

REPORT TO THE RIGHT REVEREND WJ RAY, BISHOP OF NORTH QUEENSLAND ON THE ABM CHAIRS OF COMMITTEE CONFERENCE HELD IN MELBOURNE, 16TH TO 18TH AUGUST, 2013, AT THE SIMMONDS HALL, PARISH OF SOUTH YARRA.

WELCOME, PRAYERS AND HOUSEKEEPING MATTERS: FRIDAY, 16TH AUGUST

10.00 am: Opening prayers took the form of Morning Prayer, from the Daily Offices in A Prayer Book for Australia led by Archbishop Phillip Freier.

10.45 am to Lunch: Christopher Brooks, ABM's Acting Fundraising & Communication Manager, dealt with various housekeeping arrangements for the conference. Chris then spoke about the identification of conference outcomes that conferees might wish to take back to parishes after the conference. Discussion ensued on information about updates and how they might best be sent out through the ABM website and emails.

Lenten Envelopes: Chris explained how Lenten envelopes had been sent out to parishes this year based on project groupings rather than the customary Lent 1, Lent 2, Lent 3, etc. basis as in previous years. There had been both positive and negative feedback concerning this change. Chris reported that for 2012 there had been a general downward income trend among non-profit bodies in Australia. ABM had bucked this trend and recorded an increase. In addition, for Lent this year there had also been an increase in Lenten envelope giving.

1.00 pm to 1.30 pm:

COMMITTEE SUPPORT: The Committee Support Officer, Lorraine Forster, reported on the progress so far in developing ABM guidelines for the establishment of committees of support for ABM work.

The process involved in committee formation includes:

- A guidelines document approved by the ABM Board
- The setting up of a detailed members' register
- A definition of ABM responsibility in relation to occupational, health and safety issues
- Working with children issues such as police checks
- Promotion of teamwork- a 'can do' attitude
- Fostering simple ideas which are often the best ideas
- Ideas on engaging parishioners
- Maximising benefits of ABM presences within parishes

Lorraine also spoke about fundraising ideas that might work:

- ✓ Back to Parish dinners
- ✓ Musical evenings
- ✓ Art shows
- ✓ Sponsored fun runs
- ✓ EBay sales
- ✓ Silent auctions
- ✓ Progressive dinners
- ✓ Computer classes
- ✓ Trivia nights
- ✓ Christian karaoke nights
- ✓ Stamp saving
- ✓ High teas

1.30 pm to 2.00 pm:

SPEAKERS' PROGRAMME ORGANISER: The Acting Organiser, Michael Robinson spoke about his role. Yes, some of his projects include the arranging of speakers for parishes and other church organisations. Nevertheless, he is engaged in other projects. His task is to find out why some parishes are high givers and why some are low givers. He needs to explore why some parishes no longer give and how they might become member giving parishes again.

2.00 pm to 4pm:

AROUND THE DIOCESES: All attendees, in turn, gave reports on their ABM status in their Dioceses and any information on ABM centred activity or general mission activity in which they or others might be engaged.

4.00 pm to 5.00 pm:

ABM UPDATE: Chris Brooks gave an update on a variety of highlights of the past year for ABM:

- There is now a new data base which provides better contact with supporter parishes and groups. This base also has resulted in improved receipting procedures.
- The trend for increase in income for 2012 has continued so far into 2013; indeed with a \$20,000 increase over 2012.
- There has been an increase in will bequests.
- Greater communication about projects has been achieved.
- There is a greater response achievement in launching emergency appeals.
- Electronic communication procedures have been streamlined, particularly in areas such as a mission monthly basis, pew reflections, Facebook page, Twitter feed up and running, ABM news being reported around the Anglican Communion.
- Better promotional awareness of ABM through targeted marketing strategies.
- More time has been dedicated to Diocesan representatives and committees,
- There have been fewer complaints.
- New schools appeal.
- There has been an increase in online donations.

Chris also informed the conference of challenges for 2013:

- ❖ The obtaining of visas for visitors.
- ❖ A new Christmas appeal!
- ❖ Project information and gathering.

