

## **The Diocese of Colorado**

Envisioning the Work of God's Kingdom  
Developing the Vision of the Standing Committee 2011

### Introduction

During their Spring 2011 retreat, the Standing Committee of the diocese spent time in prayer, reflection and discussion considering the key strategic issues to which we should direct our resources for the next five to ten years.

The discernment of the Standing Committee identified four “focus areas” for our common life and ministry:

- I. Living Missionally at a Grassroots Level
- II. Establishing Radical Generosity as a Core Pattern of Life
- III. Engaging Substantively the Suffering of the World
- IV. Committing Fully to Evangelizing Youth and Young Adults

The most significant exercise during the retreat was one in which the members of the Standing Committee were asked to place themselves ten years in the future, to then take an imaginative tour of The Diocese of Colorado looking carefully at that landscape, and then to describe what they would see in 2022. The result was a series of images and impressions describing a core vision for each of these four areas of focus.

The Executive Staff in the Office of the Bishop has subsequently taken those images and impressions, along with all the notes taken during the Standing Committee's retreat, and has worked to shape them into a format that will facilitate further discernment with the Standing Committee and will lead eventually to the formation of a strategic guide that will inform and shape our common life and ministry for years to come.

Recognizing the many convergences between the work of the Standing Committee and other groups of diocesan leaders—Regional Missioners, the Commission on Ministry, the Mission Strategy Committee, and various roundtable gatherings, to name a few—the Executive Staff has drawn upon those conversations to refine and expand the work of the Standing Committee. We trust that the result outlined here both reflects accurately the work of the Standing Committee and, at the same time, broadens the base of our common vision.

The process followed by the Executive Staff began by expanding the vision of the Standing Committee into a more complete narrative describing the imaginal landscape of the diocese in 2022. The Executive Staff then identified the key components of ministry to which we would need to devote ourselves in order to live into the imagined vision. As a result, each focus area is presented in a format that includes:

- *A Passage from the New Testament*: a biblical phrase or image in which each focus area can be anchored;

- *The Vision 2022*: an extended narrative, set ten years in the future, describing the state of The Diocese of Colorado; and
- *The Components*: the key issues or objectives that need to be addressed in order to live into the vision.

The Executive Staff believes that there are four important issues to keep clearly in mind while reviewing the following document.

First, this process of visioning in which we are now engaged does not represent a radical shift, break, or new direction in our collective agenda but rather reflects the natural extension and deepening of the missionally oriented ministry already begun among us—an orientation that focuses on knowing and proclaiming the gospel, making and being made into disciples, and living out of a posture of servanthood to all. We understand this evolution in our life together to be the grace-filled development of the many prayers and conversations, formal and informal, regarding our missional identity that have been taking place across the diocese for years now.

Second, the four focus areas have considerable overlap, interconnectedness, and interdependence. They simply do not fit into a particularly linear and siloed model of strategic planning. For example, engaging the suffering of the world (Focus Area III) is an integral part of effectively evangelizing young adults (Focus Area IV). At the same time, the life-changing and transformational spiritual formation that is so essential to living missionally on a grassroots level (Focus Area I) is also a profound consequence of meaningfully engaging the suffering of the world (Focus Area III). We believe that this interdependence is good—that it reflects a framework that is suited to meet the adaptive change currently challenging the Church, and that it offers greater potential than traditional models of strategic planning for capitalizing on emerging opportunities for ministry.

Third, what follows must be read in light of the purpose statement for the Office of the Bishop and the Vision Statement for The Diocese of Colorado:

- *The Purpose of the Office of the Bishop* is: to serve, support, and expand the mission of The Episcopal Church in Colorado; and,
- *The Vision for The Diocese of Colorado* is: to plant and to cultivate dynamic, imaginative, and transformational Christian communities across Colorado.

Finally, even as we have held up the three marks of mission (proclamation, discipleship, servanthood) in the diocese for the past six years, we cannot become the mission-minded, mission-shaped, and mission-focused body that God creates us to be without continuing to bring greater clarity to our missional identity. To that end, a discussion on the meaning of mission and a model describing the components of mission-shaped community are included as appendices.

