

Strategic Planning Commission

Dear Leaders of the Diocese of El Camino Real,

Members

Chair
Thomas B. Woodward
St. Paul's, Salinas
TBW2@juno.com

Nolan Redman
ECA, Almaden
nolan@the-boundary.org

Ann Wright
St. Andrew's, Saratoga
hmwright@home.com

Tom Coverdale
St. Stephen's, SLO
coverdale@cs.com

Harriet Linville
St. Peter's, Morro Bay
hlinville@thegrid.com

Joanna Shreve
St. Timothy's Mountain
View
JRShreve@aol.com

We have been charged with creating a three year strategic plan for the diocese of El Camino Real which will reflect the results of last year's Assessment of the diocese. To that end, we have studied the Assessment and have communicated directly with a large number of clergy and lay leaders of the diocese by mail, interviews and through the Mission Bell, requesting specific responses to the Assessment as well as for general suggestions for the Strategic Plan. We have received a large volume of responses from committees, agencies, deaneries and individuals. The strategic plan we propose reflects the near unanimous sentiment of those who responded.

The Strategic Plan has three different components. The first is a two year process of clarifying roles and authority in our diocesan life and enhancing relationships amongst our bishop and clergy. The second component reflects your concern that our priorities be few and focused and that we simplify some of the structure of the diocese. The third component includes some of the kinds of programs and direction which most people expect to find in a strategic plan.

We are unanimous in our belief that the clarification and healing in the first component must supersede all other matters of diocesan business and must be well on its way before we initiate new programs or set new priorities in the diocese.

We believe that many of the things that would normally be in a strategic plan (the building of so many new congregations, etc.) are not appropriate in this plan, given the urgency and the time and energy required to rebuild trust and the necessity of building a sounder infrastructure for communication and planning by the whole diocese. We believe that the structures proposed will make it possible for significant projects and ministries to arise from within our common life with the support needed for funding and implementation.

The vision and dedication of our bishop, clergy and lay people in this diocese are enormous: this strategic plan is designed to help us all work together in dreaming, planning, organizing and living out our dreams. If followed faithfully we believe that this strategic plan will make the next strategic plan a pleasure to create. Our motto might well be that of the State of Kansas, "Ad Astra per Aspera" (To the Stars through Difficulties).

Mr. Tom Coverdale

The Rev. Nolan Redman

The Rev. Thomas B.
Woodward

St. Stephen's, SLO

Episcopal Church in Almaden

St. Paul's, Salinas

The Rev. Harriet Linville
St. Peter's, Morro Bay

Mrs. Joanna R. Shreve
St. Timothy's, Mountain View

Mrs. Ann Wright
St. Andrew's, Saratoga

Assumptions of the Strategic Plan

1. The Assessment represents a fair representation of where we find ourselves as a diocese. That has been said over and over again in the responses we have received throughout the diocese.
2. As bishop and people, we have much of which to be very proud in this diocese. We continue to lead most of the church in the development and support of ethnic ministry, of women clergy in key pastorates, in our stewardship and in the quality of our clergy and lay leadership. There is genuine affection for our bishop throughout the diocese.
3. The problems in our relationships in the diocese, cited by the Assessment, are long standing and are not the sole responsibility of any person or group within the diocese; but we are all responsible for their resolution. These problems now infect nearly every process within the diocese. They have reached a critical stage and it is crucial that we attend to them with all of our resources -- to propose new programs or priorities without regaining our equilibrium, we believe, would be a waste of time.
4. Our clergy, bishop and many lay leaders will have to dedicate significant amounts of time and energy over the next two years to address the problems cited in the Assessment and described in the Strategic Plan. This commitment by all of us is the only path towards wholeness and faithful service to God as diocese.
5. As stated in the preamble, the work of clarification and healing described in Year One of the Strategic Plan must supersede all other matters of diocesan business and must be well advanced before we, as a diocese, initiate new programs or set new priorities.
6. The oversight of any strategic plan is often as important as the plan, itself. To that end, we have built in a process for oversight. To ensure that evaluation of the Strategic Plan takes place the Strategic Planning Commission has been designated, at this point, to ensure that the evaluation of the Strategic Plan takes place; but Diocesan Council or Convention may choose another body to fulfill that function.
7. We believe it would be unfair to characterize this plan as "maintenance over mission." Both maintenance and mission are important for a healthy church at any level and they are not opposites but complementary. This plan addresses both elements of our life.
8. There is much that this plan could have addressed, but has not. Those concerns which have been forwarded to us and not addressed in the plan are listed in an Appendix. There is no reason why these issues and concerns cannot be addressed outside this strategic planning process by diocesan bodies or individuals.

