

Task Force on Church Planting and Congregational Redevelopment

Wednesday, March 20, 2019

Zoom Meeting

Present: The Rt. Rev. Gretchen Rehberg, The Rev. Canon Dan Morrow, The Rev. Mike Michie, The Rev. Dr. Gray Lesesne, Ms. Katie Forsyth, Ms. Natalie Finstad, The Rev. Canon Janet Waggoner, The Rt. Rev. Allen Shin, The Rev. Canon Ada Wong Nagata, The Rev. Canon Betsy Ivey, The Rt. Rev. Alan Scarfe, The Rev. Canon Michael Sells, The Rev. Daniel Velez-Rivera, Ms. Caroline McCall, Dr. Gandhi Lopez, The Rt. Rev. Mariann Budde, The Rev. Tom Brackett

Absent: The Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers, The Very Rev. Amy McCreath, The Rt. Rev. Jennifer Brooke-Davidson, Mr. Jason Evans

Task Force Business

Opening of Meeting

The Rev. Canon Janet Waggoner opened the meeting at 3:00 and invited people check -in via sharing their response to this question, "What color are you today? And, why?" Members of the Task Force shared updates on recent events in their lives.

The Rev. Canon Dan Morrow requested prayers for Ed and Nancy.

(Individual notes not taken for the check-in.)

Update on Church Planting

The Rev. Mike Michie shared an update on the work of church planting that included the following: grant applications are written and awaiting translation into Spanish - we expect they will be ready for distribution in 10-15 business days; Megan Ritchie submitted a new grant application software to the church offices; the communications team has helped to update the website and it is almost ready to be launched; the first Discerning Missional Leadership in New Episcopal Communities retreat is next week in Los Angeles - 8 people will be attending; the following Discernment Retreat will be May 20 - 23 in Atlanta.

Schedule for Grant Review

The Rev. Canon Janet Waggoner asked about the timeline for receiving grant applications so we can schedule enough time between when posting, receiving, reviewing, and approving grants. The Rev. Mike Michie affirmed that we would get applications back quickly as there are people who are waiting to apply.

The Rev. Daniel Velez-Rivera reminded the group that we will need to submit our grants to the Executive Council for approval and he wanted to know their upcoming schedule. The Rev. Canon Janet Waggoner informed the group that the next Executive Council meetings are June 10 - 13 and October 18-20.

The Task Force agreed that it wouldn't be possible to approve grants in time for their June meeting - therefore we would set up our grants process to submit grants for approval to the Executive Council at their October meeting.

Update on Genesis Conference in Fall

The Rev. Mike Mitchie informed the group that we are close to setting a date for the Genesis event in the fall - it will likely be the end of September and potentially at Kanuga.

Ms. Caroline McCall requested clarity about if the Task Force would be asked to attend this Genesis Conference. She then requested that we add time to discuss scheduling of our next in-person gathering to the agenda. The Rev. Mike Mitchie let us know that we are still getting clear about how to best use the time at the Genesis gathering- we are certainly all invited - but it might not be the best time for our meeting. The Rev Canon Janet Waggoner agreed to try and make time for this conversation later today.

The Rev. Dr. Gray Lesesne informed the group that the Consortium of Endowed Episcopal Parishes would also be gathering church planters and missional developers this fall and encouraged us to look into this gathering. He agreed to send material to the Rev. Mike Mitchie about this gathering.

The Rev. Mike Michie closed his report by sharing about the release of two new podcasts and requesting prayers for the upcoming discernment retreat in Los Angeles.

Update on Congregational Redevelopment

The Rev. Tom Brackett shared an update on the work of congregational redevelopment - he reminded people to check the extranet site for updated between Task Force meetings.

Update on House Of Bishops & Participation

The Rev. Tom Brackett gave a positive report about his visit to the House of Bishops - he celebrated the work of our Episcopal leaders around the church. He also informed the Task Force that we have a large number of newer bishops which creates new opportunities for collaboration and, in some situations, a need to wait before joining new programs.

The Rev. Tom Brackett informed us that approximately thirty-five bishops attended an information session on Tuesday at the House of Bishops and on Thursday six bishops returned for the MapDash demonstration.

