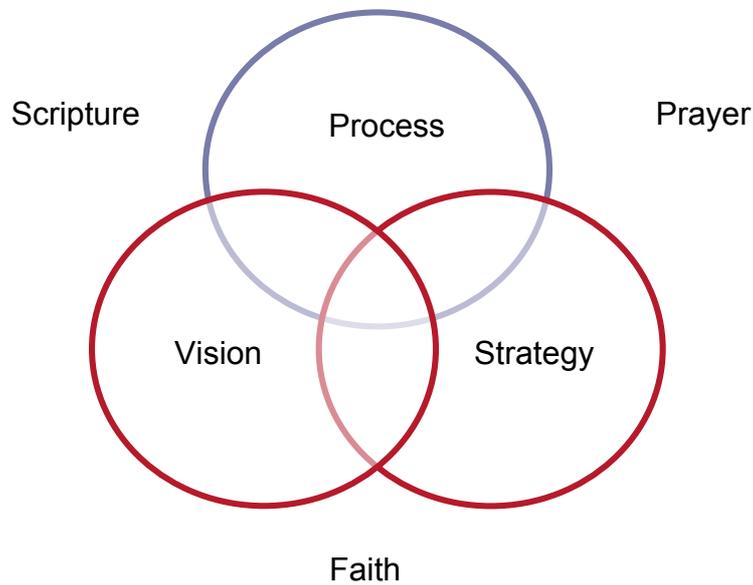


Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

Mission Action Plans



***A way forward through
Process, Vision and Strategy***

Contact
The Regional Bishop
The Anglican Centre
209 Flinders Lane
Melbourne, 3000
(03) 9653.4220

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Introduction

Why develop a Mission Action Plan? Developing a Mission Action Plan (MAP) is a great way for the people in a parish or agency to discern God's vision for them in their own context and to work together with the Holy Spirit to plan and implement strategies to realise this.

The development of a Mission Action Plan has three key elements. They are

1. Process
2. Vision
3. Strategy

The processes used to discern vision and develop strategies assist communities of faith to make disciples of Jesus. MAP development is founded on obedience to Scripture, prayer and the exercise of faith. This is one way that Christians can work to touch the lives of people in their local and wider communities. The careful discernment of God's vision for a particular people in a particular context brings hope and direction. Strategies that are derived from good data collection and analysis followed by wise planning and review enable a group of people to progress in their life of faith together.

God plans and implements. As Creator and Redeemer God's visioning, planning and outworking is clearly evident. Godly leaders throughout Scripture reflected these characteristics. Moses sent the twelve scouts into Canaan with instructions to collect data so that the best strategies could be developed for the nation of Israel to enter the land. David made detailed preparation for the building of the Temple. Paul planned his mission trips for maximum impact to establish and encourage churches throughout the known world. In each case the leaders understood God's vision for their tasks and aligned their actions accordingly.

This resource will help you to build your community relationally and spiritually so that you can be more of who God intends you to be. It will assist you to discern God's vision for your parish or agency. It will also help you plan and implement effective strategies. Included are models of planning for MAP development and examples of vision and mission statements that might be useful in your own context.

Please note that there are many websites and resources that provide useful tools to help parishes and agencies in these processes.

What are the benefits? There are many benefits in developing a Mission Action Plan.

- * Reflection leads to a greater recognition of what God is doing in our midst.
- * Greater thanksgiving for what God is doing in our lives.
- * Celebration of real strengths.
- * Nurturing gifts.
- * Taking care about real weaknesses.
- * Letting everyone in the parish know what their efforts have produced.
- * Analysing what you need.
- * Helping to establish a good pattern: plan, do, check, act to improve.
- * Allocating resources better.
- * Gaining a stronger sense of movement and momentum, of God leading us.

When should we do a MAP?

If your church or agency hasn't sought God's leading for its direction then now is the time to start.

If your church or agency has been working through a previous MAP for a few years it may be time to once again sit down and set a vision for the future. A MAP is not a process you go through once and at the end sit back and say 'we have done it!' God did not plan the world, make it and then let it run its course without further involvement.

Where do we start? Mission Action Plans can be started at many different points depending on where your parish or agency community is in its present journey.

If there is a new situation such as an amalgamation or new partnerships, then you might start with a vision process. If a parish or agency has already developed a vision and is looking towards developing effective action plans, then you might start by either reviewing current practices against earlier goals or collecting more information about yourselves and the local community. If the parish or agency is facing a particular imperative such as a financial crisis or windfall, an influx or decrease in members or employing new staff, then you might start with the identification of values and prioritising actions as a result of that.

All in all, MAP development requires a prayerful and considered approach where leaders help their communities fulfil both the Great Commandments to love God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength and your neighbour as yourself and the Great Commission to go and make disciples, baptising them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

How do we use this resource?

Mission Action Plans – A way forward through Process, Vision and Strategy gives you a variety of entry points to the development of a MAP.

Part 1 – Planning provides you with an overview and a couple of approaches to planning and leading a parish or agency through the development of a MAP.

Part 2 – Mission Action Plan provides you with the end product of the MAP document and the key elements that make up a MAP.

Part 3 – Helpful Processes gives further assistance and examples in some of the ‘how to’s’ of putting together a MAP development plan; creating the Vision, Mission and Values statements and the development of the strategies.

Part 4 – Appendices and Resources gives you some more practical aides and resources

Consultants All parishes and agencies in the Diocese of Melbourne are strongly encouraged to develop a Mission Action Plan to guide their future growth and health. Many vicars and members of vestry have experience in such work and may capably guide a parish or agency in this work. However, each Region has experienced consultants available to help parishes and agencies through the processes. The consultants are able to assist a parish or agency assess their current health and their potential in terms of mission. Your **Regional Bishop** will be able to advise you further in terms of engaging a consultant.

Part 1 – Planning

Developing a Mission Action Plan requires a prayerful and planned approach to ensure inclusion of all relevant people and discernment of issues and opportunities. Consultation with the main stakeholders of the parish or agency ought to occur throughout the MAP development process. How and when this happens needs to be part of the MAP process plan.

