

Diocesan Growth Programme : letter from Bishop Mike Hill 6 July 2007 – some thoughts from Ed Poole

1. Background to the letter links to :
 - Diocesan Growth Strategy 2005-10 (including Ministerial deployment strategy)
 - Realignment of roles for Growth – Area Deans
 - Mission Zones
 - Growth Summit, Swindon Sept 2006 and DVD for use in Churches
 - Swindon Workshop 'Equipped to Grow' Feb 2007 (13 attended from WSEP)
 - 2007 Articles of Inquiry – question on local plan

Plus ...recent training and development for Staff and others
Related vision coming through other Parent Bodies (eg WEBA focus on Mission, URC reviews)
2. My thoughts...
 - This summary suggests a changing expectation about change and growth – from the (Anglican) diocese and grass roots – to be more strategic, more focussed on mission
 - Consistent with recent re-organisations and changes in other Parent Bodies - Methodist, URC and BU – to point resources towards mission and growth
 - The thinking and expectation is consistent with SORP 2005 principles
 - Growth is not an option. We are well aware of the impact of declining numbers and activity in the Partnership. There may be some attitudes to influence, to get this on the agenda, eg turning ' a piece of admin' into something to stimulate and motivate.
 - We should beware / avoid discounting things like this because of its roots in a particular Parent Body (see new Const Declaration of Intent)
 - It's encouraging that resources are on offer to help develop the plan.
3. WSEP a strategic response?
 - ◆ be visionary and creative with response to the request for plans
 - ◆ incorporate activity and plans from all 5 Churches (showing what LEPs can do)
 - ◆ include ideas and share the results with the other Parent Bodies
 - ◆ an opportunity to include initiatives from different sources (URC, Baptist), to show diversity
 - ◆ a good integrating opportunity for new ministers
 - ◆ opportunity to raise profile at launch of new Constitution ...Covenanted Relationships?
 - ◆ Give an integrated (Partnership) response, to include 3 Anglican CWdn responses – but mapped on a broader scale
 - ◆ Use
4. Initial Steps
 - ◆ Ask Church Wardens to share copies of their responses to 2007 Articles of Enquiry on growth plans
 - ◆ Share something about the letter with all Churches and Ministers; eg comments on the proposed approach; get comments, and agreement to explore possible responses
 - ◆ Start to build a simple table to map things already planned and in progress for 2007-8
 - ◆ Build this up with inputs from new ministers and others and all churches. Work with Church Wardens, Secretaries and Leadership Teams; offer a supportive response to the planned September letter when it comes
 - ◆ Play down the Anglican source; build up the cross Parent Body and Partnership opportunities.

Growth Programme : Mapping examples ...

	Commitment	Partnership	Influence	Numbers
2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Prayer Goal (JG) ◆ Alpha Course ◆ Children and Young Peoples groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Fellowship Goal (?) – Joint Services; Social events ◆ Ministry Goal (SS) – Induction ◆ Ministry Goal – External Consultant ◆ Café Base West ◆ Holiday Clubs ◆ Planning for main festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Fellowship Goal ◆ Prayer Goal (JG) – monthly Partnership wide; linking prayer needs ◆ Occasional Offices ◆ Outreach Programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Ministry Goal (SS) ◆ Prayer Goal (JG) Church prayer groups ◆ Membership renewals
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Healthy Churches? ◆ Ministry Goal – Induction, External Consultant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Healthy Churches? ◆ NCounter ? ◆ Café Base West 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Healthy Churches? ◆ Swindon Churches Together ◆ Communication and Publicity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Healthy Churches? ◆ NCounter?

Notes :

- ◆ At this stage, the table's purpose is to help illustrate a possible strategic approach to growth. It's not definitive or exhaustive.
- ◆ These are examples only – most need more detail to become part of a 'Growth Plan'. There may be several more to include already, but good to contain in on 1 page if possible!
- ◆ Initials in brackets show the current lead person; new Ministers could share involvement and responsibilities from 2008?
- ◆ This could be used as a framework to guide planning and monitoring

Ed
20 July 07