

‘TRAIN THE TRAINER’ CONFERENCE FOR YOUTH MINISTRY LEADERSHIP



June 2015

Project Report to the Ecclesiastical Province
of Canada - DRAFT

This report on the goals, process and outcomes of the June 2014 'Train the Trainer' Conference has been prepared by Mark Dunwoody, Missioner—Diocese of Montreal on behalf of the 'Train the Trainer' Conference Planning Team.

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‘Train the Trainer’ Conference for Youth Ministry Leadership

PROJECT REPORT TO THE ECCLESIASTICAL PROVINCE OF CANADA

INTRODUCTION

This project arose from the Provincial Synod meeting held in Montreal in September 2012. The youth caucus there conceived the idea for an event that would bring together leaders in youth ministry from around the Province of Canada, and provide them with the theoretical and practical knowledge needed to go back to their home Diocese and deliver foundational training in the skills needed for effective youth ministry.

Nearly two years of planning culminated in June 2014, when youth leaders from every Diocese in the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada met in Montreal for three intensive and rewarding days at the Train the Trainer event. Facilitated by Mark Dunwoody from the Diocese of Montreal, and Judy Steers from Huron University College and the General Synod staff, the training took the 23 lay and ordained participants through teaching, planning and small group skills, contemporary approaches to youth ministry and reflective practice.

Equipped with this foundation, each Diocesan group took responsibility to plan and lead at least one peer-teaching session based on the content of one of the modules in the *Trailblazing* on-line education program of the Anglican Church of Canada. Every Diocese has followed through in the year since the conference.

Feedback from the participants and the positive reception of the Diocesan training sessions has proven this experiment a success, and the project has provided us with several object lessons that may serve to guide management of future provincial projects.

This report will provide a comprehensive account of the background and planning process for the event, a description of the training content delivered during the June conference, and a status report on the follow-up training events held at the Diocesan level, followed by an assessment of the successes and value of this undertaking and some thoughts for the future.

A WORD FROM MARK

There's an old saying that if you want something done, ask a busy person. That has certainly been very relevant to the team that have worked on TTT from the very first conversations at the youth caucus in 2012 to all the various trainings that are happening across our Province in 2015. All those who have been involved in this project from start to finish are busy people. However, they all have one thing in common: a faith that was put into action. This outworking of practical faith has made me truly thankful to be a part of what is happening across our Province.

From the very beginning, TTT had a specific, identifiable goal: that the Province would facilitate the coming together of practitioners who would be equipped with the competences of delivering training. Those folk would then go back to their own Dioceses and deliver said trainings, contextualized to their own Diocesan needs. You will see in the following report how those trainings have and continue to reveal themselves.

A huge thanks to the core planning team, the Provincial Executive, the local Montreal arrangements team, Montreal Synod staff & our Diocesan Bishops for all their support, hard work and 'can do' attitude.

It is with great pleasure that I present this report.

Mark Dunwoody
Missioner—Diocese of Montreal

BACKGROUND

The Province has a history of financial support for youth ministry formation and leadership. In 2011, the Province cancelled one of its in-person council meetings in favor of using those funds to send youth leaders from each Diocese to Common Ground, a national ecumenical youth ministry forum of the Anglican Church of Canada, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the United Church of Canada, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

In 2012, the Province again wished to devote the funds saved by cancelling one council meeting—\$40,000—to the cause of youth ministry leadership development, and turned the question over to the youth caucus. What is the best, most effective use of these funds?

The youth caucus asked the Province to do something new—deliver a home-grown training program to “train the trainers”, providing knowledge and skills that would allow a small number of participants to become permanent resources for their Dioceses.

PLANNING PROCESS

Shortly after the Provincial Synod meeting, a planning team was convened to bring the vision into reality. Charles Ferries, Cathy Laskey, Reuben Bonnell, Jennifer Campbell, Jennifer Michelin & Mark Dunwoody formed the core team, who reported at regular intervals to the Executive Committee of the Provincial Synod as the project developed.