Chris then dangled before attendees possibilities for the future, some of which have already begun:

- A new website
- A new bequest programme
- Better strategic partner visits
- More speaking engagements
- More support for parish mission secretaries to do their work
- Strengthening committees for their work
- New imagery data base including meta-tagging.
- A stronger volunteer presence with appropriate skill base.

...and, finally, some considerations that need to be taken into account when implementing the above:

- ⊙ Diocesan representatives' photographs and contact details on the website
- ⊙ ABM branding, logos and letterheads
- ⊙ Stamps and recruiting another philately expert
- ⊙ Banners and their deployment
- ⊙ Audit, bank accounts and registered names.

In the evening a parish dinner was held at St John's Anglican Church, Toorak Road.

SATURDAY, 17TH AUGUST, 2013

The day's proceedings began with a celebration at 9.30 am by John Deane of the Eucharist in the Lady Chapel at Christ Church, South Yarra.

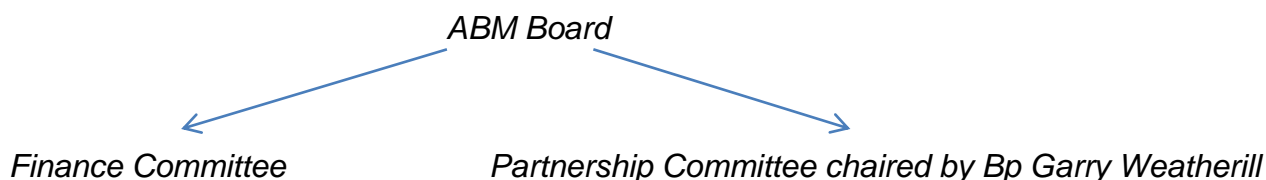
10.30 am-11.40 am:

ABM UPDATE ON UNDERSTANDING MISSION: by John Deane:

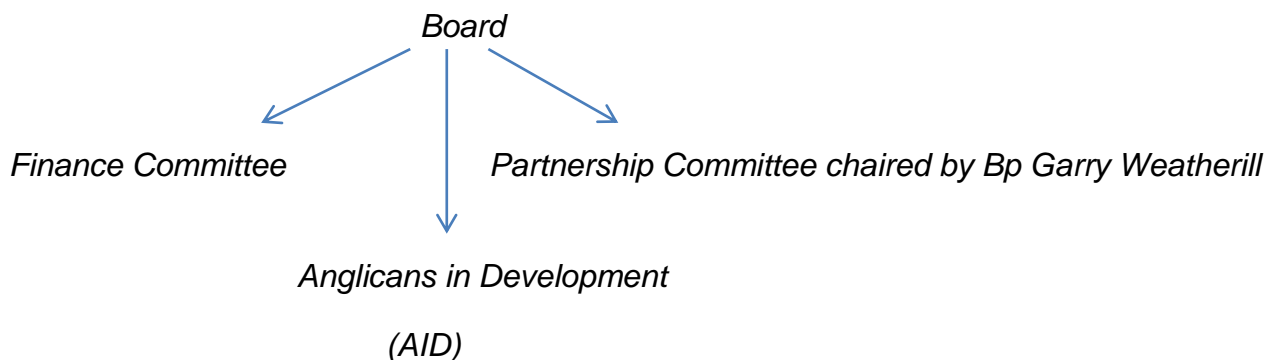
John presented a very upbeat look at how we can understand mission. Mission is God's mission. We cannot understand it completely but we can understand part of it. Mission is a gift expressed through partnership seeking transformation. The church is missional and the five marks of mission help us recognise and express mission activities appropriate for a missional church.

When ABM reorganised in 1999/2000 it established a Development Committee relating to projects and a Committee Programme to look at theological education, etc. Since then a Finance committee developed.

ABM is now looking at a new structure:



ABM is accredited by the Government for development work which can attract grants and is registered for tax deductibility. Government regulation places a greater burden which is almost impossible to meet under our set up, so we now need to alter our ABM model:



The new AID body will handle government requirements and take the burden from the other AM bodies. Partnering will be done in a number of ways:

- ⊕ AID
- ⊕ Church to Church Programme
- ⊕ Encounter Programme
- ⊕ Pilgrimages
- ⊕ School involvement

Partners overseas: John reported that links were being re-established in Malaysia and Singapore in relation to shared experiences. These churches are growing well. In Miri in the Sarawak province of Malaysian Borneo a new church has been built with seating for 1500 people.

