

SYNOD BRIEFING – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - 17.10.2007
Updated 24.10.2007

Why has this all happened so suddenly and with such urgency?

The nature of processes like these is that what may seem a lengthy process for some is viewed as sudden and urgent for others. Several factors have influenced the timing of this project.

- The motivation is contained in my vision for the Anglican Church of Tasmania in 2010 which is detailed on page 13 of my *ahealthychurch-transforminglife* vision document of 2004. The three year Imagine Project will conclude in 2010.
- Timely maturing of ideas gleaned during my 2006 study trip to the UK including my growing understanding of the missional role of a bishop in opening and developing new ministries.
- The feedback from two comprehensive reviews of my ministry in 2003 and 2005 and reviews of the work of the Registrar in 2007 and Director of Ministry in 2007.
- The results of the National Church Life Survey presented to the June 2007 Synod which I judge require decisive action.
- My assessment that the rebuilding of our parish based ministries could be enhanced by broadening the training role of a shared episcopate and linking this to focused local mission projects supported by strategic mission partners.
- The emergence of possible projects that have grown from a local context but struggle without significant external support.
- Current opportunities created by vacancies in parishes.
- Current opportunities with strategic mission partners to finance the local mission projects.

The project is a timely and strategic response to the opportunities and threats that face us as a Diocese.

What is the Bishop going to be doing?

The simply answer is, more of what I am gifted at and of what God brought me to Tasmania to do. It is clear to us all that the role of the Bishop of Tasmania brings a complex set of demands. Those demands which arise from my responsibility to 'order' the life of the Church impact significantly on my capacity to fulfill the role of a Bishop to proclaim the Gospel and to teach the Church. While the role of the Bishop of Tasmania includes the vital role of stewarding and ad-ministering the life of the Church, it is also true that direct interaction with people is central. I believe this direct interaction and engagement with local people is my primary gifting . This project will release me to significantly increase activity in these areas. It is my intention to spend time supporting and enhancing parish based ministry in the Diocese. In practical terms this will mean a significant increase in my capacity to spend time with parish leadership assisting in ministry and mission planning, development and delivery. You can also look forward to more of my teaching ministry as demonstrated in the 'Understanding Our Muslim Neighbours' workshops.

Line 6 is not sufficient to provide a full-time position, but seems a large amount for 50%.

The primary source of funding for the Missioner Bishop – Training and Projects will be that person’s parish. The budgeted \$67000 will provide:

- Funding a half-time assistant in the parish
- Some operations funds to support the diocesan component of the work
- An additional stipend component to top up the parish stipend to a level reflecting the responsibilities of the position
- A travel component for the Missioner Bishop

Where is Line 1 coming from?

This is accumulated and undistributed income held by the New Ministry Development Fund.

What about future land sales? Will we have to pay the 25%?

The New Ministry Development Fund is in the hands of the Synod. However, the Imagine Project clearly demonstrates that such a fund enables us to support and develop ministries that would not otherwise be possible. Future property sales will increase the funds available to parishes.

Will there still be money available for parishes to apply for New Ministry Funding?

Yes, the budget includes an allocation of \$75000 over the three years of the project for allocation to parish based new ministries.

Are the Project Partners locked in?

No, but negotiations at the time of writing are well advanced. An update on this matter will be given at the Synod.

Is the AH&W contribution legitimate?

The Board of Anglican Health and Welfare Ltd. believes that the answer is, “Yes.” The Mission Projects funded by the Imagine Project must be able to develop ministries relevant to the needs of local communities. Anglican Health and Welfare funding will enable the projects to give particular focus to providing relief to individuals in distress, assistance in relieving the problems of those suffering mental illness and caring for the sick and terminally ill. I believe that these ministries form an essential element of holistic Christian mission.

Isn't it a big price to pay to free up our Bishop for 20 hours?

The twenty days mentioned in the document is an attempt to conservatively estimate additional time which I would be able to give to local mission support. If this were the only gain from the project it would be obviously excessively expensive but the budget primarily covers significant mission projects.

Is the proposal a grab for power in the Diocese?