The team soon brought Judy Steers of the Anglican Church of Canada on board as a co-facilitator, and found a focus for the content of the training in the *Trailblazing* resource the being developed by the national church in partnership with the Faculty of Theology at Huron University College. *Trailblazing* is a set of interactive, online training modules to provide theological formation to leaders of youth ministry in congregations. While *Trailblazing* is available to and invites individuals anywhere to learn on their own and with others through on-line forums, several Dioceses are using this resource as the foundation to youth ministry leadership training at the Diocesan level.

Beyond this core resource, the program was fleshed out to include course materials previously developed by Mark Dunwoody and his colleagues on group dynamics and reflective practice, as well as content adapted from other sources or developed by the facilitators specifically for this event.

As the content of the conference took shape, the planners were conscious of the synergy emerging among the different levels of the church organization—a national resource would provide a foundation for a provincial event intended to increase the institutional knowledge within Dioceses by empowering congregational leaders. The hope was that by linking the training offered by the province to existing structures and, resources, the effect would be multiplied and opportunities for building on the work done at the workshop would be maximized.

Each Bishop from the Province was asked to select potential trainers to attend. Three representatives participated from each of the Dioceses of Central Newfoundland, Western Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, Fredericton, Quebec and Montreal. The Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador sent three representatives from the Diocese and two additional participants from the Archdeaconry of Labrador, representing the Council of the North.

JUNE 2014 CONFERENCE

Conference participants were welcomed to Montreal on Thursday, June 19, 2014. Space for training was provided by the Diocese of Montreal in Fulford Hall, the main gathering space for the Diocesan offices and Christ Church Cathedral. Attendees were housed in McGill University's New Residence Hall, a student residence and summer hotel about a five-

minute walk away from the downtown training site.

The conference program began on Friday morning and ran through Sunday, June 23. The program included intensive training activities, as well as worship and opportunities for fellowship among the participants. (The complete schedule may be found in Appendix A.)

Program Structure

The overarching intention of the conference was to impart the following competences to the participants:

- The competence to understand and facilitate individual and group learning processes.
- The competence to design programmes.
- The competence to direct one's own learning (Learning to Learn)
- The competence to co-operate successfully in teams.
- The competence to communicate meaningfully with others.

Participants came into the 'Train the Trainer' conference with different levels of experience and different competences; therefore they had different learning needs. That is why the competence to direct one's own learning was so crucial. Such an approach allows for these different learning needs to be identified and pursued. The group as a source for peer learning and the trainers as facilitators of these learning processes are essential pillars of this approach. This is all reflected in the structure of the experience, which was divided into *taught* and *self-taught* modes, as seen in the diagram on the following page.



Program Content

Youth Ministry Theories

How might theory inform, educate and instruct how we deliver youth ministry training?

Developed by: A. Root, D. F. White & K. Dean

Facilitated by: Judy

Content and Materials: This module introduced participants to three models of youth ministry: A relational youth ministry model developed by Andy Root, a challenge to consumer models of youth ministry from David F. White, and a mentoring, modeling and empowering approach based on the work of Kenda Dean.

Self-Reflection

How might our own journey speak to the content, style and methods of how we could deliver trainings?

Developed by: M. Dunwoody

Facilitated by: Mark

Content and Materials: This module brought in the concept of Participatory Theology, and provided a framework for a reflective style of working, learning and interacting in context. (See Appendix B.) Participants used these insights to answer the question, “What is the ‘it’ in your ministry?”

Contextualization

How might we better fit our trainings to the needs of our audience and the environment we find ourselves in?

Developed by: M. Dunwoody

Facilitated by: Mark

Content and Materials: This session explored the question of Value of Participation – what is it that motivates people (youth or adults) to want to participate in something; whether that is social institutions, groups, church community, public activity, etc. How do we encourage participation in an era where young people are increasingly suspicious of institutions, and disillusioned about their own sense of agency and power to effect positive change?

