

Mission Strategy for the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

*Adopted by the 231st Annual Diocesan Convention
November 5, 2016*

Summary of Initial Goals & Actions

*Find the full mission strategy document at
www.diomass.org/new-mission-strategy.*

PREPARING THE WAY

1. Undertake an open and thorough review of our gifts, resources, and programs.

- a) Establish a clear structure and transparent process for regularly evaluating all programs and ministries that receive diocesan funding based on their contribution to the spiritual, relational, and practical goals of our diocesan mission strategy.
- b) Assess the ways our current use of resources and governance structures support or impede the goals of our mission strategy, and make appropriate changes.

REIMAGINING OUR CONGREGATIONS

2. Share the Word of God and our own faith stories with greater confidence.

- a) Invite all members of our diocese to deepen our relationships with Jesus and strengthen our formation as disciples so that we can live our faith in the world.
- b) Support all members of our diocese in cultivating the skills of evangelism, so that we can all learn to share more readily how God is working in our lives.
- c) Reimagine our ministry with children, youth, and families, so that our young members receive the foundation they need to claim their faith into adulthood in an increasingly secular culture.

3. Address the fact of numerical decline boldly and creatively.

- a) Create a public, transparent, representative body of our diocese to support all congregations through visioning and discernment.
- b) Designate a funding stream to assist congregations to engage brave change through creative models of leadership development, discipleship, and Christian community.
- c) Expand opportunities for lay and clergy leaders to build connections with one another and to develop skills in spiritual formation, pastoral care, sound governance, financial stewardship, and building use, with attention to the needs of the nearly half of our congregations that employ part-time clergy.

BUILDING OUR RELATIONSHIPS

4. Initiate new relationships across our diocese.

- a) Develop opportunities for teams from congregations to visit other congregations, sharing worship and learning about one another.
- b) Create time and space for building relationships at all diocesanwide events.

5. Support stronger collaborations among congregations.

- a) Initiate new partnerships and strengthen existing collaborations with other Episcopal congregations, ecumenical and interfaith partners, and community organizations.
- b) Connect and equip networks of lay people, clergy, and diocesan staff members who share a passion for particular forms of service and public advocacy (such as feeding the hungry, supporting veterans, caring for elders, ending sex trafficking, eradicating gun violence, or responding to addiction and substance abuse).

6. Incorporate regions outside of Boston more fully in the life of our diocese.

- a) Create opportunities for diocesan staff members to be present in congregations and ministries around our diocese and to gather with lay leaders and clergy in order to share and learn best practices, develop closer partnerships, and know all of our communities.
- b) Invite members from all regions of our diocese to engage in leadership roles in all diocesan project teams and governing bodies.
- c) Ensure that meetings and training opportunities are accessible to members from all regions of our diocese.

7. Fulfill the Gospel command to love one another, particularly across difference.

- a) Work to respond to Jesus' call to fully include all persons in the life of the church.
- b) Enter into a large-scale, authentic, and committed conversation about racism and other forms of oppression with the support of effective facilitators and training programs, in order to move us further into the essential work of racial justice and reconciliation.
- c) Invest in ministries with communities of color and immigrant communities, drawing upon their unique strengths and supporting their health.

ENGAGING OUR WORLD

8. Deepen our relationships with our neighbors in order to work side-by-side for a more just and peaceful world.

- a) Work together to help all of our congregations to engage more deeply with their neighbors and local communities.
- b) Further strengthen our relationships with neighbors around the world through partnerships in global mission.

9. Strengthen our relationship with our Earth and our commitment to caring for Creation.

- a) Continue to foster a meaningful long-term conversation about caring for Creation in order to inspire all our members and congregations to be more faithful stewards of our physical world, reduce carbon emissions, respond to the effects of climate change, and advocate sound climate policy.
- b) Designate a funding stream to support congregations that initiate or continue significant efforts in their local contexts to restore Creation and respond to the moral crisis of climate change.