Although the work of the Executive staff has produced considerably more notes than are presented here, we hope that this document will provide a framework that can facilitate a meaningful discussion with the Standing Committee as we take yet another step in this collaborative and iterative process of prayerfully discerning a strategic vision for The Diocese of Colorado.

## Focus Area I: Living Missionally at a Grassroots Level

*“As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And he said to them, ‘Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.’ Immediately they left their nets and followed him.”*

—Matthew 4:18-20

### The Vision 2022

During our 2004 diocesan convention, keynote speaker Jim Lemmler reminded us that our life as the Body of Christ is “all about mission” and using a skillful combination of humor and well grounded theology he challenged us to make mission the focus of our common life.

In 2005, Bishop O’Neill took up the challenge in his convention addresses and offered further shape and definition to our missional life by holding up three key words—proclamation, discipleship, and servanthood—observing that these marks of mission could serve as a “challenge and a checklist” for living more intentionally into our missional identity.

Naming the word *mission* and claiming it as our core identity stimulated a wide ranging conversation among clergy and lay leaders across the diocese—one of learning more about, reflecting upon, praying with, and imagining what it might mean for us to become more mission-minded, mission-shaped, and mission-focused. A gathering of leaders in early 2011 gave evidence that the language of mission and the concept of shaping our life as a missional body was indeed being engaged creatively across various diocesan bodies—among Regional Missioners, the diaconal community, the Commission on Ministry, the Congregational Development Institute, the Mission-Strategy Committee, the Standing Committee, the bishop’s staff, and others.

The key challenge, however, was this: how do we take this thoughtful, creative interaction with our missional identity on a leadership level and translate it into greater awareness, vision, activity, and behavioral changes on a grassroots level.

The Standing Committee and the bishop’s Executive Staff began to explore this question, and it became clear that we should begin by clearly identifying the specific activities and practices already in place within congregations and regions that we could point to and hold up as icons of a mission-minded, mission-shaped, and mission-focused life. For example:

- Congregations that were using Mission Insight or other demographic tools to effectively align their life and ministry to serve the community around them;
- Congregations or individuals that had developed creative and effective practices of evangelizing and incorporating new people into their common life and ministry;
- Congregations in various contexts and configurations that had developed substantive and transformational practices of catechesis and Christian formation for people of all ages;

- Congregations that had developed innovative, imaginative, and inspiring ways of using their resources—their money, their buildings, their grounds, their time and expertise—to serve the well-being of the wider community;
- Congregations that had effectively ordered, or re-ordered, their lives in ways that gave room for emerging expressions of Christianity and modeled new forms of compelling Christian witness to those outside the mainline church.

During the course of this exercise in self-examination, we realized that our task was not simply to identify effective programs that might, in turn, be replicated elsewhere. Instead we knew that we would need to invite a wide spectrum of people across the diocese to engage in an intentional season of prayerful study and conversation about mission.

Small groups were organized around the diocese. Leaders and group facilitators were trained. A season of prayerful conversation and discernment was set aside during which these groups followed a guide we had developed. Titled “Mission Shaped Questions” this guide outlined a format of prayer, scripture reading, and conversation that focused on three key issues—“Getting the Who Right,” “Learning Life,” and “Living the Life” (more down to earth and accessible variants, we thought, of the missional marks of “Proclamation, Discipleship, and Servanthood”). Simultaneously clergy across the diocese were invited to devote a series of Sundays to preach and teach specifically about mission. We published a Lenten devotional book, based on the same key questions, that provided an additional means for individual reading, prayer, and reflection on mission. At the conclusion of this “season of prayer” groups of clergy and laity were invited to gather and to share their thoughts and observations with the bishop and diocesan leaders in a series of small group gatherings around the diocese.

