

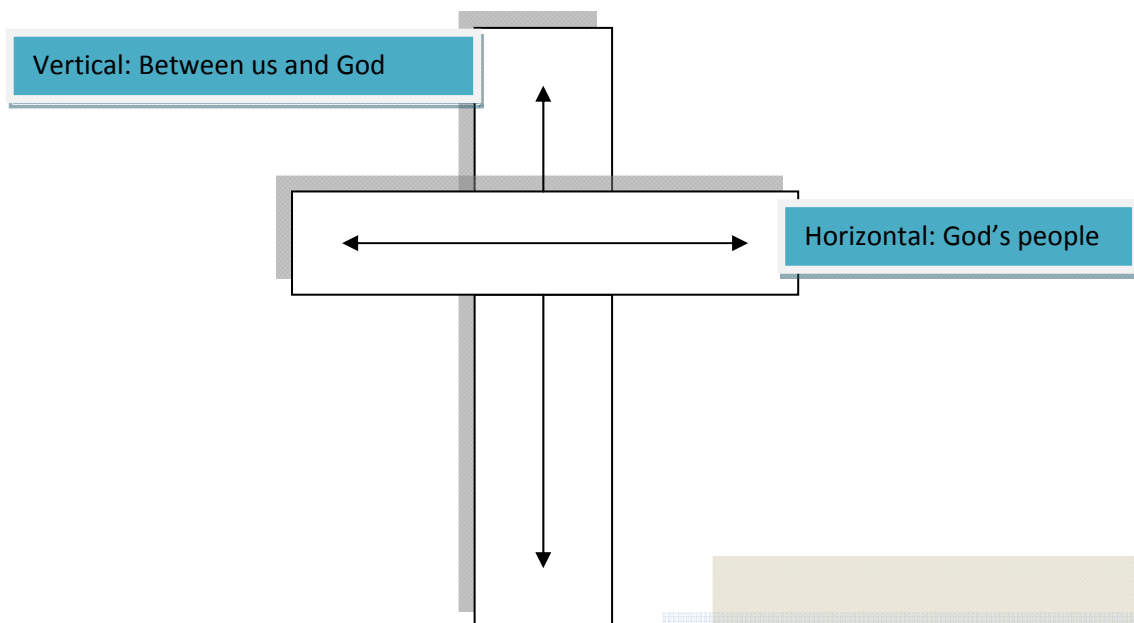
## 2011 Charge to Synod

The theme this year is Community as in our community of faith. It comes out of my reflections of Episcopal life which I have written about and which is entitled *Wearing Purple* and I hope, is a reminder of the importance of being in community. As the diocese moves forward from here, being as one in support and prayer, will sustain us in the coming months as I prepare to retire and you to start a new chapter of diocesan life.

## COMMUNITY

'Community' is a recurring theme that can be likened to a strand that weaves together the various themes that we have worked with over the years. It connects them to the wider fabric of the Body.

And the threads within the strand are the relationships which bind a community together: the vertical thread connecting ourselves with God and the horizontal thread of bonding us, God's people. Together the vertical and the horizontal keep us as one. The threads of the cross in turn are held in place by the One Holy Unifying Christ.



*Our network of relationships criss-crosses from parish to parish, church to church, schools, agencies, chaplaincies, house groups, church groups, Anglican Centre, Resource Centre*

### 1 The Horizontal Dimension

#### 1.1 Relationships.

How the diocese expresses itself as a community IE "thinking and acting as a unified diocese<sup>1</sup>" is noteworthy for its variety and vitality. What is

<sup>1</sup> Key 6: Thinking and Acting as a Unified Diocese

unique about the Diocese of Wellington is that we are a **network of relationships**<sup>2</sup> - from the companionships we have and the conversations that connect us: priests and people; deacons and communities; lay ministers, ministry teams and communities of faith; spiritual directors and mentors with those they mentor and coach; Archdeacons and their Archdeaconries; and the Bishop with the whole. The network criss-crosses from parish to parish, church to church, schools, agencies, chaplaincies, house groups, church groups, Anglican Centre, Resource Centre – this is the Diocese.

It makes us unique as a source of cohesion, co-operation and companionship on the journey. The network is a strength.

