

## **WHOLE CHURCH MISSION AND MINISTRY POLICY**

### **'Next Steps' Report**

#### **1. Introduction**

General Synod 2011 welcomed the Whole Church Mission and Ministry Policy brought forward by the Mission and Ministry Board. That Policy affirmed the primacy of mission in the life of the Scottish Episcopal Church and sought to encourage the further development of policy in a 'Whole Church' manner, recognising that different parts of the Church were separately responsible for aspects of policy and funding in the area of mission and ministry. The adoption of a 'whole church' approach was intended to encourage development of policy so that policy and funding choices were widely understood and 'owned' across the whole of the Church.

Following its acceptance by General Synod, the Mission and Ministry Board established a 'Next Steps' Group in order to carry forward the work which had been initiated by the development of the Whole Church Policy. The Next Steps Group comprises the Primus (Convener), the Rt Rev Kevin Pearson (Bishop of Argyll and the Isles), the Rev Canon Dr Alison Peden (Provincial Director of Ordinands), the Very Rev Ian Barcroft (Convener of the Church in Society Committee), Dr Peter Smart (Convener of the Ministry Development Committee), and the Rev Canon Alison Simpson (member of the Mission and Ministry Board). The Group has been serviced by the Secretary General.

All members of the Group are already heavily committed in other ways and the Group did not manage to meet until December 2012. The Group has, however, met three times and has commissioned or coordinated work on the part of others to whom the Group expresses its gratitude. During the course of its work, the Group has been encouraged not only to see tangible evidence of missional energy present in all dioceses but also by the, not unexpected, discovery that the Whole Church Policy in fact taps directly into initiatives and developments which are already under way in dioceses.

The inter-diocesan collaboration hoped for by the Whole Church Policy of 2012 is already in evidence in a number of ways. For example, the Diocese of Edinburgh includes within its TISEC Initial Ministerial Education Seminar Group students from the Dioceses of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane. Electronic communications have also enabled the linking of students in the Dioceses of Edinburgh and Brechin with, respectively, students in the dioceses of Moray, Ross and Caithness and Argyll and the Isles by Skype. Similarly, there has been linkage between the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway and the Diocese of Argyll and the Isles in the area of Continuing Ministerial Development where a series of six Action Learning Sets has been conducted together (these comprised facilitated group meetings for stipendiary clergy at which a pastoral/leadership topic was discussed with help from the facilitator). Training materials for Pastoral Assistants have also been shared between those Dioceses. Clearly, there are tangible benefits in sharing resources and good practice in these ways.

The focus of the Next Steps Group has principally been in the areas set out below.

## **2. Recruitment and Selection: Vocations Strategy**

The Group has been delighted to see the development of a Vocations Strategy for the Scottish Episcopal Church by the Provincial Director of Ordinands with the support and oversight of the College of Bishops.

Emerging from the Vocations Strategy, as well as directly from the Whole Church Policy, has been a sense of the importance of identifying and training future generations of clerical leadership in the Church. Full time training for ministry has in recent years proved difficult not least because of the cost of such training and has effectively been restricted to this able to fund themselves. Preliminary work has, therefore, been undertaken to identify possible full time training pathways for ordinands with the potential as young adult clergy to build up a lifetime of ministerial experience. Similarly, the question of how such training could be resourced is being explored.

The Next Steps Group has been encouraged to learn of young Scots ordinands already in training in theological colleges in England and who hope to return to their native Scotland in due course. Their presence affirms the belief that there is indeed the potential for the Scottish Episcopal Church to produce a new generation of younger ordinands committed to whole-of-life ministry.

## **3. Patterns of Ministry**

The Whole Church Policy recognised the need to develop coherent alternative models of ministry capable of application across the province. It is undoubtedly the case that new models of ministry are emerging in different places in the dioceses. The College of Bishops has commenced work in sharing those new models. It hopes to be able to articulate a variety of models which in turn will help the Church to develop and adopt consistent policies in relation to funding, recognising that former "augmentation" patterns of financing are no longer appropriate and that new ways need to be found of financing ministry in those places where traditional models no longer work. Similarly, the development of new patterns of ministry may require alteration to the existing canonical framework for the recognition and support of such ministries.

The Next Steps Group has also recognised the need to garner data on the kinds of ministry being supported within dioceses, the kind of mission action planning being undertaken and the implications of this for future ministry requirements.

## **4. TISEC**

In considering the future role of TISEC, the Ministry Development Committee has already initiated an examination of its central and dispersed roles with particular emphasis on the cost and financing of such roles and the accountability of dioceses for the delivery of dispersed TISEC, against the provision of provincial funding.

There has also been discussion of the possible future role of TISEC as 'generic trainer' for the province in relation to matters of education and training for discipleship and lay ministries. One way in which such a role could be fulfilled would be for TISEC to act as 'quality assurer' of training delivered within the dioceses. The Mission and Ministry Board has encouraged TISEC to undertake such a role in relation to the development of training

materials for worship leaders being established by the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway. A meeting has already taken place with a view to this serving as a pilot project to examine the practical aspects of how TISEC might function in such a capacity.

The Next Steps Group has also commissioned the scoping of work being done in dioceses both in relation to Continuing Ministerial Development and in relation to lay learning, training for lay ministries and Christian discipleship. The identification of what currently is happening across the province is a necessary first step to identifying how further inter-diocesan cooperation can be encouraged and how the province can support the work in these important fields within the dioceses.

## **5. Finance**

Discussion of the issues listed above has inevitably raised questions as to respective roles of province and dioceses in the financial resourcing of mission and ministry. Whilst matters are at a very early stage, consideration has commenced as to whether the financial dynamic between province and dioceses could helpfully be improved in order to support the shift in missional energy from province to dioceses already recognised within the Whole Church Policy. Any such shift would place the dioceses in a position of more direct control and responsibility in relation to their use of provincial funds but within a framework of accountability to the province for the undertaking of an agreed range of functions and activities.

## **6. Ecumenical Cooperation**

The development of the Whole Church Policy does not take place in isolation from developments in other denominations. Regular contact is maintained with our EMU partners, the Methodist Church in Scotland and the United Reformed Church. The Next Steps Group has also been pleased to hear reports of a joint meeting with the Church of Scotland as it reviews its ministerial training and considers the implementation of its Articles Declaratory concerning the delivery of the ordinances of religion to the people of Scotland.

The Next Steps Group acknowledges that it has only made a start to encouraging the next steps which flow from the adoption of the Whole Church Policy. Other issues identified in the Policy document remain 'on the table' for future attention.

+ David  
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April 2012