

Communications Plan

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Executive summary

The Diocese of Texas has embraced a vision as one church of 160 healthy congregations focused on evangelism and mission where each member sees themselves as a missionary. With such a vision, growth should be a natural result. The vision requires a continuing change in the very culture of the Church especially in light of last summer's General Convention actions. The goal of the following communications plan is to:

- Assist leadership, lay and clergy in the Diocese of Texas, understand what the vision means, holistically and locally
- Communicate the vision to every audience within the diocese
- Broaden knowledge and experience of the vision
- Provide resources for its proliferation
- Communicate the resources provided by the diocese to appropriate audiences
- Identify other areas with specific communications needs
- Teach each person that mission is personally transforming and also transforms the culture

The goal of the diocesan vision is to inspire unity, healthy congregations, personal transformation which will result in an increase in average Sunday attendance by the year 2010. The diocesan focus in support of the vision is on leadership and congregational development, mission, Christian formation and evangelism.

The vision offers teaching moment

This new vision provides a God-given moment in this diocese to accomplish a further change in ethos that will result in growth, congregational health and influence in the culture for generations to come. Properly developed, the vision provides a teaching moment to move from scarcity to abundance, from worry to hope, from self-concern to reaching outward.

This area of Texas was the first foreign mission field of the Episcopal Church when it was still the Republic of Texas. The Diocese of Texas is part of the Episcopal Church in the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, created by the General Convention of 1821. Our vision and mission imperative is a return to the essence of that name.

The Episcopal Church grew, as did most Christian faiths, throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, recognizing exponential growth following the World War II. At the time, it was understood that the culture of the United States was Christian.

In the last decades of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first, despite sporadic program efforts at evangelism, the Episcopal denomination declined, as did most mainline denominations. We seem perfectly poised to be the Church in 1950.

Additionally many churches (especially resource-sized churches) function on a congregational level, neither helping to resource other smaller churches or actively

participating in diocesan programs. In many places, the Church had settled into a maintenance culture existing mainly to meet the needs of its own congregation.

Vision has local/national implications

In 1993, the diocese introduced a vision to double the average Sunday attendance in by 2005. The realization of that would have been miraculous but in fact the diocese grew 14 percent by the time of Claude Payne's retirement as bishop in June 2003. This growth was a result of a focused vision on congregational health and development as well as active engagement in mission. Mission focus was a priority over pressing issues that have since become more pronounced.

In June 1995, the diocese sponsored A Gathering of the Diocese at Episcopal High School, Houston in order to engage church membership in conversation and build trust between the churches and the diocese. The Gathering was attended by more than 1800 elected and non-elected representatives from the diocese's 160 congregations. Plenaries, 35 mission-focused workshops and more than 80 spontaneously-convened groups facilitated two-way communications with the diocese while providing information and networking opportunities among congregations.

Between 1998 and 2003, the diocese sponsored national visioning conferences annually for bishops and their staffs. The successful response to the information presented at these conferences led, in part, to the Church's 73rd General Convention adoption of a resolution (A034) called "20/20, A Clear Vision." The resolution established an initiative to double the number of members in the Episcopal Church by the year 20/20. It has since been modified to double the average Sunday attendance.

A034 responded to a movement already underway and quietly building with increased urgency throughout the Church as evidenced by response to the Vision conferences. A move away from an issues-dominated church culture to one of mission-mindedness ultimately promises to produce healthier churches and church growth.

The national resolution mirrored the vision of the Diocese of Texas.

- One church of many congregations and institutions
- Continued shift in corporate culture from maintenance to mission
- Strategically plant new churches and restart others
- Become more intentional about diversity
- Recruit and equip innovative leaders
- Strengthen and teach Christian formation so people can share their faith with others, becoming disciples who make disciples.

Both the 20/20 initiative and the Diocese of Texas vision are based on the belief that the Episcopal Church--its leadership and its members--is willing to make the necessary changes to become a church of disciples eager to proclaim and live out the Gospel to love and serve one another. Actions of the subsequent General Convention forced the Episcopal Church back into the issue spotlight and much momentum and action around 20/20 have been lost or overshadowed since August, 2003. Local reaction to General

Convention actions has also absorbed much energy and effort in reacting and responding to concerns from both conservative and liberal parts of the church.

Communications key to vision success

Notwithstanding General Convention actions, the Diocese of Texas should continue to focus on our vision. The Church's mandate is to bring hope and transformation to a world that finds itself in conflict and despair--a culture in which many people have no life of faith at all.

This plan will outline steps to communicate the vision imperatives to every audience in the diocese, supporting resources available to congregations and institutions within the diocese to help them be agents of transformation locally. Strategic plans need to be developed concurrently to provide cohesive resources and communications in the areas of mission, congregational development, new church plants, spiritual formation and leadership recruitment and training.

The Diocese of Texas has enjoyed a leadership role in the Episcopal Church nationally and abroad. It is also part of this plan to maintain that posture for the mutual benefit of the entire Church and the members of the Episcopal Church in this diocese.

It is hoped the goals in this plan will provide ways by which all members of the Church can become aware of the vision and their critical role in helping to accomplish it. There is a need for a strategic, sustained, saturated campaign to make the diocesan vision take root in the minds and hearts of all church members. As a result, they can, in turn, create BHAG's (Big, Holy, Audacious Goals) for their own congregations and more effectively reach out to others and transform lives.

