

BLUE BOOK REPORT FOR GENERAL CONVENTION 2018 ADVISORY GROUP FOR CHURCH PLANTING

Members:

The Rev. Jane Gerdson, chair
The Rev. Valerie Bailey Fischer
Ms. Erendira Jimenez-Pike
The Rev. Alex Montes Vela
The Rev. Katie Nakamura Rengers
The Rev. Zachary Nyein
The Rev. David W. Perkins
The Rev. Canon Jesus Reyes
The Rev. Canon Janet Waggoner
The Most Rev. Michael Curry, ex officio
The Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, ex officio
The Rev. Canon Frank Logue, liaison to Executive Council
The Rev. Canon Tanya Wallace, liaison to Executive Council
The Rev. Tom Brackett, Staff
The Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers, Staff

Members, resigned:

The Right Rev. George Sumner
The Rev. Mike Michie

Additional members appointed during the triennium:

The Right Rev. Mary Gray Reeves
The Rev. Mike Michie, Staff

OVERVIEW OF WORK

Video: <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/mission-developers-report-church>

The Episcopal Church launched a new missional movement to engage in evangelism and church planting initiatives and to cultivate new ministries for the Jesus Movement. As there has not been a culture of church planting in the Episcopal Church in recent years, the appointment of the Advisory Group on Church Planting has helped steward the development of a church wide network for planting congregations, training and recruiting planters and mission developers and establishing new congregations and missional initiatives. Over the course of this triennium, the Advisory Group on Church Planting received over 120 grants and recommended funding for 66 new ministries with \$3,400,000 allocated for funding new church plants and mission enterprise zones. This includes

- 21 new church starts
- 22 new mission enterprise zones and hybrid missional communities
- 14 discernment grants to assist with assessment, training, and consulting during the pre-launch phase of a project
- 10 renewal grants for ministries initially funded in 2013-2015
- The new starts include 8 Latinx new starts, 3 other multi-ethnic new starts, and 2 specifically connecting with millennials. Some examples include Christ's Beloved Community (NC), Hope Sandwiches (CA), Misa Magdalena (DC), Sudanese Congregation at St. Paul's (Central NY), Epiphany Church (GA).
- The MEZ's include 3 Latinx, although almost all deal with non-dominant population groups including millennials, those living with poverty or homelessness, indigenous/native groups, or environmental stewardship/farming. Some examples include Plainsong Farm (MI), Franklinton Cycleworks (S.OH), Supper@St. Martins (PA), Table 229 (MN), 4 Saints Food Pantry (Ft. Worth), Between the Ridges (WA), Proyecto para una panaderia y pasteleria (Ecuador),
- The renewal grants include 4 Latinx renewals, 2 other multi-ethnic, 1 working with millennials, and 1 farming. Examples include: The Abbey (AL), St. Gabriel's (VA), Our Lady of Guadalupe (Olympia), San Pedro y San Paul (OR), the Abundant Table (CA), and Warriors for a Dream (NY).

Each of these ministries is in a different phase of development, some are still organizing, some are pre-launch, some are just now launching, and many of these communities are thriving, growing in membership and involvement. Each ministry is reporting back their progress in the form of a dynamic ministry plan platform that allows mission developers to keep their diocesan advocates, coaches, and church center staff up to date on their plans and growth. To learn more about individual churches or missional initiatives visit: <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/church-planting-and-missional-development>. You can find more statistics, a map of funded ministries, videos, stories, reflections, and resources.

MANDATE

Resolution D005 created this Advisory Group to expand the work of the Office of Church Planting and Redevelopment, in partnership with and under the guidance of the Joint Standing Committee on Local Mission and Ministry.

The ministry of this Advisory Group, as directed by Resolution D005, has been to create a church-wide network for planting churches. As per the Resolution, the work of the Advisory Group was to included:

- Identifying and supporting existing programs for training in planting congregations for clergy and lay leaders;
- Providing resources for planters of congregations;
- Developing and implementing a program to train bilingual/bicultural lay and ordained leaders for Latino/Hispanic ministries;

- Hiring a staff person to oversee the planting network
- Distributing approximately \$3,000,000 in grant funds to new church starts and mission enterprise zones.

The Advisory Group was to develop criteria for receiving grants, provide a reporting process, make recommendations to Executive Council about grants to be awarded, identify and assess potential planters, and develop a network of assessors and coaches, as well as initiate training processes to support new church starts and mission enterprise zones. The Advisory Group was guided by the Resolution to work with the Communications Office of The Episcopal Church to establish a website and Facebook page for church planting initiatives, as well as to produce news stories and videos to celebrate the work of church planting in The Episcopal Church.

The Advisory Group on Church Planting was also asked to oversee the continued funding of Mission Enterprise Zones as outlined in **Resolution A012** and to collaborate with Hispanic and Latino Ministry developers working on **Resolution A086**.

SUMMARY OF WORK

The work of the Advisory Group on Church Planting proceeded throughout the Triennium on two intersecting tracks. The first of these tracks was the creation – through research, design, partnership, execution and evaluation – of an infrastructure for mission development. The second track was the distribution of \$3,400,000 in grant funds to selected church plants and mission enterprise zones, a process which included designing an application, supporting church planters in the clarification of their goals and in the completion of their applications (including encouraging deeper partnerships with their dioceses), receiving and evaluating applications, continuing conversations with church planters about their applications, awarding grants, and establishing and maintaining a process for follow-up with these church plants and distribution of grant funds.

The Advisory Group met as a group of the whole three times during the Triennium – in February 2016 in Maryland, in August 2017 in Cincinnati, and in October 2017 in Baltimore. In addition, the Advisory Group met monthly by video conference throughout the Triennium. Further, subcommittees met regularly as needed for their particular work, and in September 2017, Tom Brackett and Jane Gerdson, chair of the Advisory Group, met with Mike Michie, Staff Officer for Church Planting Infrastructure, after he was hired in September 2017.

Application Process and Grant Awards

The Advisory Group on Church Planting developed four applications, each for a different kind of mission planting endeavor:

- An application for Mission Enterprise Zones
- An application for Church Plants
- An application for Hybrid Ministries (a ministry, outreach program or mission enterprise zone developing into a church plant)
- An application for a Discernment Grant

The Advisory Group also considered renewal applications for mission enterprise zones and developing church plants which had received funding in the last triennium for a mission enterprise zone or discernment grant for those working to clarify and develop a church plant.

The Advisory Group considered four main factors in evaluation of grant applications:

1. The person or team: A clearly identified missionary or team was given priority. Minimally, a local team was required to have a sense of the qualifications and skills needed in a church planter. Church planters supported with grant funds were required to undergo assessment to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses as related to the particular work of church planting.
2. The place: A clear sense of the context and/or community to be served. Evidence of a significant amount of research regarding the context and the elements needed for a church plant to be successful in that context. Evidence that the skills and ministry background of the church planter/mission developer will be a good fit for that context.
3. The plan: A clear plan and strategy for the ministry, an articulated plan for growth of the ministry, development of stewardship and/or fundraising, and an understanding of the steps needed to attain sustainability of the ministry.
4. Support from the Diocese: An endorsement letter from the bishop was required. In most cases, matching funding was required, with the exception of dioceses in which financial resources are scarce. In those cases, other evidence of strong support for the project was required.

The grant applications were translated into Spanish and released in April 2016. The Advisory Group received applications throughout the triennium until funding was dispersed. June 1, 2016 was the first deadline for applications to be considered. During the course of the triennium, over 120 applications were received, and 65 ministries were funded. A summary of ministries funded is as follows:

NEW CHURCH PLANTS – recipients of \$100,000 grants (unless otherwise noted)

Christ's Beloved Community – Winston-Salem, NC

Diocese of North Carolina

Good Samaritan – Brownsburg, IN

Diocese of Indianapolis

Millennial Church Start – Savannah, GA

Diocese of Georgia

Southwest Florida Church Plant

Diocese of Southwest Florida

Hope Sandwiches, St. John's – Bernardino, CA

Diocese of Los Angeles

El Corazon – Grand Haven, MI
Diocese of Western Michigan

Chaplain on the Harbor – Grays Harbor, WA
Diocese of Olympia

Episcopal Church of the Resurrection – Plano, TX (\$75,000)
Diocese of Dallas

La Iglesia Episcopal – Lynn, MA
Diocese of Massachusetts

Iglesia Episcopal St. James Portland, OR (\$78,000)
Diocese of Oregon

Church Plant – Hermitage, PA
Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania

Slate Project – Baltimore, MD (\$75,000)
Diocese of Maryland

Episcopal Church of Parker County – Parker County, TX
Diocese of Fort Worth

Comunidad Latina de San Dunstan – Tulsa, OK
Diocese of Oklahoma

Misa Magdalena – Aspen Hill, MD
Diocese of Washington (DC)

Sudanese Congregation at St. Paul's – Syracuse, NY (\$50,000)
Diocese of Central NY

Senor de la Misericordia – Denison, IA
Diocese of Iowa

Two Cultures, One Body in Christ - Monmouth County, NJ (\$60,000)
Diocese of New Jersey

North Park Project – San Diego, CA
Diocese of San Diego

Grovetown Episcopal Mission – Augusta, GA
Diocese of Georgia

Bethesda Episcopal Church – Orlando, FL
Diocese of Central Florida

MISSION ENTERPRISE ZONES – recipients of \$20,000 grants (unless otherwise noted)

Supper @ St. Martin's – Philadelphia, PA
Diocese of Pennsylvania

St. John's Episcopal Church – Cleveland, OH (\$23,000 + \$31,000 after growth to planting worshipping community)
Diocese of Ohio

Table 229 – St. Paul, MN (\$20,000 + \$20,000 after growth to Hybrid/Church Plant)
Diocese of Minnesota

Breaking Bread – Rapid River, MI (\$15,000)
Diocese of Northern Michigan

Plainsong Farm – Rockford, MI
Diocese of Western Michigan

4 Saints' Food Pantry – Fort Worth, TX
Diocese of Fort Worth

The Divine Office – Santa Monica, CA (\$40,000)
Diocese of Los Angeles

St. Luke's Ministry Interns – Seattle, WA (\$20,000)
Diocese of Olympia

Between the Ridges – Wapato, WA (\$20,000)
Diocese of Spokane

The Center for Mission and Ministry at St. Paul's – Kansas City, KS
Diocese of Kansas

Latinos Pa'lante St. Mary's Latino Ministry –Dorchester, MA (Hybrid/MEZ) (\$60,000)
Diocese of Massachusetts

Franklinton Cycleworks – Columbus, OH
Diocese of Southern Ohio

Proyecto para una panaderia y pasteleria – Guayaquil, Ecuador
Diocese of Ecuador Central

Episcopal Ministries of Corpus Christi – Corpus Christi, TX
Diocese of West Texas

Extending the Table - Steven's Point, Wisconsin (MEZ) (\$20,000)
Diocese of Fond du Lac

Grace Church Red Hill – North Garden, VA (Hybrid MEZ) (\$40,000)
Diocese of Virginia

Justice, Healing, Reconciliation Center – Iowa City, IA (Hybrid MEZ) (\$75,000)
Diocese of Iowa

South Sudanese Congregation – Alexandria, VA
Diocese of Virginia

Church at the Crossroads – Detroit, MI (\$25,000)
Diocese of Michigan

Teens of Santa Cruz County – Santa Cruz, CA
Diocese of El Camino Real

Appleton Episcopal Ministries – Macon, GA
Diocese of Atlanta

DISCERNMENT GRANTS – recipients of \$5,000 grants

South Bronx Team Ministry – Bronx, NY
Diocese of New York

The Bridge, St. Peter's – Dartmouth, MA
Diocese of Massachusetts

Emmaus Episcopal Church – Surprise, AZ
Diocese of Arizona

Grace Church – Montpellier, France
Convocation of the Episcopal Church in Europe

Elizabeth Easton (\$2,500)

Diocese of Nebraska

Pamela Mott (\$2,500)

Diocese of Western Massachusetts

Hispanic Church Plants in Garland, TX and Mount Pleasant, TX (\$2,500 each)

Diocese of Dallas

Christ Church – Bayfield, WI (\$3,000)

Diocese of Eau Claire

Garry Commins

Diocese of Newark

Meghan Mullarkey (\$3,000)

Diocese of Olympia

Meg Wagner (\$5,000)

Diocese of Iowa

Ragan Sutterfield

Diocese of Arkansas

Kairos West – Asheville, NC

Diocese of Western NC

Evangelizando con Los Lencas

Diocese of Honduras

RENEWALS – amount of grant funding as noted below

The Advisory Group on Church Planting recommended to the Executive Council that approved renewals be sent (upon notice of renewed funding) a survey about learning, spiritual health, and ongoing support and needs. The Advisory Group also recommended that renewals be asked to contribute to the growing church planting community of practice, by providing – in writing and video form – more information about their ongoing learnings, in order to encourage the movement of church planting across The Episcopal Church.

