



We Intend...

**Parishes Living
God's Mission**



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This program is an extension of the I Intend program (<https://www.anglican.ca/gifts/i-intend/>) developed by the leadership of Trinity Anglican Church in Aurora, Ontario. We Intend is the result of a challenge from Bishop Rob Hardwick, Diocese of Qu'Appelle and then Chair of the Resources for Mission Advisory Committee to provide a resource that would extend individual discipleship (I Intend) to congregational action (We Intend). The challenge was accepted by the Venerable Cheryl Toth and Susan Graham Walker.

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Being a Christian is not just about what we believe
—it is a way of life!

Introduction

God has gifted us in many ways—with the beauty of God’s creation, with the redeeming love of Jesus, with the guidance and wisdom of the Spirit, with the companionship of the community of faith. And God calls us to be a gift to others—to earth itself, to our family and friends, to our neighbours, towns or cities and to the national and global community. To realize the gifts we have been given and to be a gift to others is at the heart of the church. We are blessed and called to be a blessing.

As a church, we have a number of ways to think through how we live out what we are called to be. One of them is the **Five Marks of Mission** of the worldwide Anglican community developed by the Anglican Consultative Council in the 1990s (anglican.ca/marks/about).

In this new century and millennium, the Marks of Mission have won growing and wide acceptance among Anglicans around the world. They give parishes and dioceses a practical and memorable “checklist” for mission activities. We are further emphasizing this direction in this program and its companion, *I Intend...* (anglican.ca/gifts/i-intend).

The Marks of Mission help us pattern our individual and corporate life after Jesus Christ. This resource is designed to provide an opportunity for individuals and the faith community to reflect on five areas of our Christian life and ask ourselves how we might more intentionally live out what we are called to be. The five Marks of Mission and the intentions of our baptismal covenant are focused in five words of action: TELL, TEACH, TEND, TRANSFORM, TREASURE. Ultimately, we are being asked, “How are we going to live God’s mission in our life together in and for this community?”

It’s vital to our life as a Christian community that we reflect from time to time on what our mission is and how we intend to live it. This entails not just what we think, but what we want to do and how we plan to do it. Vision and mission go together. And with them comes giving a portion of all that we are and have been given by God to make it happen individually and as a community: our time, our abilities and our finances. Without the spiritual discipline of good stewardship or discipleship, our vision is a dream we have no intention of realizing! Good stewards are caring, compassionate, committed, just, thoughtful, generous and...intentional!

Individuals and congregations using this resource will find it a guide to

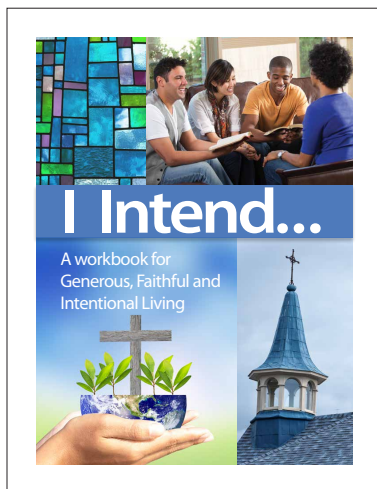
Spiritual formation

Spiritual formation involves the outward effort of taking on behaviours that foster inner growth and development. As Robert Mulholland says, spiritual formation is “a process of being conformed to the image of Christ”. Studies show that spiritual growth is influenced by three factors that interact:

- an innate biological predisposition,
- familial influences
- and the individual’s personal environment and choices.

**“Think of us in this way,
as servants of Christ
and stewards of God’s
mysteries.”**

—1 CORINTHIANS 4:1



consider how they want to work with others to live out God’s mission and be a blessing in the world. Let’s live with intention and be who God is calling us to be!

This resource was researched and prepared by the Venerable Cheryl Toth responding to a challenge from Bishop Rob Hardwick to move from individual action (*I Intend*) to corporate action (*We Intend*).

We Intend was developed as a companion to *I Intend*... However, each can be used independently or one following the other, usually beginning with *I Intend*. *I Intend* assists individuals to frame their personal decisions in a way that leads to discipleship and sound stewardship. A group or congregation might then move to *We Intend*, with its focus on how as disciples living together in congregational life we live out our collective mission.

Some ways of using *We Intend*

1. As a follow on from *I Intend* —
We Intend is a natural extension of the *I Intend* program and builds and deepens the opportunities of discipleship both individually and corporately
2. As a way of introducing the Anglican Marks of Mission to the congregation
3. As a Lenten program for new disciples or those renewing their Baptismal vows
4. As part of a larger visioning process in the congregation
5. Individuals and small groups can work through the program after which the parish leadership would use the proposals to build the congregation’s annual or multi-year Mission or Strategic plan.

Getting Started

Program Guide

This program guide provides session outlines and support for leading a small group through the program over seven sessions. (It could be accomplished in six sessions by including content from the Introduction in the first session.)

The first session is an introduction to the Marks of Mission with other sessions going more deeply into each Mark of Mission in a person's own life and then exploring how this could be lived out within their parish.

On our own & together

A unique feature of the *We Intend* design is the balance between individual reflection and then group discussion. Every individual begins with exploration of each Mark of Mission by LISTENING, REFLECTING, ASKING AND DECIDING how they intend to live out this Mark of Mission in their own life. Individuals then come together to do these similar activities in community and in the end offering intentions for how the congregation might go about living out each of the Marks of Mission as a community. A trusted small group gives individuals the opportunity to express their thoughts, expand their insights and hear God speaking to them through a loving community. (If the individuals or parish have used the *I Intend* program then the On Your Own time can also include reviewing the intentions developed at that time, evaluating follow through and either affirming or reforming your decisions.)

The first session is an introduction to the Marks of Mission as a tool for spiritual formation, that is, developing spiritual maturity by taking on spiritual practices. The other five sessions help participants go through a reflective process that results in choosing spiritual practices called Intention Statements. The small-group process then builds on individual reflection to create proposed community intentions.

The small groups can be as small as three and ideally should not be larger than 10 participants. Each *Together* session is about 1.5 hours long and should take place in a private, comfortable setting that fosters open discussion. This requires a facilitator, clergy or lay person, who has an ability to facilitate small group Bible discussions.

The ideas from the *Together* sessions can then contribute to a larger planning process for the mission of the congregation.

Romans 12:1–2

Therefore you have no excuse, whoever you are, when you judge others; for in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, are doing the very same things. 2 You say,[a] “We know that God’s judgment on those who do such things is in accordance with truth.”

The Marks of Mission are a framework for our life of faith as individuals well as a framework for responding in service to God's mission as parishes, dioceses and denomination. They were developed and refined over time by the international Anglican Consultative Council which facilitates the co-operative work of the churches of the global Anglican Communion.

Marks of Mission

Tell

To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom.

Teach

To teach, baptise and nurture new believers.

Tend

To respond to human need by loving service.

Transform

To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation.

Treasure

To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

The Baptismal Covenant

(from p. 159, BAS)

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Father?

People **I believe in God,
The Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Celebrant Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People **I believe in Jesus Christ,
his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again
to judge the living and the dead.**

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People **I believe in God the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.**

Celebrant Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you persevere in resisting evil and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbour as yourself?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human

being?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Celebrant Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation, and respect, sustain and renew the life of the Earth?

People **I will, with God's help.**

For Congregational Use

There are additional ways that the program can be integrated into the life of the parish.

Worship and Sermon Series

Each week the liturgy and sermon is aligned to the five Marks of Mission. Worship Resources [page x] provide possible Opening Prayers, Scripture readings, Prayers Over the Gifts, Prayers after Communion and hymns. At the end of each sermon a few minutes of silence (or music) could be provided to allow individuals a chance to review the Reflect questions.

Depending on the talents and abilities of the people in your church community, you may wish to invite lay people to provide the Sunday service reflection. Many lay people have workplace expertise in sustainable development, human resources, household financial management, time management, volunteer management, nursing and mental health resources, personal fitness training, etc. The clergy would likely want to meet with these individuals and assess their suitability for speaking in front of the parish. The clergy will also likely want to coach the individuals to help them craft their message.

Workshops

A way to augment the program and to go deeper into the topics is to provide weekly workshops. These would preferably be led by volunteer experts from the community. Perhaps they may even be led by the lay preachers for the series.

For example: **Creation and the Environment**, an environmental social justice organization, a local spokesperson from Kairos or someone from a local municipality could speak about ways to care for the environment;

Time, a business manager might bring expertise in time management and speak about how they see their time as a gift from God.

Talent, a human resources professional might lead a workshop on skills inventory or an expert in Spiritual Gifts Inventories or an online resource (<https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Congregations-and-Synods/Faith-Practices/Spiritual-Renewal/Assessment-Tools>).

Treasure, a financial manager might provide a workshop on household budgeting and money as God's gift. **Mental and Physical Well-being**, a

**Christian
stewardship is...**

**Everything we
think,
say
and do
after we say
"I believe."**

—KAIROSCANADA.ORG

“...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control”

—GALATIANS 5:22–23

professional trainer or a mental health nurse could speak about how to care for our mental and physical health.

Children and Youth programming

It would be important to share the *We Intend* program with the children and youth ministry leaders. The topics are relevant and can be adapted for use in a weekly program so that the whole parish—young and old—participates together.

Marks of Mission – Children and Youth Programming – some on line resources:

There are several examples of Christian Education programming based on the Marks of Mission.

1. Compendium of the Church Mice

<https://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/diocesan-ministries/children-youth-ministries/pages/compendium-of-the-church-mice>

The Compendium of the Church Mice is a creative year-long Sunday school curriculum that weaves in the Marks of Mission. It is one of several projects emerging from General Synod's Marks of Mission initiative.