The answer is, “No.” It is an attempt to influence the future shape of the Diocese by modelling through experimenting with new ways of being at mission into the future. It

is in essence a research and development model which will produce results for us all to assess and apply appropriately.

Is the proposal a way of making +John's job easier?

The proposal will allow me to focus on my areas of calling and gifting with increased effectiveness and in a sustainable way. I will be able to give additional time to areas of ministry in which I have particular expertise. No ministry is easy. We are all called to self-sacrifice as God did in reconciling the world to Himself in Christ. We are called to live and minister together applying our God-given gifts to where they will be most effective for God's work and sustainable in terms of a healthy work and life balance.

From the material sent out there seems no reason for the roles to have 'bishop' attached to them. The roles seem like the enabling positions already established. All I see is the risk of further unnecessary centralized leadership and the misuse of \$266, 495. Is there something I'm missing?

This project requires a significant shift in the way we view the ministries of bishops. It also requires acceptance of a particular view of the enormity of the task necessary for us to be the Church that has been described in my vision document *a healthy church-transforming life*. This project takes the view that our present efforts can be significantly enhanced through the ministries of bishops as defined in the position descriptions. The Missioner Bishops will bring the full authority and responsibilities of the office of bishop to the tasks at hand. The issue of the centralization of leadership is one which must be considered carefully as the project develops. The project is structured intentionally to keep all the positions funded by the project firmly grounded in local ministry.

In regard to the expenditure of these monies I believe that it is highly likely that the benefits of the project will demonstrate that the money is well spent. The resource must be applied to the development of new ministry in the Diocese. The challenge will be to honour this through the resourcing of genuinely new ministries.

Why not a deputy registrar, instead of a Missioner Bishop - Stewardship? Isn't this typical office administration?

A Missioner Bishop - Stewardship will serve to free the Diocesan Bishop to focus more on mission by being able to take delegated tasks from me which either a bishop is required to do or expected to do by the community at large.

What happens to the Missioner Bishops after the three-year funding finishes?

The theological answer is that the Missioner Bishops will be available to serve as bishops in the Church of God according to His calling and gifting. This particular project is initially structured with a three-year cycle which will be reviewed in terms of the local mission projects and the effectiveness of the particular position descriptions. This review process will be ongoing in the way that all ordained and lay people review and modify their ministries. The specific responsibilities of the position descriptions may change as a result of the review process. The Imagine Project is structured from within the local parish or agency framework in order to provide rootedness in a local context for pastoral, financial and missional reasons.

Why has the Diocesan Mission Enabler become the Director of Ministry?

This title better describes the task Paul carries out, and especially to persons enquiring from outside the diocese about the possibility of ministering with us. It is consistent with position titles which capture the particularities of executive responsibility

Is this a return to the way we were?

No, this is not the same model of ministry which the Diocese had prior to my arrival in 2000.

Isn't this overkill for three local mission projects?

It would be dismaying if this major initiative were to stop at three local mission projects. In 2011, I would very much hope to see a raft of local mission projects, additional to the huge volume of outreach mounted through our traditional parish model, effectively under God reaching Tasmanians with the good news of Jesus and building the Body of Christ across the State. We start with three; we commit to respond to whatever opportunities the Spirit of God places in our path.

What is the bottom line for Bishop John's essential outcomes from this synod meeting?

The Synod has been called to make legislative provision for more than one assistant bishop, and to authorise two appointments. It is my strong desire, however, to share with the Synod, by far the most representative body in the Diocese, my vision for this initiative for mission so that this representative body of almost 200 Anglicans from across the State can capture the sense of energy and God's purposes which I firmly believe to be in this step of faith.

Is there more detail available on the initial, specific local mission projects of *The Imagine Project*?

Work continues with due care on negotiating three specific projects. I expect to be able to release a good deal of detail as early as next week.

Why does the proposed Assistant Bishop Ordinance not appear to provide for female bishops?

We should expect this to become a matter for our Synod in May 2008. The National Meeting of Bishops has requested that no action be taken in regard to this matter until after the bishops meet early in 2008.