Trailblazing Information

A history and overview of the Trailblazing material created by the Youth Initiatives team at National church.

Developed by: Anglican Youth Initiatives

Facilitated by: Judy

Content and Materials: As one of the contributors to the *Trailblazing* online resource, Judy provided an overview of the course material and introduced participants to the various resources and forums found at trailblazing.anglican.ca.

Facilitation Skills

How do we facilitate? What tools can make us better deliver our goals of the said trainings?

Developed by: L. Calderon-Stewart

Facilitated by: Judy

Content and Materials: This module introduced participants to the “Four G’s of Teaching” (Grab! Give! Get! Go!) developed by Lisa-Marie Calderone-Stewart. (See Appendix C.)

Planning Wheel/Learning Styles/Group Functioning

Exploring all the various presenting variables that we need to think about, and actively plan towards while delivering training.

Developed by: Peacock, Naramata Centre & Judy Steers

Facilitated by: Judy

Content and Materials: This session continued work in facilitation, first covering planning and program design using the “Planning Wheel” model developed by Allison Rennie (based on work by Elaine Peacock and Education for Leadership materials from the Naramata Centre, see Appendix D.) Participants also explored group dynamics from the perspective of learning styles, and using the “Fire Theory” of group functioning developed by Judy Steers (See Appendix E).

Self-Taught Modules

The arc of the program was designed to start from a place of theory and contextualization, and to finish with a concrete example in which each Diocese produced a prototype of training based on one of the modules of the *Trailblazing* program. It is worth noting that all the teams met before the conference in their own Dioceses to explore and gain some knowledge of the *Trailblazing* module assigned to them.

During the second half of the weekend conference, Diocesan delegations were paired up into teams to flesh out a training session to deliver to the plenary, incorporating insights from the theoretical material that was introduced earlier. After the teams took some time to work on their presentations, they each facilitated a training session of about an hour, and received feedback from the other teams.

The last module of the weekend was an evaluation of the entire process, in teams and in the larger group, providing the participants with an opportunity to apply the principles of reflective practice, and to leave the conference conscious of what they had learned, armed with new skills, ideas, and a concrete plan.

DIOCESAN TRAINING EVENTS

Diocese	Event Format	Date
Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador, with the Council of the North	Three regional projects	Planned Spring 2015
Diocese of Western Newfoundland	Clergy presentation	October 2014
Diocese of Central Newfoundland	Diocesan-wide training	Planned Spring 2015
Diocese of Fredericton	Three regional "Vision for Youth" Events	January, February and March 2015
Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island	Two training for Diocesan Youth Conference Leaders	Fall 2014
Diocese of Montreal	'Building Community' Workshop for Clergy and youth workers	November 2014
Diocese of Quebec	Ecumenical Event for Youth Ministry Leaders	Planned Spring 2015

From the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador / North

AS A DIOCESE WE VALUED THE OPPORTUNITY OF COMING TOGETHER WITH LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE TO LEARN A NEW SET OF SKILLS. THERE WAS AN INTENTIONALITY OF UTILIZING THIS UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY BY ENSURING OUR PARTICIPANTS CAME FROM EACH OF OUR THREE ARCHDEACON AREAS, ALONGSIDE GAINING A FRESH UNDERSTANDING OF HOW TO PUT TRAININGS TOGETHER.

As a group we also had a chance to spend a lot of time together thinking through how we might better strategically support youth ministry across a very large Diocese.

IN ADDITION, TTT GAVE US THE IMPETUS TO CONTINUE TO WORKING TOGETHER AND FOCUS ON CONTINUING EDUCATION. IT IS OUR AIM TO BE ADVOCATES FOR THE REALITY THAT OUR WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AND YOUTH LEADERS GOES DEEPER. AS A DIOCESE WE WANT TO ENCOURAGE OUR LEADERS TO BOTH LEARN MORE AND PROVIDE MORE.