Bread and Roses – Charlotte, NC (\$12,500)

Diocese of North Carolina

Church on the Square – Baltimore, MD

Diocese of Maryland

The Abbey – Birmingham, AL (\$75,000)
Diocese of Alabama

Our Lady of Guadalupe – Seattle, WA (\$100,000)
Diocese of Olympia

St. Gabriel's – Leesburg, VA (\$75,000)
Diocese of Virginia

San Pablo – Seaside, CA (\$96,000)
Diocese of El Camino Real

San Pedro/San Pablo – Portland, OR (\$45,000)
Diocese of Oregon

St. James – Pittsburgh, PA (\$50,000)
Diocese of Pittsburgh

The Abundant Table Farm (\$35,000)
Diocese of Los Angeles

Warriors of the Dream – New York, NY (\$20,000)
Diocese of New York

Many of the applications for which the Advisory Group was unable to provide funding were for ministries that are still in various stages of development. It is anticipated that, if funding for church planting continues as requested in the Resolution below, some of these ministries will be ready to receive funding in the coming triennium.

In order for new ministries - church plants, mission enterprise zones and hybrids - to thrive in The Episcopal Church, two additional areas need to receive particular support in the next triennium. First, potential church planters and mission developers need to be identified, assessed, and trained. There is great need for leaders gifted in church planting, particularly persons who are bilingual and/or bi-cultural. Second, deeper partnerships and resources must be developed at the diocesan level. Some dioceses have the skill, vision, and commitment to partner with new church plants, while others lack experience and training in this area. Many dioceses lack financial resources or believe that investments in new church plants are too risky. Additional encouragement, partnership, and training is needed to stir some dioceses to enthusiasm and action. The Advisory Group on Church Planting and Missional Initiatives hopes that through the work undertaken in this triennium, we might inspire and encourage the Episcopal Church to a deeper understanding of how best to support and sustain new mission development across the church.

Communications

In addition to the development of an application process, the Advisory Group worked to rebrand and develop marketing materials for the work of church planting and mission development in The Episcopal Church, calling this initiative “Genesis – Cultivating New Ministries in the Episcopal Church.” In partnership with the Communications Office of The Episcopal Church, the Advisory Group developed new branding for TEC’s church planting movement, as well as a website (with information also available in Spanish), blog, and Facebook account. The communications sub-committee of this Advisory Group helped write a number of press releases announcing the availability of new grant funds and the work of the Advisory Group, including assessment, training, and coaching for church planters. In addition, a series of video messages was released, lifting up these exciting opportunities for the Church and our hopes for what might emerge from this work. The website, videos and stories can be found [here: https://www.episcopalchurch.org/church-planting-and-missional-development](https://www.episcopalchurch.org/church-planting-and-missional-development).

Assessment, Coaching, and Training

- **Assessments** – Research reveals that three keys to a successful new ministry are (1) right mission developer – someone who has the particular abilities, commitments and skills to lead a new start; (2) right location – a context in which there is local commitment and a high rate of growth in the community; and (3) right fit – a mission developer that fits well in the community and context and who has the support of the local Episcopal community. The Advisory Group identified assessors adept in the use of the assessment tool developed by the United Methodist Church. These assessors not only assessed planters seeking grant support for their endeavors, but also trained Episcopal assessors in the use of the assessment tool, as adapted for our Episcopal context.
- **Coaching** – Research on methods of coaching and reports of outcomes from planters who have received coaching resulted in a decision to train and deploy church planting coaches who meet two criteria: (1) experience in mission development and (2) training through a program certified by the International Coaching Federation. The Advisory Group invited applications from coaches who already have these qualifications, while also coordinating training for new coaches. Training for these new coaches is provided by contract, in exchange for 75 hours of coaching which they provide to individual planters upon completion of their training.
- **Training** – Foundational to our work is the training of mission developers and their teams. The Advisory Group explored a number of training resources, including ministry development plans, online resources and in-person trainings. Because in-person training opportunities also contribute to the development of a community of practice, the Advisory Group instituted in-person training sessions, and held three of these sessions during the triennium. Following participation in training sessions, church planters and their teams are invited to monthly on-line community of practice conversations which provide ongoing accountability for ministry plans as well as shared wisdom regarding best practices.

