trauma/emotional healing etc., then you should be well enough equipped.

Reboot, btw, is 12 weeks, the last week (12#) being graduation.

The course is about $650 a year. They will help promote the course online and will act as a clearing house for registrations and inquires.

You will receive communication from Reboot about running the course and during it.

To discover more; follow this link [https://rebootrecovery.com/?fbclid=IwAR3RgI4hI23\_3e1kJ5K-tldQjvxwZjXATNg0mQ3gUaR0u6UPI6c3gf6SSYg](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Frebootrecovery.com%2F%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR3RgI4hI23_3e1kJ5K-tldQjvxwZjXATNg0mQ3gUaR0u6UPI6c3gf6SSYg&data=02%7C01%7C%7C0cf5ab00d5b7485cce9308d7938ea65d%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637140113188770442&sdata=jn6b0vz5%2FfSy7%2BzhnMCOBQ80HeUpAgQfioDm5PCBpXg%3D&reserved=0)

2. **Deep Recovery**; and open to any who want to improve themselves. Curious about this one, it would be an excellent way to engage our community, if we can get the word out early. Optional idea if we have Parish buy-in.

Plan to meet with a parish that does **Deep Recovery**. This new course offering should include a workbook. This course is opened for anyone who is dealing with life-controlling issues and trauma. It is definitively Christian, but the tools and information can benefit anyone.

*It is 10 weeks long.*

Deep Recovery is a new paradigm in recovery - It’s a recovery course designed to provide tools. It is one-part addiction recovery model, one-part inner healing and one-part cognitive behavioral therapy.

Timeframe

Set up a calendar with names of volunteers. Measure the energy of the parish and have your volunteers own what they need to do as well as have a clear understanding of what they are to do and by when. Adjust accordingly and monitor effectively.

**Step 5-Moving Forward**

You cannot do everything at one time and makes changes in a rapid manner. Conduct triage and set priorities based on the lowest hanging fruit. Take on what you can change in the short run and plan out what you need to do in the short run and the long run. This assessment is designed to provide you with a list of challenges you can address in a methodical process.

Work with your vestry and parish members to undertake and then review this self-assessment. This is a tool to help you and your parish community, it is not intended for any other use than to help us be more effective in the work of the church.

Last of all, the Bishop has established the Evangelism Team. The purpose of the team is to provide support to those who need assistance in undertaking the self-assessment, addressing technical social media issues, finding written resources, sharing experiences, identifying what might be effective and what does not work and discuss ideas on how to overcome challenges.

As brother clergy in Christ, we are committed to helping each other and continuing the discussion of what works, what doesn’t and why. At the Bishop’s direction, we can visit and assist you as necessary. The national church also has available outreach grants and Yorkie’s Closet for church materials and supplies. We are all the children of God in Christ’s One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, facing the same challenges. With Christ’s guidance, we can reach those in need of the hope of the Gospel and share the peace that comes with knowing Him.

The DNE Evangelism Committee

Fr. Jeff Monroe (Chair)

Fr. Matt Mirabile

Fr. Gary Drinkwater

Fr. Brad Mathias