My thanks to you: laity, Clergy, Canons, Chaplains, Archdeacons, Dean, Vicar General, Anglican Centre team, Alayne my PA and of course Dwyllis.

### 1.2 Partnership Between Tikanga

But we are also created to live in Companionship with one another aware that God illustrates it in the Holy Trinity for all to see and seek. We are made to connect, to interrelate, to love and be loved, to converse with each other, to laugh and cry together. There is for example, the companionship we share with Hui Amorangi and Bishop Muru. We met for a Hui in 2011 with the subsequent recommitment to the partnership we share.

We have a responsibility to respect the bicultural partnership, to see justice is done and at the same time appreciate there is a need to build a new future that includes the multicultural dimension.

### 1.3 Companion Dioceses

Then there is the relationship we have enjoyed with our companion dioceses: Kagera and Brisbane and the enrichment of those links. Our visit to **Kagera** in 2000 had a profound effect on me. Dwyllis and I discovered what it was like to be involved in a growing church beyond anything in this country. But we also discovered the confidence the church had about itself with its message of Good News which stands in contrast to the defensive attitude we noticed in the church when we returned to New Zealand. It is as if, at least at times, we demonstrate a lack of confidence in the Good News – as if we dare to believe it's transforming power.

One positive outcome of that visit was to make the dream of a secondary school a reality and I am grateful to John and Mary Rowan for accepting my invitation to raise the funds to build the Good Shepherd School in Kagera after I had gained an initial financial grant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Our other and more recent companion link is as you know, with the diocese of **Brisbane** which has been extended from the original five years to a further three to conclude in 2012. This link nearer to home has seen exchanges of clergy at Clergy Conferences, meetings of the bishops, a sharing of each others' Sesqui celebrations, parish visits and at the time of

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<sup>2</sup> 2002 Synod Charge, p.4.

the flooding in 2011 we sent two priests: Jean Malcolm and Winton Davies, to assist in the Lockey Valley-Ipswich area.

#### 1.4 The Starlings of Otmoor

One of the most enduring images of community that shows it to be both a thing of grace and also practicality, is that of the starlings of Otmoor<sup>3</sup> which gather and fly in their thousands without mishap. The formation in flight demonstrates how at our best we have the ability to risk taking responsibility with effective consequences. We have seen faith-communities throughout the diocese initiate a range of liturgical, educational and pastoral opportunities.

And often at the centre of this activity – this *flying*, is the Eucharist where people gather to celebrate Christ’s presence as head of the body<sup>4</sup> as well as God’s creative power in restoring us to fullness. From the riches of our heritage comes a religious experience that is wrapped in mystery – “a constant celebration of good news, a continual rendezvous with the Risen Christ, and through Him, with God”<sup>5</sup> – whether in the Cathedral of S.Paul or S.Annes, Porirua or under the oak trees at Otiri north of Hunterville.

As the starlings of Otmoor demonstrate the release of great energy, so does the diocese through its ministers – lay and ordained.

There are currently 500 lay licences held by three hundred lay people qualified to preach, teach, visit, pray, anoint and care. There are 150 licensed clergy as well as active retired clergy with permissions to officiate. Since 1997 when in that year I was Commissary to the acting Archbishop up to and including 2011, an encouraging number of people have been ordained deacons and priests<sup>6</sup>.

*“teams working together to achieve amazing things”<sup>7</sup>*

#### Ordinations Chart

Year	Deacons in Transition	Vocational Deacons	Priests	Total
1997	8		5	13
1998	3	2	9	14
1999	6	1	7	14
2000	7	2	6	15
2001	4	1	6	11
2002	8	1	6	15
2003	8		6	14
2004	7		8	15

<sup>3</sup> Video clip shown with the 2009 Synod Charge “Forming the Future”

<sup>4</sup> Ephesians 1.23

<sup>5</sup> Page 54, “A Generous Orthodoxy” by Brian McLaren

<sup>6</sup> Permanent Deacons who form the Household of Deacons and Transitional Deacons who are on their way to being ordained Priests.

<sup>7</sup> TV 3 News 7 February 2011, quote from a New Zealand Lifeguards event.