At this time sixteen bishops have made a verbal commitment to Missio Engage. Those sixteen bishops and their dioceses will likely be placed in clusters to encourage collaboration. The Rev. Tom Brackett shared a draft of how dioceses might be grouped:

Cluster One

- Diocese of Northern Michigan – Led by The Rt. Rayford Ray – Potential focus on ministries with young adults

- Diocese of West Texas – Led by The Rt. Rev. Jennifer Brooke-Davidson- She is already working with Dwight Zscheile to some extent.
- Diocese of Fort Worth – Led by The Rt. Rev Scott Mayer

Cluster Two

- Diocese of Indianapolis – Led by the Rt. Rev. Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows
- Diocese of Central Pennsylvania – Led by the Rt. Rev. Audrey Scanlan
- Diocese of Bethlehem – Led by the Rt. Rev. Kevin Brown

Cluster Three - We know that these Dioceses in New York are passionate about this work and want to do it together.

- The Diocese of Central New York - Led by the Rt. Rev. DeDe Duncan Probe
- The Diocese of Rochester – Led by the Rt. Rev. Prince Singh
- The Diocese of New York – Led by the Rt. Rev. Allen Shin

Cluster Four

- The Diocese of E. Carolina – Led by the Rt. Rev. Rob Skirving
- The Diocese of North Carolina – Led by the Rt. Rev. Sam Rodman

Cluster Five - We know that the Dioceses in North Carolina want to work together.

- The Diocese of Central Gulf Coast – Led by the Rt. Rev. Russell Kendrick (The Rev. Canon Kammy Young has already begun this work.)
- The Diocese of Georgia – Led by the Rt. Rev. Scott Behnhase (Frank Logue)

Cluster Six

- The Diocese of Washington DC – Led by the Rt. Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde
- The Diocese of Easton – Led by the Rt. Rev. Sentosh Marray
- The Diocese of Delaware – Led by the Rt. Rev. Kevin Brown

Cluster Seven

- The Diocese of Spokane – Led by the Rt. Rev. Gretchen Rehberg
- The Diocese of E. Oregon – Led by the Rt. Rev. Patrick Bell – The Rev. Lee Kiefer

The Rev. Tom Brackett concluded this part of his report by sharing that the next stage will involve a lot of organizing to ensure our work is done with a sense of connectivity between participants.

Current Structures for Missio Engage

The Rev. Tom Brackett presented a three tiered approach to participation in Missio Engage.

Level One - Dioceses that are making this a top priority for the next 3-5 years and are willing to devote their resources (time, leaders, and money) towards the work.

Characteristics of this level are as follows:

- Participants at this level will appoint a direct diocesan coordinator for Missio Engage.

- Bishops will participate in a Missio Engage working group of bishop colleagues

Level Two - There are specific congregations participating in Mission Engage but no formal diocesan commitment. Characteristics of this commitment are as follows:

- The Bishop will not be in a Missio Engage working group
- It is possible that dioceses at this level are already working with a consultant (Kaleidoscope, Zscheile, etc.)
- It is encouraged that participating congregations meet to strategize around launching new ministries

Level Three - Congregations want to “follow” along but not be make a commitment to the Missio Engage project for their learning.

The Rev. Tom Brackett shared that there will be three stages for congregations that are participating in the Missio Engage program.

- Stage One/Research - This stage will last approximately six months - during this time people will be getting acquainted with potential mission opportunities and potential partnerships for mission. It is recommended that during this time people are using MapDash to learn about their context.
- Stage Two/Redevelopment - This stage will last anywhere from eighteen to twenty-four months and in this stage congregations will be learning from one another through as they spend time in the wider community. Participating congregations will take part in our communities of practice. We expect that during this time people will be using resources such as ECF, College for Congregational Development, etc. We are hopeful that some of the lead consultants in this work will join the Missio Engage community of practice.
- Stage Three/Launch New Ministry - Over the next few years (will vary according to context) the participants will be launching new ministries and continue learning from one another.

Questions from the Task Force pertaining to the Rev. Tom Brackett's Report

The Rev. Canon Dan Morrow noted that because of difficulty with time and logistics collaboration can often be a challenge - he asked the Rev. Tom Brackett to elaborate on the vision for collaboration during Missio Engage. The Rev. Tom Brackett said that these groups will be sources of support as they incorporate new ways of being into their diocese. Examples of new ways of being include: moving from a core principle of “right belief” to “right practice,” practicing a genuine invitation that requires an openness to change, and challenging our typical understanding of white congregations that is widely celebrated. He imagines that these collaboration groups will be spaces where people offer one another courage, expertise, and accompaniment.

