

# The Assessment Commission

## - What's it all about? -

### INTRO

During this time of financial challenge, when an increasing number of parishes are defaulting on their assessment payments and the gap between Diocesan expenditure and income is widening, the establishment of the Assessment Commission has created an opportunity for the Diocese of Natal to critically evaluate the way in which its mission and ministry is resourced. Furthermore, while the focus of the Assessment Commission, as the name suggests, is on financial resourcing, it is inevitable and indeed appropriate that the Diocese takes this rare opportunity to listen to God and to reflect more widely on its priorities, processes and structures.

### Assumptions

- We believe God calls the church to participate in his Mission to the world.
- And we believe that God has entrusted to this Diocese a specific Vision as a part of that Mission, namely to be "Loving Communities", called to "put out into deeper waters for a catch"

### Implications

- Resourcing the Diocese for ministry is about equipping it to pursue and realise its God-given Vision.
- Financial health is achieved by more than simply managing scarce resources effectively. Our call is to faith-filled listening and obedience to God.
- The task of the Assessment Commission is to consider and evaluate the appropriateness of our current Assessment system and if necessary, recommend the adoption of changes that will enable the Diocese to grow in the realisation of its Vision to be "Loving Communities".

### The process

It is hoped that the Assessment Commission will result in a LEAP. Not a blind leap of faith, but rather a series of steps, the outcome of which will be an effective and constructive solution to our current challenges. Steps:

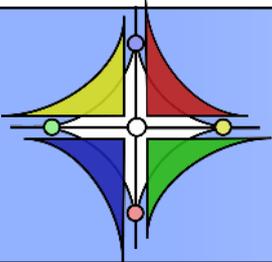
### A LEAP...

- (L)ISTEN - with understanding and compassion to the experiences of the parishes
- (E)XPLORE - and compare alternative methods of resourcing ministry
- (A)NALYSE - and evaluate the data and insights the Commission will receive
- (P)ROPOSE - in consultation with Diocesan Council & the Trustees, submit proposals to Synod for discussion, and approval or rejection.

Established by resolution of the Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Natal



**NB. ALL CLERGY: CLERGY FORUM - 17<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2019 at 9am. Venue: The Cathedral.**



# February 2019 is LISTENING MONTH

**FEBRUARY 2019** has been designated as a **LISTENING MONTH** throughout the Diocese. Please mark this exciting month in your personal and parish diaries and begin to pray for it even now!

There can be nothing more important when confronted with challenge, than pausing, and with intention, listening for the will and guidance of God for our parishes and diocese.

**Resources** The Assessment Commission will provide **resources** to aid parishes & chapelries to engage with this opportunity to Listen. The resources are not compulsory & may be freely adapted for different contexts.

- Commission resources will include outline material for a 4 part Sunday sermon series
- Small Group Bible Study & discussion materials (which may be used by individuals too)

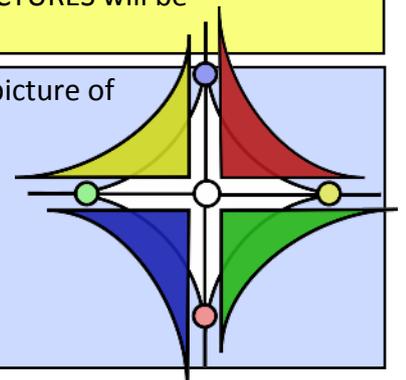
Furthermore, parishes will be invited to reflect on the Diocesan Vision and to discuss in more detail, the resourcing implications for their parish. What system & Diocesan structures will ensure that parishes are adequately resourced? To capture these ideas, the Commission will provide a Questionnaire that every parish is required to complete. The following will also be provided:

- Guidelines for completing the questionnaire
- Guidelines for holding a Parish Indaba as one option for ensuring the Questionnaire is discussed fully and completed.

**The Parish Questionnaire** This will have at least 4 components:

1. Questions that will allow the parish to reflect on their **past experiences** with regards their journey as a worshipping community especially in relation to Assessment, both the positives and the negatives.
2. Questions that will assist the parish to evaluate their **future needs** in light of their Mission Action Plans
3. A **statistical gathering** section, in which parishes will be asked to record certain key measures on a weekly basis through the month of February. These figures might include a breakdown of Sunday attendance by age group and gender, as well as weekly guild and small group activity and income, thus providing a more accurate snapshot of parish life than currently exists.
4. A general feedback section providing an opportunity to record **constructive ideas** and suggestions to improve the way in which the Diocese resources its ministries (at diocesan, archdeaconry and parish levels). Ideas relating to the METHODS currently used, as well as to our STRUCTURES will be welcomed.

**The Logo** The Assessment Commission logo, as with our Diocese, is a picture of vibrant diversity, united in purpose. With sails filled with the Spirit and the Cross pointing outward, we are a missionary people, sent to the world. We and our resources exist not to enhance the power and prestige of the Diocese, nor for the sole benefit of our members, but for the wider communities in which we live, work and witness. We are called to be **LOVING COMMUNITIES**, that share the love of Christ to the glory of God.



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