2002-2005

The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to enhance the ministry of Jesus Christ in the Diocese of El Camino Real.

YEAR ONE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

A. We will clarify authority, communication and trust relationships within the Diocese.

Diocesan Convention will establish a Steering Committee consisting of two members each from the Standing Committee, Diocesan Council, Diocesan Corporation and the Commission on Ministry, and the bishop to serve for the first year of the Strategic Plan. This Steering Committee shall have their first meeting within a month following our 2002 Convention. The President of the Standing Committee shall be the convener of the Steering Committee until the Committee elects its own presiding officer. The duties of the Steering Committee shall be as follows:

1. The Steering Committee shall hire a consultant who will assist the Steering Committee in overseeing the process of clarifying authority and communication and building trust within and among the various groups represented in the Steering Committee and in guiding that work when appropriate. If possible, the consultant will also serve to achieve the second priority, below.
2. The Steering Committee shall ensure that the roles of Standing Committee, Diocesan Council, Diocesan Corporation and Commission on Ministry and their relationship to the bishop and his staff are clear and are written. They shall include in this task the roles of D.I.E.M. and whatever other groups or processes that are involved in the oversight and support of ethnic ministries in the diocese. This written clarification shall be presented to the 2003 Diocesan Convention.

B. We will develop strategies for enhancing relationships that are strained and for reducing alienation within the Diocese.

1. We will address the strain and alienation experienced between clergy and bishop.

Within a month following our 2002 Diocesan Convention, the members of the Strategic Planning Commission and the bishop shall meet to schedule a time for an initial two day conference for the bishop and clergy of the diocese. Using a consultant they shall design the process for that initial conference and for other gatherings or meetings that will follow. The purpose of these meetings will be to build understanding and trust between clergy and bishop. This process shall be set as the first and most important priority for both bishop and clergy in the coming two years.

2. Our deaneries will be strengthened in ways that will enhance communication, build community and reduce alienation in the diocese.
 - a. The Rural Deans and Bishop shall schedule quarterly meetings for themselves and make those meetings a first priority for themselves. Part of each meeting will be dedicated to assessing the current state of our deaneries and to searching for additional ways of strengthening them.
 - b. The bishop shall convene an annual meeting of deans and deanery conveners for the purpose of strengthening the deaneries through sharing what is happening in our deaneries, doing joint problem solving regarding difficulties in organizing and motivating the various deaneries, constructing a calendar

of joint meetings (diocesan budget presentation, pre-convention meetings, etc.), and considering ways to utilize diocesan staff and resources within the various deaneries.

c. Beginning September 2003, all clergy with cure will be expected to attend their deanery meetings and to include their delegates in those meetings.

C. We will simplify the structure of the diocese.

1. Several of our agencies have operated with great creativity and productivity, even while it has been difficult recruiting people to stand for election to these bodies. Beginning immediately Higher Education, Congregational Vitalization, Lay Ministry, Children and Youth, Culture and Technology, and Church Planting will recruit for and staff their own committees, using as guidelines diversity in gender, ethnic background and geographic representation. These appointments shall be submitted to Diocesan Convention and ratified, yearly, by Diocesan Convention. While there is a downside in self-generating boards, it is clear that these groups will be able to thrive and to serve the diocese as a whole while providing for their own leadership.

In preparation for the 2005 diocesan convention, the Diocesan Council shall form a committee to evaluate this process of self-generation of committees to see if the groups involved are functioning well with balanced and diverse leadership. They shall report their findings, with any recommendations, to the 2005 Diocesan Convention.

2.. The Nominating Committee shall serve throughout the year, recruiting people for the various elected positions in the diocese as well as acting as a conduit for people wanting to serve on committees and commissions which have self-generated membership.

3. The Commission on Clergy shall be dissolved.

D. There shall be ongoing evaluation and oversight of the Strategic Plan.

At the end of Year One, the Steering Committee (above) will evaluate the progress being made in implementing the Strategic Plan and take whatever steps necessary to place items of the plan on the agenda of the groups which should be involved in implementing the Plan.

YEAR TWO OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

A. We will further enhance communication, trust and working relationships in the diocese.

1. Diocesan Council, working with the Canon Educator, will establish a semi-annual (Spring and Fall) consultation involving representatives from Higher Education, Education, Diocesan Council, DIEM, the Commission on Ministry, Congregational Vitalization, Strategic Planning, Culture and Technology, Lay Ministry, the Nominating Committee, any additional group involved in overseeing ethnic ministries in the diocese, and whatever diocesan staff wish to attend. The purpose of these consultations will be to share thinking, to encourage joint planning, to avoid conflicting agendas, and to build a common vision for the diocese.

