

**MISSION STRATEGY GOALS**  
**Episcopal Diocese of Vermont**  
**January 1, 2025 – July 1, 2027**

*They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and fellowship,  
to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Acts 2:42*

**Introduction**

*by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Shannon MacVean-Brown*

In 2023, nearly fifty members of our diocesan household contributed valuable insight into the state of our diocese by participating in the Mission Leadership Review interviews. Many more of you attended town hall meetings on Zoom at which you heard the results of the review, asked questions, and offered feedback from your context.

As promised, those insights have been developed into Mission Strategy Goals that promise to guide the continued strengthening of our congregations, diocesan entities and functioning as a diocesan household. These goals are intended to strengthen every aspect of our ministry together as we put our trust in God and find new ways to serve, worship, and care for creation.

I love how the passage from Acts shared above relates to where we are in the life of our diocese. We are not unlike the early church as they began to figure out how they would be the church in uncertain times. They shaped their ministry and structure on the teachings passed on to them by the apostles, and with an understanding that koinonia was the way they would embody their faith. Koinonia is a Greek word that is often translated as fellowship, but it encompasses an understanding of a community united by their common work, sharing, and connection for the flourishing of their community of faith.

Once the Mission Strategy Goals are jointly adopted by the bishop and the Executive Council, a Mission Strategy Action Plan will be developed by the end of 2024. The action plan will include initiatives and tasks needed to achieve each goal; identification of resources (e.g. budget, people, technology, etc.) to support the implementation of each goal; timelines, milestones, and ways to measure success; a process to monitor progress and make necessary adjustments to the plan; a commitment to accountability through regular reporting to the bishop and Executive Council; and, a communication plan to promote transparency.

Please join me in praying that the Mission Strategy Goals and the ensuing action steps will strengthen our diocese, enrich and enliven our common life and ministry, and most importantly, deepen our witness to the Risen Lord.

## STRENGTHEN CONGREGATIONS

*Lord Jesus Christ,  
make this a temple of your presence and a house of prayer.  
Be always near us when we seek you in this place.  
Draw us to you, when we come alone and when we come with others,  
to find comfort and wisdom, to be supported and strengthened,  
to rejoice, and to give thanks.  
May it be here, Lord Christ, that we are made one with you and with one another,  
so that our lives are sustained and sanctified for your service.*

*(From The Book of Common Prayer service for The Dedication and Consecration of a Church)*

### GOAL

Focus staff and consultant capacity and resources on strategic work impacting congregations - especially constellations, new congregational models, and congregational sustainability – so that congregations are better equipped to worship, form disciples, and serve their communities.

#### **A. Strategy Audit**

Create an overview with current status of strategies underway and strategies envisioned; assess current leaders/staff/consultant capacity for each strategy as well as available resources (financial, technological, staffing); determine gaps and needs for each strategy.

#### **B. Strategy Management and Oversight**

Implement a framework for each strategy with defined roles, responsibilities, and reporting structures to ensure accountability and coordination; identify a person to oversee each strategy.

#### **C. Monitoring and Evaluation**

Implement a quarterly reporting process to monitor strategy process and progress, staffing, expenditures, and milestones; make appropriate adjustments as necessary and feasible; if there are grantors, ensure reporting is accomplished in a timely manner.

#### **D. Communications**

Communicate progress, successes, challenges, next steps, and outcomes to the diocese on a regular basis.

## **BUILD RELATIONSHIPS**

*O God, you manifest in your servants the signs of your presence:  
Send forth upon us the Spirit of Love,  
that in companionship with one another  
your abounding grace may increase among us;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*(From The Book of Common Prayer, Evening Prayer II)*

### **Goal**

Strengthen and build relationships and partnerships of all sorts:  
among clergy; among congregations; among bishop/staff and clergy;  
among bishop/staff and congregations; among staff.

#### **A. Relationship Audit –**

Assess the current state of relationships in the time since the Mission Leadership Review was conducted in 2023.

#### **B. Spirit of Koinonia –**

Develop a spirit of koinonia (community, partnership, communion) in the diocese through gathering people in ways that strengthen relationships and partnerships, emphasizing the importance of reconciliation as a center point of faithful living and serving; working together, the Bishop and Standing Committee will develop initial strategies to assist the diocese in reaching this goal.

#### **C. Becoming Beloved Community: Racial Equity Institute –**

Contract with the Racial Equity Institute to help members of the diocese better understand racism in its institutional and structural form and equip clergy, laypeople, and staff to begin to work for change.

#### **D. Becoming Beloved Community: Sacred Ground Dialogue Series –**

Promote participation in Sacred Ground as a way to create space for difficult and transformative conversations on race and racism, develop cultural competency, and strengthen relationships through small groups.

## DEVELOP LEADERS AND STRUCTURES

*Almighty and everliving God, source of all wisdom and understanding,  
be present with those who take counsel in the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont  
for the renewal and mission of your Church.  
Teach us in all things to seek first your honor and glory.  
Guide us to perceive what is right, and grant us  
both the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

*(From The Book of Common Prayer, Prayers and Thanksgivings)*

### Goal

Develop sufficient role clarity for staff, structures, and leaders:  
foster appropriate authority, supervision, accountability, polity and  
governance roles, training and development, policies and procedures.

#### **A. Diocesan Structures –**

In keeping with the required THRIVE canonical review, ensure that the governance structure of the diocese is appropriate to our ministry, clearly defined and known, and includes roles and responsibilities, authority, and decision-making processes.

#### **B. Policies and Procedures –**

Create and review organizational policies and procedures related to human resources, finance, and operations; ensure that policies are clearly documented, accessible, and consistently applied.

#### **C. Staff Development –**

Develop clear, comprehensive role descriptions for each staff/consultant position; establish clear supervision mechanisms; implement an accountability framework that includes regular performance reviews, goal setting, and feedback mechanisms; provide ongoing support, mentoring, and coaching to facilitate growth and development.

#### **D. Leadership Development for Diocesan Leaders –**

Develop and provide annual orientation and onboarding for people serving on canonical bodies (Standing Committee, Executive Council, Trustees, Committee on Ministry) in Episcopal polity and governance, roles and responsibilities, resources, and meeting standards.

#### **E. Leadership Development for Congregational Leaders –**

Develop and provide annual orientation and information sessions for vestries, wardens, treasurers, and other congregational leaders.