Situation Analysis

In the late-twentieth-century, the mainline Christian denominations failed to satisfy the growing spiritual hunger in America. As a result, they have drastically declined in membership. According to figures from the World Christian Database: seven mainline denominations have shown annual decreases in membership from .30% (ELCA) to 2.63% (Church of Christ). The Episcopal Church has declined an average of 1.06% annually between 1970 and 2000, from 3,196,277 to 2,325,000 members. In 2002, the Presbyterian denomination lost more than 40,000 members, the highest decline in 20 years. The Episcopal Church lost _____ during that year.

During the same time, the study shows a gain of more than 27.5 % in denominational congregations, from 153.3 million in 1970 to 195.5 million in 2000. While the United States can no longer claim to be a Christian culture due to secularization of culture, declining membership in many denominations and the growth of a diverse population of non-Christian immigrants, this figure underscores the search for transformation and community that continues to exist in the country. Our task is to be relevant and to let people know we are here.

Church leaders believe that returning to a biblically-based model can restore the missionary power of the first-century Christianity to twenty-first-century denominations and their congregations. The power to transform individual lives and, through them, to transform society, rests in this model. The diocesan vision provides the framework for each congregation to participate in this transformation. Appropriate communications strategies will allow congregations to reach out more effectively to the unchurched and to engage current members.

Many potential church members have an aversion to the institutional church, have had a bad experience or no experience with organized religion. At the same time, there is a documented and profound spiritual hunger within the secular culture. Scripture calls the Church to be an agent of transformation in the world, loving "others as Christ loved us," which should translate directly into mission. Engaging in mission offers two realities, a Christian model for seekers where they live, work and play and an opportunity for stewardship of time, talent and treasure for those who serve.

SWOT analysis

In order to effectively promote the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Texas it is necessary to understand strengths and weaknesses and to identify opportunities and weaknesses that face us. The following provides a brief outline:

Strengths:

- A good "product"
- Historic, identifiable symbols
- Faithful and dedicated people
- Open and inclusive
- Buy-in from leadership
- Diocesan structure to drive vision

Weaknesses:

- Reputation of being white and elite
- No public recognition by some
- Negative public recognition by others
- Divisive internal reaction to issues
- Internal resistance to change
- Existing church structures and time it takes to reach consensus
- Lack of funding for strategic communications
- Loss of Anglican identity

Opportunities:

- To make a difference in the world
- To transform lives
- To grow
- To positively affect a culture in need

Threats:

- Infighting on issues that divert energy
- Gatekeepers who do not want to change anything
- Unchurched or younger generation's aversion to institutions
- Secular press coverage of negative issues
- Withdrawal of funds (GC related)
- People leaving church (GC related)

SWOT Explanation

The Episcopal Church offers a unique expression of the Christian faith, based in scripture, tradition and reason. Worship styles range from traditional to contemporary and sometimes charismatic. The Episcopal Church is a welcoming faith for those who have questions and doubts, a faith based on grace instead of sinfulness. The Church's openness to questions, coupled with its history and formalized, yet participatory worship distinguishes it from other Christian denominations. In many marriages, the Episcopal Church has become the "compromise" denomination.

In the Diocese of Texas, leadership drives and is supportive of a vision towards mission and away from issues, empowering lay and clergy leadership. The structure of the diocese allows the unique ability to direct messages and provide the vision, encouraging congregations to develop their own vision responsive to their immediate community.

Episcopal liturgy provides members with a symbolically rich environment for worship and spiritual nurture. It strives to be open to all people regardless of social standing, ethnicity, education and provides many presentations of liturgy, contemporary to traditional. The Episcopal Church has been remiss in educating its members about the essence of the Anglican tradition which is based on scripture, tradition and reason or providing an explanation of what the via media represents—a moderate position, informed by our experience and living in community with some tension from differing opinions and interpretations of scripture as acceptable.

Perception does not always match reality

The Episcopal Church no longer enjoys broad recognition among the general public, exclusive of recent press coverage. When it *is* recognized, it has the reputation of being a "country club" church, with well-educated and well-healed Anglo parishioners.

The Episcopal Church in the United States has not been known for its openness to people from all walks of life or ethnic backgrounds; its work in missionary endeavors or in the mission field, like the Mormons; for its knowledge of the Bible as are the Baptists; or for the spiritual formation training of its membership. While the Episcopal liturgy is transcendent, it is the Roman Catholics who are more closely associated with the "Mass."

In the past, some Episcopalians looked at church as an extension of their social life, a private chaplaincy with a paid Christian on call for marriages, funeral or the periodic hospital visit. Today, some would like the Church to remain "as it has always been." There is resistance to change, diversity and even outreach. In places, the gatekeeper mentality is alive and well due to lack of awareness or motivation.

Fortunately, there are many committed and spiritually mature members who will support initiatives that actively serve others and spread the Gospel of Christ through word and deed. People who are engaged in ministry to others, who have experienced a transformation in themselves or seen it in others, are very effective ambassadors. New members are often the most enthusiastic.