2. D.I.E.M. will hold a yearly consultation involving all ethnic ministries in the diocese as well as all congregations supporting or involved in such ministries. The purpose of these consultations shall be to evaluate present structures and strategies, to share stories, to search for ways to strengthen our ministries, and to build community and solidarity among our congregations affected by ethnic ministries. These consultations would be advisory to D.I.E.M. and other agencies of the diocese involved in oversight of ethnic ministries.

B. We will enhance and strengthen the life of our congregations through a Department for Congregational Life.

1. Diocesan Convention shall establish a Department for Congregational Life whose purpose it shall be to recruit, hire and oversee the work of a full time staff person for congregational life. The board of the department shall consist initially of eight members elected by Convention, with initial nominations coming from Stewardship, Lay Ministry, DIEM, and Congregational Vitalization (two each). The Department will recommend to the following Convention a process for election of new members to the Board.

2. The first task of the Department for Congregational Life will be to develop a job description for a full time staff person (clergy or lay) to serve the congregations of our diocese under the direction and supervision of the Board. The job description shall include: the development of a process for self-assessment and evaluation for use by all entities of the diocese, consultation with congregations regarding stewardship, interim ministry, evangelism, program development and the clarification of congregational goals (availability to lead vestry retreats).

C. We will make Call to Common Mission a reality in this diocese.

1. Beginning in the Fall of 2003, Higher Education, Camps and Conferences, Church Planting and D.I.E.M. will be expected to consult with their Lutheran counterparts in planning and evaluating present and future mission and outreach. Beginning with the diocesan 2004 budget, no funding for continuing or new projects will be considered without evidence that such consultation has been involved.

While the situation of each of our congregations is quite different from one another, we urge all congregations, commissions and departments of the Diocese of El Camino Real to incorporate collaboration with the Lutherans as an ongoing part of our planning and goal setting. On a congregational level, such collaboration should include such things as education, evangelism, social concerns and outreach.

YEAR THREE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

A. We will strengthen the lay ministry of the Diocese.

1. The Commissions of Lay Ministry and Congregational Vitalization, with the assistance of the Canon Educator, shall plan a "Celebration of Lay Ministry" with a major presentation by our bishop, respondents and workshops. Our neighboring Episcopal and Lutheran dioceses will be invited to attend the event, which will be a precursor to the development of a Lay School of Theology and Ministry in our diocese.
2. The Commission on Lay Ministry, working with the bishop, Canon Educator, and others of its choosing shall develop a plan for a Lay School of Theology and Ministry in the diocese and shall present that plan to our Diocesan Convention.

B. We will enhance the stewardship and financial stability of our congregations and diocese.

1. The Diocesan Corporation, working with several rectors and treasurers from around the diocese shall develop a job description for a Planned Giving Officer or Development Director to serve all levels of the diocese in the area of planned giving and the development of additional sources of funding for the church through grants and other gifts. They shall then hire for that position, either part time or full time. While the Development Director will serve on the bishop's staff, the yearly evaluation of that officer shall be done by a committee of clergy with cure and the bishop.

C. We will evaluate the success of the Diocese in accomplishing the goals and priorities of the Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Planning Commission will prepare an evaluation of the experience of the Diocese with the Strategic Plan and present it to the 2005 Diocesan Convention. The following questions will be addressed:

- Is there a reduction of conflict within diocesan bodies?
- Is there more clarity about the function and scope of our diocesan bodies, with less confusion about authority and mission?
- Are all deaneries functioning with significant increases in attendance?
- Is there increased participation in the diocese, evidenced by the numbers of people standing for diocesan offices?
- Is there ownership of new program initiatives by the diocese as a whole?
- Is there enthusiasm for doing significant fund raising for the diocese?

APPENDIX:

Additional issues and concerns to be addressed by Council, Convention or other Diocesan bodies:

1. Should the editorial policy and staff of "The Mission Bell become the responsibility of Diocesan Council, representing the entire Diocese?
2. How can Hispanic, Asian and other groups be brought more actively into the structure and life of the Diocese? How can these ministries be more adequately supported?
3. How can we address the continuing marginal financial position of the Diocese?
4. How can we develop a recognizable functional, psychological and spiritual center within the Diocese?
5. How can we address the need for clergy housing in the diocese?
6. Our Bishop has asked that each of our congregations initiate a ministry to a population not currently served by the congregation (e.g. elderly, college age, deaf, alienated teenagers). How can we build this into our life?