

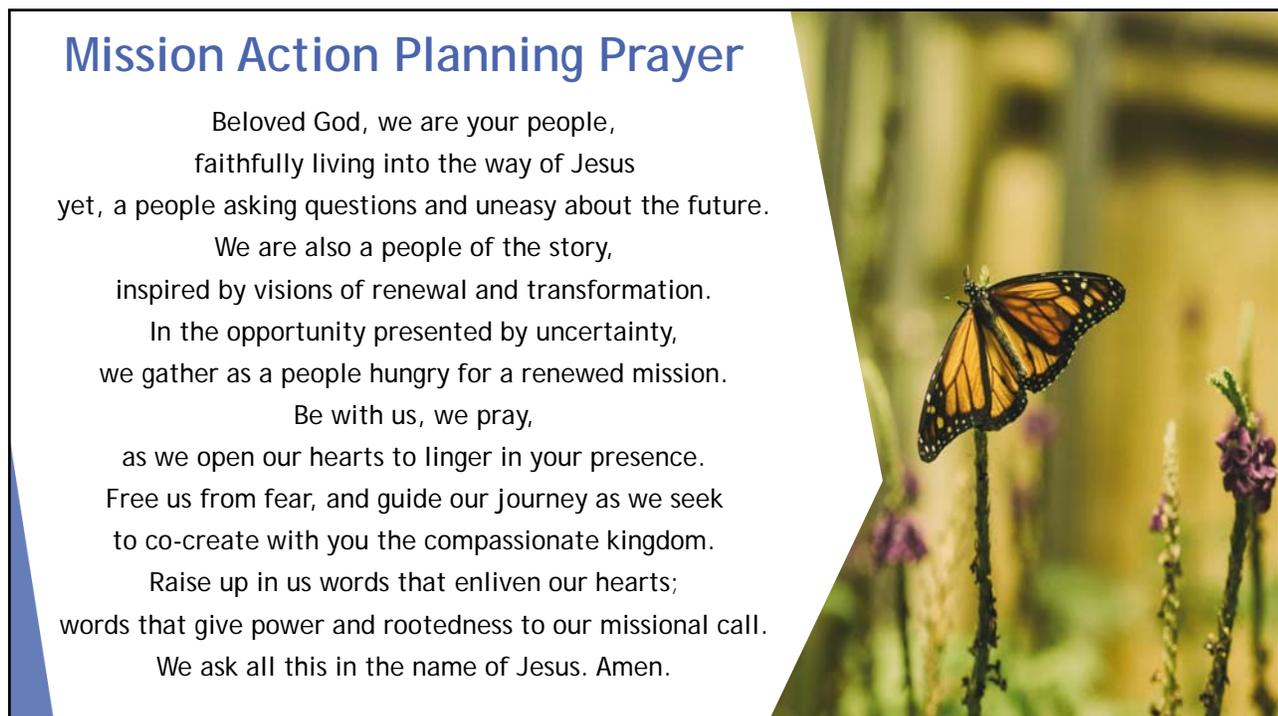
*For everything there is a season,  
and a time for every matter  
under heaven.*  
Ecclesiastes 3:1

**Diocese of  
Niagara's  
Season of Transition**

Synod Presentation  
Facilitated by M & M International  
and MAP Leadership Team  
November 8, 2019

  
FAITH-BASED CONSULTING

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## Mission Action Planning Prayer

Beloved God, we are your people,  
faithfully living into the way of Jesus  
yet, a people asking questions and uneasy about the future.

We are also a people of the story,  
inspired by visions of renewal and transformation.

In the opportunity presented by uncertainty,  
we gather as a people hungry for a renewed mission.

Be with us, we pray,  
as we open our hearts to linger in your presence.  
Free us from fear, and guide our journey as we seek  
to co-create with you the compassionate kingdom.

Raise up in us words that enliven our hearts;  
words that give power and rootedness to our missional call.

We ask all this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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## Mission Action Plan?

A missional church/diocese is one which organizes its life in light of the mission of God.