2. Society of St John the Evangelist - Resources for Facilitators and Communicators

<https://www.ssje.org/5marksofloveresources/>

Facilitator's Guides, for adults and children (7-14), have been created in partnership with the Center for the Ministry of Teaching at the Virginia Theological Seminary. These guides are designed for first-time group leaders as well as those who are more experienced. The adult guide also contains alternate ideas and tips for using this offering with young adult groups.

3. From a resource for use in religious education in English schools

<https://www.frSimon.uk/the-five-marks-of-mission-for-children-and-your-school/>

Planning Timeline

A suggested timeline that you can adjust to your situation

Late Spring	Introduce the We Intend program to the parish leadership – churchwardens, stewardship committee and chair, the appropriate leadership (clergy, wardens, executive, liturgical planning committee, staff and congregational decision-making bodies such as parish council, vestry, etc.). Propose a fall implementation.
Early Fall	<p>Recruit a facilitator(s) for the small groups. (Recruit workshop leaders.)</p> <p>Promote the program in congregational communications (bulletin, announcements, email, etc.). Print copies of the workbook for members/ attendees.</p> <p>Collect small-group participant names through signup sheets. Book the small-group meeting space. Print copies of the program for each individual.</p>
Later Fall	<p>Implement the program</p> <p>Program follow-up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate the completion of the program. • Review all the proposed intentions; prioritize them; cost out each one (taking into account the cost of not doing the intentions); propose a plan employing the Marks of Mission as a framework • Determine who will take the next steps – Churchwardens or Advisory Board or team specifically recruited for the task (small group leaders, for example, or a planning team).

Proverbs 3: 5–12

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. It will be a healing for your flesh and a refreshment for your body.

Honor the Lord with your substance and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.

My child, do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the Lord reproofs the one he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.

INTRODUCTORY SESSION

Generous, Intentional Living

Icebreaker

Have each person introduce themselves and ask them to identify a (New Year's) resolution they were able to keep and one they were not.

Additional Ice Breaker Questions

- What was your most recent 'God moment'?
- What brought you to this congregation? Why do you stay?
- Share one thing people might not know about your spiritual journey.
- For more sharing faith questions see the Episcopal Church program Sharing Faith Dinners - <http://www.sharingfaithdinners.com/>

You will need the following for each participant:

- paper
- pens
- Bibles
- *We Intend* books for each individual

Beginning

Welcome and overview of the program

Opening Prayer

Creator of the fruitful earth,
you made us stewards of all things.
Give us grateful hearts for all your goodness,
and steadfast wills to use your bounty well,
that the whole human family,
today and in generations to come,
may with us give thanks for the riches of your creation.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

—*Book of Alternative Services*, p. 396

Middle

What does it mean to live generously and intentionally?

Open discussion

- Why do some resolutions stick while others fall by the wayside?
- What behaviours, practices and habits help make lasting change possible?

Program Introduction

Being a Christian is not just about what we believe—it is a way of life!

God has abundantly blessed us. Our response to this generosity is to care for God's creation. This includes caring for ourselves, other people and the world. Every action and decision, no matter how mundane, comes from the starting place of recognizing this sacred responsibility. We are God's stewards and this leads to living with loving and generous intention. As Christians, we do this by patterning our life after Jesus Christ.

As Anglicans we have various ways of choosing a Rule of Life. One of them ties us with Anglicans worldwide—The Marks of Mission.

On your own

This program is designed to give you the opportunity to reflect on each of the Marks of Mission in your life and ask yourself: “How would living more closely with the Marks of Mission impact decisions in my life?”

Together

As Christians we live in the community of the Church to help sustain us as Christians and to live the faith together. We can apply the Marks of Mission to how we carry out our communal life in worship, learning, caring and serving. These intentions can shape the life of our parish throughout the year ensuring that we are continually aligned with God’s mission.

We will be asking each of us: “How do you want to live your faith?” And together we will be asking “How do we want to work to fulfil God’s mission for us in this place?”

- Invite someone to read the Introduction above aloud.
- Discuss.
- Highlight the Reflect, Ask, Decide and Intention Statement structure of the upcoming sessions.
- Review the steps to complete the Workbook.

Study

*Lectio divina*¹ on the Marks of Mission

First time reading

- Listen for which of the Marks of Mission stands out for you
- Each participant shares with the group which Mark of Mission stood out—resisting any further discussion.

Second time reading

- Which of the Marks do you have the most passion for?
- Which of the Marks do you follow most closely at this time?
- Which of the Marks is the most challenging for you as an individual?

Third time reading

- How is God calling us to live the Marks of Mission in our parish?
- Where might we start? What might be most challenging?

¹*Lectio Divina* (Latin for “Divine Reading”) is a traditional monastic practice of scriptural reading, meditation and prayer intended to promote communion with God and to increase the knowledge of God’s word. It does not treat scripture as texts to be studied, but as the living word.

1 Corinthians 4:1–8a

Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God’s mysteries. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. I do not even judge myself. I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive commendation from God. I have applied all this to Apollos and myself for your benefit, brothers and sisters,[a] so that you may learn through us the meaning of the saying, “Nothing beyond what is written,” so that none of you will be puffed up in favor of one against another. **For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you received it, why do you boast as if it were not a gift?** Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich!

—*The Message*

Homework

- Have each person reflect on ways they prefer to make lasting changes in their lives.
- Have each person commit to speaking with their family members or close friends about their participation in this program, asking for their support and insights.
- Have each person read the Marks of Mission as part of their prayer practice each day.

Review the tasks for *On Your Own* this week and any logistics for the next gathering of the small group .

Closing Prayer

Christ within us,
Light above us,
Earth beneath us,
Love surrounds us. Amen.

—*Celtic Prayer*

A word about Intention Statements

Just as there is time for working “On Your Own” and working “Together”, we propose that Intention Statements are developed to ground our response to each Mark of Mission into concrete action. In this case, intentions for our own life and proposed intentions for our congregational life.

An intention statement is essentially a written expression of your intention. When you write something down, it forces you to reflect on how to express it. Similarly, it gives you the ability to explore what you really mean.

An intention statement can increase accountability, help you understand yourself on a deeper level, and (crucially) reinforce your belief in your own potential.

Good intention statements are typically brief, extremely clear and inspiring. They often make reference to a new way of being rather than just a specific goal. Once written down, they can be used as affirmations (i.e. spoken statements that you repeat to yourself or choose to display in prominent areas). (from TheLawofAttraction.com)

At the end of the personal study each week you will be encouraged to name your intentions. We are suggesting perhaps two or three for each Mark. Each statement can follow the pattern of SMART goals:

- Specific • Measureable • Achievable • Relevant • Time bound

Then in the larger group the session ends with collecting ideas for how the congregation could be more intentional in living out each Mark of Mission. Here there might be a longer list of ideas, also following the SMART pattern.

For your individual intentions, you might keep a list of these in a journal and return to them regularly to see how you have integrated them into your life.

The corporate or congregational ideas should be collected, along with any specific proposals for implementation, and then be shared with the congregational leadership. Further suggestions on Next Steps can be found on p X.

SESSION I

Tell: On your own

Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God

Centering Prayer

Loving God, thank you for the gift of life.

Open my heart to hear your word.

Open my mind to understand your good news.

Show me how I might proclaim your love to others
in word and in deed.

This I ask through Jesus Christ. Amen.

...

One of the consistent messages in the Bible is that God is King. It's a way of telling us that there is no other power in the cosmos greater than God. It's a way of reminding us that no ruler on earth has more of a claim on our lives than God does. It's important for us to keep this in mind as we go about our daily lives.

Why? We live in a world in which many claim sovereignties over the lives of others—their citizens, their employees, their dependents. Some do so with good intention; others do not. Knowing that we are truly subjects of the God of Scripture helps us remember whose we are and who we are. The One we serve is “Mighty King, lover of justice” (Psalm 99:4) in whose kingdom all are to be treated with respect, fairness and dignity. We are servants of God, who is sovereign of all and cares for all.

Ours is a God whose great love for humanity is shown in the person of Jesus the Christ. In him, the kingdom of God is experienced as he heals, forgives and teaches us what self-giving love is all about. In his life, death and resurrection, God's sovereign power over life and death is revealed. God's love for us in Jesus is good news! God's kingdom brings justice and peace! We are asked to proclaim the good news of God's reign as those who profess faith in Jesus Christ. In our baptismal covenant, *Book of Alternative Services*, p. 159, we promise to tell others the good news of God in Christ through word and example. It's no small task. But it is at the heart of who we are as church, as Christ's community.

ON YOUR OWN

Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God

What in the life of our church shows this mark matters to us?

How is this Mark of Mission reflected in our worship?

What more could we do as a church to live this Mark of Mission?

Who else in our community does this? How can we help them?

LISTEN

Here are two passages from Scripture that show different aspects of how God's reign is proclaimed:

“The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims God's handiwork. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard; yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.”

PSALM 19:1–4, NRSV

³⁹ Many Samaritans in that city believed in Jesus because of the woman's word when she testified, “He told me everything I've ever done.” ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹ Many more believed because of his word, ⁴² and they said to the woman, “We no longer believe because of what you said, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this one is truly the saviour of the world.”

JOHN 4:39–42, COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE

REFLECT

When I hear “the good news of God's kingdom,” what comes to mind?

How do I experience the Good News of Jesus Christ in my life?

In what ways do I see people believing in Jesus because of my testimony?