We learned a lot, most significantly this—that capturing the hearts and minds of people throughout the diocese and engaging their participation in substantive missional understanding and activity was directly proportionate to the depth of spiritual formation and education provided on a congregational level. We recognized also the significant regional diversity of the diocese and decided that we would need to develop a variety of models and methodologies of Christian formation that were suited to different contexts—large and small congregations; urban, suburban, rural, and resort communities; conventional and emergent expressions of the faith.

As a result, we devoted significant time and effort identifying effective models of mission-shaped formation. We re-conceived and re-developed the position of Canon for Faith Formation in such a way that we not only provided resources but facilitated effective networking, training, support and encouragement in Christian formation (what we came to call “Learning Life”) that was completely aligned with our understanding of missional identity. People of all ages, living in very different contexts, have now developed their own vocabulary and frame of reference by which they are claiming their life’s work as mission and are articulating their faith personally and compellingly in word and action.

To support this effort, we also redoubled our efforts on a local, regional and diocesan level: (1) to promote effective models of the catechumenate as preparation for baptism and confirmation; (2) to use the methodology and lay-centered focus of “Unbinding the Gospel”

to create more groups of adults who had developed a vocabulary and comfort level for talking about their faith; (3) to expand and supplement the visibility and use of programs like Education for Ministry, Alfa, Just Faith, and others across the diocese; (3) to form creative partnerships with groups and organizations that were already engaged in significant Christian formation (like Spiritual Direction Colorado and Contemplative Outreach); and (4) to re-vision and redevelop the Anglican Studies Program at Iliff to serve as a more broad based and accessible resource for Christian formation of adults.

We have now consistently integrated training for lifelong spiritual formation into every diocesan and regional gathering. Mission-shaped Christian formation has been integrated into every aspect of the ministry of Cathedral Ridge—its development, staffing, programming and operations. We have actively promoted and provided incentive for year-round use of Cathedral Ridge for all ages and demographics. We now provide hospitality year-round for these groups in this place apart, and we have discovered that these intensive two or three day, or even weeklong, residential experiences, are among the most effective and life-changing resources we have for our collective spiritual formation, transformation, and Christian witness.

Now in 2022 we can say that we have succeeded in creating a culture within The Diocese of Colorado in which every worshipping community engages in substantive Christian spiritual formation as a lifelong practice. We claim this practice as absolutely essential to living missionally because we have seen that this culture creates its own energy, has taken on a life of its own, and produces organically the most effective evangelists and servants of the kingdom that we have ever seen.

### The Components

- Establish effective methodology for broad-based, diocesan wide engagement regarding our missional identity as the Body of Christ for a specific season.
- Establish a culture and collective commitment to substantive, lifelong, faith formation for all ages in every congregation in the diocese.
- Identify, hold up, and promote in the broadest possible way local examples of being mission-minded, mission-shaped, and mission-focused that are both conventional and emergent.
- Integrate the practice of substantive faith formation into the work of every diocesan body and every diocesan or regional gathering
- Maximize the usage, programming, staffing and operations of Cathedral Ridge to serve as a key resource that embodies, promotes, and establishes our missional identity.

## Focus Area II: Establishing Radical Generosity as a Core Pattern of Life

*“Then Jesus called the twelve together...and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. He said to them, ‘Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money—not even an extra tunic.’”*

—Luke 9:1-6

### The Vision 2022

Much of our growth in The Diocese of Colorado over the past ten years has been the natural consequence of what can only be described as a major cultural shift among us.

The most significant and challenging aspect of this shift is reflected in a complete change of mind and heart about how we order our lives as communities of faithful people. It can only be described as a significant counter-cultural movement that is evidenced by a significant commitment to living simply and being radically generous in all ways, both individually and corporately.

This new cultural mindset is defined by its essential priorities—focusing on the work of the kingdom versus institutional preservation, making a significant distinction between needs versus wants, and putting the welfare and wellbeing of others above our own.