2005	15	1	5	21
2006	11	4	14	29
2007	11	1	9	21
2008	9	1	10	20
2009	8		6	14
2010	11		9	20
2011	13		11	24
				260

## 1.5 Discernment

It is also worth noting the time and careful attention the diocesan community devotes to **discernment**, selection, training, formation and licensing of both laity and clergy. The discernment process for those seeking ordination for instance, whether they are accepted or not, involves interviews with Examining Chaplains [usually three per person], a Psychologist and the Bishop, as well as attendance at a residential Ministry Discernment Conference. Candidates spend one to two years on the discernment journey, write their spiritual autobiography, review books, undertake projects if required and work with a Mentor. The Bishop's Ministry Chaplain<sup>8</sup> and Director of Ordinands who is at present Canon Kate Carey-Smith oversees the process for and with the Bishop.

**1.6 Encouragement**<sup>9</sup> is an important ingredient in a healthy community. It energizes people and when people are energized they become passionate about their ministry which in turn leads on to being more effective.

But note, there is a cost and we do need to be frank about that. Just as Jesus invited the young man to give his possessions away and join Him, so we need to tell people what the real cost of servant leadership is – of living out the values of servant leadership.

A high cost won't put people off however.

Indifferent leadership or a leader bored with the work will. Finding fault in others will put people off too, as will a lack of affirmation. And if their values go unrealized people will drift away.

We must also remember and care for the Retired clergy and their spouses – I know that the Archdeaconry chaplains who themselves are retired, are appreciated as are the gatherings which I have attended. Retired clergy when encouraged, can continue to be effective assistants in faith-communities

1.7 We have received encouragement from the Anglican Communion also - notably from the **Lambeth Conferences** of 1998 and 2008.

1.7.1 The **Doctrine of Subsidiarity** emerged from Lambeth 1998.

Put simply – it means what can be done locally should be done locally and what can be done best on a more global scale should be done on a more global scale.

<sup>8</sup> Previous Chaplains: Hilary Baskerville, Alistair Hendry and Judy Hardie

<sup>9</sup> Synod Charge 2004

In a sense the Anglican Church is tailor-made for such an approach with a world-wide Communion, regional and provincial structures<sup>10</sup> [collections of dioceses or similar], and dioceses made up of parishes/mission units, chaplaincies and Fresh Expressions of Being Church.

As a Diocese we benefit from the role of mission units at the local level but we are also able to combine our resources in social services, training, fund-raising, insurance, and administration. Recently we have embarked on a mission review of the city of Wanganui in the hope that there will be initiatives that we can do together in the city.

In this day and age when the pace of life seems at times to run on ahead of us and issues seem to be complicated it will be important to collaborate across parish boundaries.

what can be done locally should be done locally and what can be done best on a more global scale should be done on a more global scale.

1.7.2 The **Indaba** groups were a gift from Lambeth 2008.

Indaba is a Zulu model of group interaction which evolved from sitting around the campfire and in respectful conversation to talk about the issues at hand. At Lambeth that meant meeting in groups of about 40 and honestly and charitably looking each other in the eye to converse on matters of poverty, abuse in its various guises, inter-faith conflict, human sexuality, the moratoria and the Covenant.

There were predictions before the 2008 Lambeth Conference that it would fail over the divisive issue of blessing same-sex-relationships and ordaining people living in a committed same-sex relationship. More than two hundred bishops didn't turn up adding fuel to the speculation that the conference was doomed before it started. That was to be far from the truth and while at times it wasn't easy and there were differences, there is no doubt that the Indaba process contributed toward what in the end, turned out to be a successful conference for the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Instead of debating resolutions which would have perpetuated the winners and losers syndrome – a point we need to keep in mind, the time spent in groups paid off.