Division within siphons energy for mission

With the advent of women's ordination came the beginnings of a rift in the church that would eventually pit "conservatives" against "liberals." This has grown to include those who believe the Church should sanction same-sex marriages and ordain practicing homosexuals and those who are vehemently opposed to it. Not everyone who supports the ordination of women also agrees with the blessing same sex-unions, but the lines are drawn between conservatives and liberals none-the-less, posing a barrier for any new initiative.

As a result of General Convention actions there is heightened tension as splinter groups have formed and threaten stability with talk of schism. Other parts of the Anglican Communion have responded negatively exacerbating the threat of division. Within the diocese there has been withholding of funds and some membership attrition as a result of the GC actions. Inordinate amounts of time and energy are needed to respond to these issues on the part of the diocesan staff.

Arguments and sexuality issues are usually the only thing that merits secular press coverage of the Church. This makes it incumbent on the Church to build relationships with the local media and try to place positive stories of transformation in local media.

Believing that a spiritually hungry world is in need of a healthy, mission-oriented Church, many leaders focus on mission rather than issues. They countered talk of schism with "one church in mission," and sought ways to improve the health of congregations, train leadership, promote congregational development, find alternative leadership for dwindling congregations, increase diversity, recruit new and younger seminarians, plant new churches and focus their vision on reaching out.

Diocese of Texas sponsors vision leadership

Locally sponsored vision and mission conferences for bishops and their staffs have allowed leadership from "both sides of the aisle" to re-evaluate the importance of proactive mission work and the need to have a focused vision for church growth. More than half the bishops in the Episcopal Church have attended one or more of the Clear Vision Conferences sponsored first by the Diocese of Texas and later cosponsored by Texas with the national Church Center and the Dioceses of Maryland, San Diego, Virginia and Western Tennessee.

By 2000, this refocus on mission became the basis for A034, a national resolution for evangelism. It was approved with great enthusiasm by the House of Bishops, the House of Deputies and subsequently supported by the Presiding Bishop and the Church's Executive Council. Similarly the diocesan vision has been embraced by the Executive Board and Council after presentation by the bishop.

Mission provides many opportunities for participation

There are many ways into a church of community of faith other than Sunday morning worship. Programs, classes, mission opportunities are all portals through which new members may become familiar with persons of faith and experience community and some personal transformation without having to join an institutional church.

The focus on mission has served to redirect the diocesan work of resourcing congregations and helping them become more healthy--prepared to actively engage their communities. Here, the structure of the diocese serves as a beacon of the vision, led by a

strong CEO, the bishop. Diocesan structure also allows the diocesan staff to act as a focal point for leadership and a resource for congregations, centralizing information, planning and providing training. Statistics can be tracked and programs defined on a diocesan level to evaluate effectiveness of communications strategy and the vision.

Mobilizing public opinion

Effectively communicating the diocesan vision and goals begins with a review and updating of those communications vehicles that are currently in place.

The diocese has:

- Organized groups to implement the actions including: Executive Board, Council delegates, vestries, boards and commissions, ECW's, youth ministers and Christian formation directors, etc.
- Identifiable symbols of the cross to arouse emotion
- Slogans to compress issues
 - A Clear Vision of One Church
 - A diverse worshipping community of missionaries
 - Transformation of lives
 - Reaching out
 - Moving from maintenance to mission
 - Making disciples who make disciples
- Events and forums to focus attention, provoke discussion and gain support
 - Diocesan councils
 - Gathering 2005
 - Forums, conferences, leadership academy
 - Regular church services/programs
 - Ministries to personify the goal of transformation
- Bridging with secular media to reach the public
 - *Houston Chronicle, American Statesman, Texas Monthly*, local weeklies
- Can provide a sustained saturation campaign to spread information
 - Personal contact
 - Diocesan newspaper
 - Web site, video conferencing
 - Dean's memo
 - News service, national and international
 - Episcopal News Service, Anglican Communion News Service
 - National paper and publications
 - *Episcopal Life, Living Church*
 - Local church, seminary and school newsletters and efforts
 - Out of home
 - Outdoor, transportation, cable (radio, tv), PSAs, direct mail

Analysis Research

Formal

- 1998 Zaccheus report-a national study
- 2001 Roper report
- Current Gallup polls
- Statistics from parochial reports: attendance, giving
- Percepts demographic information
- Graphs from Episcopal Diocese of Texas give 7-year history of vision (see addendum 1)
- Shaping Our Future Survey, 1995
- National Office of Congregational Development
- Research and analysis office of the Episcopal Church (new)
- Data compiled on andromeda.rutgers.edu/lcrew/rel2.html@data

Informal

- Feedback from web site
- Video news clips
- Magazine and newspaper coverage
- Commercial programming/publication trends
- Public discussion
- Phone interviews
- E-mail forums

Research explanation

The **1998 Zaccheus Report** is one of the broadest grassroots studies in mainline Protestant denominational history. It serves as an internal audit and examines national Episcopal identity and vocation. Conducted in nine dioceses throughout the country with more than 2,000 respondents, the report examined emerging trends and patterns of leadership as well as the crucial issues, opportunities and challenges facing Episcopal ministries.

Initial results from the 2001 research firm **Roper ASW** indicate that Episcopalians nationally agree on several areas of mission focus:

- Youth
- Spiritual growth
- Discipleship
- Reaching out to the unchurched.

Other priorities included full status for women, expanding lay leadership training and increasing diversity of church membership.