IT IS OUR INTENTION TO SET UP A STRUCTURE FOR THREE ARCHDEACONRIES EACH ONE PERSON FROM TTT PLUS ARCHDEACON TO WORK ON ONE PROJECT IN EACH AREA, TO BE DELIVERED IN THE SPRING OF 2015. THESE PROJECTS WILL INVOLVE WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE, CLERGY AND LAY AND YOUTH LEADERS.

SANDRA TILLEY ♦ NANCY MATCH ♦ DAVID BURROWS ♦ GAIL MACDONALD ♦ JOLENE PETERS

From the Diocese of Central Newfoundland

AS A DIOCESAN TEAM IT WAS A GREAT ENCOURAGEMENT TO COME TOGETHER AT TTT WITH LIKE-MINDED FOLK FROM ACROSS OUR PROVINCE. THE MANY NEW SKILLS WE LEARNED WILL BE INTENTIONALLY INTEGRATED INTO OUR DIOCESAN APPROACH TO HOW WE MIGHT BETTER ENABLE YOUTH MINISTRY IN OUR PARISHES. IN SPRING 2015, WE HELD A DIOCESAN WIDE TRAINING EVENT TO PRACTICALLY EQUIP THOSE WHO WISH TO SERVE YOUNG PEOPLE.

WE THANK THE PROVINCE FOR THIS INITIATIVE AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STRATEGICALLY ENABLING OUR YOUTH LEADERS.

NEAL BUFFET ♦ NICOLA BUFFET ♦ BEVERLY BUFFET

From the Diocese of Western Newfoundland

AS A DIOCESE WE RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF TRAINING YOUTH WORKERS AND EQUIPPING THEM WITH THE SKILLS TO DO THE MINISTRY. WE ATTENDED THE TTT EVENT WITH EAGER EXPECTATIONS OF GAINING NEW SKILLS AROUND THE COMPETENCIES OF FACILITATION. IT WAS A TRULY GREAT TIME TO COME TOGETHER WITH OTHER DIOCESAN FOLK IN OUR PROVINCE TO LEARN, AND HAVE FUN. THEY CERTAINLY WORKED US HARD WITH A FULL ON AGENDA, BUT ALL THE LEARNING HAPPENED UTILIZING METHODS THAT WERE EXPERIENTIAL AND CREATIVE.

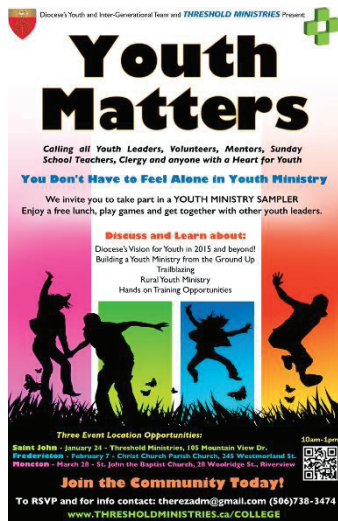
ON OUR RETURN TO WESTERN NL WE DECIDED THAT THE BEST WAY TO FOLLOW-UP ON THIS TRAINING AT DIOCESAN LEVEL WAS TO FIRST DO A PRESENTATION AT CLERGY CONFERENCE IN OCTOBER 2014. AN OVERVIEW OF WHAT WE LEARNED WAS EXPLAINED AND WE HIGHLIGHTED THAT AS A TEAM WE ARE ABLE AND WILLING TO COME TO LOCAL PARISHES TO DELIVER TRAINING TO YOUTH WORKERS.

WE LOOK FORWARD WITH GREAT EXCITEMENT TO ACTIVELY BUILDING PARISH YOUTH MINISTRY CAPACITY IN THE DIOCESE OF WESTERN NEWFOUNDLAND. THANKS SO MUCH TO THE PROVINCE OF CANADA FOR MAKING THIS EVENT HAPPEN.