## 2 The Vertical Dimension

### 2.1 The Holy Spirit

Harvey Cox sounds a warning<sup>11</sup> – that the church in the future is going to have to contend with the Holy Spirit. His concern is that the church in stressing the importance of belief has relied upon



<sup>10</sup> The Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia as a three Tikanga Church is probably the most innovative of kind in the Anglican

<sup>11</sup> Harvey Cox, "The Future of Faith"

authoritarian structures to maintain that. Many would argue that the structures have been on the whole, positive, but Cox argues that structures can become overbearing – canons and rules too nullifying and where it is better to do nothing if doing something has an element of risk. The need for certainty takes precedence over the need for freedom. Cox's contention reminds me of the story of the Grand Inquisitor in Dostoyevsky's novel<sup>12</sup>. The Grand Inquisitor when addressing the silent Prisoner derides Him for having rejected the offer made by the *'terrible and clever Spirit'* who had offered Him the world in return for His allegiance all those centuries before and instead opted for freedom even to the extent of sacrificing Himself for it. In the end the old Inquisitor orders the Captive to leave and never to return. What the old man wanted was certainty - an ordered life at the expense of freedom and truth. A church without the Spirit of God.

The Age of the Spirit now though is *coming ready or not* – that *Captive* from Dostoyevsky's novel released by the *Grand Inquisitor* has not gone away at all but is here with us as always.

*Lord, Holy Spirit,  
You blow like the wind in a thousand paddocks,  
Inside and outside the fences,  
You blow where you wish to blow.*<sup>13</sup>

The Spirit blows over fences and boundaries, through churches, across cultures and countries, into religions and values. The Spirit is both at the centre and on the edges – sustaining the faith-community but also willing new shapes and forms of faith-community to come into being.

*" .... What if the Spirit is preparing something new in the congregation? What if the whitecaps on the recently smooth waters are caused by the wind of the Spirit, not the whispers of critics? Isn't it possible that you are working for a premature and bland peace when something deeply creative is in motion?"*<sup>14</sup>

## 2.2 Re-imagining the profile of the church with the Life-Giving Spirit,



The Diocesan 'Temples and Tabernacles'<sup>15</sup> Task Team is an example of the church involved in something quite creative. It gamely works on the edge of risk, considering the resources and demographics of the diocese as it focuses on Mission. At this point in our life as a diocese we are or should be, less concerned about flower arranging in the sanctuary and more concerned about the most effective way we can utilize the many resources we have and how they can be better matched to the mission opportunities that arise.

It is a matter of thinking strategically and we should not allow ourselves the false luxury of sitting on our assets when we could have both 'tents' and 'tabernacles' – God's Spirit is in both and beyond both.

<sup>12</sup> Fyodor Dostoyevsky, "The Brothers Karamazov", p. 283ff

<sup>13</sup> Song to the Holy Spirit, verses 1 & 2

<sup>14</sup> Eugene H Peterson on Spiritual Direction quoted in the 2005 Synod Charge

<sup>15</sup> Tents and Tabernacles is a phrase coined by George Ling: Tents being flexible church communities and structures and tabernacles referring to established parish communities with church buildings and plant.

Do I see us closing some church plant? Inevitably yes in some situations, just as I see new mission units beginning and I hope assets can be re-channelled towards new initiatives. We know God's Holy Spirit isn't confined to the sanctuary of the church - God's Spirit is everywhere including in change, and at times its force can be more than a mild summer breeze.

- ✦ A Spirit-filled Church is generous and caring, uninterested in name-calling, and most interested in reaching over the fence to chat to the neighbour - perhaps even to take the fence down.
- ✦ A Spirit-filled Church is a permission giving one – *it's ok to go ahead and take the fence down, re-arrange the seating*. But we should also feel able to use less words to celebrate the Eucharist, and even do 'messy' and un-ordered liturgy.
- ✦ A Spirit-filled church is where we are Servant Leaders making use of the gifts we have been given to care, to proclaim, to plan, to act, to be collaborative and to be willing to learn if we do make a difference to people's lives
- ✦ A Spirit-filled church has a mixed economy - upholding what is best in our inherited tradition as well as encouraging fresh expressions of being church engaged in mission.
- ✦ A Spirit-filled Church is by and large the one we are in, it is here, we are part of it and we are charged with the responsibility of making it more visible as the agent of God's Mission to the world which will ultimately know us by our love, our faith and our passion for serving God.

### 3 Food, Faults and Faith In The Family

The theme of community with its vertical and horizontal dimensions makes up the whole of the *cross*, symbol of our faith. The future rests with the community valuing itself as that, growing outwardly to a spiritually hungry society and inwardly to deepen its self awareness.