Ongoing **Gallup polls** indicate a coming religious revival that presents "remarkable challenges and opportunities" for faith communities. The challenge is that most people

say they believe in God, but they don't know what they believe about God. The Episcopal Church is positioned perfectly to respond to these people because it is accepting of all persons regardless of where they are in their personal journey of faith.

The Shaping our Future Survey taken throughout the diocese in 1995 indicated the major areas of interest and concern for members of the Church which included youth and Christian formation. A copy is included as addendum #11.

More **informally**, trends in the media, including *The Passion of the Christ* and prime-time follow-ups; a bishop on ER who helps a young doctor return to his faith; commercial success of *Touched by an Angel*; proliferation of religion sections in major newspapers; front cover stories on Jesus in *Time* and *Newsweek*, all indicate that commercial media recognize a market for spiritually-based material.

Research needed:

The national Executive Council has approved the establishment of a research and analysis unit at the Church Center under the direction of a qualified statistician and researcher, to collect appropriate data, and to analyze and interpret it on a consistent and long-term basis. The office will identify the base figure of worshipers in Episcopal churches as of 2000 and redesign the parochial report to include data appropriate to the focus on leadership development and growth. Information will help evaluate ongoing effectiveness of diocesan efforts as well.

Much statistical information is available on Louie Crew's website. Locally, parochial reports and Percept reports provide internal and external demographics and statistics.

Define problem/opportunity

Since the late 1950's church leaders, both ordained and lay, have long recognized declining church membership. Volumes have been written to address the situation. Church growth of years ago has become the graying of the Church in 2004. A maintenance-oriented church holds little relevance for today's youth or to the broader culture in which it exists. In order to be relevant to a large segment of the population that sees no value in the institutional church, congregations must learn to engage the unchurched in creative ways.

Gallup polls and other research indicate heightened spiritual hunger in society. While 80% of people say they believe in God, they don't know *what* they believe. It is the Church's responsibility to be an agent of transformation in this world. The church has the opportunity to become more relevant to more people if it can respond by reaching out strategically to these people without a faith home.

Targeted brochure provides missionary support

If we are asking our parishioners to be missionaries, we need to prepare them when they go into the world. The first thing a salesperson receives is collateral material about their product. We train people in church in an understanding of scripture and we want them to have information about what the diocese offers in terms of ministries, facilities and resources. So the first tool would be a diocesan brochure in a unique and winsome format that would include a map of the diocese which would display the breadth of the diocesan congregations, locations of facilities and the division of convocations. The other side would highlight one of the diocesan institutions like Camp Allen whose ministry of hospitality touches more than 35,000 people a year.

A tool which encourages members to see the 160 congregations, many institutions and more than 67 schools as One Church would provide a missionary who was confident in talking about their church and its interaction with culture.

These brochure/maps might be used in track racks, shared with Chambers of Commerce and/or placed in visitor welcome information to increase awareness among members and seekers as well as the community and media.

Ad campaign to support vision and evangelism efforts

Supporting this effort and the bigger picture of changing the perception within diocesan communities would be an ad campaign focusing on the uniqueness of the Episcopal Church and our Anglican heritage of the via media. This campaign would be launched concurrently with a national effort in 2005, preceded by specific preparation for congregations to respond to visitors.

The Discovery Series: *A Christian Journey* and the five newcomer brochures will continue to be available and marketed nationally. All have been translated into Spanish and funding is being sought to produce them in Spanish. They are available through the diocesan office, Morehouse Publishing and Episcopal Media Center as well as the bookstore at Camp Allen and Kanuga.

Publics/Objectives/Tactics

Internal

Bishops-Holding the key to diocesan leadership, bishops can promote a vision in the diocese. Make use of the Church's centralized leadership and diocesan structure.

- Objective is to create synergy around the diocesan vision and have the bishop become a banner carrier during all their interactions with local congregations and by the end of 2004, have all congregations provide the Diocesan Center with their own local vision statement and encourage all members to see themselves as missionaries.
 - Encourage a missionary focus at the diocesan Council, 2005 and at the Gathering, 2005.
 - Bishops and lay leadership to encourage participation in Iona Center training, conferences and the Gathering
 - Bishop to demonstrate his support and that of entire diocesan staff to the vision, and resourcing local congregations
 - Ask clergy who have engaged a vision locally to share stories.
 - Regular e-newsletter from Congregational Development and Communications offices
 - Clergy to receive prepared information package about the vision and its assessment on local level prior to Council, 2005

Office of Congregational Development and Communications

Council delegates are committed, knowledgeable church leaders, clergy and lay, who run the gamut of conservative to liberal. A majority of delegates have demonstrated their support of the vision following the bishop's request regarding resolutions at 154th Council. Executive Board and Standing Committee are supportive of the diocesan vision.

- Objective: To keep elected representatives and other lay leaders informed of initiative progress and secure their continued support for focusing on mission as opposed to issues
 - Provide each an update with information packet/cd with stories from a variety of churches where vision is engaged, personal testimonies of how vision is changing lives and helping churches grow, new church plant information, new youth initiatives, etc.
 - Focus 2005 Council with Bible study questions on mission and evangelism, recruit exhibitors who display a mission component, speakers and any presentations to be examples of results or need for the vision

Council host committee to coordinate with Communications Office, Division of World Mission, Youth, Outreach, 2004-Feb. 2005

Diocesan Center staff is focused on being a resource for congregations. This office is the logical place to centralize information and materials.