- + Listen to God and community  
Where God is active in the world
- + Co-create with God - what is needed to meet God's mission for us  
Steps/objectives/plans



*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*  
Philippians 4:6-8

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## Today's Agenda

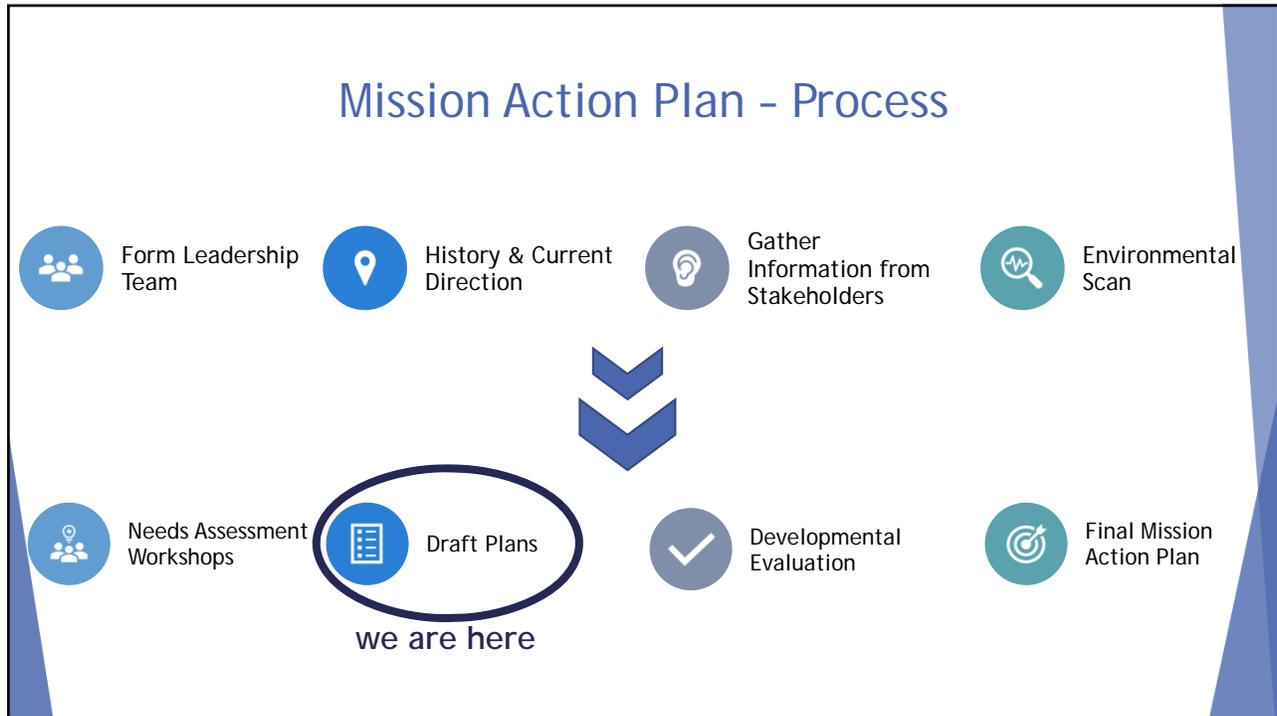
MAP Process: What We've Done

Summary of What We Heard

Bringing It All Together

- DRAFT Plans
- Vision and Mission

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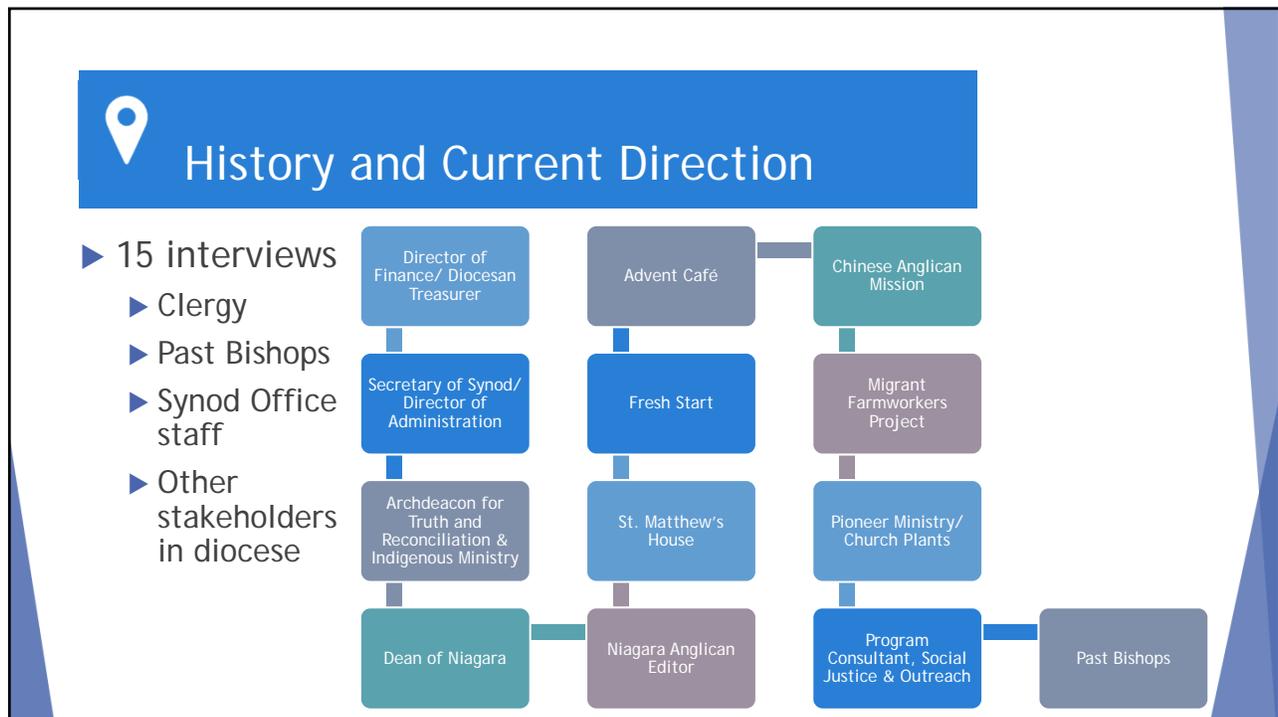
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## Form Leadership Team