Who will be on the MAP Development team and whether a consultant will be engaged are amongst the first issues to be planned. How will they and members of Vestry seek God's will for the future of the parish or agency?

How will information be gathered and how it will be assessed? How will members of the parish or agency be involved and how will progress be reported? Which activities will bring the best results in the determination of Vision, Mission and Values and the development of the Strategic Plan?

Leadership

Senior Leaders Leadership is the most crucial driver of a MAP development process. Leaders of parishes and agencies, especially the senior leaders – vicars and CEOs – need to view this work as essential to their ministries. Prayer, consideration of Scripture and listening to the Holy Spirit are as important in this process as in any other aspect of their lives. Throughout the Bible God usually revealed his ways to leaders – Abraham, Moses, Deborah, Esther, Peter, Paul, James to mention a few. As a rule the senior leader holds God's vision for the community of faith in his or her heart even if it is in embryonic form. Working with other leaders such as vestry and the wider parish or agency community will help to discern this further and begin to put 'flesh on the bones'.

MAP Development Team Parishes and agencies have leader teams who oversee the ministries. Parishes have vestries, and in some cases have staff teams. Agencies have governance and management teams.

MAP development usually requires a small team of between 4 and 6 people dedicated to manage the process. It is practical to select members from those who are already in leadership. However, it might be good to consider the gifts and experience of others in the community of faith who have particular contributions to make. Some examples include people who are experienced in strategic planning and those who are skilled at leading multiple small groups – such as might be needed in a whole parish or agency consultation process. Business people, teachers and public servants might be amongst the professional profiles that could be considered.

This team will bring its recommendations to vestry.

Partnerships

Many parishes and agencies develop partnerships to improve their capacities for mission. Sometimes partners are other Christians who are able to share in particular areas of ministry. For example, Access Ministries partners many parishes in the provision of Christian Religious Education and chaplains in schools. At other times partners are not Christian as such but can work with parishes and agencies in ministry. Many local councils support parishes as they provide low cost meals for people in the wider community.

If a parish or agency is contemplating a partnership with another group it needs to assure itself that the group's vision, mission, beliefs and values align with their own.

Following are two examples of planning models.

Models of Planning

Example 1

MAP Development Team Members		Vicar; warden; xxxxxx; cccccc;	
	Activities (example)	Responsible Person	Timeframe
Seeking God	Meetings / services for vestry and members of the MAP Development team	Vicar	February, 2009
Information Gathering (Internal)	Financial records for past five years	Treasurer	April, 2009
	Diocesan Assessment data for past five years	Vicar	
	Buildings Audit	Warden	
	Parish Survey	MAP team member	
	NCLS data	Vicar	
Information Gathering (External)	Local demographic data	MAP team member	
	Conversations with neighbouring churches	Vicar	
	Conversations with local school principals	MAP team member	
	Review all data	MAP team	
Vision, Mission and Values	Retreat Day for vestry and the MAP Development team	MAP team members	June, 2009
	Focus Groups for feedback and input including Vestry	MAP team members	
	Review VM&V data	MAP team	
	Draft Vision, Mission and Values	MAP team	
Strategy Plan	Strategy Plan development meetings	MAP team members	August, 2009
	Focus Groups for feedback and input including Vestry	MAP team members	
Mission Action Plan	Put together VM&V and SP sections	MAP team members	November, 2009
	Whole church meeting for feedback and input	MAP team members	
	Complete MAP	MAP team members	
	Acceptance by Vestry	MAP team members and vestry	
	Presentation to parish	Vestry	

Example 2

The steps for producing a Mission Action Plan in this model are:

1. Collecting information about your area;
2. Parish Meeting;
3. Goal setting;
4. Strategies to implement goals;
5. Review goals. This is ongoing and annual.

Goal Setting (Step 3) is best done with the vestry and staff team, however the whole congregation can be involved in Step 2, and also with a report back to the congregation of the goals and strategies as part of Step 4. At Step 2 members of the congregation can add extra insights into the make up of the area at this stage of collecting information, and on the other hand they may need to recognise how the area has changed since they moved there 30 years ago.

Step 1 – Collecting information about your area.

This is an important first step as it will give you an accurate picture of your community. A useful aid in ordering the collected data is the “Parish Information Sheet (Snapshot)” form.

Data collection is not an onerous process. The Australian Bureau of Statistics has data from the last census freely available from their website. Local council sites have some census data with projections for the next 5, 10 and 15 years. Local councils also have reports like: Municipal Early Years Plan, and Aged Services Plan.

Each council has a Strategic Planning Department and the manager is generally willing to talk about the strategic plan with a senior leader of the local church.

A useful resource is VictoriaOnline.vic.gov.au. This website assists in finding local, state and federal government information and services.

Finding out what agencies, Christian and secular, are working in your area gives information on some of the needs and issues in the community that are not apparent in census data.

The Anglican Church participates in the National Church Life Survey held every five years. The NCLS data contains the thoughts of people in your church about your church as well as information on the bigger picture.

Step 2 – Parish Meeting.

When all the data has been collected you can hold a meeting of the whole parish where the “Parish Information Sheet” is presented. It is likely that a number from the congregation are involved in other groups in the community, which gives a fuller picture of the community.

Start the meeting with a time of worship and prayer that God will guide and direct us as we meet together. Discuss the current ministries the church is involved in. You can ask for ideas on ministries the church leadership could consider at the planning day.

An important exercise at this meeting is gaining an understanding of what the members of the church think about their church. Here are a couple of ideas for doing this.

- a. Have people form groups of three or four. Ask each group to think about the parish and discuss the following headings, writing their thoughts on each one.
 - i. Our Strengths
 - ii. Our Weaknesses
 - iii. Our Opportunities
 - iv. Our Threats

OR

- b. Ask people to form groups of three or four. Each group discusses in turn the following questions.
 - i. If this church closed down what would the congregation miss?
 - ii. If this church closed down what would the community miss?
 - iii. If this church closed down who would notice?

After the parish meeting, collate the data that has been collected for use in step 3.

Step 3 – Goal Setting.