Which do I find easier—showing what I believe through my actions or talking about what I believe? Why?

What do I find challenging about the other?

ASK

The first Mark of Mission calls us to “proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom.” This missional aspect of being a follower of Christ is emphasized in our baptismal covenant when we promise to “proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ.”

Think back over the past week (or month). How have I proclaimed God’s Good News in what I say?

How have I proclaimed God’s Good News in what I do?

To whom am I making these proclamations of word and deed?

DECIDE

What one thing could I do over the next month that would show my family, my co-workers or my community what I have experienced of God?

What is one thing I can say to those around me that lets them know what I believe to be God’s good news?

Which of these shall I do? How?

INTENTION STATEMENT

God willing, it is my intention to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom by:

-
-
-

SESSION I

Tell: Together

Open

If this is the first session in the series, begin with an icebreaker. Ask people first to say their name and where they were born. Then invite people to say their name again and one thing about their baptism.

When finished, remind people that this study will look at the Marks of Mission, affirmed by Anglicans throughout the world, and at our baptismal covenant. No matter where we were born or when we were baptized, we share in these elements of being disciples of Christ.

Light the candle and, after a time of silence, pray the opening prayer.

Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God

For this session you will need:

- a candle
- a cross, as a visual focus for this session

Prayer

Holy God, you give us life and love.

Open our hearts to hear your word.

Open our minds to understand your good news in our life together.

Open us to proclaim your love to others in word and in deed.

This we ask through Jesus Christ. Amen.

...

REVIEW “On Your Own” session and homework

- Ask participants if they are engaging in the “On Your Own” We Intend studies. If so, invite any questions or comments. Remind them of the importance of engaging with the intention section as a way of actualizing what we are learning together.

LISTEN

From the On Your Own introduction

One of the consistent messages in the Bible is that God is King. It's a way of telling us that there is no other power in the cosmos greater than God. It's a way of reminding us that no ruler on earth has more of a claim on our lives than God does. It's important for us to keep this in mind as we go about our daily lives.

Why? We live in a world in which many claim sovereignties over the lives of others—their citizens, their employees, their dependents. Some do so with good intention; others do not. Knowing that we are truly subjects of the God of Scripture helps us remember whose we are and who we are. The One we serve is “Mighty King, lover of justice” (Psalm 99:4) in whose kingdom all are to be treated with respect, fairness and dignity. We are servants of God, who is sovereign of all and cares for all.

Ours is a God whose great love for humanity is shown in the person of Jesus the Christ. In him, the kingdom of God is experienced as he heals, forgives and teaches us what self-giving love is all about. In his life, death and resurrection, God's sovereign power over life and death is revealed. God's love for us in Jesus is good news! God's kingdom brings justice and peace! We are asked to proclaim the good news of God's reign as those who profess faith in Jesus Christ. In our baptismal covenant, we promise to tell others the good news of God in Christ through word and example. It's no small task. But it is at the heart of who we are as church, as Christ's community.

Here are two passages from Scripture that show different aspects of how God's reign is proclaimed. Read the passages more than once before engaging with the passages in either of the methods outlined.

¹ Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through town. ² A man there named Zacchaeus, a ruler among tax collectors, was rich. ³ He was trying to see who Jesus was, but, being a short man, he couldn't because of the crowd. ⁴ So he ran ahead and climbed up a sycamore tree so he could see Jesus, who was about to pass that way. ⁵ When Jesus came to that spot, he looked up and said, "Zacchaeus, come down at once. I must stay in your home today." ⁶ So Zacchaeus came down at once, happy to welcome Jesus. ⁷ Everyone who saw this grumbled, saying, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner." ⁸ Zacchaeus stopped and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my possessions to the poor. And if I have cheated anyone, I repay them four times as much." ⁹ Jesus said to him, "Today, salvation has come to this household because he too is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰ The Human One came to seek and save the lost."

LUKE 19:1–10, COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE

"And now, Lord...grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus." When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness.

ACTS 4:29–31, NRSV)

Explore the passages in either of the following ways:

A) Using Gospel-based discipleship

- After the first time it is read, ask: "What word(s), idea(s) or sentence(s) stand out for you in the gospel?"
- After the second time, ask: "What is Jesus (the gospel) saying to you?"
- After the third time, ask: "What is Jesus (the gospel) calling you to do?"
- Share as people wish.

Invite participants to share any insights or concerns from their "On Your Own" reflection.

B) Engage with the following questions:

- What can we learn from the story of Zacchaeus about how to show God's reign in our lives?
- What would it mean for us to proclaim God's word with boldness? Does boldness mean "louder and prouder" or "with some risk" or something else?
- What challenges do these passages present to us?

REFLECT

Think about the community in which you live. What issues does it face?

What would be good news for our neighbourhood or community? For our families? For the world?

How does our neighbourhood see or hear us proclaiming good news?

ASK

The first Mark of Mission asks us to *Tell* others about God as we "proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom." In our baptismal covenant, we promise to "proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ." Very often in our personal or communal lives we favour word over example (or vice versa) when we are asked to proclaim God's good news both by what we do and what we say.

How do we as a church community understand the good news of God's kingdom?

How do our church building and grounds proclaim good news?

What are the core values we show in how we worship and work together? *(Try to name five.)*

How do we show others what our core values are? How do we tell them about our experiences of the good news?

DECIDE

What is one way we can proclaim good news to our neighbourhood through our church building and grounds?

What might we do to show a core value in how we interact with one another as a parish?

What opportunities are there in our local community to show what we believe, either through action or word?

Which one of these ideas do we want to put into practice? How?

Which of these do we want to pass on to one of the church's decision-making bodies (priest and wardens, advisory board or vestry, We Intend committee) for consideration?

TOGETHER

Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God

What in the life of our church shows this mark matters to us?

How is this Mark of Mission reflected in our worship?

What more could we do as a church to live this Mark of Mission?

Who else in our community does this? How can we help them?

Closing Prayer

O God, whose desire it is that all the peoples of the world should be one human family, living together in harmony, grant that our parish, by its worship and its witness, may help and hasten the day when your will is done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

INTENTION STATEMENT

God willing, it is our intention to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom by:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Cost of undertaking these ministries
(all resources—time, people, building, etc.)

\$

Cost of NOT undertaking these ministries

\$

SESSION 2

Teach: On your own

Teach, baptize and nurture new believers

The early days of the church show us a variety of ways in which people heard about Jesus and decided to follow in his way. Some were among the crowds who followed him from the first days of his ministry. Some learned of him after the resurrection through the witness of the believers. Some were drawn to the community because of acts of healing or service done in Jesus' name. Some came to believe because a crisis in their life caused them to seek help. Some were part of households in which the head of the household became a believer and, as a result, all his dependents joined the community. How did you enter the household of faith?

In whatever way you became part of the Christian community, at some point you will have learned what it means to be a Christian, joined in the sacrament of baptism and experienced ways to help you grow in faith. That process is critical to developing as a disciple of Christ and to the health of the church. At the end of Matthew's gospel, Jesus says to his disciples: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19–20). Without teaching people what it means to follow Jesus and nurturing them in the life of faith, we lose our identity and our purpose. Growing in faith is a lifelong journey, and helping one another grow is a task for all of us.

Prayer

God our Father, you see us your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world: Show us that your ways give more life than the ways of the world, and that following you is better than chasing after selfish goals. Help us to take failure, not as measure of our worth, but as a chance for a new start. Give us strength to build our faith in you, and to keep alive our joy in your creation: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FROM A DISCIPLE'S PRAYER BOOK, ANGLICAN COUNCIL OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES –
<http://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/A-Disciples-Prayer-Book.pdf>

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LISTEN

The following two passages from Scripture illustrate some of the diversity in how we come to have faith in Jesus Christ. Read them over two or three times before responding to the questions.

So he [Phillip] got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over to this chariot and join it.” So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” He replied, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

“Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,
so he does not open his mouth.
In his humiliation justice was denied him.
Who can describe his generation?
For his life is taken away from the earth.”

The eunuch asked Philip, “About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?” He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him.

ACTS 8:27–38, NRSV

[Timothy], 5 I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you. 6 For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; 7 for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.

2TIMOTHY 1:5–7, NRSV

How does the unnamed Ethiopian official come to faith in Jesus Christ?

How does Timothy come to have faith in Jesus Christ?

Which experience is closer to my own? In what way?

REFLECT

The second Mark of Mission asks us to *Teach* others how to be disciples of Christ. It states that we are to “teach, baptize and nurture new believers.” Notice that the verbs are “teach,” “baptize” and “nurture.” Take a minute to reflect upon how you have been taught and nurtured in the Christian community and how you have taught or nurtured others.

Who has helped me understand the Scriptures and what they say about Jesus? Under what circumstances?

Who have been models of faith in my life? How did they influence me? How have I followed their example (or not)?

What or who is nurturing me in my faith now?

ASK

In our baptismal covenant, we promise to “continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers.” This promise is usually seen as referring primarily, but not exclusively, to our participation in the worship and educational life of the Christian community.

How confident am I in my understanding of Scripture? How comfortable am I in helping someone else understand what the Bible says about Jesus?

What would make me more confident in doing so?

ON YOUR OWN

***Teach, baptize
and nurture new
believers***

What in the life of our church shows this mark matters to us?

How is this Mark of Mission reflected in our worship?

What more could we do as a church to live this Mark of Mission?

Who else in our community does this? How can we help them?