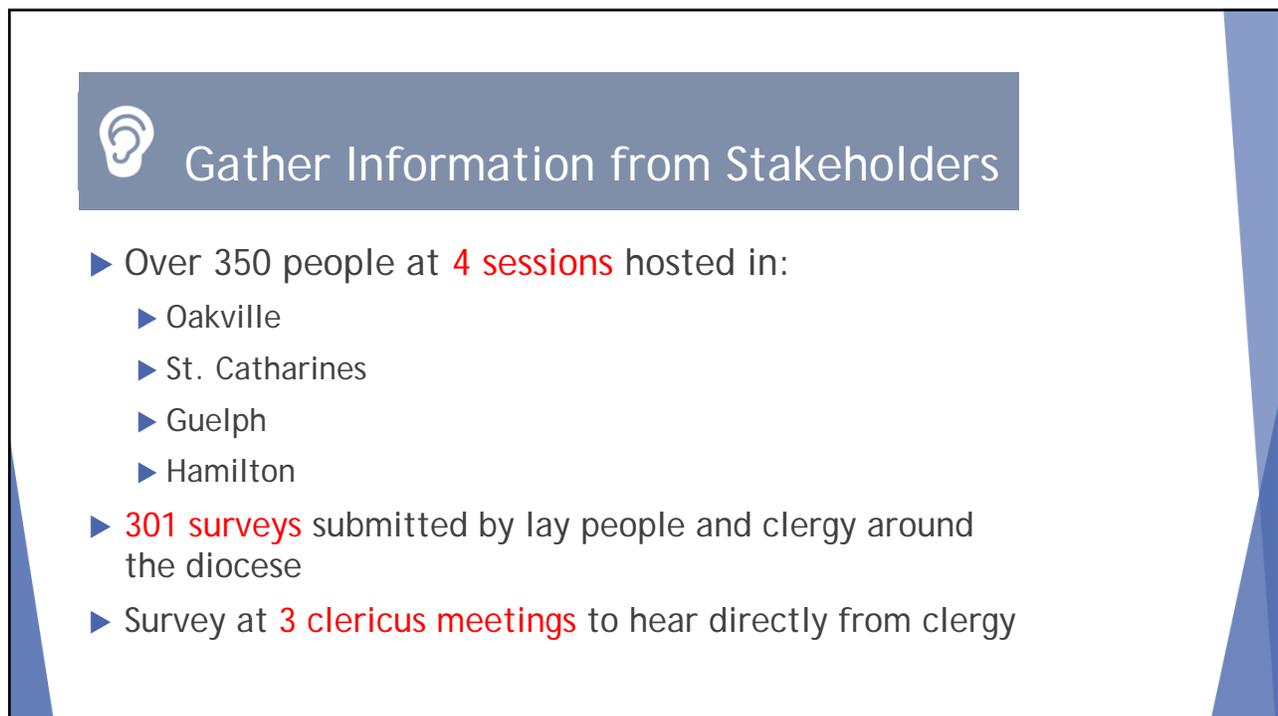


- ▶ Formed committee in April/May 2019
- ▶ Over 20 representatives
  - ▶ Lay
  - ▶ Clergy
  - ▶ All regions of the Diocese
- ▶ Set timelines

