

New mission hubs position churches for growth through partnership and service

For some, the word “mission” might evoke traveling to the other side of the world. But many churches of the diocese are answering the call to mission right in their own neighborhoods, supported by funds from the Together Now campaign. Two new mission hubs were announced at the 2013 Diocesan Convention: the Plymouth, Cape and the Islands Hub, and the Merrimack Valley Hub. They join the South Coast Mission Hub, the “pilot” hub, which has completed its first year of serving Fall River, New Bedford and the surrounding communities.

A mission hub is a collaboration among three or more parishes that come together to discern the particular needs and special resources in their communities, and then work collectively to have an impact. According to the Rev. Samuel Rodman, Project Manager for Campaign Initiatives, communities are nourished by the work and resources of the church, while the church strengthens its relationship with the community—the key, Rodman said, to long-term sustainability, as well as learning and growth.

“The byproduct, or the gift, is when a congregation partners with others, they learn what they do well and what they might be doing more effectively... there’s a lot of cross-pollination that happens from the work,” Rodman said.

Investing in the gateway cities

The Merrimack Valley Hub encompasses Haverhill, Lawrence and Lowell—gateway cities with highly diverse mid-size urban centers, large immigrant populations and a host of similar stubborn social and economic challenges.

Continued inside



Students at the afterschool program in the arts, based at Trinity Church, Haverhill

Our \$20-million campaign

\$2 million

Tithing for mission beyond our diocese

\$2 million

Caring for God's creation

\$4.5 million

Equipping congregations for strategic local mission

\$7.5 million

Raising up new generations in faith and service

\$4 million

Transforming our cathedral church

For more information about each of the campaign initiatives, please visit: www.diomass.org/together-now-campaign

New mission hubs position churches for growth through partnership and service (con't)

The Rev. Jane Bearden, Rector of Trinity Church in Haverhill, said that it just makes sense for these communities to work together. "[All of the hub churches] have a large physical plant and small, changing congregations, and all have an interest in working with kids in our neighborhoods," she said. The Merrimack Valley Hub will focus on providing afterschool programming for children, with a special focus on music and arts education. Sites will also provide mentoring and homework help.

The new hub has two strong models already in its midst: the ACAT program at Trinity Church in Haverhill and Esperanza Academy in Lawrence, an independent school in the Episcopal tradition for middle school age girls. The ACAT (Academy of Creative Arts at Trinity) program is currently a weekly program providing music education and other creative activities for children ages 6-12.

The mission hub will expand ACAT to five days a week, start an elementary program at Esperanza in Lawrence and expand afterschool programs at St. Anne's Church and St. John's Church in Lowell. These programs are on track to launch in September 2014.

Lilli Leggio, Director of Communications and Outreach at Esperanza Academy and a volunteer with the ACAT program, said that she hopes these programs can offer their cities something they desperately need: hope.

"There is great need, a hunger, in Lowell, Lawrence and Haverhill, for hope," Leggio said. "We believe our children are our greatest resource and source for renewal."

Listening to the community

The Plymouth, Cape and Islands Mission Hub has a twofold mission: to care for people who are without community, and to care for God's creation. But their

journey to becoming a mission hub began by asking the question: what does mission mean to us?

"Churches have to ask, 'what do we have to offer that no one else has?' And that comes down to God-centered relationships," said Deacon Helen Trainor of Christ Church in Plymouth.

The hub organizers found that parishioners were equally passionate about serving all groups of people who may feel isolated: the elderly, LGBTQ youth, returning veterans, migrant workers and others. They decided to focus on developing a plan to equip people for mission with people from all walks of life.

A group of 10 people will be the first cohort to take this training, and will begin mission work at nursing homes, assisted living facilities and other locations within the hub's geographic reach.

Uniting together in this new way will be crucial to the 18 small churches of the hub, which are scattered from Wareham to Provincetown to Nantucket. Many are located in vacation areas and see their attendance fluctuate throughout the year. Having an organized community for support and prayer will make the work of mission stronger and more sustainable in the long run, Trainor said.

"Jesus understood that mission is exhausting," said Trainor, "and that it takes courage to go where other people are, as opposed to having them come to you—think of being in a jail cell, a nursing home or a Head Start program—and you can't do that without a strong community to come back to, that will support you and pray over you."

Spiritually, organizationally and financially, churches in the new hubs will be able to learn from one another and work towards mission that is sustainable in the long term. Both hubs are already hard at work forming committees, organizing trainings and planning for the future.

"Statistics show that churches that are engaged with mission are churches that grow," said Rodman. "And to do [mission] well, over a sustained period, churches need the resources, gifts and talents of more than one congregation."

—Ellen Stuart

MISSION HUB APPLICATION PROCESS

A mission hub is a collaboration of three or more Episcopal churches within a particular geographic area committed to implementing a mission outside the walls of their respective church buildings. Any such partnership is encouraged to apply. The timelines for the upcoming rounds appear below. More information, including **application materials, is available** at www.diomass.org. On the homepage, click "Our Mission," then "Mission Hubs." There is also a new information packet which can be sent directly to interested parties.

ROUND TWO

Feb. 1, 2014:	Letters of intent solicited
Mid-March 2014:	Application assistance training
April 15, 2014:	Applications due
Early May 2014:	Application review, including presentation event
May 15, 2014:	Applicants presented to Diocesan Council for approval or are referred
November 2014:	New hub(s) announced at Diocesan Convention

ROUND THREE

July 1, 2014:	Letters of intent solicited
Early September 2014:	Application assistance training
Sept. 25, 2014:	Applications due
Early October 2014:	Application review, including presentation event
November 2014:	New hub(s) announced at Diocesan Convention

QUESTIONS may be directed to the Rev. Sam Rodman, Project Manager for Campaign Initiatives, at srodman@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 404.

