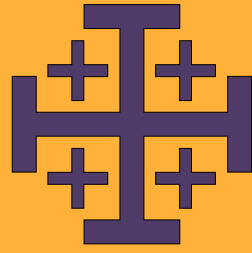




GULF ATLANTIC DIOCESE

STRATEGIC PLAN

2023-2028



ABOUT THE DIOCESE

The Gulf Atlantic Diocese was formed in August 2009 and officially recognized by the Provincial Council of the Anglican Church in North America in December 2009. The Rt. Rev. Neil Lebhar served as the Diocese's first bishop, with the Rt. Rev. Alex Farmer succeeding him in August 2022.

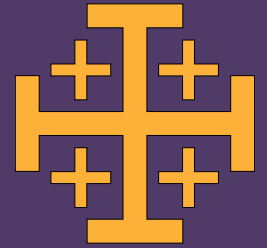
We have 42 churches across four states, averaging nearly 80 people per Sunday, per congregation, and over 120 clergy serving in our Diocese.

VISION STATEMENT

We are a growing Anglican network
of flourishing churches.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of this Diocese shall be
to proclaim the transforming Gospel of Jesus Christ
in every facet of our faith and life.



ABOUT THE PROCESS

The process of creating a strategic plan for The Gulf Atlantic Diocese included four phases.

1

During the first phase, a team gathered to determine the broad categories and scope of the project.

2

The second phase included conducting extensive research on the diocese, the ACNA, and the state of the Church in America, in order to present to stakeholders at the Strategic Planning Event in May 2023.

3

The third phase presented the data in seven final categories (Who We Are; Geographic Growth; Leadership Growth; Love God; Love Others; Reach Out; Steward Well), which enabled stakeholders to craft suggested goals for the Bishop's review.

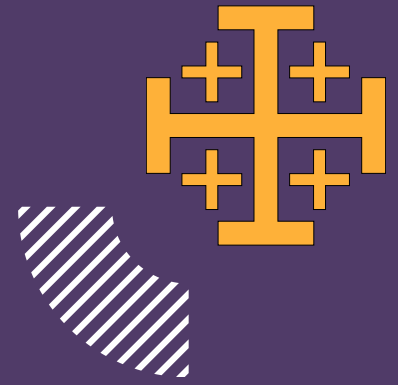
4

Approved goals were submitted to Joint Leadership in phase four, then presented to the diocese at its annual Synod. They will be reviewed annually and adjusted as necessary.

This is an overview only; these goals are not presented in detail here; detailed SMART goals can be viewed by scanning the QR code found at the end of this document. Additional support documents (including the details of the process, the data presented, the results of the Strategic Planning Event, and the full list of submitted goals) are available upon request.



ONGOING STRATEGIES



Planting Churches

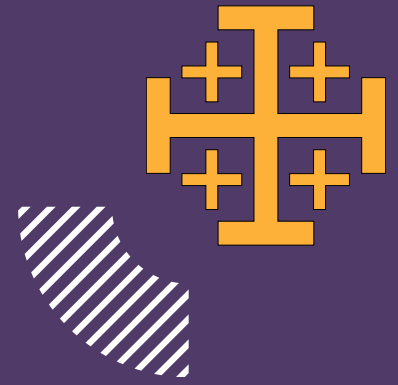
To prepare and support leadership structures for expansive growth by developing effective planting strategies and funding streams to launch generative projects for the flourishing of the church.