This step could be undertaken over two vestry meetings, however it is better if the vestry and staff can spend a day away from the parish where they won't be disturbed or tempted to return for a small issue that might arise.

- a. Two weeks before the planning day distribute the data that has been collected to vestry and staff asking them to read it and to pray for God's leading. It can be useful to also distribute some other documentation that might help people think “outside the square”. These could include a summary of some current findings of Hugh Mackay's research; the differences in outlook between Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y; or other similar material.
- b. Two weeks before the planning day tell the parish when the planning will take place. Ask them to pray that the vestry will know God's will in planning for the next few years.

- c. At the planning day start with worship/prayer and then give thanks to God for the current ministries and aspects of parish life.
- d. Discuss the material that was distributed.
- e. Break into groups of two or three. Each group is asked to talk and write down what they believe God wants this church to be doing in 10 years time given unlimited resources of people and money. (This frees up people to suggest something God might be saying to them but they would not normally suggest as it seems “impossible”)
- f. List all the ideas on a whiteboard or butcher’s paper.
- g. Rank the ideas in order of importance. One way is to give each person 5 votes and they list their preferences, these are tallied.
- h. Give thanks to God for a good day’s work.

Step 4 – Strategies to implement goals

This step can be done by the whole vestry or by a sub-committee of vestry. It really depends on the size of the vestry, the trust they have in each other and the way they work together. As you begin to develop your strategies remember to pray asking God to guide you and bring to mind his strategies for the parish.

Strategies are the who, what, when, where and how to achieve the goal. They are concrete actions. Some longer term goals will have strategies for this year and a different one for next year as you work step by step to achieve the goal.

When the vestry have agreed on the goals and strategies they need to be shared with the parish. The leadership might have a vision but it will go nowhere or you will be hampered in its implementation if the majority of the church members are not with you. Regular reporting back to the members of the church will enable them to see the progress being made and how God is working through this process.

Step 5 – Review goals & strategies

It is essential to review your goals and strategies each year at a planning day to see how you are going. Some goals you may achieve earlier than expected and there may be others that you had planned to be further along the way than you are. It is quite normal for some tweaking of your goals and strategies to occur each year.

As a group ask yourselves for each goal:

- How far did we get in achieving our goal and strategies?
- What surprising, unexpected things (blessings & burdens) happened along the way?
- How have you seen God at work?

Don’t just leave your review from one year to the next. At each vestry meeting the agenda should include reports on how the strategies are going and where you are up to.

In all of your reviews be honest and be realistic. With the best of intentions we can try to do too much, or become a little lazy. People can be sick and not able to report on time. Acknowledge that and be flexible. Planning is not meant to be a burden. It is an opportunity to be encouraged as we see God working through us and the things he can achieve with us.

Part 2 – Mission Action Plan

Introduction

Strategic thinking helps parish and agency leaders determine the best routes to take in the realisation of vision and mission. By thinking strategically leaders avoid following pre-determined recipe-like plans, but instead are able to adapt their actions to enable their desired outcomes.

Key elements in strategic thinking are:

1. A lively vision and mission that is well communicated and 'owned' by the leaders and members of the parish
2. Disciplined determination of leaders to realise the vision
3. Support of the members of the parish or agency to realise the vision
4. Outcomes clearly stated and corporately understood
5. Good monitoring processes that enable leaders to determine progress toward outcomes

Strategic thinking always involves change, and often, profound personal change. It requires critiquing present paradigms and ways of thinking, relating, and behaviour. It is imagining the results you want to achieve in the future, it is *practical dreaming*.

Strategic thinking is about clarifying the direction and vision of the whole, along with its key success measures. It is about identifying relationships supporting the whole organization and vision. It allows relationships and goals to work together in a way that supports and doesn't hinder the progress of the parish or agency as a whole.

The Document

Mission Action Plans have two main sections

- a) Vision, Mission and Values
- b) Strategy Plan

a) Vision, Mission and Values

Vision *The future story of a parish or agency that enables the people to see a better time ahead for themselves and those for whom they care*

Mission *The unique contribution the parish or agency makes within their own context*

Values *The things that are most important to the parish or agency which influence the way people behave and the choices they make*

b) Strategy Plan

What is this? A Strategy Plan is the result of the work a parish or agency has done in the developing, communicating and owning of vision and mission. There are seven key sections to it.

1. Goal
2. Outcome
3. Monitoring Process
4. Strategies
5. Resources
6. Responsible Person
7. Timeframe

Definitions

Goal A goal is a broad aspirational statement of direction and intent that is founded in the Vision and Mission of the parish or agency.

For example

- A. *To extend compassion into the local community*
- B. *To increase the Biblical literacy of parishioners*
- C. *To establish a vibrant ministry for children and their families*

They need to be written clearly so that all members of the parish and agency can understand them. A good grid to assist in the writing of goals is the acronym *SMART* goals. (See Appendix 7) Some of the characteristics of these SMART goals are incorporated into the rest of the Strategy Plan.

Outcome The outcome re-forms the goal so that it is clear and measurable. This moves the goal from the aspirational to the practical.

For example

- A. 80% of parishioners are involved in compassionate volunteering in the community at least once a month

or

Soup kitchen ministry is established

- B. 80% of parishioners say their use of Scriptural principles for decision-making has improved considerably in the last 12 months

or

80% of parishioners read the Bible five times a week or more

- C. Children's and Family minister is employed

or

60% of children who attend Kids Club are not regular attenders of the parish

Monitoring Process Monitoring processes are the way leaders in parishes and agencies systematically keep an eye on progress towards outcomes. There are many different forms of monitoring processes that can be used, but they need to be identified at the start of the process. Leaders and the MAP Development Team need to determine which information is useful to their understanding of progress and how that information will be collected and reported.

Data Collection

- Financial packages
- 'Pastoral Care' and other packages
- Leaders' Reports
- National Church Life Survey
- Natural Church Development
- Own surveys
- Own focus groups

Data Monitors

Who are responsible for the monitoring of data that will inform the leaders of progress towards agreed outcomes?

