

Letting Down The Nets

An Overview



June, 2005

IN THE BEGINNING it is about stewardship – about finding the resources and tools with which to do the work that God calls us to do together. *Serving God's World, Strengthening the Church: A Framework for a common journey in Christ* is a shared vision for growth in mission and ministry across Canada for several years, a vision for *service in God's world*. The challenge of making this vision and the *Framework* real lies in finding and coordinating the resources required for new work along with existing work.

The financial resources are available to fund the Anglican church's present and future *if we choose to respond intentionally, imaginatively and courageously with a prudent stewardship plan that engages our finest leadership within an effective organization.*

This challenge resulted in the development of the plans outlined in Letting Down the Nets – a plan to:

- Increase the financial resources of parishes, dioceses and General Synod that are essential for the church's renewal and restoration. In order for our church to grow in membership, faith and service, strong financial support is required at all levels and
- Raise new funds the church requires now for "Serving God's World, Strengthening the Church"

An Introduction

The present situation across the Anglican church in Canada indicates that dioceses and parishes are facing very critical congregational development and pressing financial stewardship issues. At present we operate on more of a year to year survival basis that rather a plan for growth and development.

Some dioceses have a much greater capability to provide the required long-term planning, expertise, program and training to meet their own needs. Other dioceses are caught in the spiral of limited resources and inadequate infrastructure. There is little hope for real change including increased giving under these circumstances.

Currently there is no intentional cross-sharing of resources, programs and financial support. A few dioceses are developing fresh, exciting initiatives for creating strong, healthy parishes. Virtually all dioceses are basically on their own and have insufficiently resourced infrastructures for coming anywhere near being able to assist their parishes with the critical work of discerning a new purpose, creating a relevant vision and ministry plan, growing new leaders and actually making the changes that will lead to a flourishing and possibly growing congregation.

Dioceses will want to find their own solutions to these pressing issues. But the question is where might the resources come from and how. General Synod is positioned to provide a key measure of support by providing only those resources for dioceses and parishes that they cannot provide for themselves.

‘Letting Down the Nets’ is a bold stewardship initiative and plan of the Anglican Church of Canada to raise significant new funds and resources for ministry and mission for parishes, dioceses and national work. It is not a capital campaign or a short-term solution to balance current budgets. It is a plan based on educating and empowering church leaders to improve the ongoing financial capability at all levels of the church. The major focus of this plan is providing the resources at the diocesan and parish levels. The proposed plan will only work where there is a compelling and vibrant vision for our parishes, dioceses and General Synod.

In total, the ‘Letting Down the Nets’ Project is anticipated to cost a total of \$3.2 million from 2005 to 2008 and will raise in excess of \$30 million. The costs for the ‘Letting Down the Nets’ Project must be funded by sources outside of the current General Synod budget. These new sources of funding will be pursued through an enhanced major and planned giving program and, through very intentional education, a dramatically increased emphasis on stewardship and proportional giving. This amount will be raised in gifts, pledges and grants from individual Anglican donors, foundations and diocesan grants.

‘Letting Down the Nets’ is a plan for raising new funds the church requires now for “Serving God’s World, Strengthening the Church

- The document “*Serving God’s World, Strengthening the Church*,” articulates a compelling vision (and inspiring goals) and provides the basis for an urgent ‘case’ for raising the financial resources the church requires now. The resources required for full implementation are not yet in place.
- “*Serving God’s World, Strengthening the Church*” is ambitious and far-reaching including, as it does, work now being done as well as new work. It must be phased in over the next six years as resources become available through increased efforts at stewardship and fundraising.
- Resources and financial support for moving forward with “*Serving God’s World, Strengthening the Church*” could be in place soon if we move forward prudently and boldly with this Implementation Plan for “Letting Down the Nets”.

‘Letting Down the Nets’ is a plan for increasing the financial resources of parishes, dioceses and national that is essential for the church’s renewal and restoration

- **A major focus of this plan is providing the resources at the diocesan and parish levels.** The proposed plan will only work where there is a compelling and vibrant vision for our parishes, dioceses and General Synod. The case for support that needs to be written must articulate this compelling and vibrant vision. A major cross-country communications strategy must be initiated.
- **Anglicans tend to give to vision** especially when it is a compelling understanding of God’s mission and preferred future for our church and when the vision (“*Serving God’s World, Strengthening the Church*”) is cast by leadership and owned by membership. There is seldom ever a ‘best time’ for raising new funds.
- **The Church has to accommodate the giver.** Stewardship is much more than giving to meet the church’s needs. In practical terms it means carefully listening to the wishes, concerns and interests of our supporters. In organizational terms it means the initiatives outlined in this plan must be

complemented by a comprehensive and intentional plan to tell the story of our vision and work in an exciting and personal way that strengthens our unity and relationships across Canada.