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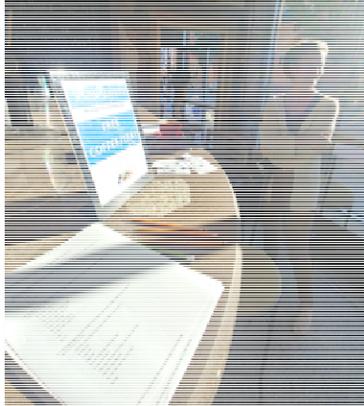
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## Environmental Scan



- ▶ Broad **external trends and drivers** of change
  - ▶ Angus Reid Studies on Religion in Canada
  - ▶ Stats Canada and Reports on Canada's Rural Population
  - ▶ Giving Trends in Canada
  - ▶ Events at the Drive Change
- ▶ **Trends in geographic regions** of the diocese
  - ▶ Demographic stats and trends
  - ▶ 19 "Community Discovery" Interviews
  - ▶ De-churched and un-churched surveys/ focus group

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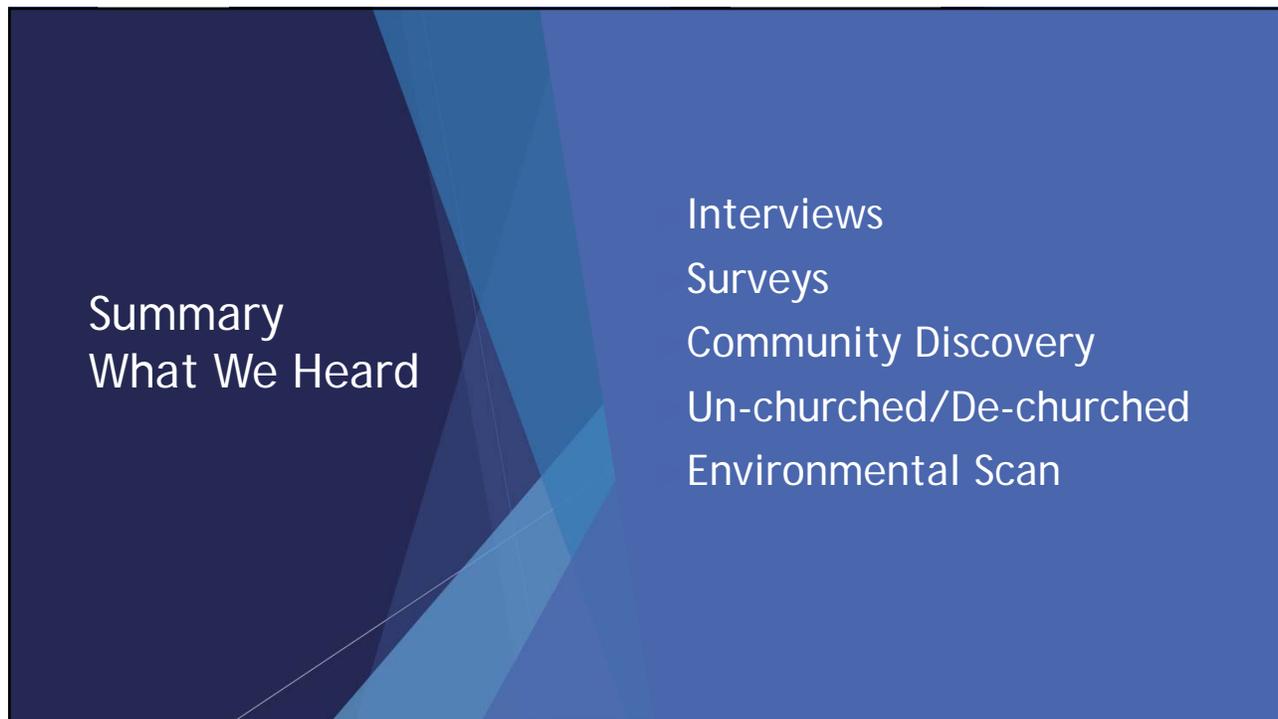