- Clergy
- Wardens
- Vestry
- Leaders

Data Collection Cycle

When will data be reviewed so that progress to Outcomes are monitored systematically?

- Vestry meetings
- Executive meetings
- Staff meetings
- Annual Church meetings

Strategies Strategies are the 'action' part of the Strategy Plan. What are the steps to be taken by leaders and members of the parish or agency to achieve the outcome? What is the order of the steps? What impact do these strategies have on the planned strategies to accomplish other goals and on the regular routine of the parish or agency?

Resources Resources are the people and assets that a parish or agency have to enable the strategies and eventually successful realisation of outcomes and goals. They included people, finances and buildings and assets.

People

When considering the people who will work towards the fulfilment of the goals, leaders of parishes and agencies need to think about two areas – the *framework* through which people are helped to minister well and the *'joy factor'* with which they undertake their tasks.

Framework How are people recruited, trained, and valued? How are they helped to improve in their ministries? How does the parish or agency assist new people find appropriate places of service? Has succession planning for leaders and ministries been developed?

Joy Factor When people take on new tasks they may do so through intrinsic motivation from God's call or inspiration from the Vision or Mission, or they may do so through a sense of duty. Also tasks begun with great heart may eventually become duty-bound and difficult. Leaders and the MAP Development Team need to find ways to monitor and ensure that people in ministry are nurtured in such a way they maintain the 'joy factor'.

Finances

Financial resources include:

- Cash
- Assets
- Borrowings / Repayments
- Offertory
- Grants
- Income streams eg rentals, partnerships

Buildings and Assets

Buildings and assets as resources need to be viewed through the perspective of the Vision and Mission. Are they suitable and practical for present and future tasks? What is the cost of on-going maintenance? What heart and sentimentality is there in the community of faith towards these things? Do leaders and members of the parish or agency have a 'light touch' when they consider the way buildings and assets can enable the realisation of the Vision and Mission? What are the results of a buildings and grounds audit?

Responsible Person Filling this box in the Strategy Plan is arguably the most important part. The Responsible Person is one who is in charge of ensuring that goal is fulfilled. This is the person who will champion the goal throughout the community of faith and will adjust strategies to make it happen.

Timeframe Timeframes can show end times for milestones identified in the strategies as well as achievement of the goals themselves. Timeframes are best shown as anticipated finish times rather than start times. In other words, MAP Development Teams need to identify when they expect outcomes to be achieved, not started.

MAPS can be written as a matrix or in a narrative form.

Example 1 – Matrix

Vision St Illustration’s Parish believes God has called us to minister intentionally to people in our local community who are poor and disadvantaged. Service to the poor will be an important theme in our teaching each year. We will seek to partner a Welfare Agency such as Anglicare or The Brotherhood of St Laurence to be more effective. We will also see if other churches will work alongside us.

We look forward to the day when we will give 10% of our offerings to the poor and disadvantaged in our local community. We look to setting up a weekly ministry that will directly help. This might be a foodbank, soup kitchen, skills classes or a financial advice service.

Mission A caring community making disciples of Christ

Values God’s love to the world through us
Compassion
Justice and mercy

Goal A	Outcome	Monitoring Process	Strategies	Resources	Resp’ble Person	Time-frame
To extend compassion into the local community	80% of parishioners are involved in compassionate volunteering in the community at least once a month	Annual survey Small group leaders’ reports Ministry leaders’ reports	Employ a coordinator for community services. This person will have two main aims: 1. To establish a soup kitchen ministry 2. To work with small group leaders encouraging groups to be a part of the soup kitchen ministry as well as developing their own unique community based ministries if they choose All small groups develop an action strategy which involves them in a compassionate community based ministry at least three times a year Develop a soup kitchen ministry that the whole parish is encouraged to contribute to, especially as small groups. Seek partnership with Anglicare as appropriate	Stipend for two days a week coordinator Seeding fund of \$5000 to establish soup kitchen Grant application to local council to assist with ministries	Vicar Vestry sub-committee for the development of community ministry	Sept, 2009

Example 2 – Narrative

Vision St Illustration’s Parish believes God has called us to minister intentionally to people in our local community who are poor and disadvantaged. Service to the poor will be an important theme in our teaching each year. We will seek to partner a Welfare Agency such as Anglicare or The Brotherhood of St Laurence to be more effective. We will also see if other churches will work alongside us.

We look forward to the day when we will give 10% of our offerings to the poor and disadvantaged in our local community. We look to setting up a weekly ministry that will directly help. This might be a foodbank, soup kitchen, skills classes or a financial advice service.

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Goal A To extend compassion into the local community

Outcome 80% of parishioners are involved in compassionate volunteering in the community at least once a month

Monitoring Process Annual survey
Small group leaders’ reports
Ministry leaders’ reports

Strategies Employ a coordinator for community services. This person will have two main aims:

1. To establish a soup kitchen ministry
2. To work with small group leaders encouraging groups to be a part of the soup kitchen ministry as well as developing their own unique community based ministries if they choose

All small group develop an action strategy which involves them in a compassionate community based ministry at least three time a year

Develop a soup kitchen ministry that the whole parish is encouraged to contribute to, especially as small groups.

Seek partnership with Anglicare as appropriate

Resources Stipend for two days a week coordinator
Seeding fund of \$5000 to establish soup kitchen
Grant application to local council to assist with ministries

Responsible Person Vicar
Vestry sub-committee for the development of community ministry

Timeframe Sept, 2009

Part 3 – Helpful Processes

Information Gathering

What is this? Gathering information from external and internal sources is essential to the MAP development process. **External information** gathering processes include gathering information about the local and relevant wider community through local council websites; VictoriaOnline.vic.gov.au; local school and other groups' publications and newspapers.

Internal data can be gathered through records such as budgets, annual parish assessment data, minutes of meetings and tools such as National Church Life Survey and Natural Church Development.

Creating opportunities to hear the feedback and input of the whole community of faith is also an important way to gather internal information. Tools can include surveys, focus groups, structured interviews and large group activities. Internal data can also be gathered when members of the community of faith speak informally with members of the MAP Development Team.