Ms. Natalie Finstad inquired about if there was material that participants would use that address issues of racism, etc. and help bishops do this very important work of deconstruction. The Rev. Tom Brackett said that while we cannot directly require participants to go through a certain program they will have access to resources and we are hoping to form a direct partnership with the Absalom Jones Center in Atlanta led by Dr Catherine Meeks. Ms. Natalie Finstad agreed to share resources with the Rev. Tom Brackett about addressing oppression when launching new ministries.

The Rev. Canon Ada Wong asked if the bishops from the Diocese of Los Angeles are interested in Missio Engage. The Rev. Tom Brackett expects them to be involved at the second level given the fact that they have a newer bishop.

The Rt. Rev. Alan Scarfe shared that the Diocese of Iowa will be working with Dwight Zscheile this year and he asked if there was a possibility to also work with Missio Engage so he doesn't "miss out." The Rev. Tom Brackett committed to finding ways for the Diocese of Iowa to stay connected to Mission Engage provided both programs are open to flexibility.

The Rev. Canon Dan Morrow and The Rt. Rev. Gretchen Rehberg noted that many of the consultants that people are hoping will participate have their own particular strengths, cultures, and operating assumptions. While it may be possible for these groups to collaborate it will require conversations about these differences. The Rev. Tom Brackett agrees with this observation and assured the group that he would be working to help people come together and work collaboratively.

The Rt. Rev. Mariann Budde mentioned that the Diocese of Washington will engage a faith based group outside the Episcopal Church to guide a strategic planning process and redevelopment process. The group is The Unstuck Group, led by Tony Morgan, author of the Unstuck Church. She is happy to join the wider conversation of learning and share our learnings.

Next Steps for Congregational Redevelopment for New Ministries

The Rev. Tom Brackett shared that the next steps will be developing MapDash, figuring out how to involve leaders already doing the work of Missional Development, and identifying ways to share stories of parishes/congregations that have gone through a transformation from a single culture to multicultural. He noted that these stories will be available online.

The Rev. Janet Waggoner asked about specific ways for the task force to engage. We identified these three ways: helping with the development of web content. developing a rhythm of meeting with participating dioceses, negotiating relationships with consultants. Ms. Caroline McCall committed to helping with the College for Congregational Development work.

Subcommittee reports

Communications

The Rev. Dr. Gray Lesesne reported that the communications subcommittee has been helping to finish various materials requested by staff members. He also shared that the press release pertaining to grant availability is done.

Church Planting/Grants

Ms. Katie Forsyth affirmed the report given by The Rev. Mike Mitchie and mentioned that they are going to be looking for grant reviewers so that we can build teams of reviewers for when the grant application process begins.

Congregational Redevelopment

The Rev. Canon Betsy Ivey affirmed the report given by The Rev. Tom Brackett - they will meet again having now received Tom's report.

Strategy and Networking

The Rev. Canon Dan Morrow said that he has nothing to report at this moment - the team has not met since the last Task Force meeting in February.

Upcoming Business

The Task Force agreed to have a MapDash introduction during our next meeting. This meeting will happen during Holy Week. If people are unable to attend they can watch the recorded version of the meeting and training.

The Rev. Canon Janet Waggoner asked the group about finding a time to meet after the October meeting of the executive council. The group agreed to this timing and agreed to fill out a scheduling doodle poll for a face-to-face meeting.

The meeting adjourned.

Decisions Made During Task Force Meeting

- The Task Force agreed to submit grant requests for approval to the Executive Council at their October meeting.
- The Task Force agreed to have a MapDash introduction during our next meeting

Action Steps from the Task Force Meeting

- All:
 - If you are interested in the following aspects of Tom's work then please get in touch with him:
 - Creation of web content
 - Setting a rhythm of meeting with participating dioceses
 - Negotiating relationships with consultants
 - Share about registration for the second discernment retreat:
https://dfms.formstack.com/forms/nec_leadership_ga
- The Rev. Dr. Gray Lesesne

- Set up a meeting w/Tom about the webpage
 - Send material to the Rev. Mike Mitchie about the CEEP gathering.
- Ms. Natalie Finstad
 - Share resources with the Rev. Tom Brackett about addressing oppression when launching new ministries.
 - Send out meeting minutes and incorporate edits.

Next meeting – Wednesday, April 17 (3:00 pm EST / 2:00 pm CST / 1:00 pm MTN / 12:00 noon PST) on Zoom

Requests for Prayers

- The Rev. Mike Mitchie: Discernment retreat in LA
- The Rev. Canon Dan Morrow: Prayers for Ed and Nancy