2012 Grant Award Update

The first Diocesan Council Mission Tithe Grant of \$25,000—awarded in 2012—went to Tatua Kenya, formerly known as Be the Change-Kenya. Tatua, Swahili for “solve,” creates opportunities for Kenyans to build solutions to poverty through community organizing.

Last year, Tatua Kenya trained 40 community organizers who recruited 300

Kenyans to volunteer at local orphanages. Their work reached more than 150 children. This year, because of the Mission Tithe Grant, Tatua trained 60 community organizers who recruited more than 3,000 volunteers to get children off the streets and back to school. In four months of campaign work, 180 children have returned to school, moving toward

a goal of 1,000 children by June. In addition, Tatua began advising other movements, both in Kenya and internationally, on how to use community organizing to tackle issues including prison care, youth civic engagement, health care reform and gender equality.

— Mary Ann Lee

Mission Tithe Council Grant supports “citizen partners”

From the mission tithe portion of the Together Now campaign proceeds, \$100,000 has been allocated as global mission partnership grants to be awarded by Diocesan Council (\$25,000 annually for four years).

At the Diocesan Convention on Nov. 2, the 2013 grant was awarded to Foundation Cristosal and St. Paul’s Church in Newburyport. The faith-based nonprofit Foundation Cristosal was formed in 2001 and exemplifies a sustainable approach to poverty eradication in El Salvador that is rooted in human rights-based community

development and engages those who are poor as citizen partners.

Foundation Cristosal has had a long-term partnership with the Diocese of Massachusetts’ Youth Leadership Academy, with youth from this diocese traveling to El Salvador to learn about how Americans and Salvadorans can work together to better the world. For the past three years, Foundation Cristosal has partnered with St. Paul’s Church in Newburyport to share community development experience and build the capacity of both Salvadorans and Americans to appreciate and

exercise their human rights. Cristosal is interested in exploring other parish partnerships. For more information, visit <http://cristosal.org>.

— Laura Walta



Mission Tithe Matching Grant helps weave communities together

Epiphany Parish of Walpole is blessed to have received a Mission Tithe Matching Grant, made possible by the Together Now campaign. As a member of Walpole Families of Faith (congregations from all of the mainline denominations in Walpole), Epiphany is partnering with Mil Milagros, which means “A Thousand Miracles.” This organization works with children, families and communities in Guatemala to prevent malnutrition and ensure that children complete sixth grade healthy, literate and prepared to continue their education.

Good ministry frequently begins with a good idea and a call from God, but often there isn’t much investment other

than one or two people doing their best to sustain an initiative that needs many more hands. This grant ensures the participation of more hands from the Walpole community in this ministry by jump-starting a five-year commitment of all the mainline churches, public and private schools and the town government—a true public-private partnership. Additionally, this commitment ensures physical and supportive mutual relationships between the Anglican Diocese of Guatemala and the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.

As rector of Epiphany Parish, I have helped to host the Mil Milagros artisan shows in the church undercroft semi-annually. At each, I noticed the brightly colored scarves, exquisite beadwork and the throngs of people who would come to view and purchase the artistry brought forth by our sisters and brothers. After four years I decided to find out more about what was driving two sisters in my parish, Jo-Ann Barrett and Jay Ellen Barrett, who hosted this ministry. They introduced me to Margaret Blood,

an Episcopalian from Boston, who had begun this work with little more than a dream and a call from the Holy Spirit. After speaking with Margaret, I was hooked.

As we entered conversations about partnering, not one congregation was hesitant to move forward in working together. This was an opportunity for communitywide, interfaith ministry.

With a small portion of the grant monies received, in August of 2014 we will send a delegation comprising myself, a United Church of Christ clergyperson (fluent in Spanish), a school district representative and a member of the Walpole community to work and learn in Guatemala with six schools and communities in the state of Sololá.

I am so blessed to be part of something where God is calling my parish and the wider community together to make a difference. With the help of the Mission Tithe Matching Grant, we are answering God’s call to weave threads into one strong cloth.

—The Rev. Alan Hesse



A Mil Milagros board member teaching math games to the children at the Chichimuch School



Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

138 Tremont Street
Boston MA 02111
617-482-5800
www.diomass.org

TOGETHER NOW CAMPAIGN COLLECTIONS AND DISBURSEMENTS

Because of the generosity and faithfulness of thousands of donors, millions of dollars have gone forth to fund the priorities of the Together Now campaign. Thank you for carrying this work forward through your payments, participation and prayer.

TOTAL PLEDGE COLLECTIONS TO DATE

of nearly \$32 million committed diocesanwide

\$13,447,518

DISBURSEMENTS

Parish share of collaborative campaigns	\$3,439,644
Tithing for mission beyond our diocese	\$610,913
Green Grants and Loans	\$405,223
Mission Hubs (including Youth and Young Adult Ministries)	\$413,029
Mission Institute	\$200,000
Barbara C. Harris Camp and Conference Center	\$750,036
Cathedral Church of St. Paul Renovations	\$450,044
Total Disbursements (as of 12/31/13)	\$6,268,889

2014 PLANNED DISBURSEMENTS (AS OF 12/31/13)

Tithing for mission beyond our diocese	\$400,000
Green Grants and Loans	\$250,000
Mission Hubs (including Youth and Young Adult Ministries)	\$800,000
Mission Institute	\$200,000
Barbara C. Harris Camp and Conference Center	\$250,000
Cathedral Church of St. Paul Renovations	\$2,600,000
Total amount scheduled to be disbursed in 2014	\$4,500,000

(parish share not yet available)