- Objective: Continually improve the responsiveness of the Diocesan Center staff to local congregations and make the resources available from the national and

diocesan centers made known beyond the Diocesan Center. This is a major touch point for congregations. The staff must continue to be responsive to the congregations and institutions, requesting their input.

- This begins at resource level and is also critical at support staff level.
- Revise web site and begin regular e-mail newsletter (e-zine) to diocesan leadership regarding resources, highlighting case studies of congregational health and mission.
- All Diocesan Center staff should be on mailing list for “e-zine” and encouraged to provide responses and comments. Building critical two-way communications that encourage staff to do a better communicate when speaking with congregational leaders.
- Support staff can also solicit responses from people with whom they come into contact. It is critical that the diocesan vision is communicated to support staff group and their role in its accomplishment be highlighted.

Diocesan leadership, Immediate and ongoing

- Objective is to improve ministry staffs' ability to work as a team, focused on healthy church growth, carrying vision message from the diocesan leadership to the congregations. This group may also provide resources to their own congregations. Very important to have the diocesan bishop's support in order for the vision and goals to be a priority.
 - Use conferences, meetings for treasurers, communicators, wardens, lay leadership. --Bishops are the carrier of this imperative. Lay leadership can be used for presentations, supported by printed and electronic materials from

Communications Office, 2004 - ongoing

Camp Allen sits at a unique crossroads where church and public intersect. It offers a ministry of hospitality presenting an Anglican model of evangelism and welcome. It offers a non-confrontational spiritual retreat for all who enter its grounds. It's the best kept secret in the diocese.

- Objective: To attract members and non-members to experience God in a pastoral setting and open a door through which each may experience a deeper spirituality.
 - Budget to increase marketing to diocesan congregations and groups, non-Episcopalians and corporations
 - Develop program offerings to attract new people (nature photography, Elder Hostel, ect)
 - Book a diversity of pre-developed programs which bring their own audience
 - Develop programs that express uniqueness of Camp Allen (eg. Christmas in the Pines, Family Camp)

Camp Allen board and staff, Ongoing

Institutions of the Diocese (hospital, social service agencies) provide one of the most direct contacts the Church has with potential members and the public beyond Sunday morning worship services. This group includes parents of students in Episcopal schools

who are not members, patients in Episcopal hospitals and church-sponsored health clinics and the general public who drive by Episcopal churches and agencies daily.

- Objective is to increase institution boards and staff exposure to the Episcopal Church and the vision by June 2005 providing all touch points with information on the vision relevant to their role in representing the Church and its mission, in order to improve their ability to be ambassadors of the Episcopal Church.
 - Use personal contacts and meetings, information packets, video tapes and PowerPoint presentations by diocesan leadership to boards, staff and teachers
 - Press packets, video from the bishop, teleconference or video presentation is appropriate for hospital and school personnel.
 - E-zine and newsletters to introduce and update them. Make sure they have basic information about the Episcopal Church as well. Brochures in hospitals, clinics, schools and social service agencies.

Local bishop and diocesan leadership to present vision to boards from local schools and institutions and disseminate information provided by Communications Office.

Immediate and ongoing.

Seminary and Episcopal schools

Dean and faculty groom and train future clergy and church leaders.

- Objective is to incorporate vision and mission-mindedness into the curriculum of Episcopal schools and the seminary by 2005 school year in such a way that doing mission and incorporating the need to reach out to the unchurched becomes a natural extension of whatever ministry future students engage in.
 - Make mission work a required part of curriculum as well as incorporating it into other facets of traditional studies.
 - Support materials, information packets, e-zine, etc. to deans and seminary professors, school faculties, e-zines or newsletters to seminarians, heads of schools

Designated dean and Communications office.

Seminarians-group from which sustained leadership will develop to continue the focus on mission and church growth. This will probably be an easier group than any to convince of the urgency of focusing away from issues and towards mission.

- Add them to mailing lists for continuing information and solicit feedback on e-mail forums.

Faculty, designated spokespersons and add to mailing lists. Beginning with 2005-06 school year

Congregational level

Clergy It is critical to hold clergy accountable for growth in their congregations and their efforts to reach to unchurched people in their communities. Most are eager to receive training, enthusiastic about responding and using resources that are available.

- Objective is to increase the resources and training to clergy in order to make their job easier and help them sustain healthy congregations within the next two - three years.
 - Diocesan leadership support using latest technology, articles in the paper and reaffirmed during personal visits from bishop, diocesan staff.
 - Make Percepts demographic studies available for their particular area, provide training, evaluation, and make sure they are on-line.
 - Diocesan offices to distribute resources, compile success stories, provide congregational development training.
 - Iona Center for Leadership Development. Curriculum responsive to clergy input and GC mandate for continuing education.
 - Include forum for clergy of different sized churches (resource, program, transitional and family) on the Web site.