## Needs Assessment Workshops

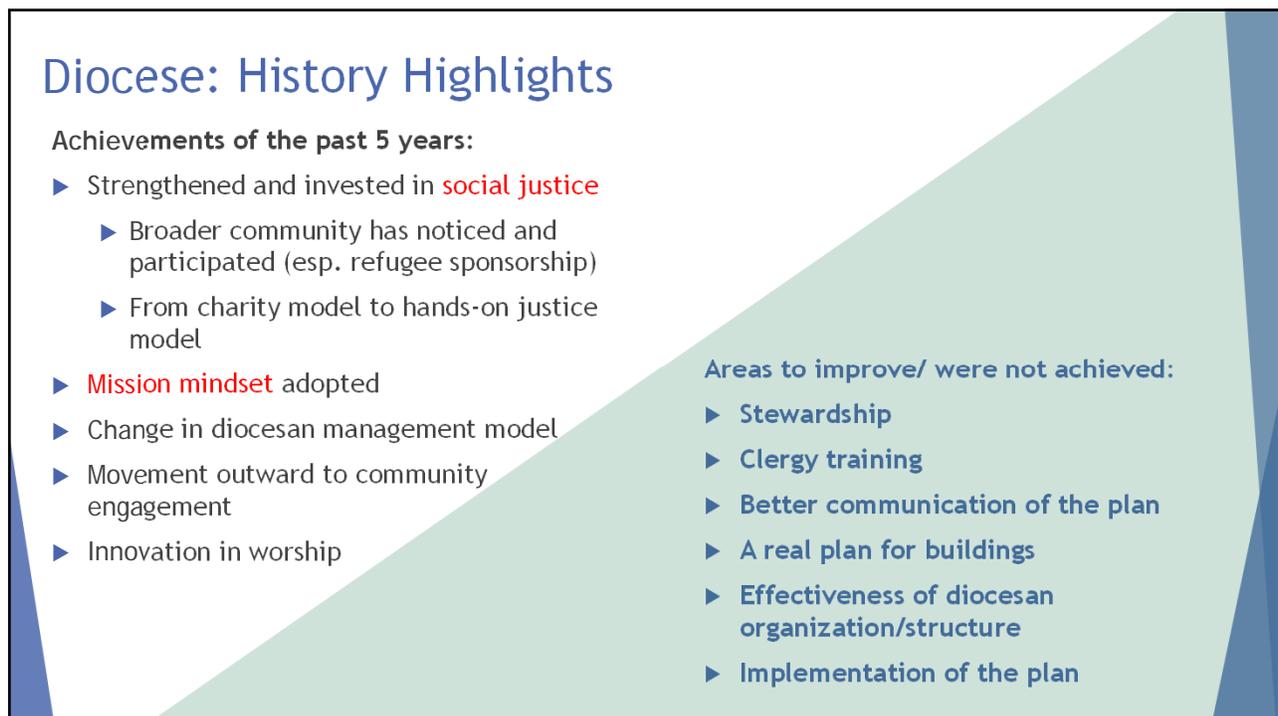


- ▶ 2 workshops with Leadership Team
  - ▶ Reviewed all information gathered
  - ▶ **Listened, Heard and Discerned** what clergy, parishioners and community were saying
- ▶ Identified **Key Areas of Focus**
- ▶ Developing Vision and Mission

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### Contextual changes in Diocese:

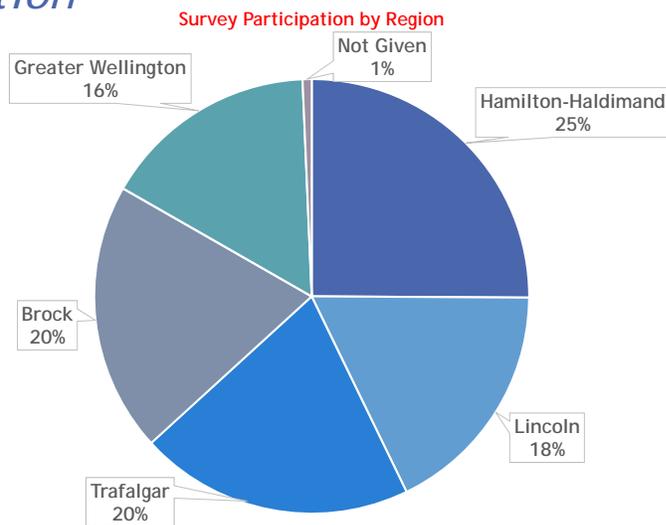
- ▶ Community connections between parishes
- ▶ Communications and social media
- ▶ Buildings and cemeteries need attention
- ▶ Families have less time available
- ▶ Aging and accessibility
- ▶ Decrease in Christendom
- ▶ Social justice and TRC at forefront



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### Stakeholder Feedback Highlights *Survey Participation*

**45** clergy  
**251** lay people  
3 'not given'



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### If you wish the diocese was more actively involved, what would that look like?