REV STEVEN MAKI ♦ REV PAULETTE BUGDEN ♦ KATIE FLYNN

A highlight of our presentation was a balloon game that demonstrated how folk may participate in an activity in many different ways. It was a sight to behold to see some of the clergy chasing a balloon around the room!

From the Diocese of Fredericton



The poster for 'Youth Matters' features a central graphic of four silhouettes of people in various active poses (running, jumping, stretching) against a background of a sunset or sunrise. The text on the poster includes: 'Diocese's Youth and Inter-Generational Team and THRESHOLD MINISTRIES Present', 'Youth Matters', 'Calling all Youth Leaders, Volunteers, Mentors, Sunday School Teachers, Clergy and anyone with a Heart for Youth', 'You Don't Have to Feel Alone in Youth Ministry', 'We invite you to take part in a YOUTH MINISTRY SAMPLER. Enjoy a free lunch, play games and get together with other youth leaders.', 'DISCUSS AND LEARN ABOUT: Diocese's Vision for Youth in 2015 and beyond! Building a Youth Ministry from the Ground Up, Trailblazing, Rural Youth Ministry, Hands on Training Opportunities', 'Three Event Location Opportunities: SAINT JOHN - January 24 - Threshold Ministries, 105 Mountain View Dr., Grand Falls; Sackville - February 7 - Christ Church Parish Church, 245 Watermain Road; HENOCAN - March 28 - St. John the Baptist Church, 23 Woodridge St., Riverview', 'Join the Community Today!', 'To RSVP and for info contact: therezadm@gmail.com (506)738-3474', and 'www.THRESHOLDMINISTRIES.ca/COLLEGE'. There is also a QR code and a '10am-5pm' time slot.

AS A TEAM WE ALL APPRECIATED THE OPPORTUNITY TO COME TOGETHER TO LEARN, REFLECT, AND BUILD UPON OUR DIOCESAN TRAINING CAPACITY.

IN 2015 WE HELD THREE REGIONAL TRAININGS SPECIFICALLY AIMED AT YOUTH LEADERS, SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND CLERGY, AND ANYONE WHO HAS A HEART FOR MINISTERING TO YOUNG PEOPLE. THE EVENTS WERE CALLED 'YOUTH MATTERS: YOU DON'T HAVE TO FEEL ALONE IN YOUTH MINISTRY'.

THE TRAININGS REVOLVED AROUND THE TOPIC OF "A DIOCESAN VISION FOR YOUTH IN 2015".

TTT GAVE US THE MOMENTUM WE NEEDED TO GO FORWARD WITH NEW TOOLS AND A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO IMPLEMENT REFLECTIVE BASED PRACTICE. IT IS WITH GREAT EXCITEMENT THAT WE LOOK FORWARD TO USING THE SKILLS GAINED TO HELP OTHERS IN THEIR PARISH MINISTRIES.

REV AMANDA LONGMOORE ♦ COLIN McDONALD ♦ DEBORAH KANTOR ♦ JASON SMITH

From the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

WE HELD TWO TRAINING SESSIONS TO PREPARE THE LEADERS FOR THE DIOCESAN YOUTH CONFERENCE IN THE FALL OF 2014. WE INCORPORATED THE LESSONS AND APPROACH THAT WE LEARNED AT TTT AS WELL AS SOME ACTIVITIES THAT WORKED WELL FOR OUR OWN PRESENTATION AT TTT. WE USED THE 'BALLOONS' WHEN THEY WERE GATHERING AT THE START, WE USED A FUN GAME TO BECOME INTERACTIVE AND LEARN NAMES, AND THEN WE INTRODUCED "THEO THE THEOLOGY BALL" TO HAVE MORE PERSONAL SHARING AND GROW DEEPER AS A GROUP.