**In what ways am I modelling what it means to follow Jesus?
To whom? How?**

**How am sharing my faith with members of my family
(children, grandchildren, siblings, etc.)? With my friends?
Co-workers?**

DECIDE

The writer to Timothy reminds him that the gift of faith within needs to be rekindled in order that he have a spirit of power and love and self-discipline. So does it for all of us.

What is one area of my spiritual life that I would like to see strengthened?

What are two or three things I can do to begin to see this realized?

Who might I support in their faith life? How?

INTENTION STATEMENT

God willing, it is my intention to teach, baptize and nurture new behaviours by

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-
-

SESSION 2

Teach: Together

Teach, baptize and nurture new believers

For this session you will need:

- a *We Intend* participant book
- a Bible and baptismal candle, as a visual focus for this session

Prayer

Blessed are you, Lord God, ruler of the universe; we praise you for your love and mercy which you have shown to all your people. We give you thanks and glory as we pray for those preparing for baptism and give thanks for our baptisms through which you made us your sons and daughters. Give us grace to live in your love, and help us to come closer to you by faith, prayer, and example. All glory is yours, Father, though Jesus your Son in the communion of your Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

ADAPTED FROM THE PRAYER FOR ANNIVERSARY OF A BAPTISM,
BAS, HOME PRAYERS, P. 695

...

REVIEW “on your own” session and homework

- Ask participants if they are engaging in the “On Your Own” We Intend studies. If so, invite any questions or comments on the second week.
- Remind them of the importance of engaging with the intention section as a way of integrating what we are learning together.
- Review which suggestions for proclaiming good news the group wanted passed on to decision-making bodies in the church. Is that still the emphasis the group wants to make?

Open

Remind one another of participants’ names by having each person say their name and the name of one of the godparents or sponsors at their baptism or, alternatively, the baptism of one of their children. If some of the participants are not baptized, ask them to say their name and the name of someone who is teaching them about the Christian faith.

When finished, light the baptismal candle. After a time of silence, pray together.

LISTEN

Read the introduction on page 21. Invite participants to share any insights or concerns from their “on your own” reflection. What did they discover about the diversity of how people come to be part of the Christian community?

The following passage from Scripture shows the early Christian community as it taught and baptized new believers. Read the passage more than once before engaging with the passages in either of the methods outlined.

³⁷When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

³⁸Peter replied, “Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

⁴⁰With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” ⁴¹Those who accepted his message were baptised, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

ACTS 2:37–47, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION, UK

Explore the passage in either of the following ways:

A) Gospel-based discipleship

- After the first time it is read, ask: “What word(s), idea(s) or sentence(s) stand out for you in the gospel?”
- After the second time, ask: “What is Jesus (the gospel) saying to you?”
- After the third time, ask: “What is Jesus (the gospel) calling you to do?”
- Share as people wish.

B) Engage with the following questions:

- In this passage, what drew people to the Christian community?
- How did they participate in the apostles’ teaching, in fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayer?
- What was the pattern of their days?
- Why do you think the community was growing so quickly?

REFLECT

The second Mark of Mission asks us to *Teach* others who are drawn to our proclamation of the good news of the kingdom. It says we are to “teach, baptize and nurture new believers.” Notice that the word “teach” comes before the word “baptize,” which seems to assume that we are teaching people about the faith before they choose to be baptized. This seems to be in contrast to the practice in many of our parishes, where it is children who are baptized and then taught as they grow.

In our congregation, how have most people come to faith in Jesus? (grew up in the church, adult converts, came from other denominations or faiths, life crises, evangelism or outreach programs, etc.)

When we speak of new believers in our congregation, are we assuming adults or babies or both? Why?

Are there people in our congregation who are new to the Christian faith? New to the Anglican church? New to the community?

What are we doing to attract people to the Christian faith?

In our interaction with others in the wider community, do we go to where people are or do we wait for people to come to us? What are the reasons for our current practice?

ASK

In our baptismal covenant, we promise to “continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers.” This promise is a quote from the Acts passage and is a way of speaking of the many ways in which people are nurtured in faith—through study and education, through their relationships with other believers, through worship and through prayer.

How are people being taught and nurtured in their understanding of the Christian faith and our Anglican Communion?

TOGETHER

**Teach, baptize
and nurture new
believers**

What in the life of our church shows this mark matters to us?

How is this Mark of Mission reflected in our worship?

What more could we do as a church to live this Mark of Mission?

Who else in our community does this? How can we help them?

In our life together, what are the primary ways we nurture people in their spiritual lives?

What are ways we help people understand the Scriptures?

In our congregation, what do we do to help families teach the faith to their children through both word and action?

How are people in the congregation being mentored in their faith?

How are they mentoring others?

DECIDE

The believing community exists to share God's love in Jesus Christ and to help people understand and grow in that love. We all need to rekindle the gift of faith within us in order that we and our congregation are engaged in a vital and life-giving faith.

In what we currently do to “teach, baptize and nurture new believers,” what might we do better? How?

What are some things we are not doing that we might try? How?

Which one of these ideas do we want to put into practice? How?

Which of these do we want to pass on to one of the church's decision-making bodies (priest and wardens, advisory board or vestry, We Intend committee) for consideration?

...

Closing Prayer

Almighty God, the fountain of all wisdom, guide us as we consider how best to help us all—new and experienced disciples of Christ—grow in faith, hope and love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

INTENTION STATEMENT

God willing, it is our intention to teach, baptize and nurture new believers by:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Cost of undertaking these ministries (all resources—time, people, building, etc.) \$

Cost of NOT undertaking these ministries \$

TOGETHER

***Teach, baptize
and nurture new
believers***

What in the life of our church shows this mark matters to us?

How is this Mark of Mission reflected in our worship?

What more could we do as a church to live this Mark of Mission?

Who else in our community does this? How can we help them?

SESSION 3

Tend: On your own

Respond to human need by loving service

Flowing from our relationship with Jesus, we serve others with loving kindness in many ordinary ways.

We listen deeply to each person, respecting Christ already present and at work. We stand in loving solidarity with generous intercession and prayerful action.

The witness of Scripture is that God is acutely attentive to human creatures and aware of their needs. The depiction of man and woman in the Garden shows them being given all they need to flourish by their Creator. Even when they do not attend to the limits God places upon them and become keenly aware of their nakedness before one another and their Creator, God does not abandon them. Instead, God fashions them garments to clothe themselves. When the people of Israel are wandering in the wilderness, freed from slavery but not able to fend for themselves, God sends manna to give them daily bread. When the prophet Elijah, exhausted and despondent, is on the run from King Ahab and Queen Jezebel, God sends angels to provide food and remind him to sleep under the shelter of a broom tree. Food, clothing, shelter—God knows our most basic needs and cares whether they are met.

We see God's care for humanity evident in the ministry of Jesus. He heals those who suffer; he feeds those who hunger; he forgives those who are broken by their guilt. And he teaches his disciples that doing so is a sign of God's reign coming near. This is what God's kingdom is like.

When we experience someone reaching out to us in our need, we realize God's care for us through them. Whether we are grieving, frightened, confused or in despair, another's word of comfort and care upholds us. When we are hungry or homeless or hurting, food, shelter and safety remind us we are not alone in our need. Someone cares. God cares. Someone cares in God's name. And that can make all the difference.

We respond to God's care for us, experienced through the kindness of others, by turning outward and offering similar care, kindness and love for others. We become the embodiment of God's love and model the action of Jesus with and for others.

Prayer

Loving God, thank you for all who reach out to those in need, whatever that need may be. Thank you for all who have shown me compassion, comfort and care when I needed it most. Increase both my ability to see those in need and my willingness to help them. This I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

THE VEN. CHERYL TOTH

...

LISTEN

This passage from the Gospel of Mark tells of an encounter between someone in need and Jesus. Read it a few times before responding to the questions.

⁴⁶ Jesus and his followers came into Jericho. As Jesus was leaving Jericho, together with his disciples and a sizable crowd, a blind beggar named Bartimaeus, Timaeus' son, was sitting beside the road. ⁴⁷ When he heard that Jesus of Nazareth was there, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, show me mercy!" ⁴⁸ Many scolded him, telling him to be quiet, but he shouted even louder, "Son of David, show me mercy!" ⁴⁹ Jesus stopped and said, "Call him forward." They called the blind man, "Be encouraged! Get up! He's calling you." ⁵⁰ Throwing his coat to the side, he jumped up and came to Jesus. ⁵¹ Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man said, "Teacher, I want to see." ⁵² Jesus said, "Go, your faith has healed you." At once he was able to see, and he began to follow Jesus on the way.

MARK 10:46–52, COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE

What is the focus of the people in the crowd? The blind man? Jesus?

Why causes the crowd to shift in the way they respond to the blind man?

Why does Jesus ask the blind man what he wants? Isn't it obvious?

What is the blind man's response to having his need met?

REFLECT

The third Mark of Mission asks us to Tend to others by responding to human need by loving service. Note that the word "respond" does not dictate how we act. We can—and do—respond to situations in a variety of ways.

What is my emotional reaction to being in need myself? Do I call out for help like the blind man or keep quiet? Why?

ON YOUR OWN

Respond to human need by loving service

What in the life of our church shows this mark matters to us?

How is this Mark of Mission reflected in our worship?

What more could we do as a church to live this Mark of Mission?

Who else in our community does this? How can we help them?

When in my life have I felt someone respond to a need I was experiencing? How did they know I needed help? What did they do or say?

How do I typically respond when I see the need of someone close to me? A neighbour? Someone on the street? In another part of the country or world?

ASK

In our baptismal covenant, we promise to “seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbour as yourself.” While there are a great many needs in our world, not all of them register with us. Those that do, do so for a reason.