Surveys Surveys can be created by a MAP Development Team to gain information about demographics, behaviours and attitudes of people in their parish or agency. Software and websites can be utilised to create and collate these. MAP Development Team members can also write their own.

(See Appendix 1)

Focus Groups Focus groups can be organised by members of the MAP Development Team. All members of the parish or agency can be invited to attend or alternately, representatives of various parts of the wider organisation can be selected. Agreed questions are asked of all groups with responses recorded and collated. Open discussion is encouraged with facilitators recording main points. Members of the focus groups agree that the recorded conclusions are accurate summaries of the discussions. Focus groups can be formed to ascertain people's perceptions and opinions about certain issues or proposals. They can also be used to understand underpinning values, beliefs and aspirations.

Structured Interviews Structured interviews can be organised by members of the MAP Development Team. All members of the parish or agency can be invited to attend or a representative group can be selected. Agreed questions are asked of all interviewees with responses recorded and collated. Interviews can be held to ascertain people's perceptions and opinions about certain issues or proposals. They can also be used to understand underpinning values, beliefs and aspirations.

Large Group Activities Large group activities can be used for wider consultations. It can be a good idea to appropriate the services of a skilled and independent facilitator. Large group activities can be held to ascertain people's perceptions and opinions about certain issues or proposals. They can also be used to understand underpinning values, beliefs and aspirations. There are many tools available on websites and other resources that can help make these sessions profitable.

Frequently a session begins with a short presentation about the topic under discussion. People are then divided into smaller groups for activities that stimulate discussion which draws to conclusion. A plenary session at the end where each group reports on their findings or wrap ups is useful so that all those present have a chance to hear the ideas of others.

Stakeholders Every parish and agency has a variety of stakeholders who have a vested interest in the successful fulfilment of God's intentions in that context. Obvious stakeholders include leaders, members and employees. Others include family members, immediate neighbours and the denomination. Stakeholders are also people who benefit or potentially benefit from the ministries provided. For example, local schools, youth and young adults, residents of nursing home and so on.

The MAP Development Team needs to identify immediate and potential stakeholders early in the process and remember to include them in the process and the final outcome.

Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

What is this? Vision is the future story of a parish or agency that enables the people to see a better time ahead for themselves and those for whom they care. It brings hope to a community and provides direction and insight for decision making.

Vision comes out of a process of discernment, consultation, information gathering and prayer.

A vision is filled with details and examples that will stimulate and encourage people to work together under the Holy Spirit to achieve it. It also helps a parish or agency to see its own progress towards the agreed goals and can help it to make strategy adjustments along the way.

Tips for Creating Vision Statements A vision is:

- “An image of our desired future’
- A vivid description of what things will be like once we have fully completed our mission
- Compelling, tangible and immediate
- Described in the present or immediate future tense
- A richly detailed and visual image

There is no magic formula for creating vision, but authors Collins and Porras suggest there are three necessary conditions:

1. It must reflect the inner personal needs, values, and motivations of the people involved as they respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit
2. It must be driven by and inspire authentic personal commitment
3. Communication and reinforcement are vitally important

Visualisation can be helpful. The ability to communicate a vivid, imaginative conception of what you want to see happen can be powerfully motivating. Communicating in ways that instinctively appeal to people is an important part of realizing the vision.

Vision Grids Vision Grids are excellent tools for assessing the ‘balance’ of a vision. Grids are selected or developed to reflect the parish or agency’s vision, values and beliefs. Some examples here include Spherical Grids, Second Generation Grid and ‘Bigger’ Vision Grids.

1. Spherical Grids

A *Spherical Grid* is one that helps the MAP Development Team determine if all stakeholders have been considered. One simply imagines oneself at the inner centrepoint of a large sphere.

- When we look *forward* to the people we hope to serve through our ministries, have we adequately identified them and the needs we hope to address?
- When we look *backward* to those who have gone before us, are we sufficiently honouring them?
- When we look *sideways* at the people who walk with us as members of the parish or agency or as partners, have we provided adequately for their nurture and development in faith, life and mission?
- When we look *inward*, have we put our own motives and desires before God and genuinely sought his direction?
- When we look *upward*, are we confident that God has spoken with us and we are ready to obey him?
- When we look *downward*, have we sufficiently recognised the activities of the evil one so as not to be tempted or discouraged?

2. Second Generation Grid

A *Second Generation Grid* is one that helps the MAP Development Team consider the impact that the vision might have on those beyond our own immediate circle.

The key questions in considering a Second Generation Grid is *Who will be affected beyond us* and *How will their lives be touched?*

For example, if part of the vision includes a partnership with a commercial enterprise such as a counselling service or childcare facility, will the clients of these partners experience God's love and compassion through their work? Another example is if part of the vision of a parish is to develop a performing arts ministry, will the audiences of future performances be inspired to see something of the beauty and justice of God?

3. 'Bigger' Vision Grid

No parish or agency operates in a vacuum. Sometimes it is good to look at the visions of leaders in the wider church. These *'Bigger Vision Grids'* can help the MAP Development Team understand the thinking of leaders who impact their own parishes and agencies and see if visions need to be adjusted accordingly.

Some examples provided here are

AIM4MELBOURNE – The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne Vision Statement (See Appendix 2)

The Five Marks of Mission of the Worldwide Anglican Community (See Appendix 3)

Seven Marks of a Healthy Church by Robert Warren. (See Appendix 4)

Focus Questions Planned focus questions can guide a parish or agency through a period of discerning of God's vision. They can be the core of sermon series and Bible studies. They can enter the language of people as they interact with each other.

The key to a focus question is to not know the answer when you ask it!

Focus questions enable MAP Development Teams to genuinely ask deep questions of the parish or agency, the Scriptures and each other. Here are some examples.

1. What was in the heart of God when he dreamt of

- the world?
- ... the church?
- ... my parish?
- ... me?

2. What can we do that brings good, that no-one else can do?

3. The centurion watched Jesus die and could say, 'Surely he was the Son of God!' (Matt 27:54)

What would we need to be like for an enemy to say of us, 'Surely they are children of God?'