For that to be so, the *club* mentality with the comfort it provides needs to be continually challenged, so pastoral care and hospitality aren't confused with 'club' values. That is to say, we aren't called to shut ourselves away from the world – indeed it was Archbishop William Temple who said, "*Church is the only society on earth that exists for the benefit of non-members.*"

And it was David Parker<sup>16</sup> who said how important it is to have extra places set at the table so visitors can be offered hospitality.

Dwyllis was raised on a farm in South Canterbury. Generosity and hospitality were a way of life - there was always someone turning up at mealtime: local stock agents, shearers, harvesters, neighbours. Quickly an extra place was set and a meal was served. Mostly it was

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<sup>16</sup> David Parker, Pastor of the Desert Willow Creek Church, California who spoke at 2011 New Wine at El Rancho.

at short notice, sometimes there didn't appear to be all that much extra in the pantry but always the visitors were fed.

With that background, hospitality is an important part of life at Bishops court. In our first year Dwyllis found that many clergy had not been to Bishops court so we organized and prepared a BBQ to which all the clergy families of the diocese were invited. That it poured with rain on the day did not deter us from having a great time, albeit shoulder to shoulder in the house and garage.

One of the most significant of all the many functions we have provided and which was initiated by Dwyllis, is an annual dinner for those celebrating significant ordination anniversaries. This year it will be a bit different in that it will be an open-ended invitation to the ordained to call on us one evening after Cathedral Evensong. Stay tuned.

Above all it has been an intentional demonstration of the ministry of hospitality which is so important .

Being an hospitable people has been part of our long Judea-Christian tradition. We do need to bear in mind its significance and not to think that a cup of instant coffee and a cracker biscuit constitutes a sufficient expression of creating a climate of caring generosity.

But there is too, the matter of hospitality around the table of reconciliation – at Eucharist – and having an extra place set there also.

It brings us back to the question Brian McLaren has raised – what comes first, believing or belonging? As you know it was a question I took to the Lambeth Conference in 2008 in relation to the Eucharist as an inclusive meal and which we discussed in our Bible Study group.

The outcome of that conversation being, that if an un-baptised person comes forward to the table for communion, we include them so that they feel they do belong and that the spark of faith which has brought them thus far might grow into the flame of faith. The bishops' proviso was that it behoves the priest to follow-up with the aim of bringing the person fully into faith in Christ and to be baptised.

The emphasis shifts from being guardians to being servant leaders – from keeping the faith to sharing the faith.

What have I learnt in the role of Bishop? Perhaps more than anything it is that provided we have a heartfelt sense that God's Spirit is involved – that our faith is based on a "*deep seated confidence*"<sup>17</sup> in what we set out to do, people will trust the leadership and will work to help achieve a goal. Even when ministry and mission are at their most challenging there are people in the faith-community prepared to get the job done. An appropriate quote might be: ***Remember impossible is merely an opinion.***

We have together as a diocesan community done so much that has been effective.

But I have also learnt, and this long-pre-dates wearing purple, that not everything works.

I recall before I was ordained when as a stock agent, I lost a farmer's cattle beast at a sale. Wrong count. The head auctioneer after sorting it all out and hearing my apology told me not to worry and said, "*if you're not making mistakes you're not working*". In respect to

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<sup>17</sup> Page 3 'The Future of Faith' by Harvey Cox, Harper Collins pub.2009

what we have attempted in the diocese it is true we haven't succeeded with everything we have tried but **we have tried** as we have sought to follow The Way.

We have at times opted for risk-taking rather than safety which according to Archbishop Rowan Williams puts us in good company, "*The historic mainstream had its origins in risk-taking innovators*".

Jesus Himself took a risk when He commissioned the apostles – they were quite ordinary people, although He was aware that ordinary people can be inspired to do extraordinary things.

In drawing these threads of my reflections together, I refer again to the way Harvey Cox distinguishes between belief and faith and to say that while belief can be set forth in a creed, faith is more intangible and involves the whole self. It is as if *faith* is one step further on than *belief* if we were to follow Cox's argument. A sentiment echoed in the way Carl Gustav Jung who when in his 80's, was asked if he believed in God.

He said: "*Believe?*" [pause] "*I know*". That is my response too – I know.

*"The historic mainstream  
had its origins in risk-taking  
innovators".*

*++Rowan Cantaur*