



# THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

## **2015-2016 Mutual Ministry Review An update from the Standing Committee and Bishops**

The Standing Committee and our Bishops embarked in 2015 on a Mutual Ministry Review (MMR). The Samaritan Counseling Center of Lancaster, Pennsylvania helped us create a survey to listen to you about our mutual ministry in the Diocese of Maryland, and released it for your participation in October 2015. Thank you for completing a total of 318 surveys! Data from the survey were sorted by respondents' role in the diocese, such as Convention delegates, vestry members, clergy, diocesan staff and leaders.

Your survey results have helped the Standing Committee, Bishop Sutton and Bishop Knudsen take an in depth look at our Diocese so that we might learn and grow in our many ministries.

The Standing Committee and Bishops have worked diligently together over the last several months to analyze this data with support from our consultants. The survey's range of responses showed candidness and honesty. Both positive feedback and challenges are being discussed in a spirit of love that is already producing fruit. Our Bishops, Diocesan staff, Standing Committee and Diocesan Council have started and will continue undertaking actions to address the priorities and areas of importance identified in the MMR survey.

Bishop Sutton is truly excited about all the possibilities revealed in the MMR and is deeply grateful for all the results.

We present to you this summary of the MMR findings, and give thanks to God for the guidance they offer to all of us in the Diocese of Maryland.

### ***We can Celebrate!***

- We have an entrepreneurial and visionary leader in Bishop Sutton.
- Bishop Knudsen's skills and experience compliment Bishop Sutton's well.
- The Diocese of Maryland is full of people who are ready "To Do."
- Measures of the levels of Energy and Satisfaction from respondents are positive indicators for action and change
- There was a high degree of participation from vestry members
- There is a Very Strong Consensus around Top Priorities

### ***Top Priorities Show Our Diocese's Passion for Ministry***

Three themes from the survey were prominent in all of the categories of respondents analyzed. Strengthening and supporting these as top priorities for the Diocese will lead to greater energy and satisfaction for the work we do together in what Presiding Bishop Curry calls "the Jesus Movement."

### **1. “Take a leadership role in working with churches that are struggling”**

- Provide training and support for encouraging Stewardship & Congregational Vitality
- Promote early intervention for congregations with serious difficulties • Increase assistance for congregations in Ministry Transition.

### **2. “Equip Clergy and Lay leaders with strategies that enable them to reach new members.”**

- Provide resources to support congregations in evangelism
- Address underlying concerns about congregation financial stability
- Highlight and face concerns about future congregations

### **3. “Equip congregations to be effective in addressing problems in their surrounding communities.”**

- Help congregations understand Changing Demographics
- Support congregations in identifying their local Social Needs • Assist Strategies for Shared Ministry

#### ***Additional Areas of Importance***

Several other themes were identified across the returned surveys at levels slightly below that of our top priorities, but were also important to address. They include:

- Promote a Higher Level of Trust throughout the Diocese
- Articulate a Vision for our Future
- Continue to Upgrade and Improve Communication lines
- Assist Congregations with Strategic Planning Initiatives

#### ***Next Steps***

At a meeting in August and at a retreat in early October 2016, Standing Committee met with the Bishops to review and discuss the results of this Mutual Ministry Review. With prayer and with deep mutual respect we began looking forward together in building the Diocese of Maryland as, in the words of Bishop Sutton, “A Loving Community.”

#### ***Our Thanks to You***

We are grateful to the team of consultants, David Miron, Barry Frey, and Jim Hanna, to Diocesan staff and Diocesan Council. Above all, we offer our heartfelt thanks to the hundreds of lay and clergy members of the Diocese of Maryland for engaging in this important Mutual Ministry Review.

May God be glorified in our continuing work together.

## **The Standing Committee and Bishops of the Diocese of Maryland**

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Mr. Paul Durham, President  
St. Matthew's, Oakland

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Church of the Holy Trinity, West Baltimore

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The Rev. Canon Dr. Mark Gatza  
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The Rev. T. Stewart Lucas  
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