WE REVIEWED THE MATERIAL FOR WHAT MAKES A GOOD LEADER FROM OUR TTT BINDER. THIS WAS ALSO A TIME OF SHARING AND OPEN DISCUSSION WITH OUR GROUP AND WE HAD CANDY! FROM LESSONS WE COMPLETED ON TRAILBLAZING WE SHARED SOME OF THE INFORMATION WE FOUND APPLICABLE—I.E. GOOD VS. BAD THEOLOGY AND BUMPER STICKERS. WE DID A SHORT PRESENTATION ON OUR DIOCESE 'CARE TO SCREEN' POLICY, AND PROCESS AND SOME EXAMPLES OF DO'S AND DON'TS. WE SHARED INFORMATION ABOUT TRAILBLAZING AND ENCOURAGED PEOPLE TO LOOK INTO IT AND TALK ABOUT IT AT THEIR PARISHES.

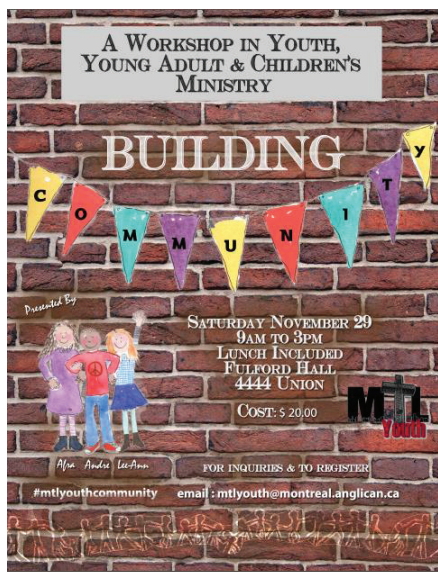
BOTH SESSIONS WERE WELL ATTENDED AND WELL RECEIVED. WE ALSO ENJOYED THE OPPORTUNITY TO COME TOGETHER AS TTT'S TO DEVELOP THE PLANS FOR THE SESSIONS AND REMINISCE ON OUR WONDERFUL WEEKEND IN MONTREAL.

AT THE DIOCESAN YOUTH CONFERENCE, SINCE WE HAD DONE TRAINING SESSIONS WITH MOST OF THE LEADERS WHO WERE THERE, IT MADE IT SO MUCH EASIER BECAUSE WE ALL KNEW WHAT TO EXPECT AND WHAT TO DO. ATTENDING TTT HAS GIVEN US MORE CONFIDENCE IN DEALING WITH BOTH THE YOUTH AND FELLOW LEADERS.

JESSICA BOWER ♦ KRISTIN PETITE ♦ JUDI COLP



From the Diocese of Montreal



AT THE AMAZING AND MOTIVATIONAL 'TRAIN THE TRAINER' CONFERENCE IN JUNE 2014, WE WERE CHALLENGED TO USE THE INFORMATION WE HAD LEARNED TO TEACH OTHER LEADERS IN OUR OWN DIOCESE. AFTER MUCH RESEARCH, PROMOTING AND PRAYER, ON NOVEMBER 29TH 2014 THE DIOCESE OF MONTREAL WAS ABLE TO EXECUTE THAT CHALLENGE! WE HOSTED A CONFERENCE BUILT AROUND THE "BUILDING COMMUNITY" TRAILBLAZING MODULE, WELCOMING 25 INDIVIDUALS REPRESENTING SEVERAL DIFFERENT PARISHES AND COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT MONTREAL.