Do I consider myself loving in how I respond to my own needs? If not, how might I respond to myself more lovingly? Do I need to reach out for help?

What needs do I see within my family and friends? Is there something I can do or say that would help? If so, what?

What are the most pressing needs in my community? How are they being met? What else might be done?

What humanitarian crisis in the world most disturbs me? What am I currently doing to respond to it, either on my own or through others?

DECIDE

Consider the resources at your disposal—your time, your energy, your skills, your money. All of them can be part of how you respond to the needs you see around you.

What is one thing I could do to respond to my own needs more lovingly?

Which of the human needs I have considered (individual, group, ongoing or current crisis) do I feel most called to respond to now? How?

What do I need—resources, information, training, mentors—in order to respond?

How can I continue to support those in need through pray or study?

INTENTION STATEMENT

God willing, it is my intention to respond to human need by loving service by

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-
-

Matthew 7:12

In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.

—*New Revised Standard Version*

SESSION 3

Tend: Together

Respond to human need by loving service

Open

Sitting in a circle, ask the participants to share an incident from the past week or two in which they helped someone else or were helped by another.

The person talking will hold a symbol (cross, rock, etc.) while they are talking, and pass it to the next person when they have finished. When all have finished, light the candle and, after a time of silence, pray the following.

For this session you will need:

- a candle
- a loaf of bread or oil for anointing, as a visual focus for this session
- a small cross or rock for the opening circle

Prayer

Gracious God, rock of our salvation, we give you thanks for your many blessings to us. We thank you for the opportunities you give us to support our brothers and sisters in need. We thank you for those who have shown us your compassion and care. Be with us now as think about how we as a church might respond to human need in loving service. We ask this through Jesus the Christ, servant of all. Amen.

...

REVIEW “on your own” session and homework

- Ask participants participating in the On Your Own studies for their questions or comments from the previous session.
- Remind them of the importance of engaging with the intention section as a way of integrating what we are learning together.
- Review which suggestions for better teaching and nurturing believers the group wanted passed on to decision-making bodies in the church. Is that still the emphasis the group wants to make?

LISTEN

Read the introduction to Session 3, p. 30. Briefly discuss how it reflects our understanding of God's care for people.

Invite participants to share any insights or concerns from their "on your own" reflection. What did they discover about how they respond to their own or others' need?

This passage from the Gospel of Mark tells of an encounter between people in need and Jesus. Read the passage more than once before engaging with the passages in either of the methods outlined.

¹ In those days there was another large crowd with nothing to eat. Jesus called his disciples and told them, ² "I feel sorry for the crowd because they have been with me for three days and have nothing to eat. ³ If I send them away hungry to their homes, they won't have enough strength to travel, for some have come a long distance." ⁴ His disciples responded, "How can anyone get enough food in this wilderness to satisfy these people?" ⁵ Jesus asked, "How much bread do you have?" They said, "Seven loaves." ⁶ He told the crowd to sit on the ground. He took the seven loaves, gave thanks, broke them apart, and gave them to his disciples to distribute; and they gave the bread to the crowd. ⁷ They also had a few fish. He said a blessing over them, then gave them to the disciples to hand out also. ⁸ They ate until they were full. They collected seven baskets full of leftovers. ⁹ This was a crowd of about four thousand people! Jesus sent them away, ¹⁰ then got into a boat with his disciples and went over to the region of Dalmanutha.

MARK 8:1-10

Explore the passage in either of the following ways:

A) Gospel-based discipleship

- After the first time it is read, ask: "What word(s), idea(s) or sentence(s) stand out for you in the gospel?"
- After the second time, ask: "What is Jesus (the gospel) saying to you?"
- After the third time, ask: "What is Jesus (the gospel) calling you to do?"
- Share as people wish.

B) Engage with the following questions.

- The crowd has been with Jesus for several days while he is teaching them. Why is he concerned now? What is he worried about?
- What is the disciples' concern?
- What resources do the disciples have with which to feed the crowd?
- Jesus blesses the food and it is distributed. What is the result?
- This is considered a miracle story. What do you see as the miracle?

"It is not the Church of God that has a mission in the world, but it the God of mission who has a Church in the world"

—TIM DEARBORN

REFLECT

The third Mark of Mission asks us to *Tend* to others by responding in loving service to human need. Notice that the word “respond” is an open one, encouraging us to consider the context of our community and appropriate ways of meeting needs as we understand them.

Think about the community in which you live. What are the needs you see present there?

If a different area than your residence, think about the community in which your church is located. What are the needs you see present there?

What service agencies work to meet the needs of the church’s neighbourhood? (*List as many as you can and what you know of their work.*) Are there needs you think are being unmet?

The third Mark of Mission asks us to respond to human need by loving service. There are many ways we can respond to need. What makes something a loving service?

ASK

In our baptismal covenant, we promise to “seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbour as yourself.”

What are some of the ways you know parishioners are involved in loving service to others? (*These can include working within the community in service clubs and volunteer activities.*)

What are the ways your congregation seeks to love their neighbour locally and/or globally? What needs are you seeking to meet?

Which of these are direct service to others? Which are through church or community partnerships? Which are through financial support?

The story of the feeding of the 4,000 showed meagre resources meeting great need and producing abundance. What resources (human or financial) in your congregation are directed to meeting the needs of others?

In what areas do you think your resources are inadequate? What would help?

DECIDE

Consider the resources within your congregation—people's time, energy, skills and money. All of them can be part of how you respond to the needs you see around you.

Of all the needs you see in your community, which one impresses you as the most critical? Why?

What is the church doing to alleviate that need? What could the church do?

Is there something from this discussion that warrants further study or prayer reflection? If so, what?

Is there an idea from this discussion that you want to pass on to one of the church's decision-making bodies (priest and wardens, advisory board, parish council or vestry, We Intend committee) for consideration?

Closing Prayer

Almighty and most merciful God, we remember before you the homeless, the destitute, the sick, the aged, and all who have none to care for them. Heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and turn their sorrow into joy. Grant this for the love of your Son, who for our sake became poor, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BAS, P. 681

TOGETHER

Respond to human need by loving service

What in the life of our church shows this mark matters to us?

How is this Mark of Mission reflected in our worship?

What more could we do as a church to live this Mark of Mission?

Who else in our community does this? How can we help them?

Notes

INTENTION STATEMENT

God willing, it is our intention to respond to human need by loving service by

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Cost of undertaking these ministries
(all resources—time, people, building, etc.)

\$

Cost of NOT undertaking these ministries

\$

SESSION 4

Transform: On your own

Seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation

When we read the stories of the Bible, we see evidence time and again that the God we worship yearns for the world to be a better place. The garden God gave the first humans is lost to them when they choose knowledge over relationship, mutual accusation over reconciliation. God despairs when the society their descendants create is one of violence and corruption (Genesis 6:11–13). The divine attempt at “re-creation” through the devastation of the flood does not bring about a new society. When God vows never again to destroy the earth and its peoples, the Holy One works to create a people bound to God in covenant relationship—a people that would live with justice toward one another and generosity to the strangers and aliens in their midst. When that covenant was broken time and again, God sends prophets to call the people to repentance and renewal. In time, Jesus—human face for an invisible God—showed divine love for us in his life and ministry, death and resurrection. The people who follow Jesus the Christ are called to live out God’s mercy and compassion while seeking God’s justice and peace for all. We are called to be a transformative community, joining with one another to live by the Spirit and working to bring about the world for which God yearns—a world symbolized in Revelation as a city through which the river of life runs and in which the tree of life brings forth leaves “for the healing of the nations” (Revelation 22:1–3).

The fourth Mark of Mission calls us to be transformative agents in the world. It asks us “to seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation.” This Mark of Mission has itself been part of a growing transformation. When it was first formulated in the 1980s, it asked us to seek to transform unjust structures of society. In 2012, the Anglican Consultative Council, acting on a request from the Anglican Church of Canada, added the phrases that urge us to challenge violence and pursue peace and reconciliation. Perhaps our experience in Canada—in the aftermath of the residential school system by which we as a church have been confronted with our own violent past—has helped us to see with greater urgency the need to pursue peace and reconciliation.

Everything is being renewed and restored.

Paying attention to something local allows us to participate in a small part of God’s great work of transformation.

Prayer

Holy One, our world grieves you. There is violence, injustice and hatred and sometimes we do not know how we can make a difference. Yet you call us to be your people, to seek the things you love and to live as you want the world to be. Give us wisdom and courage that we might be your transforming and transformative people. This we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

...

LISTEN

This passage from the book of Exodus is part of a great story of liberation and transformation. Read it a few times before responding to the questions.

(**Backgrounder:** Moses was born to a Hebrew woman in a time when the Hebrew people were enslaved in Egypt and the Pharaoh ordered Hebrew males to be killed at birth. Moses was saved from possible death by his mother hiding him in a reed basket by the river. Found by one of Pharaoh's daughters, Moses was raised in Pharaoh's court with an awareness of his Hebrew parentage. When a young adult he reacted to the oppression of his people by striking and killing an Egyptian overseer. Afraid of being exposed as a murderer, Moses fled to Midian where he met and married a Midianite woman named Zipporah.)

¹Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ²There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. ³Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up." ⁴When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." ⁵Then he said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." ⁶He said further, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. ⁷Then the Lord said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, ⁸and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ⁹The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. ¹⁰So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt." ¹¹But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" ¹²He said, "I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that

it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain.”

EXODUS 3:1–12, NRSV

Notes

How does God get Moses' attention?

How does God explain who is speaking to Moses?

What is the task God gives Moses?

What is Moses' reaction to God's demand upon him?

Why do you think Moses reacts as he does?

REFLECT

The story of Exodus is the telling of Moses' call by God—a call to challenge injustice and change a society. Our call by God comes in a variety of ways through the circumstances of our life. In Moses' case, his growing up with privilege in an oppressive society gave him experience that uniquely positioned him to help his people.

How have I heard the call of God in my life? (through creation, prayer, another person, Scripture, a voice within)

How have I felt called to the work of transformation in my life?

How does my life experience enrich that call?

How have I responded to that call?

ON YOUR OWN

Seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation

What in the life of our church shows this mark matters to us?

How is this Mark of Mission reflected in our worship?

What more could we do as a church to live this Mark of Mission?

Who else in our community does this? How can we help them?

ASK

In our baptismal covenant, we promise to “strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.” The fourth Mark of Mission asks us to take action in light of that promise. It asks us to *Transform* the world by transforming unjust structures of society, challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation.

What are the issues of injustice or violence present in my community?

What does it mean to pursue reconciliation and peace where I live?

Do the circumstances of my life help or hinder me in understanding these issues or working to change them? How?

What do I find most challenging about the call to transform society? What do I find most exciting?

DECIDE

Consider the resources at your disposal—your time, your energy, your skills, your money. Consider the individuals and organizations working to bring about transformation in our world. All of them can be part of how you respond to this Mark of Mission.

If I could change the world in one way for the next generation, what would I want to see different?

What are three ways I could act to bring that closer to reality?

With whom or what might I work to bring about change?

What do I want to do next?

INTENTION STATEMENT

God willing, it is my intention to transform unjust structures of society by

-
-
-

To challenge violence of every kind by

-
-
-

To pursue peace and reconciliation by

-
-
-

Homework

To prepare, read the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action. They can be found at http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf. The calls directed specifically to the churches are in the sidebar.

SESSION 4

Transform: Together

Open

Invite people to look at the newspapers or magazines for a minute and choose one headline that captures their attention. Ask them to cut it out and then join the opening circle.

Invite the participants to say what headline they chose and what about it caught their eye. Fasten the headlines to the bulletin or white board. Place board on table. When all have finished, light the candle. After a time of silence, pray the opening prayer.

Seek to transform unjust structures of society to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation

For this session you will need:

- table
- current newspapers or news magazines, as a visual focus
- a candle
- scissors
- bulletin board or white board
- thumbtacks or bluetak/tape

Prayer

Lover of humanity, we pray for the world you have created and for all its peoples. The headlines of the day tell us of crises and catastrophes—many of our own making. Yet they also speak of the many ways we seek to transform our world into a more just and peaceful place. Be with us now as we consider the ministry you have entrusted to us in this place and for this community. This we pray in the name of Jesus, Prince of Peace. Amen.

...

REVIEW “on your own” session and homework

- Ask participants participating in the On Your Own studies for their questions or comments on the third week.
- Ask participants how they are feeling about last week’s intention statement. What have they learned in trying to live it out?
- Review the suggestions for meeting the human needs of your local or global community you made last week. Consider again the one the group wanted passed on to decision-making bodies in the church. Is that still the emphasis the group wants to make?

LISTEN

Read the introduction on page 39. Invite participants to share any insights or concerns from their “on my own” reflection.

This passage from the Gospel of Matthew shows Jesus engaging in a prophetic act. Like the prophet Jeremiah buying land when the nation was under siege, a prophetic action is intended to make people look at themselves and their society in a new way.

(**Background:** *The New Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. VIII tells us that in the first century CE, when Jesus lived, children were “often regarded as inferior, without status or rights, treated more as property than as persons, and were never held up as a model for anything.”)

¹ At about the same time, the disciples came to Jesus asking, “Who gets the highest rank in God’s kingdom?”

²⁻⁵ For an answer Jesus called over a child, whom he stood in the middle of the room, and said, “I’m telling you, once and for all, that unless you return to square one and start over like children, you’re not even going to get a look at the kingdom, let alone get in. Whoever becomes simple and elemental again, like this child, will rank high in God’s kingdom. What’s more, when you receive the childlike on my account, it’s the same as receiving me.

⁶⁻⁷ “But if you give them a hard time, bullying or taking advantage of their simple trust, you’ll soon wish you hadn’t. You’d be better off dropped in the middle of the lake with a millstone around your neck. Doom to the world for giving these God-believing children a hard time! Hard times are inevitable, but you don’t have to make it worse—and it’s doomsday to you if you do.

MATTHEW 18:1–7, THE MESSAGE

Explore the passage in either of the following ways:

A) Gospel-based discipleship

- After the first time it is read, ask: “What word(s), idea(s) or sentence(s) stand out for you in the gospel?”
- After the second time, ask: “What is Jesus (the gospel) saying to you?”
- After the third time, ask: “What is Jesus (the gospel) calling you to do?”
- Share as people wish.

B) Engage with the following questions:

- Why do you think Jesus responded to his disciples’ question about rank and power by putting someone with low status at the centre of the conversation?
- Why does Jesus equate himself with someone without status or rights? (Verse 5.)

Other resources we would like to focus on – by topic:

Other resources to learn more about transforming unjust structures. Your diocese could provide additional information on local opportunities to take action.

Kairos

- **Kairos**

Truth & Reconciliation

- **TRC Calls to Action**

Human Trafficking

- **Video from the Anglican Church of Canada**
- **Toolkit from Canadian Council of Churches Human Trafficking in Canada Working Group**

Resources from the Anglican Alliance

- **Corrections**
- **Church Council on Justice and Corrections**

Peace and Justice

- **Commission on Justice and Peace of the CCC**
- **Project Ploughshares**

Poverty

- **“Healing Poverty” a resource from the Commission on Justice and Peace of the Canadian Council of Churches**

Ecological concern/responsible investing

- **Investing With a Mission: A Guide to Responsible Investing and Church Funds**

Food security

- **Foodgrains Bank**

- How does Jesus want the “little ones”—the displaced and disadvantaged—treated by his disciples?
- What stumbling blocks do you think Jesus is referring to?

REFLECT

Think about the community in which you live? Who are the “little ones” (those of low status or little power) in your community?

How does your church work to welcome them? Or does it?

Who are the people with low status and little power in our country? In the world?

What stumbling blocks to full participation in the community are placed in their way? By whom or what?

ASK

The fourth Mark of Mission calls us to be transformative agents in the world. It asks us “to seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation.” In our baptismal covenant, we promise to “strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.”

What issues of injustice or violence affect your community?

In what ways is your parish or the wider church in your community working for justice on these issues or challenging the violence present?

Where is reconciliation needed within your community?

Notes

The Anglican church seeks to engage with peace and reconciliation efforts between indigenous and non-indigenous people in our country. Consider the TRC Calls to Action directed to the churches. How are these being supported in your parish?

What stumbling blocks do you see get in the way of transformation, peace and reconciliation in your community and parish?

What could be done to remove them?

DECIDE

Consider the resources with your congregation—people's time, energy, skills and money. Consider the individuals and organizations working to bring about transformation in our nation and the world. All of them can be part of how you respond to this Mark of Mission and strive for peace, justice and reconciliation.

Of all the issues (injustice, violence, need for reconciliation) facing your community, which one impresses you as the most critical? Why?

What is the church doing about it? What could the church do?

What could the church do as a first step?

Is there something from this discussion that warrants further study or prayer reflection? If so, what?

TOGETHER

Seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation

What in the life of our church shows this mark matters to us?

How is this Mark of Mission reflected in our worship?

What more could we do as a church to live this Mark of Mission?

Homework

- To prepare for the next session, read what work is being done on ecological justice at www.kairoscanada.org

Who else in our community does this? How can we help them?

Is there an idea from this discussion that you want to pass on to one of the church's decision-making bodies (priest and wardens, advisory board, parish council or vestry, We Intend committee) for consideration?

Look again at the headlines with which you began this session. How would you like to see them transformed? Include your "transformations" in the closing prayer.

Closing Prayer

Lover of justice, we have discussed difficult issues in our gathering. Hear us now as we offer you our hope for our church, our community and the world. We pray for (*people say aloud their transformed headlines*). Give us courage to bring our best efforts to your kingdom of justice and peace. In the name of Jesus our Saviour. Amen.

INTENTION STATEMENT

God willing, it is our intention to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom by:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Cost of undertaking these ministries
(all resources—time, people, building, etc.) \$

Cost of NOT undertaking these ministries \$

SESSION 5

Treasure: On your own

Strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

All creation is a gift to be cherished.

We are in an ecological crisis. Let's do something together, even with a small patch of earth at our doorstep.

It is perhaps not surprising that the fifth Mark of Mission was not developed at the same time as were the other ones. Originally there were four Marks of Mission; they were first formulated as part of the report on mission and ministry for the sixth meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in Nigeria in 1984.¹ The final Mark of Mission was added at a meeting of the ACC in Wales in 1990. There a report noted: *“There has been a consistent view of mission repeated by ACC, the Lambeth Conference, the Primates’ Meeting and others in recent years, which defines mission in a four-fold way... We now feel that our understanding of the ecological crisis, and indeed of the threats to the unity of all creation, mean that we have to add a fifth affirmation.”*² From that meeting came the final Mark of Mission—“to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.” In the decades following the ACC meeting in Wales, we have come to realize with ever greater urgency that the safeguarding of creation is fundamental to the survival of the earth and all that the Creator holds dear. For this reason, a promise about this was added to the baptismal covenant of the Anglican Church of Canada in 2013.