For examples of Vision statements see Appendix 5.

Mission

What is this? Mission is incorporated into vision, but has its own unique function. Mission is at the very heart of vision. It's what gives vision meaning.

Mission can be discerned by asking some of the following questions.

1. What is the unique mission to which God has called the parish to undertake at this particular time and within its own context?
2. What unique contribution does the parish make to some or all of the following:
 - Its own people
 - The local community
 - The Anglican and broader Christian community
 - The wider community, including a global perspective?
3. What specific groups of people are affected? For example, youth, women, disadvantaged, migrants and so on.

Mission and vision statements are different but they often get confused.

A mission statement expresses the purpose for which the church exists. Jesus' mission statement to the first Christians is found at the end of Matthew's gospel: "Go then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptise them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you." (Matt 28:19 & 20)

Some churches have shortened this to "To know Christ and to make him known".

This is very easy to do after you have had a day for dreaming, review and planning. One church, after such a day, wrote their mission in this way

"This church exists to:
worship God
lead people to Christ
encourage and care for one another
respond to community issues and needs"

Tips for creating a mission statement Mission is the central and compelling goal that focuses people's effort. It is tangible, specific, crisp, clear and engaging. It reaches out, touches, even grabs people's hearts.

Statements of mission are part of the **vision** but are often written separately. These statements can become the recognisable quote (or slogan) of the parish or agency.

Characteristics of a statement of mission are:

- They clearly state 'why we exist'
- Should be succinct; 1 or 2 sentences at the most
- Should quickly and clearly convey how the parish or agency fulfils its key ministries
- Should be simple to pass the *grandparent test*: If you can explain it to him or her so they can understand it, then maybe you're on to something
- Should tie the activities of the parish to the basic mission ie We have monthly fellowship lunches *so that* we can show God's love and concern for each other.
- Should be broad, inspirational, enduring, compelling and flexible enough to last a long time
- Needs to be meaningful and inspirational to people inside the parish or agency – it need not be exciting to all outsiders
- It is motivated by God's purpose.

For examples of Mission statements see Appendix 6.

Values

The future story of the parish or agency – the vision – is underpinned by values and core beliefs. These are usually imbedded into the vision document itself.

Core beliefs Core beliefs are shared understandings of self-evident truths. Within a parish or agency context these include Anglican theology and the basic tenants of the Christian faith.

Values Values are the compass of a parish or agency. They help determine when the obvious way is not the 'right' way. Values are those things that a parish will always promote and whose violation it will never condone. For example the authority of Scripture, mission, pastoral care, creativity, spiritual gift development, conduct of liturgy and also love, truth, fairness, freedom, unity, tolerance, responsibility, respect for life.

Continuing shared revelation through worship, prayer, Scriptural study and loving fellowship will clarify each community's perceptions of these.

Metaphors As the MAP Development Team promotes discussion about values they may find asking members of the parish or agency describe themselves in metaphor a valuable activity. They may ask people to finish sentences such as

My church is like ... (an octopus ... a kitchen ... a centaur ... a light globe)

My parish is like ... (a family ... a club ... an orchard ... a bowl of spaghetti)

When people have completed the sentence ask them to explain why they say so. The main themes, ideas and language that comes from these answers can bring a useful insight to leaders about the perceived strengths and challenges facing the parish or agency, but also something about the assurances and fears that people have.

What do you value? Here is an activity that the MAP Development Team might use to help identify values.

Directions - Your core values are the things that are most important to you in life and influence the way you act, the choices you make, the way you spend your time.

From the list below select the 5 – 10 values which are most important to you. Choose values which consider all aspects of your life – do not limit your responses to any particular situation. Feel free to add your own if not listed below.

Generosity	Transformation	Evangelism	Practical	Vocation
Truth	Love	Justice	Meaningful	Communication
Taking risks	Community	Children	Health	Shared
Initiative	Connection	Youth	Growth	Sacrifice
Creativity	Celebration	Older people	Strength	Cost
Morality	Conversion	Difference	Fresh Expression	Change
Integrity	Faith	Engagement	Mission	Fun
Forgiveness	Prayer	Clergy	Partnerships	Humour
Courage	The Bible	Lay ministries	Teaching	Respect
Hard work	Sacraments	Leadership	Responding	Tradition
Adventure	Commitment	Theology	Safeguard	Responsibility
Excitement	Discipleship	Education	Worship	Optimism
Influence	Health	Ministry	Experience	Reliability
Friendship	Diversity	Formation	Energy	Discipline
Balance	Culture	People	Outward-looking	Trust
Aesthetics	Appreciation	Environment	Passionate	Excellence
Stability	Thankfulness	Climate	Prophetic	Duty
Loyalty	Neighbourliness	Quality	Peace	Dignity
Enterprising	Mercy	Resources	Loving service	Tenacity
Informality	Welcome	Gospel	Discernment	Cooperation
Participation	Daring	Responsive	Affirmation	Encouragement
Relationships	Team	Gifts	Contribution	Care
Stewardship	Attitudes	Joy	Relaxed	Acceptance
Security	Affection	Helping	Competence	Knowledge
Tolerance	Challenge	Negotiation	Collaboration	Wisdom

Part 4 – Appendices and Resources

Appendix 1 Surveys

Some tips for writing surveys. (See example)

- Each question or statement needs to seek a single focus response
- If seeking a graded response always provide an even number of responses so that respondents cannot 'sit on the fence' (Questions 8, 9, 14, 15)
- Always provide clear instructions for respondents. (Questions 1, 7, 10)

St Example's Anglican Parish, Suburb

St Example's Anglican Parish, Suburb Parish Survey May, 2008
--

1. What is your gender? Male Female
(Please tick ✓ one)

2. What is the postcode of your current home address? _____

3. What is your age range?
(Please tick ✓ one)

12 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 24	25 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60 - 69	70 - 84	Over 84
<input type="radio"/>									

4. How long have you attended St Example's parish?
(Please tick ✓ one)

Less than one year	1 to 2 years	3 to 4 years	5 to 7 years	8 to 10 years	More than 10 years
<input type="radio"/>					