We knew at the outset that we would need to make a concerted effort across the diocese to consistently and continuously raise the visibility of global economic disparity and the impact of our consumption of resources on the lives of others around the world if we wanted to awaken our collective hearts. More than anything else, this became the foundational step in motivating people across the diocese to consider living more compassionately through responsible consumption and increased generosity.

We knew too that the gateway into a collective life of radical generosity would be opened only as we addressed the integrity and spirit of our own internal commitments and practices. We continued our efforts therefore to create a common and consistent practice across all our congregations to financially support the work of the wider Church by contributing ten percent of their plate and pledge to the Office of the Bishop. It took time, care, patience, and a consistent effort. But once we got there, we were surprised. The result was not merely practical, for the symbolic value was quickly evident in all of our relationships and in many ways it outweighed the financial benefit. The playing field was effectively leveled across the many divides of the diocese. A true sense of shared identity and equality emerged. Through this one gesture, we began to see ourselves as intimately connected to a greater vision and purpose, and we were inspired. We experienced a new confidence and trust that we were all collectively committed to one common life and ministry, and this discovery in turn released new energy across our diocesan life. We came to call it “relational tithing.”

Many congregations soon adopted a leadership bible study program called “Turning the World Upside Down” focused on the study of passages from The Acts of the Apostles.

Through prayerful and practical conversation these communities have, for example, turned their budgets upside down—in effect, looking at missional priorities and the work of the kingdom as fixed costs then seeing institutional needs as “discretionary.” Vestries have made decisions to re-purpose real estate assets for the work of the kingdom in ways that reach out significantly to others in the community. Congregations have undertaken significant environmental audits and re-ordered their use of resources. The language of “environmental generosity” has become remarkably common as many individuals and congregations across the diocese have not only reduced their environmental impact but also produced environmental benefit. Clergy and vestry leaders have made decisions not simply to focus on the life of their parish but to collaborate with other congregations on mission initiatives—much in the western tradition of “barn raisings”—forming partnerships and claiming relationships that have surprisingly given birth to all kinds of new ministries that require very few financial resources. The experience has been described by some as one of discovering a greater abundance among us and realizing greater freedom by claiming meaningful relationship.

The aggressive promotion of the significantly expanded “Faith and Money Initiative” has also played a significant role in creating a culture of radical generosity in the diocese. Those who have experienced it understand why. It has not been a new stewardship program. The “Faith and Money Initiative” has made no pretensions, veiled or otherwise, to be a fund-raising program. Instead, the focus of the initiative has been this—to assist individuals and congregations in developing a healthy and theologically sound understanding of the role of money in the life of faith. This initiative has included a broad based approach, not unlike the Ignatian Exercises, that challenges individuals and their congregations to undertake serious self-examination of their patterns of consumption and its cost—financially and spiritually—and then to identify ways of making specific changes that are both financially and spiritually freeing.

Given the economic realities of the past ten years, it came as no surprise when the work of “The Faith and Money Initiative” surfaced a significant pastoral need—namely, practical guidance and support to assist individuals to make healthy, practical changes in their personal financial practices. The “Financial Freedom Initiative” that grew out of the “Faith and Money Initiative” now provides substantive, individualized, professional education, guidance, and support that has helped hundreds to reduce or eliminate their burden of debt, to rearrange their financial commitments and obligations, and to understand their own financial practices as a spiritual discipline. Those who have been helped by this initiative—many of whom came from outside the church—are deeply grateful for this ministry of practical and life-changing empowerment. Many are now actively participating in the life and ministry of their communities with inspiring generosity. Their perception, not surprisingly, is that the Church is not only a community of people who care but a community that offers, in very real ways, a greater vision of human life.

## The Components

- Establish a baseline by which every congregation is committed to supporting our common life and ministry across the diocese by contributing ten percent of their annual plate and pledge to the Office of the Bishop.