Diocesan Communication and Congregational Development offices, bishops. Beginning fall 2004

Parish staffs and lay leaders

- Objective is to increase their understanding of the mission initiative and have them desire a growing and engaged congregation.
 - Provide needed training for leadership development so staff and lay leaders become banner carriers within the congregation and encourage others to participate.
 - Iona offerings
 - Discovery Series
 - Bishops to meet with congregations and leaders on regular visitations and do a vision presentation with them.
 - Bishops to commission congregations as missionaries-write commissioning responses based on Baptismal Covenant
 - Provide leadership on diocesan level to do mission oriented training for adult education classes and encourage participation in diocesan sponsored leadership training (all of which will have mission focus).

Bishops, diocesan offices of congregational development, communications, stewardship, Christian Formation. Immediate

Members This is where the work is already being done and the best source of stories exist.

- Objective is to educate members at large in such a way that they perceive their role in the success of a mission initiative and encourage sharing of stories where stories are taking place, incorporating the stories in the newspaper, website and showcasing at diocesan events and conferences.
 - National and diocesan newspapers, church newsletters, video taped presentations from bishop. Pew sheets, bulletin inserts, personal contact,

banners on church websites, ads in church publications and newsletters, posters, cd's with info packets.

- Diocesan brochure that tells the diocesan story, ministries, facilities and resources. Every three years, a different resource would be featured on one side-map of the diocese on the other side indicating churches, geography of the convocations, etc. Camp Allen one year, St. Luke's Hospital another, St. Vincent's House another.

Diocesan communications offices with resources from national Church Center. Beginning immediately, ongoing.

New members-the most enthusiastic torch bearers for this movement. Those who have recently become members are eager to share the experience; open to ideas because they have no preconceived notion they are not supposed to be involved in mission.

- Same as above

Youth-current and future church and the group from which future leaders will come.

- Objective is to bring them into the decision-making process up front, listen to them, and strategically recruit future clergy and leadership from this group, doubling the number of under 30 postulants by 2006 and placing young adults on every planning team for mission initiatives. With the help of clergy and diocesan leadership, this group should be targeted for focus groups, committees and designers of materials.
 - Tactics to reach them should be heavily electronic-a special e-zine developed by youth for youth.
 - Encourage youth representation on vestries

Office of Congregational Development with help from Communications and youth. Immediate and ongoing

Visitors

- Objective is to welcome visitors in a non-threatening way, provide needed information and offer an inclusive community using support materials provided to churches.
 - Help prepare churches to welcome visitors. Congregational development conferences, seminars and materials. Provide a checklist for all churches to measure their preparedness. Available now.
 - Brochures (see addendum 2), signs, visitor friendly worship booklets so they are not lost during the service, cd's and video tape about the church's efforts to reach the spiritually hungry with information on the Episcopal Church, trained greeters.
 - Follow up contact from greeters team

Communications and Iona Center to provide resources, training materials. Spring 2005

External

Anglican Communion-70 million Anglicans worldwide

- Objective is to keep information about initiative and effects up to date using:
 - Episcopal News Service, Anglican Communion News Service, *Anglican World*
 - Diocese of Texas should also invite leadership from Anglican Communion to visit Texas to experience missionary work here and make connections. This will help dissipate issues-oriented focus of some.

Bishop's and Communications Office. Could feature at Council, conferences. Ongoing.

Media

- The objective is to create long-term relationships with media representatives with a goal to change the content of coverage from sensational to transformational. Stories about mission trips, personalities in the church, programs that involve the Episcopal Church in mission activities in the community (Church under the bridge, Way Station ministry to the homeless, Astronomer priest, etc.) and strategic placement of mission-oriented stories will support local involvement. This is a slow, long-term commitment which requires established relationships with media representatives.
 - To accomplish this, diocesan offices will train designated communications people in each congregation, outreach ministries and agency who will provide stories from their congregation or agency to local media, thereby creating a bridge between the Church and the public community in which they exist. (See addendum 3)
 - Advertisements-print and broadcast ads that promote the Episcopal Church as a place where all are welcome. (See addendum 4)

Communications office-ongoing.

Public

- Objective is to continue reaching this group through community programs (health fairs, after school programs, outreach ministries) and strategically placed stories and advertisements, bill boards and broadcasts.

Local, congregational communications ministers. Immediate

Program planning

Key message points:

- The Episcopal Church has a clear vision of being One Church
- A community of miraculous expectation
- Dedicated to the transformation of lives
- Desirous of becoming a more diverse church, more closely mirroring the culture
- Mission-minded, both domestic and foreign
- Every member is a missionary
- Dedicated to congregational health which is reflected growth
- Planting a new church each year

Explanation

The vision of being one church must have the element of "miraculous expectation" because transformation is made possible by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Texas must respond to the changes in the demographic makeup of its 57 counties. Growth in the diocese has tracked growth in population statistics. In order to grow the church beyond this, starting churches in new areas is fundamental to reaching more people. Support of existing churches to intentionally attract populations that may or may not be able to support themselves is also vital. This means offering worship services in Spanish and perhaps Chinese and Ibo so that people can worship in their native languages. This also requires maintaining an active pastoral presence in particular communities and providing appropriate resources in these languages. (See addendum 5 and 6)

A strategic evaluation of efforts in "culturally" different congregations should be kept current and support predicated on adherence to Anglican tradition of tolerance and openness to others, strict accountability and an understanding of the diocesan vision as it relates to their own established goals.