Summary of Responses	Count	Percentage (%)
Yes, I wish our diocese was more actively involved		93%
Sharing of Ideas and Collaboration Across the Diocese		
Continue Supporting Parishes and Clergy		
Further Connecting People in Faith and Mission		
Helping People Feel Connected to the Vision and Mission		
Current Level of Involvement is Good - no change		1%
Don't know/ Not sure/ Blanks		23%
No/ None	7	2%
Other	6	2%
Total	378	

1. See the Bishop & diocesan staff in parishes more
2. Parishes engaging & connecting with other parishes
3. Education/information/ learning opportunities

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	Top Responses	Frequency (#)	Frequency (%)
1	Engage the community (go out)	72	10%
2	Be open/welcoming and safe	48	7%
3	Be disciples of Christ	34	5%
4	Share our faith/invite others to faith/proclaim the Good News	33	5%
5	Be loving (and be a loving presence in the community)	33	5%
6	Be inclusive and embrace diversity	28	4%
7	Reach and be relatable to young people	27	4%
8	Engage social justice issues/defend the voices of the vulnerable	26	4%
9	Connect with people/be together/gather community	24	3%
10	Be relevant/offer Gospel in relevant manner/relatable	20	3%

What is God calling us to be and do?

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## Community Discovery Interviews

Some of the things we heard consistently....

- ▶ All organizations wanted **more collaboration - Great news!**
- ▶ Some were very pleasantly **surprised** that the church was asking
- ▶ The issues were not geographically defined
- ▶ Vast differences across the diocese, e.g., some areas have only one service support agency!
- ▶ People view church - "people as white middle-class doing what they should", but **NOT building relationships**
  - ▶ What does "being a neighbour" really mean?
- ▶ At their core is grass roots approach with formal associations (do we fit?)
  - ▶ Example - St. Catharines

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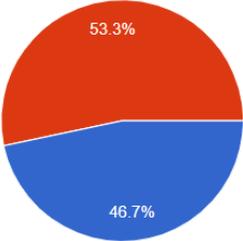
## De-Churched Focus Group

- ▶ Rejected
- ▶ Hurt
- ▶ Felt pushed out
- ▶ Feels "risky" to go back to church (fear of being hurt again)
- ▶ Loss of community & needing to find community elsewhere
- ▶ Stronger relationship with God (relationship on own terms)
- ▶ Church leadership not supportive of new ideas
- ▶ Spiritual longing still very present in many
- ▶ Still questioning faith (need space)

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### Mulberry Coffee Shop Survey Results (30 total)

Do you currently have a spiritual practice?