- Commit to living simply both institutionally and individually (in terms of money, personal time, facilities, and environmental impact).
- Create institutional models for reordering community life that embody the principles of radical generosity.
- Rework and expand a diocesan-wide “Faith and Money Initiative.”
- Proactively raise awareness and educate the diocese about the realities of economic disparity and asymmetry (globally, nationally, locally, and even institutionally within our diocesan life).
- Integrate principles and practices of living with radical generosity into the diocesan discernment and formation process for clergy.
- Create a broad based, diocesan wide faith and the environment initiative that supports these same principles.



### Focus Area III: Engaging Substantively with the Suffering of the World

*“A leper came to him begging him, and kneeling he said to him, ‘If you choose, you can make me clean.’ Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, ‘I do choose. Be made clean!’”*

—Mark 1:40-41

#### The Vision 2022

One of the most grace-filled transformations that has taken place in our diocese over the past ten years is this: in communities across Colorado, Episcopal Churches have become known.

No longer seen as buildings whose doors are open only on occasion and house a vague and largely indistinguishable configuration of individuals, Episcopal Churches have become known, visible, recognized, valued, even publicly admired, for the substance of their communal and life-giving presence locally and globally. It is not, by any stretch of the imagination, the consequence of more effective packaging and marketing the Church. In small towns and large, rural and urban, in spite of the widely divergent political and economic propensities of Coloradoans, Episcopal Churches have come to be known as communities of people who incarnate the self-less, self-giving, self-emptying, and irresistibly compelling love of Jesus. Far from the superficial, polite, and neighborly care of conventional manners, this posture of community relationship is deeply, authentically, generously, courageously, fearlessly, inconveniently, visibly, vocally engaged—hands on, heart to heart, eyeball to eyeball—with those in our world who suffer, really suffer, both locally and globally.

This has become a mark of The Episcopal Church’s identity in Colorado.

People unfamiliar with our Church don’t always have the vocabulary to describe this phenomenon, but they know it when they see it—that our Episcopal communities scattered across Colorado consist of individuals who actually embody an authentic and transforming vision of our collective humanity. Whatever assumptions, personal history, or prejudices about the faith they may bring to the table, people who do not fully understand the Church still recognize this—that this life-giving and life-changing compassion, brought to life in action among us, is something they themselves actually long to know.

For our part, we would say simply that we been inspired, challenged, and ultimately willing to make thoughtful, difficult, and provocative choices—many of them counter-cultural—about how we order our lives individually and institutionally.

It is difficult to say where the “tipping point” came.

Those in the diocese with experience and knowledge of congregational growth and development had long said that one essential element in vibrant and growing congregations was this—that at least twenty-five percent of a congregation’s members were engaged visibly in hands-on care for the poor. This observation, made at a Standing Committee

meeting in 2008 and shared informally at subsequent clergy gatherings, planted an important seed that was given force and direction when we realized that many congregations in Colorado, particularly small ones, were already doing this. We needed simply to bring these practices to light.

We knew from the outset that engaging our congregations meaningfully and actively with the real suffering of our world would require a broad based approach. We understood that we would need to create a framework with various points of entry by which every person in every congregation could grow in their awareness and engagement—moving from minimal knowledge to thoughtful and informed awareness; from low-risk activities to significant, high-commitment undertakings; from hands-off support to hands-on work, including even the decision to make significant lifestyle changes.

The work of Episcopal Relief and Development served as a foundational element in capturing the hearts and minds of people of all ages across the diocese. We established a “Church Engagement Team” that developed creative and user-friendly resources, many already produced by Episcopal Relief and Development, to bring issues of global poverty, disease prevention, hunger and economic development into the pew in helpful and accessible ways.

We integrated formational opportunities into all facets of our diocesan and congregational life in which we could name and identify the suffering that was present in our own communities and beyond.