Anglican Alliance: This has been set up by the Archbishop of Canterbury following Lambeth to co-ordinate development work throughout the Anglican Communion. It has a ten member board of trustees and an advisory committee to keep the Alliance free of politics. John is chair of the Advisory Committee. Regional Councils of the Alliance are appointed, e.g. SE Asia, the Pacific to look at issues such as environmental problems, refugee challenges and so on. This is not a great fundraising body but it seeks to establish co-operation.

Anglican Witness: This is an organisation that seeks to bring together the main bodies engaged in evangelism and mission.

Reconciliation: ABM wants to continue and develop efforts in resourcing programmes in the area of reconciliation. Malcolm McCallum has been engaged as Reconciliation Co-ordinator for this purpose.

Working with Children: Work is being done in this area to place protocols in each part of ABM's sphere.

11.45 am-12.30 pm:

ABM BOARD WORK by Claire Barrett-Lennard, Board member and Western Australia Provincial Representative:

Claire talked about the work of the board of ABM:

Governance: the Board brings together a diverse range of skills and experience in its membership to be a constructive board. The office manages ABM but the Board governs ABM and it determines strategic plans.

Strategic Planning: Policies are approved or amended by the Board. Policies give ABM a unified voice and express the values of the Board.

Finance: Day to day finances are managed by the Executive. Finance and Investment committees serve the Board. The board oversees budgets, income and expenditure and deals with frauds.

Board formation: The Board looks at member conduct, for example where there might be a conflict of interest or where matters of confidentiality are of concern. The Board fills vacancies and looks at succession planning.

1.30-2.15 pm:

PROGRAMMES UPDATE: by Isabel Robinson, Papua New Guinea Programme Co-ordinator:

Isabel spoke of the relationship between ABM and the Amity Foundation. The Amity Foundation was set up in China by Christians in 1985 as a non-government organisation to-

- contribute to China's social development and openness to the outside world,
- facilitate Christian involvement and participation in meeting the needs of society more widely known to the Chinese people,
- serve as a channel for people-to-people contact and the ecumenical sharing of resources.

In the past a relationship with Amity began for ABM in 2009. Amity has programmes all over China. We have been supporting a women's programme near the Myanmar border.

In the Dai Ethnic Project near Myanmar in the Yunnan Province there has been a focus on women's health and an emphasis to build up women's health advocacy groups in local communities. Five hundred women have received check-ups and 77% were found to have problems. In addition, 853 Amity toilets have been placed in three villages making a huge improvement to local health.

Amity has an active policy of bringing local government officials into its operations so that associations and projects can continue and grow.

In the near future a new three year project will commence in this area focussing on HIV from drug injection. In this locality, infected people are excluded from society. It is a sad fact that 35% of the people are unaware of the means of transmission of HIV.

3.20 pm- 4.00 pm:

ABM IN SCHOOLS: by Brad Chapman, Education Missioner

Brad spoke very enthusiastically of ABM's commitment in going to schools to enable ABM to engage in mission in a new way by introducing young people to the work of mission, particularly the work of ABM. This, therefore, is an opportunity to introduce young people to God. Such involvement occurs in diverse places like Adelaide to the Philippines.

Brad personally visits places and makes DVDs to show how ordinary people in ordinary situations live and are helped. The DVD making projects are being implemented for and by local people in areas such as the Philippines.

Brad also reported on the value of pilgrimages. Brad, himself, and others have come to know God through these pilgrimages and have entered into mission and ABM through them.

The day finished with evensong in Simmonds Hall.

SUNDAY, 18TH AUGUST, 2013

Conference members were given a choice of worship locations. I chose to worship at the 10 am Eucharist at Christ Church, South Yarra. The preacher was John Deane.

1.30pm-2.00 pm: After lunch the conference regathered into final session for an opportunity to share what members had been able to take from the conference. I shared that I was enthused by the upbeat tone of the conference and the developing understanding of our approach to mission.

Following this session the conference ended with prayer.

Rod Gooden

Diocesan Representative

28th August, 2013