

ARCHDEACONRY COMMISSIONS ON MISSION AND MINISTRY

A. Reference

1. Executive Committee, September 24, 1976
2. Synod 1977
3. Diocesan Council, February 24, 2006

B. Membership

1. The Archdeacon (as chair) and all Diocesan Council members in the Archdeaconry. This will include the lay and clerical members of Diocesan Council appointed by each Deanery Council but will exclude otherwise eligible persons who are members of the parish being reviewed
2. any other person or persons that the Bishop wishes to name to the Commission

C. Purpose

To be responsible to the Bishop and Diocesan Council for the development of a long term pastoral and financial strategy for individual parishes that will recommend the most effective use of resources for mission and ministry in that place.

D. Criteria Outlines

1) Quality of Parish Life

- Worship - bright, joyful, special emphasis, participatory,
- Nurture - prayer group, Bible Study, Children and Youth participation,
- Outreach - special appeals, apportionment increased each year or target reached,
- Administration - annual and varied financial appeals, leadership, organization of parish life stewardship, treasurers reports,
- Ministry,
- Community - Degree of open and caring fellowship, communication, etc.

2) Particular Ministry

- is it an average routine type of ministry (minimum pastoral ministrations),
- is there any special group ministered to (elderly),

- is there a need for a special ministry (ethnic),
- can a unique style of worship and ministry be developed (hospital, chaplain to community-college, institutions),
- does the community require a special kind of ministry? (youth, low-income, etc.),
- efforts to regain lapsed and new members.

3) Geographical Location

- Anglican density,
- nearness to other Anglican parishes,
- distance traveled by members attending worship,
- future housing trends,
- on public transportation routes,
- is it serving an unchurched area (presence needed),
- parking facilities.

4) Neighborhood Trends

- is the neighborhood static,
- what future prospects in local population.

5) Economic Stability

- Check average giving level of members and subscribers,
- Use of envelopes, annual visitation, method of obtaining covenants (pledges), formulation of Budget, communication of financial facts to congregation, use of quarterly statements, etc.,
- means of raising extra income - rents, nursery, etc.,
- can special appeals be considered over and above the base income,
- can a time limit for meeting necessary base income be established.

E. Suggested Procedure

1) The Commission will use these criteria and give prime attention on how to best help:

- parishes requiring mission grants,
- parishes failing to meet their apportionment ('failing' means that the congregation has paid less than 75% of its apportionment for 2 consecutive years),
- parishes with capital debts that will take many years to clear, or are unable to reduce,
- new developments,
- opportunities for mission and ministry (new patterns).

- 2) Meet with the parish leadership to review facts,
- 3) Provide education on the congregations' commitments to and benefits from their Diocesan membership,
- 4) Optionally arrange for an independent full or partial audit of the parish's relevant financial records,
- 5) Endeavor to be of help by suggesting possible solutions and encouragement. The Commission will review options and make recommendations. Recommendations may include (but are not restricted to):
 - that the parish reorder its spending priorities
 - that the parish dispose of personal or real assets
 - that diocese invoice the parish directly for the costs to the Diocese of their incumbent's membership in the Diocesan extended health and dental plan, and/or the Huron Pension plan and/or the Clergy Retiring Benefit plan.
 - that the Bishop formally declare the parish to be a 'supported parish' (see Canons 9 and 28 for the ramifications of this). Correspondingly, the Archdeacon would recommend to the Bishop that designation of a parish as a 'supported parish' would be removed when a parish so designated has paid 75% of its apportionment for two (2) consecutive years.
 - If the recommendations of the Commission are not implemented or do not rectify the situation that prompted the investigation within a time frame set by the Commission, the Commission may recommend to the Bishop that the level or type of ministry of a parish be adjusted.
 - If the adjustment of ministry does not rectify the situation within a time frame set jointly by the Commission and the Bishop, the Commission may recommend that the church be closed. It should be noted that under current Canon law, such recommendation requires the concurrence of a resolution of the parish vestry.
 - In making a recommendation regarding church closure, the viability of a parish should be determined using such criteria as the diocese may provide. These include (but are not restricted to): inability to pay apportionment, payroll, insurance, other costs of ministry, inadequate attendance at services of worship, depletion of parish trusts or other assets, crises in pastoral relations, disrepair of church buildings, inability to appoint or elect the required parish officers, lack of energy to do ministry, etc. The existence of any of these criteria in a parish will trigger an automatic meeting with the territorial Archdeacon and if the Archdeacon so determines, the Archdeaconry Commission.
- 6) The Archdeacons will keep the Bishops in touch with the on-going discussions and insights of the Commissions