Local congregational representatives, mission funding coordinators and outreach chairs must be identified and trained to communicate and encourage a mission initiative throughout the diocese. They provide a very localized "speakers bureau" for meetings of bodies, committees, organizations and smaller groups throughout the diocese. It is important to include younger clergy in order to give them the experience of working with a visioning process. They must be willing to make presentations to congregational and other groups. Training for these representatives will be developed by the offices of Communications and Congregational Development and provided at a convocational or regional level or as part of Iona Center offerings.

- Support materials** will include:
- Comprehensive interactive website redesign to become the central repository for resources and information for the diocese. It should include:
 - Stories of transformation in different locations and in churches of different sizes (200 words or less synopsis with contact info)
 - Resources for training communications people
 - Resources for congregational development
 - Business plans for congregations and agencies
 - Forums for discussion on many subjects including mission, Christian formation, visioning processes, etc. Meetings could be based on committee or vestry membership as well as open to all interested persons. (will help provide informal feedback and increase buy-in)
 - Include targeted messages written to and by different groups
 - **Press information kit** (with PowerPoint presentations) with information on the mission and vision, brochures, sample vision statements of some churches and step-by-step vision procedures. It also includes the bishop's Council address outlining goals, examples of mission activity in congregations of all sizes, resources, websites and plans for future implementation. The kit/cd will be provided to all clergy, diocesan contacts, seminary dean and students, all commissions and committees, Council delegates and anyone else who requests a copy. Entire format will also be included on website.
 - **Diocesan newspaper, Executive Board and Council delegates** will all be encouraged to use mission as a focus for their work to further disseminate the vision.
 - By 2005, **video** examples of programs depicting ministries in congregations that are engaged in mission will be made available for wide-distribution and shown at Council, Warden's Conference, etc.

A Gathering of the Diocese, June 2005

In order for the diocesan vision and goals to become an identified movement across the diocese, they should be introduced as such in an organized and celebratory effort. The 2005 Gathering can provide the venue where both elected and non-elected members of the diocese can participate with appointed leadership and clergy to celebrate the community of the Diocese of Texas. Mission and vision will be the theme of the gathering, daily Bible study will use passages regarding mission and stories of growth and miraculous transformation will be produced in a video to be used throughout the 3-day event. These will show how an attitudinal change in congregations results in transformation and growth and will showcase a grass roots movement towards mission in churches of all sizes, with attention to diversity.

Exhibitor will be encouraged to show how their organization has positioned itself for mission while others can highlight their foreign or domestic mission trips.

A celebratory gathering on the central Friday evening will involve diverse groups in the diocese and the closing Eucharist will encourage participants to carry the spirit of the Gathering to their local congregations and communities.

A key plenary speaker like Desmond Tutu or Joan Chittester to provide enthusiasm, uplift the participants give them a charge to go out and spread the gospel. A great preacher like Barbara Taylor Bradford could also be invited to preach. Workshops would offer models and processes for visioning, fundamentals for healthy churches and many more. Time would be available for networking and sharing information. This proved a very important part of the previous Gathering in 1995.

A formal request from the bishop should be sent to all clergy to participate with their church leadership and potential leadership. The Gathering will be of great benefit to clergy in jumpstarting and encouraging the emergence of new and young leadership. A concurrent youth event doing mission in the Houston area will take place and be highlighted at the Gathering.

Timeline

This communications plan is not a program with an end date but a continuing commitment to head the Gospel call to transform lives. The long-term goal is to be an agent of change in our culture with members who are actively involved in reaching out and growing spiritually. A concurrent goal is to raise awareness of the Episcopal Church as a Christian faith dedicated to *being* Christ in the world, welcoming and responsive to all people. The result of doing this effectively will be a growing, healthy and diverse church that is relevant in today's culture.

May, 2004	Draft of Communications plan to Resource staff
June, 2004	Final approval by Resource staff and presentation to Executive Board
Sept, 2004	Approval by Executive Board
Oct, 2004	Approval of funding for Communications Plan
Oct, 2004	Vision conference for clergy and their staffs as focus of clergy conference
Oct, 2004	Hire IT person to manage website and office computers, databases (\$40,000)
Nov, 2004	Finish information packets (\$3,000)
Jan, 2005	Executive Board, clergy, lay leadership receive information packets
Feb, 2005	Rollout of new website (\$10,000)
Feb, 2005	Diocesan brochure available to all churches and congregations (\$60,000)
June, 2005	A Gathering of the Diocese (\$150,000)
Sept, 2005	Video of Gathering keynote speakers with visioning model provided to each congregation (\$15,000)
2005	Easter, Rally Day and Christmas ad campaign (\$500,000)

Funding for communications efforts for 2004-2005

Oct, 2004	Hire IT person (first year)	\$40,000
Immediate	Research/evaluation	
	Survey, selective focus groups, one-time consultant	5,000
Nov, 2004	Information packets /with cd's	
		\$3,000
	Feb, 2005	Rollout of new website
		\$10,000
	Feb, 2005	Diocesan informational brochure (3 year shelf-life)
		\$60,000
	June, 2005	A Gathering of the Diocese
		\$150,000
	Sept, 2005	Video of Gathering keynote speakers
		15,000
2005	Multi-media Ad campaign	
		\$500,000
Total		\$783,000

Overall Budget

The target budget for the 20/20 initiative over the next 18 years is \$2 billion (\$2,000,000,000.00) in new money through a tripartite development program soliciting major gifts, middle market gifts and a grass roots/popular campaign. A board of appointees of the Presiding Officers of the GC and the provinces would also include the treasurer of the Church. The board would have the authority to raise and disburse funds. Additionally, a Council of Advice, lay leaders of the Church, clergy, bishops and major donors, would provide outside guidance and oversight to the work of the board. The board would employ a development office and a grant office.