The following key concepts and core values guided the plan's development:

- ❖ We embrace the joy and responsibilities of being stewards of God's gifts of creation and redemption.
- ❖ Gospel is that vision of life that gives our parishes meaning and purpose and energizes each of us in living life and reaching outside of the parish with a passion for Christ's ministry and mission.. People want to hear and see in our parishes, dioceses, nationally how we are genuinely living into this vision with purpose and integrity.
- ❖ The implementation plan must be flexible to reflect the needs of each individual diocese.
- ❖ Healthy congregations create a healthy diocese.
- ❖ Increased givings in parishes and congregations will enable each Diocesan community to pool its resources of time, abilities and money for supporting Diocesan and National endeavours in the undertaking of ministry and mission.
- ❖ It is essential that the National Plan be integrate-able with all diocesan-based financial development initiatives. It is critical to the success of this plan that it will be all encompassing and yet intentionally focused.
- ❖ Senior diocesan and national leaders will need to make the implementation of the plan one of the highest priorities.
- ❖ The diocesan based stewardship and financial stewardship giving models (including planned giving or gift planning as it is often called) must be designed to ensure widespread parish/congregational ownership of both the National plan and vision as outlined in the "*Serving God's World, Strengthening the Church*".

- ❖ The plan must take into account both the current economic and organizational challenges and also the philanthropic opportunities that influence General Synod's four sources of funding revenue:
Proportional gifts - Investment income - Anglican Appeal - Planned Gifts
- ❖ Ownership of the plan within each diocese is essential to nurturing a shared vision and support for immediate funding needs and long-term ministry and outreach.

The Implementation Plan of Letting Down the Nets is detailed in Four Major Areas or Tracks of Activity:

A. Stewardship Education and Congregational Development

- There are very positive results wherever dioceses have taken the opportunity to do stewardship education well and have emphasized the development of the congregation as a community of stewards. Building on these results, it is crucial that we pilot and test a holistic stewardship initiative, based on a transformation process. The financial component of this initiative will be aimed at increasing giving by at least 8-10% annually for several years. A stewardship demonstration or pilot project will be undertaken in at least four dioceses over the next three years. The level of assistance required will include staff support, resources and funding for diocesan training and equipping events, guest speakers or workshop leaders.

B. Proportional Gifts to General Synod

- The proportional gifts received from all dioceses for the work of General Synod are voluntary. We recognize that these are gifts and yet, they provide the principal source of funding for the ministry and mission of General Synod. The current suggested level of gift is based on 26% of each diocese's income. Since this process commenced in 2000 some dioceses have been able to make gifts at this level, some higher and some lower. For those dioceses contributing less than 26% it does not appear that there is a current plan for increasing the level of giving. With increased coordination and implementation of diocesan-based financial stewardship and fundraising essentials such as vision, leadership, education, communication and organization each diocese could strengthen the potential for greater funding support. The **full implementation** of voluntary, annual Proportional Gifts from

dioceses to General Synod based on the suggested figure of 26% of diocesan income will result in an additional \$600,000+ per year, based on current figures.

C. Annual Appeals

- Many Anglican donors are listed on the separate donor lists and databases of at least four Anglican national appeals. Currently this means that Anglican donors could receive four separate national appeals within a short time frame each year. Donors have also indicated that they are confused by this system. Therefore it is considered desirable at this time to conduct the necessary research and establish a plan for coordinating future fundraising efforts at the national as well as local levels in order to ensure that the trust and integrity of future fundraising initiatives are not seen to compete with parish, diocesan and national interests. In the case of the four components from the offices of General Synod; Anglican Appeal; PWRDF; The Anglican Journal and The Anglican Foundation it does not mean combining these appeals into one but rather to find better ways for cooperation between the groups to ensure that all are enhanced. To this end an audit/study is currently underway and this study with recommendations should be available by September 2005.

D. Planned Giving and Major Gifts

- For several years General Synod has supported a small network of Planned Giving consultants in a number of dioceses by way of financial support and the provision of resources. This minimal funding support has produced amazing dividends and this experience is proof that a far greater impact can be achieved with additional resources. In order to enlarge our financial capacity we need to strengthen and increase our network of Planned Giving consultants over the next four years and engage in a carefully prepared, prudent, long-term plan that is properly resourced. The plan for this track is to expand the covenant and partnership agreements between General Synod and dioceses so that all dioceses have the services of a Planned Giving Consultant. In addition, we will cultivate major individual donors who are in positions where they can donate \$ 100,000 to \$ 5 million plus. This organizational framework will have the capacity to potentially raise between \$50 and \$100 million through the intentional gathering of planned and major gifts over the next ten years. Never before have we attempted something like this. Typically gifts received under this track

will go primarily to parishes rather than dioceses or General Synod, which means, of course, that all three levels of the church, parishes, dioceses and General Synod will subsequently benefit.

Summary of the Costs for Funding the Implementation Plan

The following figures are recommended *additional* funds, (over and above) the annual General Synod budget, under the management of the Financial Development Sub-Committee of FMDC, which will be raised from foundations, individual donors and other sources.

	2005	2006	2007	2008
Proportional Gifts Track	\$ 85,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
Annual Appeals Track	\$ 110,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
Planned & Major Gifts Track*	\$ 380,000**	\$ 380,000**	\$ 480,000**	\$ 580,000**
Stewardship Education & Congregational Development Track	\$ 166,666	\$ 166,666	\$ 166,666	\$ 166,666
TOTAL	\$ 741,666	\$ 696,666	\$ 796,666	\$ 896,666

*** Existing Partnership Program re Planned Giving Consultants:**

This includes part-time consultants in:

Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

Nova Scotia and PEI

Ontario

Edmonton

Ottawa (appointment pending)

British Columbia (partial funding of diocesan part-time consultant)

Pacific Rim (David Rushton)

Special Projects (Rob Waller)

Calgary (appointment pending)

New Westminster

** Includes salary and benefit costs related to the national senior development officer for implementing this plan.