Raising Up Leaders

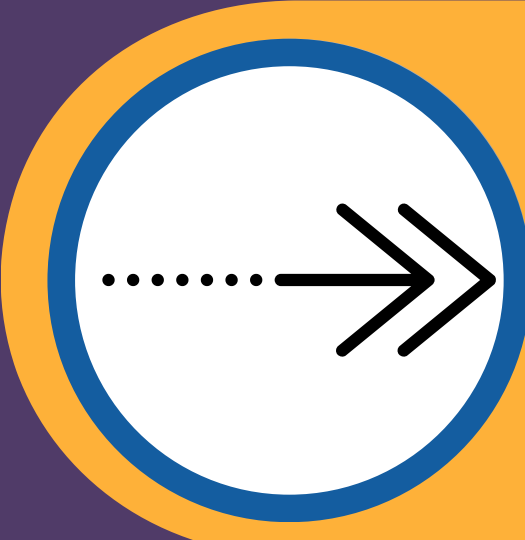
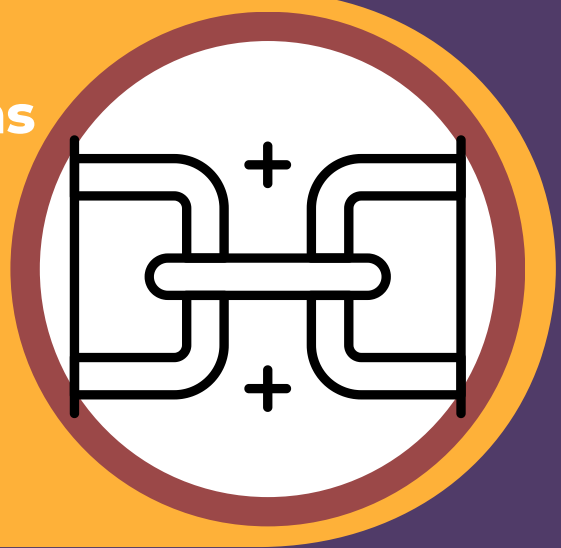
To equip the laity and clergy of the diocese for ministry through theological, missional, and contextual formation and application.

ONGOING STRATEGIES



Strengthening Congregations

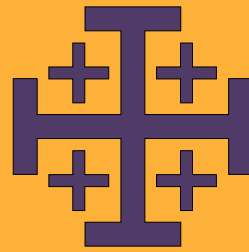
To equip congregations to flourish, each in their unique location and ministry, through a support system that provides tools, training, and resources for effective missional ministry.



Reaching the Next Generation

To reach the next generation of believers for the next generation of the church, in all age groups, by concentrating on reaching the lost and discipling new believers and youth.

NEW INITIATIVES



Center for Ministry

Develop a model for supplemental formation for mission, equipping laity and clergy for ministry through practical, theological education in a diocesan Center for Ministry (CFM). The CFM will launch in two phases: the first will cover content areas of greatest need and interest to our Diocese; the second will cover content areas supplemental to seminary training to prepare candidates for canonical exams.



Networks

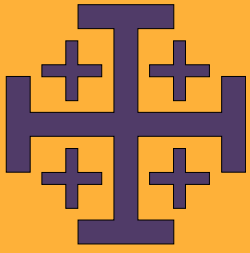
Create a unified culture of shared wisdom through a structure of peer networks intended to strengthen our diocesan and parish ministry together. These networks will launch in two phases: the first by ministry role, the second by topic. These networks will be empowered to influence the Synod and shape diocesan life.



The Grow Fund

Create a Grow Fund, enabling the diocese to steward targeted gifts and funding streams for programs such as: church planting, revitalization projects, seminary scholarships, internships, next gen ministry, curacies, and a diocesan retreat center.





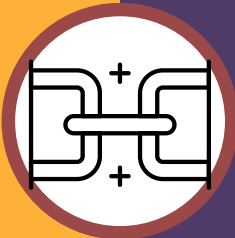
1-YR GOALS

1.1



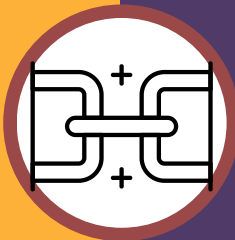
Encourage the expansion of our diocese by identifying target cities for church planting, and syncing our leadership structures to better facilitate geographic and transfer growth.

1.2



Network Structure Phase 1: Develop networks to increase congregational collaboration, resourcing, and support. Phase 1 networks launch by role, such as: parish admin, comms dir, next gen leaders, prayer ministers, senior wardens, pastoral musicians, etc.

1.3



Launch an effective Learning Management System that will be utilized for Safeguarding training and the Center for Ministry.