The fact that we did not realize the covenantal and missional aspect of our relationship with creation sooner speaks to our preoccupation with ourselves as the human species, our way of viewing all of reality through the lens of how it benefits or threatens us. This self-centred way of looking at the world is one aspect of our sinfulness. As we come to understand the threat to our existence posed by climate change we have become more and more concerned with the fragility of creation and our need to safeguard it. Contrast that with God’s lavish love for the earth and its creatures. As depicted in the book of Job, God is the mother and father of creation who intimately cares for its creatures: *“Has the rain a father, or who has begotten the drops of dew? From whose womb did the ice come forth, and who has given birth to the hoarfrost of heaven?... Can you hunt*

1 As noted in the previous session, the fourth Mark of Mission was revised in 2012 to reflect the awareness that the church needed to name the need to oppose violence and work for peace and reconciliation.

2 Anglican Consultative Council, *Mission in a Broken World: Report of ACC-8, Wales 1990* (London: Anglican Consultative Council, 1990), p. 101.

the prey for the lion, or satisfy the appetite of the young lions, when they crouch in their dens, or lie in wait in their covert? Who provides for the raven its prey, when its young ones cry to God, and wander about for lack of food?" (Job 38:28–29, 39–41). God our Creator has a relationship with all of creation—from the waters of the heavens to the creatures of the earth. It is as we come to realize our relationship with God and with creation that we will be freed to live out this Mark of Mission. In this, as in so many things, we have much wisdom to learn from the indigenous peoples of this land about what it means to be stewards of the earth.

Prayer

Creator, we give you thanks for all you are and all you bring to us for our visit within your creation. In Jesus, you place the Gospel in the Centre of this Sacred Circle through all of which all creation is related. You show us the way to live a generous and compassionate life. Give us your strength to live together with respect and commitment as we grow in your spirit, for you are God, now and forever. Amen.

A DISCIPLE'S PRAYER BOOK, ANGLICAN COUNCIL OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

...

LISTEN

This passage from the book of Genesis is part of the first creation story, one of two within Genesis. Read it a few times before responding to the questions.

²⁶Then God said, "Let us make humanity in our image to resemble us so that they may take charge of the fish of the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the earth, and all the crawling things on earth."²⁷ God created humanity in God's own image, in the divine image God created them, male and female God created them.²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, "Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and master it. Take charge of the fish of the sea, the birds in the sky, and everything crawling on the ground."²⁹ Then God said, "I now give to you all the plants on the earth that yield seeds and all the trees whose fruit produces its seeds within it. These will be your food.³⁰ To all wildlife, to all the birds in the sky, and to everything crawling on the ground—to everything that breathes—I give all the green grasses for food." And that's what happened.³¹ God saw everything he had made: it was supremely good.

(GENESIS 1:26–31, COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE)

Psalm 24: 1–2

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; for he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers.

—*New Revised Standard Version*

Humanity is made in God's image for what purpose?

What are the characteristics of God's relationship with creation that you think we are asked to mirror in our relationship with creation?

What does it mean to rule, have dominion or take charge in the way God does?

What do you see as "supremely good" about creation?

REFLECT

Take a walk outdoors slowly and silently, to personally visit and encounter neighboring nature. Notice the sounds, smells, and colors. Stop when a particular place attracts you and pay closer attention to it. First notice what happens to your sense of self and your sense of God when viewing creation as an object. Then notice what happens when viewing creation personally, as an equal, possessing its life and energy. Listen, look, respect, receive. Imparting great value and worth, we "treasure" by investing in relationships, continuing to walk, reflect, wonder, and tend our neighboring creation.

WWW.SSJE.ORG/2016/08/23/TELL-TEACH-TEND-TRANSFORM-TREASURE/

OR

How would I describe my relationship with creation? What do I most treasure about it?

How do I see God in and through the earth and all its creatures?

What does the diversity and intricacy of creation say to me about our Creator?

What do I find challenging in the responsibility God gives humanity to have dominion over creation? In the call to safeguard creation and sustain the earth's life?

ASK

In the final promise of our baptismal covenant we say we will “safeguard the integrity of God's creation, and respect, sustain and renew the life of the earth.” The fifth Mark of Mission asks us to *Treasure* the earth and to take action in light of that promise.

In what ways do I show respect for creation in my daily life?

How am I involved in efforts, personal or corporate, to safeguard creation and ensure the sustainability of the planet?

What are things I am doing—in my yard, my community or beyond—that help renew the earth?

What would I like to do?

DECIDE

Consider the resources at your disposal—your time, your energy, your skills, your money. Consider the individuals and organizations working to safeguard creation and sustain/renew the life of the earth. All of them can be part of how you respond to this Mark of Mission.

ON YOUR OWN

Strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

What in the life of our church shows this mark matters to us?

How is this Mark of Mission reflected in our worship?

What more could we do as a church to live this Mark of Mission?

Who else in our community does this? How can we help them?

Notes

When I consider the environmental issues facing us, which one tugs at my heart? Why?

What change do I want to see?

What are three things I could do to bring that closer to reality?

With whom or what might I work on this concern?

What do I want to do next?

INTENTION STATEMENT

God willing, it is my intention to safeguard the integrity of creation by

-
-
-

To help sustain and renew the life of the earth by

-
-
-

SESSION 5

Treasure: Together

Strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

For this session you will need:

- a We Intend participant book
- a candle
- a plant or globe of the earth, as a visual focus for this session
- pictures of a variety of scenes from nature (landscapes, animals, plants, etc.) that are laid out in random order when people arrive

Prayer

Creator and Sustainer of all, you have filled the earth with beauty and given us the joy of living within your creation. We come to you knowing that this fragile earth, our island home, is undergoing great strain. The web of creation is being pulled apart by what we human creatures are doing. Give us wisdom and courage that we find a way forward that sustains and renews the face of the earth; in Christ's name. Amen.

...

REVIEW "on your own" session and homework

- Ask participants participating in the On Your Own studies for their questions or comments on the week.
- Ask participants how they are feeling about last week's intention statement. What have they learned in trying to live it out?
- Review the suggestions for seeking to transform the unjust structures of society or pursuing peace and reconciliation. Consider again the one the group wanted passed on to decision-making bodies in the church. Is that still the emphasis the group wants to make?

Open

From the variety of photos present, invite people to choose a "nature" picture that depicts something in creation they love. Ask each participant to show the picture they chose and to say what attracted them to it.

When all have finished, light the candle. After a time of silence, pray the opening prayer.

Strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

What in the life of our church shows this mark matters to us?

How is this Mark of Mission reflected in our worship?

What more could we do as a church to live this Mark of Mission?

Who else in our community does this? How can we help them?

LISTEN

Read the introduction on page 50. Invite participants to share any insights or concerns from their “on your own” reflection. Did they have any insights into their relationship with and within creation?

This passage from the Gospel of John shows Jesus talking about himself as a shepherd. In biblical imagery, the metaphor of a shepherd is often used to depict kings and others with responsibility for others. Read the passage more than once before engaging with the passages in either of the methods outlined.

⁶⁻¹⁰ Jesus told this simple story, but they had no idea what he was talking about. So he tried again. I’ll be explicit, then. I am the Gate for the sheep. All those others are up to no good—sheep stealers, every one of them. But the sheep didn’t listen to them. I am the Gate. Anyone who goes through me will be cared for—will freely go in and out, and find pasture. A thief is only there to steal and kill and destroy. I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of...

¹¹⁻¹³ “I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd puts the sheep before himself, sacrifices himself if necessary. A hired man is not a real shepherd. The sheep mean nothing to him. He sees a wolf come and runs for it, leaving the sheep to be ravaged and scattered by the wolf. He’s only in it for the money. The sheep don’t matter to him...

¹⁴⁻¹⁸ “I am the Good Shepherd. I know my own sheep and my own sheep know me. In the same way, the Father knows me and I know the Father. I put the sheep before myself, sacrificing myself if necessary.”

JOHN 10:6–18, THE MESSAGE

Explore the passage in either of the following ways:

A) Gospel-based discipleship

- After the first time it is read, ask: “What word(s), idea(s) or sentence(s) stand out for you in the gospel?”
- After the second time, ask: “What is Jesus (the gospel) saying to you?”
- After the third time, ask: “What is Jesus (the gospel) calling you to do?”
- Share as people wish.

B) Engage with the following questions:

- What does Jesus say are the characteristics of a good shepherd? What is the purpose of a good shepherd?
- What are the characteristics of the hired man and the thief? What are they trying to achieve?
- What is life like for sheep being cared for by a good shepherd? What is it like for sheep under the care of someone else?

- Why do you think a shepherd would sacrifice his life for that of the sheep?

REFLECT

What is a word or phrase that you would use to describe the state of the earth at this time? What most worries you about it?

In a story of creation in Genesis, God gives human beings dominion—responsibility to care for—creation. Do you think we have acted more like a thief, a hired man or a shepherd in relation to creation? Why?

What sacrifices might we human beings need to make in order for the earth and its creatures to have “real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of”?

ASK

The fifth Mark of Mission asks us to *Treasure* the earth and to take action in light of that promise. We are “to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.” The promise in our baptismal covenant that was added in 2013 and we affirm this saying, “I will, with God’s help” echoes this: We promise to safeguard the integrity of God’s creation, and respect, sustain and renew the life of the earth. (Notice the addition of the word respect in the baptismal promise.)

In what ways is the integrity of creation threatened in your community or region?

What is the most critical issue in relation to sustainability in the environment?

How do we experience ‘God’s help’ when we act on the Baptismal covenant

TOGETHER

Strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

What in the life of our church shows this mark matters to us?