WE STARTED OFF THE DAY WITH SOME SILLY GAMES TO GET EVERYONE COMFORTABLE WITH EACH OTHER. AFRA TUCKER AND LEE-ANN MATTHEWS LED US IN A SESSION FOCUSING ON THE EIGHT PRACTICES OF COMMUNITY. WE TOOK A QUICK A BREAK AND THEN SPENT SOME TIME IN SMALLER GROUPS CREATIVELY SHARING HOW EACH OF THESE ATTRIBUTES WERE IMPORTANT TO OUR PERSONAL SITUATIONS IN TERMS OF BUILDING OUR COMMUNITIES. AFTER LUNCH,

ANDRE PARRIS LED A SESSION SHARING SCOTT PECK'S FOUR STAGES OF HOW TO BUILD A TRUE COMMUNITY. AT THE END OF THE DAY, CONFERENCE ATTENDEES WERE GIVEN THE CHANCE TO REFLECT

AND SHARE ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE THAT DAY. ALL IN ALL, THE DAY WAS SPENT GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER, SHARING STORIES, LAUGHING, EATING TOGETHER AND LEARNING FROM ONE ANOTHER.

AMONG MANY OTHER THINGS, WE LEARNED THAT BUILDING A TRUE COMMUNITY TAKES; PATIENCE, FLEXIBILITY, TRUST, A COMMON GOAL AND THE ABILITY TO CREATE A SAFE PLACE FOR THE MEMBERS OF THAT COMMUNITY. MANY ATTENDEES OF THE CONFERENCE MENTIONED HOW THEY LOOKED FORWARD TO BUILDING AND DEVELOPING NEW AND ALREADY EXISTING COMMUNITIES IN THEIR OWN PARISHES.

AFRA TUCKER ♦ LEE-ANNE MATTHEWS ♦ ANDRE PARRIS

From the Diocese of Quebec

LAST FALL, THE DIOCESE OF QUEBEC HAS TAKEN THE EXCITING STEP OF HIRING A YOUTH COORDINATOR. HIS ARRIVAL HAS ALLOWED SHARING OF IDEAS BETWEEN HIS OWN BACKGROUND IN YOUTH LEADERSHIP AND THE TRAINING I RECEIVED AT TRAIN THE TRAINER. THE DIOCESE FACES MANY CHALLENGES, SUCH AS LIMITED RESOURCES AND VOLUNTEERS, AS WELL AS CHALLENGES MORE SPECIFIC TO US, SUCH AS BRIDGING LINGUISTIC COMMUNITIES, AND A FRAUGHT HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE CHURCH WITHIN OUR SOCIETY, BUT WE FEEL HOPEFUL AS WE WORK TO CONNECT YOUTH LEADERS WHO ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES.

ALTHOUGH THERE IS A GREAT NEED FOR YOUTH MINISTRY IN THE DIOCESE OF QUEBEC, WE BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE ARE HESITANT TO COME FORWARD AND TAKE PART BECAUSE THEY FEEL UNCERTAIN OF THEIR QUALIFICATIONS FOR THIS WORK. ON THE OTHER HAND, THOSE ALREADY DOING YOUTH MINISTRY FEEL ISOLATED AND DON'T HEAR ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OTHER PARISHES. BY ORGANIZING AN EVENT WHERE PEOPLE CAN LEARN BASIC SKILLS AND SHARE IDEAS, WE WANTED PARTICIPANTS TO REALIZE HOW MUCH THEY HAVE TO OFFER, AND BE ENCOURAGED BY EXCHANGES WITH OTHER YOUTH MINISTRY WORKERS. SINCE WE ARE A FAIRLY SMALL COMMUNITY, THE EVENT WAS OPEN PARTICIPANTS IN OTHER PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC CHURCHES IN OUR AREA.

MARY THALER ♦ YANN SAVARD

At the Train the Trainer Workshop, I was able to connect with other youth leaders from across Eastern Canada to share ideas and experiences, as well as practice specific skills in group facilitation. One skill which was particularly new and exciting for me was how to organize activities to create a safe, supportive environment where all participants feel confident contributing. Since the workshop I have been able to use many of these concepts as a Sunday school teacher and youth leader in my home parish of St. Michael's Sillery. I find that many of the modules on the *Trailblazing* website are on topics that I had been wanting to explore for a long time, and it's great to have a resource so adapted to my needs.

