

# Supporting Materials Previous Reports

E.5



### **E.5.1 Bishop's Response to Parkdale Commission Report**

I want to do this

- There is general agreement "business as usual" is not effective

I will create and chair Parkdale Ministry Development Council

#### *Parkdale Ministry Development Council*

- Creative imaginative ministry
- United Anglican presence in Parkdale
- It will be financially sound
- It will be a grass roots partnership
- It will recognize the fundamental importance of urban ministry
- There will be effective ongoing communication of progress

#### *Membership*

- Each incumbent/priest in charge
- One lay person from each parish nominated to the Bishop
- One member of the Parkdale Commission
- There will be a Diocesan staff person to provide support
- There will be a facilitator

#### *Structure*

- Parkdale Ministry Development Council
- Working Groups (drawn from people with suitable skills)

#### *Social Needs*

- Environmental scan
- Community audit

#### *Models*

- Research models for partnership existing in Canada, North America and the Anglican Communion

#### *Theology of Urban Ministry*

- In consultation with Trinity and Wycliffe

### *Financial*

- Current situation in each parish
- Identify funding sources
- Seek creative ways to raise money
- Fiscally sound
- Create a new administrative model

### *Property*

- Take an inventory of what we own including office equipment
- Use of buildings

### *Report*

- Interim Report in January 2007 and April 2007
- Final report in June 2007
- Regular communication with wardens and advisory boards

### *When recommendations are reached*

- Review Canons and Policies and Procedures of Diocese
- Review parish responsibilities i.e. vestries

### **Make a decision & implement it**

## **E: 5.2 Report of the Diocesan Commission 2006**

June 30, 2006

To the Right Reverend Philip Poole  
Area Bishop of York, Credit Valley  
Diocese of Toronto

**Re: The Report of the Commission on Ministry in Parkdale Deanery**

Right Reverend Sir:

We are herewith offering this report of the Commission on Ministry in Parkdale, appointed by you in January 2006. You asked us to develop a new strategy for mission and ministry for Parkdale parishes and to “come up with new and creative directions (for these parishes) which might serve as a template for the diocese”. By this report, we have tried to do as you requested.

There have been at least two other Commissions appointed by bishops of Toronto to consider the Church in the Deanery of Parkdale; one in 1980, another in 1998. Undoubtedly, these commissions were appointed because of the demographic shifts in the Parkdale area which have caused a steady decline in membership and therefore the financial resources of the parishes of the deanery. Some of this decline has been caused by the move to the suburbs in the 1940s and 50s of the original, founding English-speaking population, which made up many of the congregations. The area has been an immigrant reception area since very early days and every decade or so a new nationality with a diversity of religious expression has settled in this area. Interestingly, the area now is attracting many English-speaking, middle and upper income individuals and families who wish to settle permanently in the area. Today the decline is due more because fewer people are seeking membership in any Christian community. It has become increasingly clear to us in this urban portion of our diocese that we can no longer continue to function as we have been accustomed to in the past.

The 1980 Commission was formed “to examine the church in Parkdale and make recommendations and plans for reorganization”. In its report to the bishop, its authors reflected on the “latent hostility in the deanery toward the diocese”, on “the weariness of maintaining the buildings” of the then 12 parishes”, and “the need for financial assistance from the diocese”. It recommended the selling of St. Mark’s and the merger of its congregation with the Epiphany; the tearing down of St. Stephen’s buildings, including church, parish house and rectory, and developing a new facility to house both St. Stephen’s congregation and a proposed Chinese congregation; the renovation of the

basement of St. Mary the Virgin and St. Cyprian's parish for community outreach purposes; keeping St. Alban's so as to continue its ministry to a Japanese congregation; and retaining St. John's, Portland Street for the development of a diocesan retreat house and resource center. In essence, the bulk of the recommendations for the mandated "reorganization" had to do mostly with buildings.

The 1998 Commission recommended that six of the remaining eight parishes, (St. Mary and St. Cyprian's had been closed and sold, and St. Alban's had been combined with St. Matthias, and St. John's Portland Street had been closed and the property sold) be formed into two clusters aimed mainly at fostering cooperative ministries. While the west cluster composed of only St. Anne's and Epiphany St. Mark's functioned modestly for a short period, the concept was soon discarded.

The current Commission, herewith reporting, has met with the Advisory Boards of all seven parishes, with the deanery clericus, with clergy engaged in relevant specialized ministries outside the deanery, and with the leadership of St. Christopher House, an agency whose work is involved with the some very critical social needs of people resident in the Parkdale area. And we met with Mr. Deryck Williams who was appointed by the diocese to oversee the administration of the parishes of St. George the Martyr and St. Stephen-in-the-Fields.

While all these encounters with laity and clergy have influenced the conclusions we have come to, there are three other factors that have shaped the recommendations we make. One has to do with the changing demographics of the Parkdale area of the city of Toronto. This area includes several old and distinctive residential and commercial neighbourhoods, such as the Annex, Kensington, Chinatown, Little Italy and Little Portugal, all of which are experiencing considerable change. Condominium developments are increasing at a rapid rate, and a new diverse commercial vitality is being evidenced. Property values are continuing to soar. While previous population shifts have seriously impacted on the sustainability of most of the parishes, it is possible that these parishes will be faced with new opportunities for growth, even as they are currently experiencing new opportunities for ministry which their continued presence presents.