We knew from our own experience just how quickly these conversations could become polarizing and divisive, so we intentionally created opportunities, developed helpful methodologies, and modeled ways in which all of us, regardless of our political affiliations, could have thoughtful, substantive, and discerning conversations about real life issues—whether it be the environment, climate change, economic disparity, race and racism, immigration, violence and peace-making, hunger, or healthcare—in a prayerful, faith-filled context. We built on our the experiences among diocesan clergy, the Standing Committee, and General Convention Deputies in learning to address “hot button issues.” We knew from those experiences that we had indeed developed a more transcendent way by which we could own our differences individually while maintaining our relationship collectively, not merely establishing a “safe-space” but also claiming that “creative-space” of honest self-examination and mutual reflection in community that is truly transformational.

We knew that if we really cared about living justly, we would need to claim in a new way the depth of our own contemplative tradition as a force for lasting social transformation and change. As one individual described it, “We were really clear about one thing—that it’s not the task we do that makes the difference, it’s the being, the presence, the spirit that we embody and bring into whatever we do that is healing and life-changing. This is the unique witness of the saints.”

With this in mind, we made major changes in the way clergy are trained and formed as pastoral leaders. Those seeking ordination were required to become proficient in a second language. Postulants and candidates were required to spend a portion of one summer working in a developing country. By being taken out of their cultural context, experiencing first-hand the poverty in which the majority of the world lives, acquiring proficiency in

another tongue, and encountering the challenges of cultural diversity, newly ordained clergy felt increasingly motivated and empowered to speak, to raise awareness in their own communities regarding issues of global poverty, to advocate for justice on behalf of the poor and marginalized, and to bring their congregations out of a certain parochial isolationism into the realities of world.

We began also to train lay and ordained leaders in effective community organizing—giving leadership across the diocese the knowledge and skill necessary to undertake substantive assessments of community needs and then to identify and mobilize others who would be motivated to effectively address those needs. We integrated learning and training modules on best practices in local and global development into a variety of training forums—CDI, diaconal formation, new clergy orientation, diocesan convention, and so on. We formed a innovative partnership with the Center for Contemplation and Action to help shift the paradigm of parish outreach from one of “charity” and/or “social work” to one of “mutual social transformation,” placing prayer and action in their rightful, interdependent, and most effective relationship. We organized the “Come and See Visitations”—day long, hands on, educational, awareness raising, site visits, to Jubilee Centers around the diocese. Slowly but consistently, we have seen clergy, vestries, and other leaders significantly re-orient their congregational resources and programs to engage collectively in focused and sustained action that addresses such issues as hunger, homelessness, economic development, and health care, to name a few.

Now congregational outreach ministries are no longer seen as simply the task of collecting funds in order to make charitable grants. In fact, the word “outreach” in parish conversations is rarely heard these days in this diocese because a more compelling marker of Christian identity has come into play. Outsiders no longer say that Episcopal Churches are silent and indifferent, because congregations across Colorado have learned to position themselves—heart, body, mind and soul, using all of their resources and abilities—to live in solidarity with the poor and to claim a mutually liberating and life-giving relationship with the suffering of the world.

We have become known because we have discovered indeed that this vision, brought to life among us, is what our world longs to see—that human suffering knows no division and that the embrace of suffering sets love free.

### The Components

- Rework the discernment and formation process in a way that raises up clergy to be personally engaged with the suffering of the world.
- Establish a Church Engagement Team to raise awareness and engage individuals and congregations in hands on work with the poor.
- Develop and implement training in community organizing that includes substantive theological reflection for clergy and lay leaders across the diocese.

- Actively and consistently hold up examples of communities that embody substantive engagement with the poor, the marginalized, and the dispossessed.
- Identify ways to meaningfully connect the ministries of contemplative communities with those working for social justice work.
- Raise up pastoral leadership in the diocese that names and addresses serious issues—locally, nationally, and globally—and addresses those issues in the context of faith through their preaching, teaching, and community action.
- Continue the process of establishing a new vision for diaconal training and ministry that is more strongly and clearly identified with the poor and marginalized.
- Organize a “Come and See” initiative that invites key leadership to visit and learn about diocesan, national, and even global programs of relief and development.
- Develop a rule of life for the Office of the Bishop that models both the synergy between prayer and action and meaningful engagement with the suffering of the world.

