



BISHOP'S INTRODUCTION

I'm delighted to play my part in launching our Casting the Net programme.

It has taken us a while to get to this point. But many people have contributed to the journey which began with the Diocesan Review and has now reached this exciting moment. I have been encouraged beyond all my expectations by the way in which clergy and people of our diocese have committed themselves to this process.

Jesus and the Net

Why the net? Jesus told his disciples to put the net out again ... and to put it out in a different way. And it caught a miraculous haul of 153 fish (John 21: 1-13). Casting the Net is our response to Jesus. It's our approach to the call to make disciples. It's trying again but in a different way.

Questions

People are sometimes anxious about initiatives like Casting the Net. We've drawn up impressive plans. But are we actually going to do it? Or will it be another bright idea gathering dust? Yes we are going to do it. In fact we are already implementing Casting the Net. In the developing work of our Policy and Action Groups, the appointment of Development Officers and the reorganisation of our diocesan structures, Casting the Net is already well under way.

A Journey

I hope that people will see this as a journey – a sort of pilgrimage. It's not a list-making or box-ticking exercise. Each of the Nine Marks of a Healthy Mission-

Shaped Church invites us to 'go deeper' – to ask fundamental spiritual questions about what we do and how we do it.

We hope that congregations will take a careful and prayerful look at their life and ministry, be encouraged by aspects which are strengths and identify a small number of areas in which they hope to make new progress.

There is no need to feel overwhelmed by this. We hope that our Ministry and Education programme and our Children and Young People programme will provide resources, training and support that will help congregations to move forward together.

Encouragement and Prayer

I am enormously encouraged by the work which is being done across the diocese. The quality and commitment of the people who are working together is outstanding. But nothing grows without prayer. I ask you to remember in your prayers all of the people who are working on this initiative, our clergy, vestries and congregations.



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NINE MARKS OF A HEALTHY MISSION-SHAPED CHURCH

The vision stated in our Diocesan Strategy is that our diocese 'comprises a thriving group of hopeful, caring & committed congregations whose shared life, worship & effective engagement with people & issues in their communities attracts growing number of people from diverse backgrounds to share the values and work of our church'. In short we are seeking to 'grow faith communities'.

To achieve this we've agreed the 'Nine Marks' of a Healthy Mission-Shaped Church as principles to guide initiatives for mission and growth in our Diocese:

1. Worship that renews and inspires,
embracing the rich variety of our traditions

2. Transformed lives and communities,
through receiving the Good News of Jesus Christ

3. Lifelong Christian nurture:
deepening the knowledge of God in our lives

4. Reaching out to children and young people,
because mission-shaped churches seek to engage with children and young people

5. Rooted in prayer, word and sacrament:
experiencing God and his will for us

6. The welcome of newcomers and celebration of life events:
helping newcomers become part of the life of the church and making the most of special occasions

7. Sharing faith by confident and sensitive evangelism,
witnessing to God's presence and power

8. Serving the community in practical ways,
reaching out to others, especially those in need

9. Ready to seek growth
and Cast the Net.

POLICY AND ACTION GROUPS

Five 'Policy and Action Groups' have been created to implement the Diocesan Strategy according to the 'Nine Marks'.

Ministry and Education

The Ministry and Education Action Group will work in three key areas:

(i) *gathering and publicising news about courses and events*, offering Christian education and training to individuals or congregations.

(ii) *exploring how lay ministry can be better encouraged and supported*, by providing events to train and affirm the work of volunteers who serve our churches (e.g. webmasters, Vestry members, musicians and all involved in church life).

(iii) *encouraging the professional development of the clergy*, enriching the learning culture of clergy, and improving their support for review and appraisal.

Although it was not possible to appoint a Ministry and Education Officer in the recent recruitment, we are looking at creative ways to ensure the tasks we are committed to are actually carried out.



Convenor:
Canon Alison Peden
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Children and Young People

Veronica Kinahan will be working with the Policy and Action Group for Children and Young People until mid-August. She





has already been contacting congregations to draw up a picture of our work with children and young people.