Community of Practice

A Community of Practice has been created by organizing gatherings not only for grant recipients and prospective grant recipients, but also for many others who are curious about or already engaged in the work of church planting and new ministry development.

In the November 2016, a Genesis Gathering was held in Dallas, as a pre-conference event occurring before the Evangelism Matters Conference. Over fifty church planters and ministry developers came together for this Gathering, where we built capacity for these ministries, shared learnings, and offered networking opportunities for persons engaged in similar kinds of ministries. In April 2017, a Genesis Gathering was held prior to the Missional Voices conference at Virginia Theological Seminary.

Our Community of Practice has continued to develop through online conversations and trainings. A variety of resources, many of which are available online, have also been made available to support the work of planters and mission developers.

Staff Officer for Church Planting Infrastructure, Church Planting and Redevelopment

Resolution D005 specifically included funding to support a staff position to undergird the work of church planting and mission enterprise initiatives. In Spring 2017, a committee was appointed to engage with leadership at the Episcopal Church Center in the hiring process. Following a process of extensive application review, interviews and engagement with candidates, the hiring committee selected The Rev. Mike Michie. Since 2005, Michie served as rector of St. Andrew's in McKinney, TX, a church he planted and of which he is the founding rector. Under his leadership, the congregation grew to a 650-member church, with a series of community-based ministries, including an outreach program called "The Bless-Mobile," a food truck ministry.

In Conclusion

Our church is being called to new adventures in the Jesus Movement – to participate in the Holy Spirit's action in the world and to share the Good News of God's extravagant love. We have spent this triennium building a robust infrastructure for the work of church planting, including creating a dynamic community of practice. We have identified where new communities are forming around the church, and we have created spaces for leaders in the work of church planting and mission enterprise development to gather for mutual sharing and support, as well as to be equipped with spiritual, material, and relational resources for the work of the Gospel in local contexts. We know that there is work left to do, and we hope that General Convention will approve funding for this important work in the next triennium.

SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE 2015-2018 TRIENNIUM

The Advisory Group on Church Planting made recommendations to Local Ministry and Mission and Executive Council for the funding of 65 new church plants and mission enterprise zones, totaling to date \$3,203,500 at the time of this report. We anticipate giving the whole \$3,400,000 by the end of the triennium.

Church Plant Grants: \$1,938,000
MEZ/Hybrid Grants: \$609,000
Discernment Grants: \$48,000
Renewal Grants: \$608,500

In addition, the Advisory Group spent budgeted funds for travel and meetings, to fund coaching and assessor trainings, mission developer trainings and community of practice gatherings throughout the triennium. \$240,000 was budgeted for this work.

	<u>Year to date</u>	<u>Projected End of Triennium</u>
D005 Committee Travel/Meetings:	\$23,190.53	\$50,000
Coach/Assessor Trainings:	\$23,945.09	\$53,000
Mission Developer Training:	\$49,946.07	\$120,000
Community of Practice:	\$6,259.48	\$15,000
Total:	\$103,341.17	\$238,000

CONTINUANCE

Now that an infrastructure for church planting and for development of mission enterprises has been established, it is essential to sustain and utilize this infrastructure. These resources must be matched by resources of the wider Church in order for this work to continue to grow and to thrive.

Therefore, the Advisory Group on Church Planting proposes the following Resolution for consideration of General Convention 2018:

Title: Continue a Church-wide Network for Planting Churches—2018

Be it Resolved, That the 79th General Convention and the Episcopal Church celebrate and strategically support emerging communities through the good work initiated by GC2015 – D005 and A012 to develop a church-wide network for planting congregations, training and recruiting planters and mission developers; and establishing new congregations or mission enterprise zones each triennium that are especially committed to mission and evangelism that engages under-represented groups, including youth and young adults, people of color, poor and working-class people, people with a high-school diploma or less, and/or people with little or no church background or involvement; and be it further

Resolved, That the Church honors the holy experiments emerging throughout the Church – experiments that build partnerships, expand the language of ministry, create new ways to engage the people of God, harvest and share learnings, and lend courage to those leading new ministries and lower the cost of failure through a network supporting mission development; and be it further

Resolved, That the budget for sustaining this congregational network will be \$6,800,000.00 for 2019-2021 to be allocated as follows:

\$200,000 to identify and support existing programs to produce training in planting congregations for clergy and lay leaders

\$600,000 to provide resources for planters of congregations

\$1,000,000 for the development and implementation of a program to train bilingual/bi-cultural lay and ordained leaders for various cultural contexts

\$500,000 to support a staff person to oversee the planting network

\$3,000,000 for grants to support up to 30 congregations with the size and grant depending on the context and need of the congregation; and be it further

\$1,500,000 for the establishing of a land bank for purchasing land for new churches. Monies borrowed for land purchase will be repaid by the borrowers; and be it further

Resolved, That the convention urges the Episcopal Church Development Office to prioritize raising \$6 million per triennium to plant new congregations, so that a network of interested donors will be developed; and be it further

Resolved, That Dioceses receiving money for planting new congregations under this program will contribute matching local funding to support the costs of any new plants, with the exception of cases of significant diocesan financial limitations; and be it further

Resolved, that the bishop or a diocesan advocate representing any diocese receiving funds shall take part in a cohort of church planting dioceses to share best practices and methods of supporting mission developers, as we all are learning how to nurture new ministries that challenge our assumptions about how to share the gospel with new cultures and generations, and that dioceses not receiving grant funds are also invited to participate in the diocesan cohort; and be it further

Resolved, the Presiding Bishop and President of the House of Deputies continue the advisory group of not more than twelve people, consisting of those with experience in planting congregations, diocesan oversight of such work, working with evangelism and mission, to carry out provisions of this resolution, including making recommendations to Executive Council about grants to be awarded, helping to identify potential planters, and continuing to develop a network of coaches, and working with staff on training church planters, and be it further

Resolved, That the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$6,800,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

Explanation:

As we have not in recent years had a culture of church planting or infrastructure in the Episcopal Church to plant new congregations, we believe it is necessary to be intentional

about creating the environment to encourage new mission development and evangelism efforts across the church. The 78th General Convention established the Advisory Group for Church Planting and allocated \$5,000,000.00 for establishing new churches and mission enterprise zones. That Advisory Group has recommended grants to Executive Council for the funding of 65 new works, continuing existing works and, has begun developing resources for assessing and training church planters.

During this triennium, the Advisory Group has held three training events for church planters and mission developers and has begun establishing a network of coaches. This group also has hosted community of practice gatherings both in person and online, offering training and support for planters, mission developers, and coaches.

The Advisory Group for Church Planting is committed to continuing engagement in this work and for seeking out and networking with others across the church who will join in supporting these endeavors for the furthering of mission development in the Episcopal Church.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), pp. 314-315.

Resolution to Collect Demographic Data of Leadership

As we also spent significant time working to support the development of new communities of under-represented people in the Episcopal Church, the Advisory Group on Church Planting also proposes the following Resolution for consideration of General Convention 2018. We hope to encourage the church to begin to tell the truth about who is in leadership in our communities of faith and to work toward further justice and equity in leadership across the church.

Title: Collect demographic data of leadership

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That the 79th General Convention adopt a standard of requiring recipients of mission enterprise zone and new church start grants to disclose how the demographics (ethnicity/age/income range) of those in positions of authority in the new ministry, including staff and any advisory board or vestry members, compare to the demographics of the surrounding population, and be it further

Resolved, That the Parochial Report be modified to collect demographic data (ethnicity/age/income range) on vestry members together with the demographics of the surrounding 3-mile radius of the church.

Explanation

Our work as the Advisory Group on Church Planting has revealed that instrumental to starting and maintaining healthy communities of faith and/or worshipping communities requires that dynamics of power, privilege, and authority be consistently evaluated and reevaluated to ensure that church leadership reflects the communities they are a part of or are hoping to engage, and to expand existing concepts of leadership. Doing so allows the new ministry to grow out of healthy DNA.

Our work with church plants and mission enterprise zones is an invitation to the church to a new way of thinking, because best practices for new ministries inform how we go about existing ministries. To that end, the Advisory Group hopes to bear witness to the reality that it is best practice for all churches to be aware of how those in positions of authority reflect the existing community around the church. We believe that asking congregations to supply this information each year using the demographic report found at the Episcopal Church Researching Your Congregation and Community web page together with information on staff and vestry will raise the issue in a helpful way for all of the congregations of the Episcopal Church.