1.4

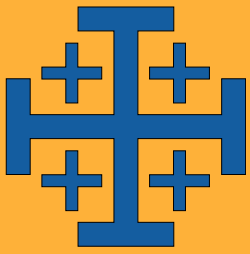


Increase awareness and understanding of diverse cultures, ethnicities, abilities, and experiences within the family of God by prioritizing sense of belonging in diocesan metrics and events.

1.5

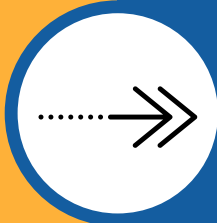


Grow Fund Phase 1 (Assessment): Prepare for building the Grow Fund by assessing the level of financial thriving of all church and diocesan ministries to identify areas of financial need and potential giving.



3-YR GOALS

3.1



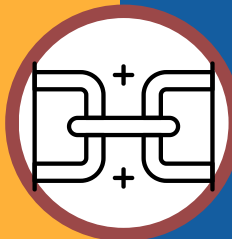
Increase training and coaching to strengthen evangelistic efforts of laity and clergy and to empower clergy to be evangelism catalyzers in their churches.

3.2



Revise the Ordination Process, including discernment weekend and clarity regarding the efficacy of the diaconate and presbyterate tracks and the requirements for each.

3.3



Network Structure Phase 2: Develop networks to increase congregational collaboration, resourcing, and support. Phase 2 networks launch by topics determined at the Strategic Planning Event in May 2023: Network of Theologians, Antioch Network, Women's Ministry Network, Access Leadership Network, and Network of Catechists.

3.4



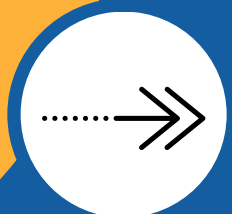
Center for Ministry Phase 1: Launch a program to strengthen lay leadership and discipleship. Topics will include those identified during the Str. Planning Event in May 2023: Evangelism, Prayer Ministry, Small group discipleship, Worship & the Book of Common Prayer, Lay Eucharistic Minister, Lay Catechist, and Lay Preacher cohorts, Spiritual Gifts, Family Ministry & Next Gen Ministry, The Biblical Narrative, DEI, etc.

3.5

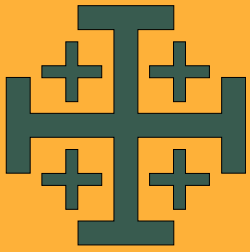


Grow Fund Phase 2 (Opportunities): Offer opportunities for individuals and groups to financially support our proposals for Church Planting, Fellowships, Internships, and Curacies.

3.6



Identify and equip a point person for family ministry (children, youth, and parents) in every church of the Diocese.



5-YR GOALS

5.1



Center for Ministry Phase 2: Launch courses for clergy covering topics required for canonical exams and that will supplement seminary training.

5.2



Grow Fund Phase 3 (Flourishing): Research and pursue options for securing a retreat center for use by the diocese for clergy conferences, spiritual transformational events/retreats for churches seeking renewal, training and assessments for networks, camps, etc., in order to put into action the principles and practices that will strengthen churches for flourishing mission as well as increase leadership pipelines.

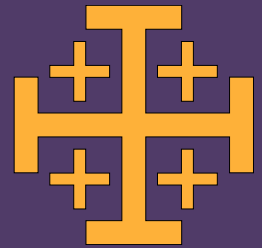
5.3



Build partnerships between college ministries and churches in primary university communities within the geographical boundaries of the Diocese.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.
1 Thessalonians 5:11



SMART Goals

We are extremely excited to be able to share this broad overview of the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan with you. For more information on each goal, including measurable outcomes, action steps, relevance to the mission of the Diocese, and more specific timing, please scan this QR code.

For More Information

The research and data presented at the May 2023 Strategic Planning event as well as the details of the work produced by the SPE (e.g. statements and suggested goals for each subcategory) are available by request from StrategicPlan@gulfatlanticdiocese.org.

Scan Me:

