

Archdeacon for Regeneration and Mission

Commensurate with the adoption of the DMAP by Synod in November 2021, the new position of Archdeacon for Regeneration and Mission was established, and I was appointed to the role and began ministry on February 1, 2022. At the writing of this report, I have had four months in the role. My primary focus has been to progress aspects of the DMAP that I am responsible for.

The intention of the DMAP is to enable our Diocesan vision of regeneration and renewal. It outlines a set of priorities and actions that we hope will move our Diocese to a more 'mission shaped' footing. It is permission-giving and anticipates a broad range of responses within the Diocese but is never-the-less realistic about the challenges we face.

Supporting/Listening to Clergy: I have visited a good portion of the clergy so that I could listen firsthand to their joys and concerns. This has been a positive experience for me and I have enjoyed sitting with and listening to clergy. Feedback has been positive.

Mission Action Planning: In the same way that the DMAP is a positive plan for a regenerated Diocese, so parishes also need to plan in order to discern God's call and participate in God's mission. A parish without a plan will drift toward a kind of 'default future'. I have encouraged parishes to work towards producing a Mission Action Plan that is undergirded by prayer, is strengths based and identifies a small number of goals to be adopted that will make a big difference to the parish's mission and ministry. I have supported 5 parishes in this process in May and I will 5 more Vestries in June. It is important that at some point, clergy and vestries include the whole parish in this process.

Training: I have engaged with the UK Church Army and gained an agreement whereby we can use their resources for training lay people in outreach and evangelism. The 'Leading your Church into Growth' course is also being investigated that would offer clergy specific skills to help us all engage with our communities and so that our parishes become more 'mission shaped.'

Missional Clusters: It is hoped that later in the year Missional Clusters of three or four clergy will be formed. This will be on a voluntary basis but will be a way of supporting clergy in their leadership as they manage change in parishes. It will be a way of offering encouragement, learning and the cross pollination of ideas from positive models and experiences.

Missional Coaches: The DMAP asks the Bishop to license Missional Coaches who can work alongside the Archdeacon for Regeneration and Mission as the whole Diocese becomes more 'mission shaped.' Among other things they may mentor clergy, be involved in Parish Reviews and support the planting of Fresh Expressions of Church.

Parish Reviews: Parish Reviews are a formal way for parishes and clergy to 'take stock' of parish life and to plan for a good future. The process includes an opportunity to give thanks for the existing positive aspects of parish life and mission and to name the challenges that may exist. A new set of guidelines has been written to facilitate Parish Reviews so that the process is seen through a missional lens. The new guidelines are to be approved by Standing Committee and enacted by the Archdeacons with the Archdeacon for Regeneration and Mission supporting the process.

Digital Communications: I have been active promoting among clergy the important of having a positive digital presence through websites, email and social media. The digital world is a new frontier of mission and there are many opportunities to resource the spiritual journey of seekers, promote the gospel of Christ and tell the good news stories of what God has done for us. I have engaged with a web designer who has designed a website for a particular parish with the intention of using this as a template for other parishes.

Standing Committee Commission: In May Standing Committee established a Commission to undertake research on aspects of the DMAP it was responsible for. It has been nominally referred to as the 'Structuring for Growth Commission.' The Commission was tasked with researching and recommending ways of improving structures and administration within the Diocese, encouraging collaboration between parishes and other Diocesan entities, improving governance and management practices in parishes and ministry units and developing policies aimed at supporting new initiatives and fresh expressions of church. An interim report will be presented at Synod 2022 with the final report expected in November 2022.

Ven Canon Mark Chamberlain