Mary Thaler, Diocese of Quebec

CONCLUSIONS

Our primary and immediate goal for the project was to bring youth workers together from our Province to equip them with the competencies to deliver training in relevant skills. To demonstrate that the competencies were effectively imparted, and to deliver on the intention to provide an ongoing resource to member Dioceses, each participating Diocesan team committed to deliver at least one training session in the months following the conference. To date, twelve training events have been held across all seven Dioceses of the Province.

The ‘Train the Trainer’ Provincial training conference occurred within two years of the Provincial Synod mandate. The planning and execution of the project, in and of itself, was a positive demonstration of teamwork, collaboration and results which may serve as a model in several ways.

First, in order to be successful, the team quickly realized they would need to collaborate effectively at a distance. Using appropriate technology, such as videoconferencing, was important, but so was a team commitment to regular meetings and sticking to deadlines, so that “out of sight” did not become “out of mind.” Key to establishing that culture was having a clear goal with measurable achievable objectives.

Another key to success was that the project got off the ground quickly after the proposal was approved at the Provincial Synod meeting. Good ideas can quickly lose momentum and stagnate if not acted on—it was important to seize the initiative.

Finally, the planning team used previously developed resources and made intentional connections to existing structures and programs at all levels of the church hierarchy, which has had three big benefits. First, tapping into available material reduced the workload of the planning team in delivering a high quality product. Secondly, there was a ready-made case for participation—it was easy to see how the benefits of the training could accrue not just to the individuals attending the conference, but to the sponsoring Dioceses and parishes as well.

Building on this last point, we are always aware that time and money, talent and energy are scarce resources, and we should always be asking, “Was this a good use of our money?” and “What are the multiplying effects of our efforts?” In assessing these questions, we can see that while we directly affected twenty-five participants, within a year of the conference these individuals will have delivered training to hundreds across our province. Almost all of these are clergy, youth workers and people involved in other ministries who are now, and will continue to use these newly acquired skills to work with young people in a parish setting.

Further, we have introduced all the Dioceses in our province to an active and growing national resource for youth ministry in *Trailblazing*, which opens the door to all kinds of possibilities for future collaboration and learning to build on what has already been gained.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The question of, “What comes next?” is the subject of ongoing discussion. There will be opportunities for reflection and consideration of how best to support our youth ministries strategically in the months leading up to the next Provincial Synod meeting.

1. Aim for one project per three-year Synod cycle, and connect each to the last. The team found that two years for planning and development, and one year for assessment and follow-up was a pace that was manageable, but one that continually advanced the project. In order to keep this momentum from one project to the next, the province should use the opportunity of the triennial Synod meeting to showcase a finished project, and link it to a new proposal for the next three years.
2. Use the *Trailblazing* resource. This provides a common frame of reference for working together throughout the Anglican Church of Canada. It also happens to be particularly valuable as a tool for those living and working in remote areas.
3. Provide a path for knowledge sharing. The ‘Train the Trainer’ format for this conference was very successful, and future projects could simply replicate that formula. However, it may be more useful to think in terms of the more general principle of knowledge sharing.

We look forward to the next exciting steps, walking together in Christ’s name.

A WORD OF THANKS

As a team, we would like to thank the many hands who contributed to the success of this project: our Diocesan bishops, the Provincial Synod Council and Executive committee, the Provincial Synod Youth Council who originated the idea, the Montreal Diocesan Synod staff and local organizing team who provided space and logistics for the conference, Judy Steers of the Anglican Church of Canada and Huron University College for her expertise and facilitation, and of course to all the participants for their enthusiasm, hard work, and ongoing ministries.

Thanks also to Beth Reed of the Diocese of Montreal and to conference participants and organizers for their contributions to the preparation of this report.

We feel that we must conclude by saying that throughout this long process, we have had a great deal of fun. While we all took our tasks very seriously, we did everything with a joke and a smile.

‘Train the Trainer’
Conference Planning Team