5. Which Sunday service do you attend most regularly?
(Please tick ✓ one) Morning Evening

6. How frequently do you attend Sunday services?
(Please tick ✓ one)

Weekly	Fortnightly	Once a month	Once every two months	Less than once every two months
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Which ministries generated by St Example's parish are you currently serving in?
 (Please tick ✓ as many as applicable)

Sunday Services		Rest of the Week	
Leading Service	<input type="radio"/>	Drop-in / food parcels	<input type="radio"/>
Music	<input type="radio"/>	Baby bundles	<input type="radio"/>
Bible Reading during service	<input type="radio"/>	Men's Ministry	<input type="radio"/>
Welcoming	<input type="radio"/>	Kids Club	<input type="radio"/>
Music	<input type="radio"/>	Playgroups	<input type="radio"/>
Overhead projector operation	<input type="radio"/>	Youth Group	<input type="radio"/>
Kids Talk	<input type="radio"/>	Mission support	<input type="radio"/>
Prayer (during and after services)	<input type="radio"/>	Pastoral care	<input type="radio"/>
Morning tea / Supper	<input type="radio"/>	Small group	<input type="radio"/>
		Vestry / Warden	<input type="radio"/>
		Other (Please specify)	<input type="radio"/>

8. St Example's parish provides me with many opportunities to serve God to the full potential of my gifts, talents and experience.
 (Please tick ✓ one)

Strongly Agree Agree Mildly Agree Mildly Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

9. St Example's parish provides excellent teaching and training to develop my gifts and talents.
 (Please tick ✓ one)

Strongly Agree Agree Mildly Agree Mildly Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

10. In my opinion, the MOST effective ministries at St Example's parish are:
 (Please tick ✓ up to 3)

Clergy	<input type="radio"/>	Mission support	<input type="radio"/>
Vestry / Wardens	<input type="radio"/>	Youth Ministry	<input type="radio"/>
Sunday services	<input type="radio"/>	Children's Ministry	<input type="radio"/>
Outreach to the community	<input type="radio"/>	Playgroup	<input type="radio"/>
Men's Ministry	<input type="radio"/>	Other Please specify	

11. In my opinion, the LEAST effective ministries at St Example's parish are:
 (Please tick ✓ up to 3)

Clergy	<input type="radio"/>	Mission support	<input type="radio"/>
Vestry / Wardens	<input type="radio"/>	Youth Ministry	<input type="radio"/>
Sunday services	<input type="radio"/>	Children's Ministry	<input type="radio"/>
Outreach to the community	<input type="radio"/>	Playgroup	<input type="radio"/>
Men's Ministry	<input type="radio"/>	Other Please specify	

12. I am involved in Christian ministries that are NOT generated by St Example's parish.
 (Please tick ✓ one)

Yes No If YES, go to Q. 13
 If NO, go to Q. 14

13. In an average month, I spend MORE time in the ministries NOT generated by St Example's parish than I spend on ministries generated by the parish.

(Please tick ✓ one)

Yes No

14. I enjoy bringing non-Christian friends to the ministries generated by St Example's parish.

(Please tick ✓ one)

Strongly Agree Agree Mildly Agree Mildly Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

15. I feel a strong personal commitment to St Example's.

(Please tick ✓ one)

Strongly Agree Agree Mildly Agree Mildly Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

16. In my opinion, St Example's primary mission location is:

17. In my opinion, the areas of greatest CHALLENGE for St Example's parish are:

18. In my opinion, the areas of greatest STRENGTHS in St Example's parish are:

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Information is collected and managed in accordance with the privacy policies and practices of St Example's Anglican Parish, Suburb for the purposes of REVIEW AND FUTURE PLANNING. All respondents remain anonymous.

THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF MELBOURNE
VISION STATEMENT

AIM4MELBOURNE
Anglicans in mission

2009 A year of fresh connections

We are Anglicans together in Mission (AIM) in Melbourne and Geelong,
celebrating Christ's transforming love

CONNECTED with God in Christ through the Holy Spirit
CONNECTED with each other
CONNECTING with the community
CONNECTING with the generations and cultures

CONNECTED with God in Christ

- Through conversion to faith in Jesus Christ
- Through prayer, the bible and the sacraments
- Through a transforming faith commitment as a disciple

CONNECTED with each other

- As followers of Jesus Christ
- Through healthy and diverse worshipping communities
- By a culture of appreciation, encouragement and thankfulness

CONNECTING with the community

- By being good neighbours
- By acts of mercy
- Through welcome and evangelism
- By concern and action for justice

CONNECTING with the generations and cultures

- Engaging with children, youth and younger adults
- Recognising and developing the contribution of older Anglicans
- Welcoming and engaging across cultures

Appendix 3 *Vision Grids*

The Five Marks of Mission

The Five Marks of Mission of the Worldwide Anglican Communion

- ✚ To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
- ✚ To teach, baptise and nurture new believers
- ✚ To respond to human need by loving service
- ✚ To seek to transform unjust structures of society
- ✚ To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and Sustain and renew the life of the earth