How is this Mark of Mission reflected in our worship?

What more could we do as a church to live this Mark of Mission?

Who else in our community does this? How can we help them?

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change;

Courage to change the things I can;

And the wisdom to know the difference.

—REINHOLD NIEBUHR

What are we doing in our parish life that demonstrates our respect for creation and our willingness to safeguard the integrity of creation? Consider worship life, educational efforts, use of building and grounds, community outreach, etc.

In what ways is our parish supporting the wider church and community as it works on issues of ecojustice and sustainability? Consider both direct efforts, partnerships with community agencies and support of organizations like KAIROS.

What might we do locally to sustain and renew the life of the earth?

DECIDE

Consider the resources with your congregation—people's time, energy, skills and money. Consider the individuals and organizations working to safeguard the integrity of creation. All of them can be part of how you respond to this Mark of Mission and strive to sustain and renew the life of the earth.

Of all the environmental issues facing your community, which one impresses you as the most critical? Why?

What is the church doing about it? What could the church do?

What could the church do as a first step?

Is there something from this discussion that warrants further study or prayer reflection? If so, what?

Is there an idea from this discussion that you want to pass on to one of the church's decision-making bodies (priest and wardens, advisory board, parish council or vestry, We Intend committee) for consideration?

Look again at the photos with which you began this session. Take a moment to give thanks, silently or aloud, for the gift of creation. Join in the closing prayer together.

Closing Prayer

Creator, we give you thanks for all you are and all you bring to us for our visit within your creation. In Jesus, you place the Gospel in the Centre of this Sacred Circle through all of which all creation is related. You show us the way to live a generous and compassionate life. Give us your strength to live together with respect and commitment as we grow in your spirit, for you are God, now and forever. Amen.

A DISCIPLE'S PRAYER BOOK, ANGLICAN COUNCIL OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

INTENTION STATEMENT

God willing, it is our intention to safeguard the integrity of creation by:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Cost of undertaking these ministries
(all resources—time, people, building, etc.)

\$

Cost of NOT undertaking these ministries

\$

Worship Resources

The liturgical resources listed below have been pulled together from various Anglican, United and Lutheran sources. They are suitable for a Eucharistic service but do not necessarily require it. It is really important to modify or adjust these resources to suit the specific context of the worshipping community you serve.

Opening, Gathering Prayer or Collect

Session 1: Creation and the Environment

God of the living, with all your creatures great and small
we sing of your bounty and your goodness, for in the harvest of land and
ocean, in the cycles of the seasons, and in the wonders of each creature, you
show your generosity. Teach us gratitude that dispels envy, that we may honour
each gift as you cherish your creation, and praise you in all times and places.
We ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Session 2: Time

Eternal God of time and space. The numbers of our days are known only to
you. May we use our time wisely and in your service, honouring the gift of life
in each day, and using the opportunities you place before us to live and love as
Christ taught us. We ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Session 3: Talents

O God of steadfast love, as Jesus your Son turned water into wine, help us to
transform our hearts, that by your Spirit, we may use our varied gifts to show
forth the light of your love as one body in Christ. We ask through Jesus Christ
our Lord.
Amen.

Session 4: Treasure

Generous God, in abundance you give us things both spiritual and physical.
Help us to hold lightly the fading things of this earth and grasp tightly the
lasting things of your kingdom, so that what we are and do and say may be our
gifts to you through Christ, who beckons all to seek the things above, where he
lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Session 5: Mental and Physical Being

We rejoice, O Christ, for in your tender compassion, you shoulder our burdens and ease our heavy hearts. Keep us ever mindful that as Children of God, you call us to show compassion for ourselves, as well as for others. We ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Scripture Readings

Parishes that are accustomed to using the lectionary may have to make an exception for the five Sundays of the program and assign alternative readings below. This allows for cohesive worship experience as the readings then reflect the five areas of stewardship of the *I Intend...* workbook. Here is a suggested list of alternative readings:

Session 1: Creation and the Environment

Genesis 2:4-17 or Numbers 35:33-34, Matthew 6:25-34

Session 2: Time

Colossians 4:2-6, Luke 10:38-42

Session 3: Talents

1 Corinthians 12:4-11, Matthew 5:13-16

Session 4: Treasure

Ecclesiastes 5:10-20, Luke 16:13-15

Session 5: Mental and Physical Being

Romans 12:1-2, Matthew 11:25-30

Prayer Over the Gifts

Session 1: Creation and the Environment

All Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation: through your goodness we have this bread and wine set before you, which earth has given and human hands have made. Let them become the bread of life and the cup of salvation for us. Amen.

Session 2: Time

God of faithfulness, accept our offering this day, and give us grace to witness to your truth and live as faithful stewards, now and always, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Session 3: Talents

Gracious God, we know your power to triumph over weakness. May we who ask forgiveness be ready to forgive one another, in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

Session 4: Treasure

Gracious God, you offer your love generously. Accept our offering in the same spirit, with thanksgiving and praise, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Session 5: Mental and Physical Being

God, our refuge and our strength, receive all we offer you this day. Make us self-compassionate and discerning stewards, strong in body and in mind, that we may follow in the teachings of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer After Communion

Session 1: Creation and the Environment

Prayer after Communion Please stand

All God you clothe the lilies of the field, feed the birds of the air and abundantly bless our lives. Equip us as your stewards to help renew the face of the earth. Amen

Session 2: Time

Living God, may we who have shared in these holy mysteries, use our time in your service, honouring the love that we have been given, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Session 3: Talent

God of love, we have been grafter together as one, unified body through this Holy Communion. Continue to weave our varied gifts together for the building up of your Kingdom here on earth. Through Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

Session 4: Treasure

God of generosity, may the boldness of your Spirit transform us, may the gentleness of your Spirit lead us, may the grace of your Spirit allow us to share and give from a sense of abundance, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Session 5: Mental and Physical Being

Lord God, you feed us with living bread ; renew our faith, strengthen our bodies and calm our fears that we may act with love, for ourselves and for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

NEXT STEPS

On your own

Next Steps - On Your Own

Consider doing this following exercise at the conclusion of session five or at another time within a month after completing all the sessions.

1. Take all the intention statements you have filled out over the five weeks.
(If you did not finish some of them, take a few minutes to do that, trying to recall the dominant thought or feeling you had doing that session in order to recreate what you wanted to do.)
2. Read them over slowly—aloud if possible.
3. Take a few moments to reflect on what you intended to do by considering the following questions.
 - a. Which of these intentions were you able to follow through on?
 - b. Which of these intentions never got beyond writing them?
 - c. Which of these intentions were the most challenging? How? Why?
 - d. Which of these intentions were the most rewarding? How? Why?
 - e. Looking ahead, ask yourself what you want to continue exploring, praying for or acting upon from the intentions of all five weeks.
(You may have one for each week or a few for the entire time or none at all—discern what you truly want to continue doing.)
1. Once you have decided what you want to carry with you into the future, fill out the Intention Reflection form and decide where you are going to keep it so it remains part of your daily awareness.
2. End your reflection time with silent prayer and/or the following:

Loving God, I offer you my praise and thanksgiving for your redeeming work in the world. Thank you for the ways I have been challenged to live more fully the marks of mission. Strengthen me as I move forward that I may share your good news, nurture others in the faith, care for those in need, challenge all that diminishes human life and sustain the life of the earth. Help me especially to _____ as I seek to deepen my discipleship. This I pray in Christ's name and for the sake of your reign. Amen.

INTENTION REFLECTION

The most challenging intention for me has been:

The most rewarding intention for me has been:

I learned:

It is my intention to continue to _____
and/or to pray for _____ for
the next _____ months as part of my living as a disciple of Christ.

NEXT STEPS

Together

Consider doing this following exercise at the conclusion of session five or at another time within a month after completing all the sessions.

1. Take all the intention statements your group came up with over the five weeks.
2. Read them over slowly—aloud if possible.
3. Take a few moments to reflect on what you intended to do by considering the following questions.
 - a. Which of these intentions will you pass on to one of your church's decision-making bodies?
 - b. Which of these intentions do you want your church to continue exploring, praying for or acting upon? (Your group may choose one for each Mark of Mission or focus on several intentions from one Mark of Mission—discern what you truly have passion, energy and capacity to accomplish.)
 - c. How will we share this experience with the parish leadership?
4. How will you share this experience with the parish leadership?
 - a. Share the story of your personal and group experience:
 - i. article for a newsletter
 - ii. announcements
 - iii. presentation to parish groups
 - b. Offer to work with a Visioning Group to integrate the ideas into the plan of ministry for the congregation, including costs.
 - c. Decide as individuals which ministry or ministries catch your attention and energy.
 - d. Brainstorm ideas for working with other denominations and community groups to accomplish the intentions
5. Determine any additional follow through.
6. End your reflection time with silent prayer and/or the following:

Loving God, we offer you our praise and thanksgiving for your redeeming work in the world. Thank you for the ways we have been challenged as a church to more fully carry out the marks of mission. Strengthen us as we move forward that we may share your good news, nurture others in the faith, care for those in need, challenge all that diminishes human life and sustain the life of the earth. Help us especially to _____ as we seek to grow as your disciples. This we pray in Christ's name and for the sake of your reign. Amen.

TOGETHER

Intentions

to share with the parish leadership

Tell – To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom

Teach – To teach, baptize and nurture new believers

Together – To respond to human need by loving service

**Transform – To seek to transform unjust structures of society,
to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and
reconciliation**

**Treasure – To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation,
and sustain and renew the life of the earth**