● Yes

● No

Buddhist meditation daily

Church and life group

Exercise and philosophy and mindfulness

Devotions through guided books a few times a week and I pray daily

A relationship with God, my rock, my salvation; try to pray all the time

I'm catholic but I'm not strict to the rules

Meditation practice and Sangha

Meditation, Sunday Worship

Mindful Breathing

Mindfulness

Occasional prayer - breath meditation

Presbyterian Church

Regular church attendance, reading/prayer

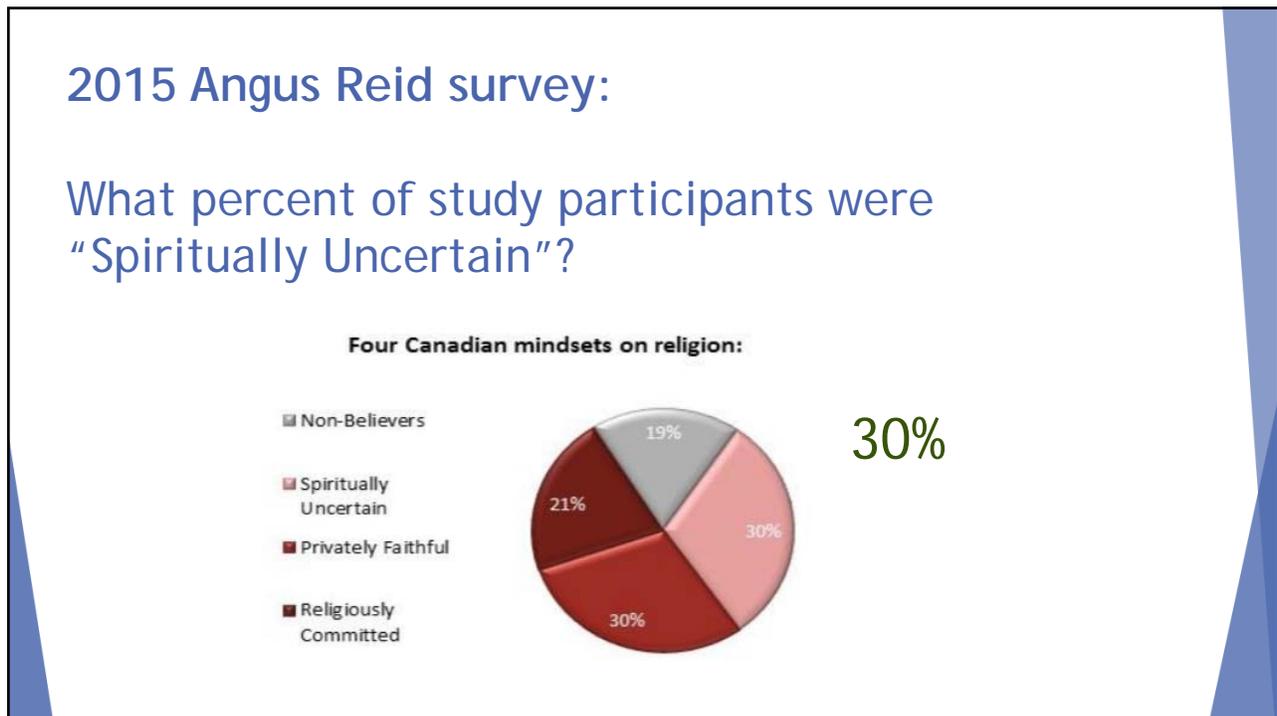


15 respondents are **not** currently looking for a spiritual practice

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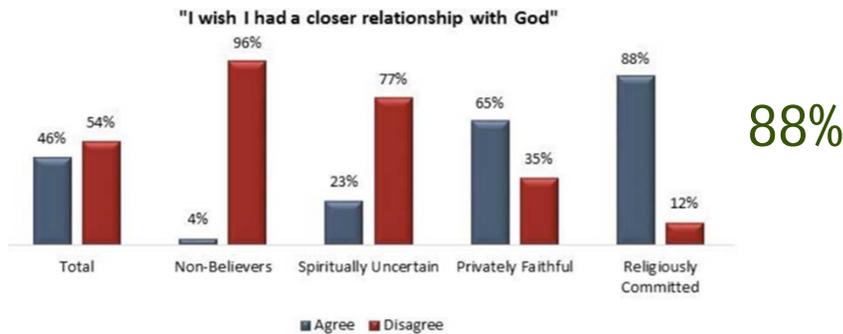
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## 2015 Angus Reid survey:

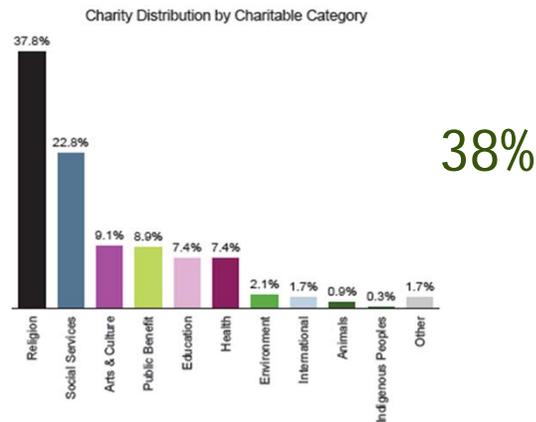
What percent of "Religiously Committed" wish they had a closer relationship with God?



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## CanadaHelps: 2018 Giving Report:

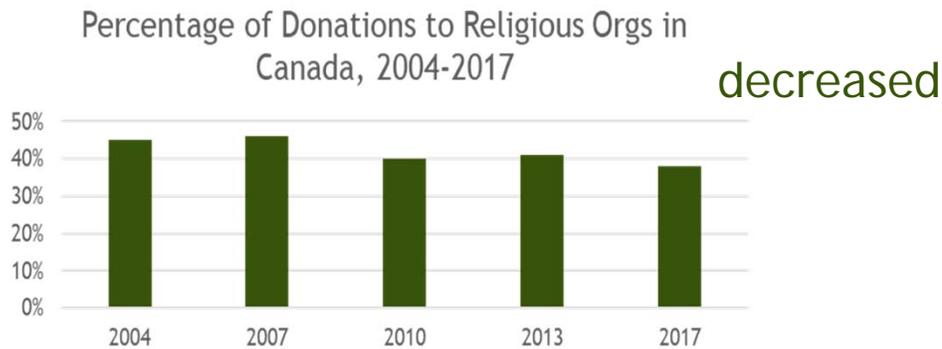
What percentage of all charitable donations go to religious organizations?



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## '30 Years of Giving in Canada' Report and 2018 Giving Report

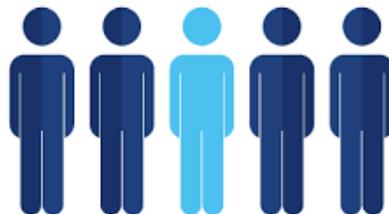
Did % of donations to religious organizations decrease or increase between 2004-2017?



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What fraction of Canadians live in a rural area (rural = less than 1000)?