Concurrent efforts:

Other things that must happen to make the 20/20 initiative move forward include:

- Creative strategies for evangelism developed
- Enhance spiritual formation within congregations. This must be seen as a lifelong endeavor and enhance the belief that being Episcopalian means being involved and taking Sunday to Monday. Planning for this will come from the national office of spiritual formation in cooperation with provincial and diocesan Christian Formation directors and include specifically targeted work for youth and young adults.
 - Currently a 20-session discovery class, based on the Baptismal Covenant, is being written and taped by the Diocese of Texas for nationwide distribution. It will be available in November 2002.
- Recruit and equip innovative leaders
 - New guidelines drawn for Commissions on Ministry who approve postulants for seminary training
 - Renewed efforts to engage in college and university campus ministry that is both multicultural and multi-ethnic
 - Produce profiles and training criteria for alternative forms of leadership in the style of the local lay-leadership and Canon-9 priests with format for instruction and minimum requirements (EX. Matagorda)
- Provide major congregational development and church planting planning-conferences to share information and ideas, examples, support materials

Evaluation

Immediate feedback is available from Gallup polls, statistics gathered from annual parochial reports from each congregation, surveys and specific studies done that provide an internal audit or starting point for measuring the effectiveness of the 20/20 initiative. This provides adequate background information on which to base a communications strategy. A new office for research and analysis has been established at the Church Center to continually track the information gathered from these polls and studies.

Within this information and stated goal of doubling attendance by 2020, an appropriate message may be crafted and ways in which to deliver the message focused on particular publics, electronic, print, video, personal, group or individual. One critical piece is that whatever form the message takes, it must be state of the art in design and presentation.

While it is relatively simple to track how many pieces are mailed (electronically or otherwise) and estimates can be made as to how many people received certain messages, the number of people who actually act on it and respond may be measured by built in mechanisms in the messages. Replies and input from readers must be continually solicited and evaluated.

It will take several years to see the fruits of the labor in renewed ministries, growing churches and transformed lives. Stories about these events will grow in number if the communications plan is proactive about gathering and sharing them. That effort (perhaps in book form) can become a message piece itself.

The Communications Office will track coverage in diocesan and other church publications for coverage of 20/20 and stories that express the initiative's fruition. It would seem that the number of these would grow as the initiative gathers speed in the coming years.

A clipping service should be engaged to gather coverage in secular publications as well as broadcast pieces.

The national group of parish and diocesan editors, communications directors and web managers will be asked to support the effort of ongoing 20/20 coverage at their April 24-28, 2002 meeting and will be asked to provide any resources they know of or have created to the Communications Office for inclusion on the central website to be shared broadly across the country. Additionally, each will be asked to provide "transformation" stories in brief terms for use on the web site and other possible reproduction. Response to these requests will gauge local buy-in for the initiative and indicate where there needs to be an altered effort. This group is positioned to be extremely effective in carrying the message in training local communications people to do the same in their congregations' communities. Coverage will indicate success here.

Ex. In 1998, St. Francis, College Station, Texas sent two people responsible for church communications to a training session sponsored by the diocese. Within the next year, St. Francis was featured in 15 front page stories in the Bryan/College Station Eagle. The church has shown exponential growth in the past several years indicated by its average attendance and increased revenues, improving its ability to make a difference in its community.

Response from electronic forums, targeted to specific publics, will also provide feedback to the Communications Office, allowing alterations to be made to the message as needed. A survey of bishops following their fall House of Bishops meeting and briefing on 20/20 will indicate the amount of local buy-in from the leadership of each diocese.

The initiative has been circulated for two years in committee and will gather strength as it becomes a part of many leadership meetings throughout this year and early next year. A celebratory rollout of 20/20 can be made at the 2003 General Convention and the video from that used to introduce the initiative to every congregation in the Church but it is critical that the communications plan and schedule not be tied to the General Convention or its three-year schedule. The communications plan must be immediate, continuing and capable of responding to feedback.

Response from parishes, requests for materials and measured activity on 20/20 web site will also provide much feedback, especially after the GC videotape is made available to all congregations.

The web site, e-zine and newsletter will all solicit response and ideas from church leadership at all levels. This will provide information from those who are engaged in the initiative. Where response is not evidence will indicate areas of concern.

While much of this response is informal, results of the communications plan will be evident in the initiative's effectiveness in concrete was by the time the 2003 and especially 2004 parochial reports come in. Church growth in terms of average attendance, pledging and operating revenue should begin to rise, as should the number of new church starts. These are hard statistics and can be accessed easily through the data base. Areas of concern will show up and can be targeted for more focused communications and congregational efforts.

While most of the evaluation will be done by the office of research and analysis, and much of the initiative's success depends on local leadership support, the communications plan can reach the grass roots and begin to build interest from the most local level, placing accountability on leadership from several directions.