Should parishes which contribute to the New Ministry Development Fund expect to receive their contributions back in the form of New Ministry grants?

Synod established this fund to direct resources to specific projects, wherever they may be located in the Diocese. Parishes have equal access to these pooled funds, regardless of the source of the corpus of the funds.

Does the funding of *The Imagine Project* impact adversely on the forthcoming scheme for the funding of youth ministry initiatives requested by Synod this year?

In response to the motion at Synod, the newly-constituted Diocesan Council at its first

meeting requested that recommendations from the Director of Ministry be brought to its next meeting, scheduled for next month. Indications from the Director of Ministry are that he expects to recommend funding of youth ministry initiatives, in addition to the funds already contributed by parishes, of the order of \$240,000 over the next four years, or \$60,000 per year. These funds will be sourced from several directions, and include a Diocesan contribution which will require the approval of Synod in the 2008-9 budget considerations. I hope that one source of funding will be from individuals, parishes or organisations wanting to sponsor a youth ministry traineeship. If you'd like to fund a trainee in part or whole the amount required is \$10000/year. I'm sure that our Director of Ministry, Paul Cavanough would be delighted to hear from you.

Why do the Missioner Bishops need to be bishops?

There are two principal reasons here, equally important. Firstly, there are functions which I can only delegate to a bishop but which I need to delegate in order to create the space for resourcing mission which is on my heart. Secondly, I am convinced that the nature of the Diocese means that we can under God create opportunities for mission by leveraging off the God-given distinctive and recognition of the office of bishop, deployed in the historical sense of bishops as missionaries. The Missioner Bishops, will, with me, bring a comprehensive set of skills/experience and lead mission across the Diocese in a holistic way.

Can you give more detail about those specific Episcopal functions which you propose to delegate to the proposed Missioner Bishop - Stewardship?

There are responsibilities which I am required to carry as Diocesan Bishop. However, Episcopal interaction with or chairing of a number of bodies within the Diocese, bodies which bring a richness to the breadth of the service we offer such as Anglican Health and Welfare, Anglican Chaplaincy Tasmania, Christ College Trust and so forth, is one area where delegation is contemplated. Importantly, whilst I am strongly committed through *The Imagine Project* to an increasing ministry of teaching, mentoring and encouragement across our parishes, there are wonderful celebrations in parishes where the Missioner bishop - Stewardship could assist. Thirdly, there are constant calls on my time to meet with individuals and groups from all sectors of the community which provide opportunities for mission and derive from the role of the Anglican Church in the life of Tasmania, much of which could be handled by the Missioner Bishop - Stewardship.

Is there precedent in the Australian church for part-time assistant bishops?

Yes. Two examples are Bishop Trevor Edwards in the Diocese of Canberra/Goulburn and Bishop John Parkes in the Diocese of Brisbane.

Where will your focus lie when the Missioner Bishops commence their ministries?

Aside from those functions, including representing our Diocese in the Australian church, I believe God is calling me to focus far more on resourcing mission across the Diocese, teaching, pastoring and mentoring - a missionary bishop amongst his people equipping, encouraging and leading.

What is the realistic potential for the *The Imagine Project* to free up your time for resourcing mission to a greater degree than the conservative figures in *The Imagine Project* documentation?

As I indicated in my communication last week, as the precise details of the implementation of *The Imagine Project* are worked through, I see increasing opportunities for equipping for mission in my program. I don't think it impossible that over the start-up phase, I will see my time freed for mission growing from an initial opportunity of perhaps two days per month to a figure closer to 20% of my time or more than an additional day per week. Analysis shows that a realistic breakdown of my newly-available time could be directed as follows, per annum:

Parish-based support:	5 days North, 5 days North-West, 10 days South
Training intensives:	2 x 3 days
Clergy support:	10 days
Self care retreat/preparation:	10 days
Total:	46 days per annum

I ask that we all continue in prayer as the time for Synod to meet comes closer, asking God to confirm for us the risks and challenges of this fresh initiative in His name.

Bishop John Harrower
24 October 2007