Another factor, related to the first, which has shaped this report is an emerging theology of urban ministry which positions the church not only as a continuing provider of sacramental and pastoral ministry to those who seek a spiritual home, but as a physical presence in the city as an incarnational sign of God's grace. We have however discerned a lack of adequate resources available through theological colleges and post-ordination programs to encourage an understanding of this emerging theology and to develop skills necessary to meet the challenges of urban ministry. We are constantly reminded of the baptismal covenant undergirding this new theological awareness, which defines and challenges our physical presence in the city to seek and serve Christ

in all people. This theology of urban ministry, a growing understanding of which we believe must be one of the major priorities of our diocese, should lead us to expand our understanding of who our parishioners are, to include not only our existing congregants, but also as well those whose lives and/or work are in our geographical parishes. The emerging landscape in which our parishes exist is calling us to be faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ by re-imagining what it means to be church. We believe parish life can no longer be just congregationally driven, but must find a fuller expression in ministry and mission that is contextual, directed to the reality of the life that is lived in this diverse multi-lingual, multi-racial, multi-cultural, and multi-faith city.

A third factor which has profoundly impressed and influenced us has been the existence of a deanery initiated study of urban theology and ministry, set up independent of your Commission, yet at the same time . This group of laity and clergy representing all seven parishes, self-named, **The Parkdale Deanery Advocacy Working Group**, met with the Commission, offering some recommendations for our consideration. Briefly stated, we were asked to consider the following:

- A united deanery with a vision for the Gospel in downtown Toronto and an Anglican presence, capable of robust outreach, evangelism, service to seekers both inside and outside the church, and community service, through a sharing of our human and financial resources
- That “*business as usual*” is no longer a possibility in the deanery. This applies to the way parishes and the deanery are staffed, the way in which we provide outreach, services to seekers, and pastoral care in our urban setting.
- That no church building be sold, but that we be creative in our uses and maintenance of what we have
- That there be a unified way of addressing the needs of people across the deaneries of Parkdale, Riverdale and St. James
- That there be enhanced communication between deanery and diocese and between deaneries, which is essential to support the creation of urban ministry
- That there be a sharing of education programming, pastoral care, outreach, and liturgical events
- That the parish ministry include ministry to the communities and people who live within the boundary

We agree with the essence of all these concepts and suggestions, and because we believe they are attainable, we recommend the following:

1. That no existing parish in Parkdale Deanery be closed, nor should any property be sold, but that the current situation of separate parishes not continue
2. That there be created immediately a **Parkdale Ministry Development Council** with representatives of clergy and laity chosen from each parish in consultation

- with the Bishop, along with at least one continuing Commission member. This Council should be recognized as an effective continuation of the Commission on Ministry in the Parkdale Deanery
3. In view of the unsuccessful experiences to effect a new approach to ministry in Parkdale, we recommend that this new Parkdale Ministry Development Council be asked to report by June 30, 2007. Prior to this the Bishop should received two interim reports – by January 16, 2007 and April 30, 2007.
  4. That this Council devotes no more than a year from its beginning to consider models of new and appropriate structures.

The following example is offered only as one suggestion in order to generate discussion.

A **Team Ministry** could be created that would provide for and minister in a single **Parkdale Parish**, incorporating all seven existing congregations.

This model could have a staff comprised of one full time clergy person to serve as the **Supervising Minister**; two full time clergy persons who would serve as **Pastoral** and **Liturgical Ministers**; one clergy person or layperson to serve as a **Missional Minister** with responsibility for **Outreach, Education, and Evangelism**; one full time person to serve as **Financial** and **Property Coordinator**, and a full time person to serve as **Office Assistant**. This model could include the ministry of non-stipendiary clergy.

The Commission recommends that research should take place within this first year of the Council to consider other models of urban ministry structures.

Bishop Poole, you presented this Commission with an awesome challenge to reinvent the way in which ministry is done in Parkdale. In submitting the above report and recommendations, we pray that they will be useful as you, along with the people - lay and clergy - of Parkdale Deanery consider what God is calling the Church to be and do as we move further into this 21<sup>st</sup> century.

THIS REPORT IS RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED by the Parkdale Commission:

Kennedy Marshall

Heather McGregor

David Neelands

Joachim Fricker (Chair)

Simon Bell (Staff Resource person)

## Appendix A

The following parishes constitute the Parkdale Deanery on the Diocese of Toronto

<b>Parishes</b>	<b>Incumbent</b>
St Anne's Gladstone	The Rev. G. Philip Cooper – interim priest in charge
Epiphany and St Mark	The Rev. Kenneth Borrett
St George-the-Martyr	The Rev. Max P. Woolaver
St Mary Magdalene	The Rev. Canon Harold J. Nahabedian
St Matthias, Bellwoods	The Rev. Jeffrey Kennedy
St Stephen-in the-Fields	The Rev. Canon Christian Swayne, O.H.C. – interim priest in charge
St Thomas, Huron Street	The Rev. Mark Andrews