We are also planning a **workshop on Saturday 6th June** in the Church Centre at St. Paul's, Kinross for further development of ideas and would be pleased to welcome anyone interested in being involved. **Please contact the convenor for more details.**



Convenor:
Rev. Anne Haselhurst
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Casting the Net

The Casting the Net Action Group supports implementation of the Diocesan Strategy through communication activities and will develop NETworking opportunities for congregations to share their experiences in mission and growth activities.



The other part of the Action Group's work is to assist churches to 'Cast the Net'. We'll be taking this forward with gusto when the Casting the Net Diocesan Officer, Rev. James

Petticrew is in post in May.

We will help churches to review their congregational life in line with the Nine Marks of Mission. Facilitators will work with vestries and/or congregations to explore how healthy their church life is and help create a mission plan for action. The idea is to make it do-able: building on local talents and opportunities and using material from the other Action

Groups. **If you'd like to be trained as one of the facilitators, do contact the convenor.**

The process will be piloted with three churches over the summer and then we'll be looking for more churches to use a revised and improved process. In the meantime we are encouraging all congregations to consider ideas for mission and growth and give them the Casting the Net banner.



Convenor:
Dr Karen Gaskell
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Organisation of Charges and Deployment of Clergy

The role of the Organisation of Charges and Deployment of Clergy Action Group is to take a strategic view for growth in mission and ministry following the core values set out in Casting the Net.

The Action Group acknowledges that the process of change during a vacancy can be demanding. It is not the intention of the Group to provide all the answers. The Group will seek to work with vestries to follow a recognised process of consultation where the resources required for growth in mission and ministry can be sought. Working alongside the other Groups, the Organisation of Charges and Deployment of Clergy Action Group will seek ways of reviving new life and harnessing potential for growth.



Convenor:
Very Revd. Kenny Rathband
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Administration

The Administration Action Group carries on the role and functions of the original Diocesan Administration Board in the new structure agreed in the Diocesan Strategy. The Administration Group's work covers all aspects of management of the finances of the diocese and the related business administration; it undertakes the review and presentation of provincial and other grants (e.g. for ministry; for repair and maintenance) for the charges; it reviews building related issues, through its Buildings Committee (convenor, Revd Jeremy Auld) and it will work with each Action Group to agree individual budgets.



Convenor:
Dr John
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THE NET IS BEING CAST....

Congregations are already starting to 'Cast the Net'. During Lent, the Bishop led a teaching roadshow that was enjoyed by many. Several congregations organised bible studies of the *Lentwise* book about our spiritual journey with Christ as guide and the essentials we need on that journey of faith. In May, a stimulating music workshop, led by Stuart Muir, pastoral musician at Dundee Cathedral, was held at St John's Perth. In the next column is an initiative that any congregation could cast their net with.

We want to hear what your church is doing to Cast the Net so send your experiences to:

**Karen Gaskell, kmgaskell@btinternet.com
Woodlands Lodge, Buchanan Castle Estate, Drymen G63 0HX.**

BACK TO CHURCH SUNDAY

27 September 2009

'Come As You Are'

Back to Church Sunday started five years ago in Manchester. It's now expanded and last year 3,000 churches participated and 37,000 people accepted invitations to attend church with a friend.

The programme has shown that:

- Personal invitations work better than mailings.
- Newcomers are more likely to attend when they know that there will be other newcomers.
- The whole congregation needs to be wholeheartedly engaged.
- Some invitees worry that they will be signed up for tasks in church, so allow them just to 'be'.
- It is good to have Harvest Festival after Back To Church Sunday as a special forthcoming event to invite people to come back again.
- It's not necessary to worry about measuring success in numbers, success can be connecting with one person.

Resource packs containing posters, invitation cards and a DVD have been made available to all Rectors, but it doesn't need to be that complicated. All that's needed is for everyone in the congregation to:

1. pray that God will reveal the person they should invite.
2. invite that person to come to church *with them*. (i.e. collect and bring; don't arrange to meet on church doorstep.)

www.BacktoChurch.co.uk

Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and
Dunblane Charity No. SC017654