- ▶ 1/10
- ▶ 3/5
- ▶ 1/5
- ▶ 3/8



The urbanization of Canada's pop is mostly driven by economic changes  
Main factor in ON appears to be out-migration of youth (20-30 years old)

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Between 2001 and 2011, what was the % increase in aboriginal populations living off-reserve?

- ▶ 72%
  - ▶ 25%
  - ▶ 54%
  - ▶ 15%
- 72% increase**  
**Overall, Aboriginal pop increased by 58% (2001-2011)**

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## Bringing it All Together

Key Areas of Focus    Draft Plans    Vision & Mission

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## Draft Mission Action Plan

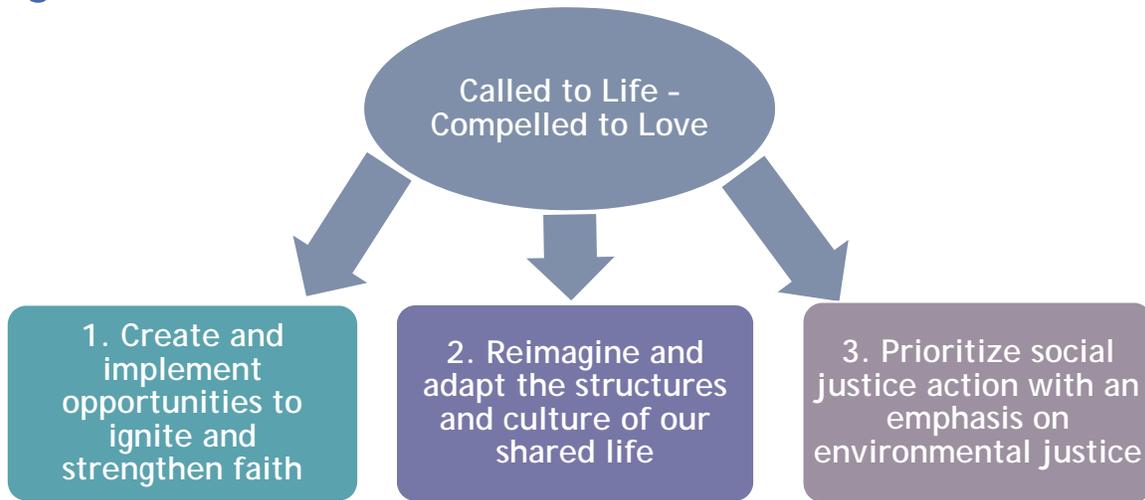
**Vision:**  
Called to Life - Compelled to Love

**Mission:**  
Ignited by the irresistible love of Jesus, we create opportunities to deepen faith, share stories and care for God's world.

*You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide; so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. John 15:16*

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## Objectives:



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## Called to Life - Compelled to Love

### 1. Create and implement opportunities to ignite and strengthen faith

*Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. John 15: 4-5*

Strategies	Possible Ideas
A. Nourish and support clergy, parishioners (current and de-churched) and staff in this longing to know Christ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide training and resources for parishes</li> <li>• New monastic praying community</li> <li>• Reconcile and engage with de-churched</li> <li>• School for Missional Leadership</li> <li>• Recruit new leaders with missional skills</li> <li>• Differentiated curacies</li> </ul>
B. Spread the Good News of the Gospel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equip people</li> <li>• Develop innovative church plants and missional communities</li> </ul>

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## Called to Life - Compelled to Love

### 2. Reimagine and adapt the structures and culture of our shared life

*Every disciple of the kingdom is like a householder who draws out from his storage room, things both old and new. Matthew 13:52*

Strategies	Possible Ideas
A. Bishop appoints resources necessary to conduct a broad consultation and implement recommendations coming from that work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reporting to diocese</li> <li>• Shared administrative resources</li> <li>• Review infrastructure use</li> <li>• Incubator groups</li> </ul>
B. Review <b>current communication practices</b> and develop improved practices to ensure full, transparent and effective understanding and knowledge together, as diocesan partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inter-parish and regional communication tools</li> <li>• Forums to enable greater collaboration</li> <li>• Retooling communication platform</li> </ul>

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## Called to Life - Compelled to Love

### 3. Prioritize social justice action with an emphasis on environmental justice

*Preach the Gospel, if necessary, use words. St Francis of Assisi*

Strategy	Possible Ideas
A. Deepening our understanding of social justice issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand the mandate and focus of Greening Niagara to respond to the climate crisis</li> <li>• With indigenous partners, develop a "next steps" plan post-Doctrine of Discovery</li> </ul>
B. Provide response strategies, training and resources to parishes	
C. Actively engage in reconciliation work in response to the TRC	

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