#### Focus Area IV: Committing Fully to Evangelizing Youth and Young Adults

*“Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.”*

—1 Timothy 4:12

#### The Vision 2022

Ten years of intentional work and a major investment of time, thought, and money has resulted in this—a significant increase in young adults among and around us who are now meaningfully engaged in a life of faith. Some of the old-timers see this as an answer to prayer—that this Church, which they so love, will survive and endure—but there’s more to it than that.

These young adults take ministry seriously, are actively committed to their own prayer and formation, understand it to be integral to their life, exercise leadership in both conventional and non-conventional expressions of the Church, and care passionately and actively about addressing the suffering and injustices of our world. Their presence has both revitalized and radically transformed our own understanding of what it means to be the Body of Christ in ways that have been both deeply challenging and liberating.

The turning point came when our diocesan leaders began to recognize and name the complete disconnect between conventional expressions of Christianity and a surrounding culture of young adults who, in spite of their indifference to the Church, still long for an authentic and substantive expression of faith and care deeply about the plight of our world. We decided to become informed, educated, and aware of the specific issues of this cultural divide so that we might prayerfully reorganize our collective life to more effectively bring the good news of God’s kingdom to a different culture and generation.

We knew at the outset that we would not succeed if our work together were merely an effort to re-package and re-market old methodologies of “youth work.” We recognized that we would need to let go of the possible outcomes, particularly the conventional measures of success and failure—such as the number of pledging members occupying places in pews—if we were to have any hope of getting outside of ourselves and discovering the possibilities and new directions in which the Spirit might be leading us. We understood also, that in spite of our willingness, we who were so enmeshed in a particular institution might simply not be the ones empowered by God to speak to another culture and generation.

To create the right context for evangelizing young adults, we decided to adopt a parallel development model across the diocese. Rather than simply trying to redevelop our existing programs and congregations, we understood our work would need to be twofold:

- To support and develop the ministries of conventional congregations and programs; and,
- To identify, support, and facilitate the development of new and emergent expressions of faith.

This meant:

- That we needed to continue to strengthen and develop existing youth ministries throughout the diocese, continuing to invest, for example, in programs such as Quest and Genesis;
- That we needed to expand and develop the networking, training and support of all leaders who worked with children, youth and young adults in the diocese;
- That we needed to complete the development of Cathedral Ridge in ways that were consonant with both conventional and emergent expressions of faith so that it could become an effective resource for evangelizing and forming young adults;
- That we needed to overhaul the way we handled raising up, training, and supporting lay and ordained leadership to make it more culturally and generationally friendly;
- That if we wanted to plant and cultivate alternative communities of faith that could reach into our culture we would need to reconceive what it might mean to be a worshipping community beyond the limited scope of traditional parishes or missions;
- That we needed to rework the ways in which we had typically taken stock of our common life (including, for example, completely overhauling parochial reports);
- That we needed to create the infrastructure and train key leaders to use effectively a diverse array of social media, effectively flattening our ways of communicating, extending our reach, and reaching more effectively those outside the Church; and,
- That we needed to work aggressively to provide significant funding for these conventional and emergent ministries.

Many congregations have now embraced a new way of understanding themselves, not as a single congregation but as multiple worshipping communities, gathering on different days, meeting in different ways, some led by clergy, some led by lay people. Some congregations just don't fit any mold and are either led or have been founded by people who do not come from within the traditional Church (often young adults operating in rather unconventional ways). Even so, these congregations are proving to be grace-filled communities of prayer, hospitality, and transformation. This mixed economy of conventional and emergent communities, with conventional and emergent forms leadership, has created a dynamic space that is the context in which we have increasingly engaged the hearts and minds of young adults.

Now we are seeing new forms of what formerly would have been called campus or college ministry. Our three, year long residential communities—located in Durango, Fort Collins, and Boulder—invite young adults to live together in intentional community and adopt a rule of life that includes the practice of prayer, study, and community service. Our “Youth Service Corps” has teams of college graduates volunteering a year of service in the San Luis Valley and elsewhere while living in community and engaging a similar rule of life. Some of these young adults, in turn, have been inspired to bring their experience and commitment to provide leadership that has brought renewal to more conventional, parish based, campus ministries.

None of this could have happened were it not for the development of Cathedral Ridge. This center—both intimately connected to our common life but still, at the same time, a separate and distinct expression of our common ministry—is reaching across the generational and cultural divides of our diocese.

Its creative summer programs, so far from traditional camp sessions, reach nearly 1,000 children and youth each year, engaging their hearts and souls in a wonderfully formational experience of community, fellowship, and spiritual growth. The “Leadership Internship Program” at Cathedral Ridge has developed a summer and year round staff of young adults who are drawn literally from around the world. The racial, cultural, and experiential diversity that they bring to the Cathedral Ridge community is significant, and their presence, commitment, and collective witness has inspired a greater awareness and understanding of the true breadth of the one ministry that is ours to share. In a new initiative called “Crossing the Divide,” we have been pleased to host gatherings of young adults from some of the most conflicted regions of the world to explore, in a context of faith, the nature of peacemaking, conflict resolution, and reconciliation. While deeply challenging and even controversial at times, these gatherings have won national and international attention and have given rise to other expressions of exchange and partnership among young adults around the world.

This work collectively has been perhaps the largest single undertaking in generations in The Diocese of Colorado. The resources required have been significant. The challenges have been many and great. But we know this reality to be the price of living missionally—that in a world haunted by conflict and violence, we can spare no expense making saints.

### The Components

- Raise awareness and train diocesan leadership to understand the surrounding culture—its perceptions and the cultural shift in relationship to existing expressions of Christianity.
- Organize diocesan structures to reflect a new parallel development model (a “mixed economy church” that embraces both conventional and emergent models of ministry and pastoral leadership).
- Develop Cathedral Ridge fully to support, embody, and expand this parallel development model.
- Establish new models of young adult ministry to evangelize and form young adults, including such as residential “monastic” communities.
- Raise significant funds.

## Appendix I: Defining Mission

In the Outline of the Faith, or Catechism, *The Book of Common Prayer* offers the following definition of the mission of the Church (page 855):

- Q. What is the mission of the Church?
- A. The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.

This simple definition, stated in question and answer form, equates the work of the Body of Christ with the redemptive activity of God as it is revealed in the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. The objective of this mutual activity is identified as the restoration of “all people to unity with God” or “divine union.” This same missional vision of a fully alive and fully restored humanity is reflected throughout *The Book of Common Prayer*, including for example, the Collect for the Second Sunday after Christmas which reads, “O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ....” (BCP, page 214)

The Outline of the Faith goes on to describe the scope of activity that is involved as the Church engages in this divine enterprise:

- Q. How does the Church pursue its mission?
- A. The Church pursues its mission as it prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love.

This section makes it clear that the mission of the Church is not limited exclusively to the activity of good works or social justice in the world but instead encompasses the full spectrum of the Church’s life—prayer and worship, sacrament and fellowship, evangelism and service. Significantly, this is a more comprehensive and more dynamic definition of *mission* than commonly articulated and understood.

Finally, in addition to describing the objective and scope of the Church’s missional identity, the Outline of the Faith also addresses the issue of agency:

- Q. Through whom does the Church carry out its mission?
- A. The Church carries out its mission through the ministry of all its members.

Taking all three missional questions into account, the Church’s mission then is understood as our comprehensive involvement, engagement, and participation in the *missio dei*—the ongoing work of divine love in the world. Mission is both contemplative and active in nature, embraces both our inner and outer life, is grounded in tradition and the witness of others, and inspires new and imaginative ways to manifest and proclaim the good news in our own day and time.

Missional identity and missional activity, in other words, is both the practice and the consequence of immersing ourselves—heart, mind, body, and soul—in the dynamic reality of God’s love working within us and among us.



## Appendix II: Components of Mission-Shaped Community