Appendix 4 *Vision Grids*

Seven Marks of a Healthy Church

1. Energized by faith rather than just keeping things going or trying to survive
 - *worship and sacramental life*: moves people to experience God's love
 - *motivation*: energy comes from a desire to serve God and one another
 - *engaging with Scripture*: in creative ways connect with life
 - *nurtures faith in Christ*: helping people to grow in, and share their faith.
2. Outward-looking focus with a 'whole life' rather than a 'church life' concern
 - deeply rooted in the *local community*, working in partnership with other denominations, faiths, secular groups and networks
 - passionate and prophetic about *justice and peace*, locally and globally
 - makes connections between *faith and daily living*
 - responds to human need by *loving service*
3. Seeks to find out what God wants discerning the Spirit's leading rather than trying to please everyone
 - *vocation*: seeks to explore what God wants it to be and do
 - *vision*: develops and communicates a shared sense of where it is going
 - *mission priorities*: consciously sets both immediate and long-term goals
 - able to call for, and make, *sacrifices*, personal and corporate, in bringing about the above and living out the faith.
4. Faces the cost of change and growth rather than resisting change and awaiting failure
 - While embracing the past, it *dares to take on new ways* of doing things
 - *Takes risks*: and admits when things are not working, and learns from experience
 - *Crisis: responds creatively to challenges that face the church and community*
 - *Positive experiences of change* however small, are affirmed and built on
5. Operates as a community rather than functioning as a club or religious organisation
 - *Relationships*: are nurtured, often in small groups, so people feel accepted and are helped to grow in faith and service
 - *leadership*: lay and ordained work as a team to develop locally appropriate expressions of all seven marks of a healthy church
 - *lay ministry*: the different gifts, experiences and faith journeys of all are valued and given expression in and beyond the life of the church.
6. Makes room for all being inclusive rather than exclusive.
 - *welcome*: works to include newcomers into the life of the church
 - *children and young people*: are helped to belong, contribute and be nurtured in their faith
 - *enquirers* are encouraged to explore and experience faith in Christ
 - *diversities*: different social and ethnic backgrounds, mental and physical abilities, and ages, are seen as a strength.
7. Does a few things and do them well focused rather than frenetic.
 - *does the basics well*: especially public worship, pastoral care, stewardship and administration
 - *occasional offices*: make sense of life and communicate faith
 - *being good news* as a church in its attitudes and ways of working
 - *enjoys what it does* and is relaxed about what is not being done

Appendix 5 Vision Statements (Examples)

Vision 1 To proclaim the Christian message in word and action
To be a welcoming and dynamic worshipping community
To be an influence for good in our communities
To teach, baptize, and bring to maturity believers in Christ
To respond to the needs of others with loving service and compassion

Vision 2 St Illustration's Parish believes God has called us to minister intentionally to people in our local community who are poor and disadvantaged. Service to the poor will be an important theme in our teaching each year. We will seek to partner a Welfare Agency such as Anglicare or The Brotherhood of St Laurence to be more effective. We will also see if other churches will work alongside us.

We look forward to the day when we will give 10% of our offerings to the poor and disadvantaged in our local community. We look to setting up a weekly ministry that will directly help. This might be a foodbank, soup kitchen, skills classes or a financial advice service.

Vision 3 St Local Parish is looking forward to a time when the congregation will be large enough to add a part-time Children's and Families minister to the staff. We will enjoy the sound of children and young people in our services and pray that Sunday School and Youth Groups will clearly communicate God's love to the children and teenagers and help them become disciples of Jesus.

In the short term, we will work together to set up two mid-week playgroups that will be led by lay people. We will seek help from the Diocese to make these as effective as possible. We will also approach a local primary school to start a Kids Hope Program.

Even though we don't have many children or youth at present, we will develop our Sunday services to be more 'young people friendly'. We will also work to start a new family oriented service either later on Sunday morning or in the late Sunday afternoon.

Vision 4 St Hopeful's Parish is surrounded by eight retirement villages and two nursing homes. We feel called to minister more fully to the nearly 1,000 people who reside in these places.

Our parish will develop two areas of mission. One is pastoral care directly into these villages and homes. We will look to partner other churches in this. The second is develop a mid-week service and lunch at the church and provide transport for the residents to attend.

We look to inviting retirees to become active in the volunteer ministries of our church.

Vision 5 St Faithful's Parish aims to be a 'parish church' reaching out to the wider community and offering a breadth of worship and service that meets the needs of a wide range of people. We value and endeavour to develop our traditions within a broad anglo-catholic liturgical pattern, a catholic sacramental theology, and an outreach in sharing the good news of the gospel of Christ.

Vision 6 To grow as the people of God
as people come to faith
as people are nurtured in faith
Through God's Word and service

Appendix 6 Mission Statements (Examples)

1. Building passionate followers of Jesus Christ
2. Growing as the people of God
3. A caring community making disciples of Christ
4. We are a community of people who worship, grow, love, serve and help you discover Jesus
5. To know Christ and to make him known
6. Helping people become committed followers of Christ
7. To help the people of the local area become fully committed followers of Christ
8. Our church is committed to helping people become and grow as Christians

Appendix 7 SMART Goals

SMART Goals

S Specific and Stretching

- A goal should be specific in its Aim and Objectives.
- Work on producing the best wording will pay dividends in the long-term.
- It should also take you on from your current situation.
- It shouldn't simply be a statement of what's already happening!

M Measurable

- It is important to be able to see results and, in order to do this, goals need to be measurable.
- Something vague like 'it would be good to see more people in church' is likely to cause disappointment. How many new people; by when?

A Achievable and Agreed

- Unachievable goals lead directly to guilt and anger
- Also, make sure that there is consensus, and that it isn't just one person's – or a small group's – bright idea.

R Relevant and Realistic

- Make the goal relevant to each situation. Every church, every community is different. Just because the Church down the road is doing something doesn't mean it will be right for you. It has to be your goal for your situation.
- Ensure, too, that it is realistic for your situation; nothing is more depressing than unrealistic goals.
- It can be good to include some early 'easy wins'. This will give encouragement to all involved in the process.

T Time Bound and Timely

- Say when the goal is to be achieved by. Then, at that point, it can either be ticked off, or reviewed.
- Fundraising thermometers outside a church, marked 1/10th of the way up, with paint peeling off it are less unhelpful and dreadful publicity!
- The timing of the goal should also be appropriate, in terms of what else is going on, and what other priorities are set.

Resources

Anglican Diocese of Melbourne <http://www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/>

Australian Bureau of Statistics homepage <http://www.abs.gov.au/>

Back to Church Sunday home page (United Kingdom) <http://www.backtochurch.co.uk/>

Church of England home page <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/>

Collins and Porras <http://www.growthconnection.com/Creating-A-Mission-Statement-Example.htm>

Collins and Porras <http://www.growthconnection.com/Creating-Vision-Statements.htm>

Creating a Mission Action Plan (Diocese of Exeter)
http://www.exeter.anglican.org/cpage/cwmdownminist/map_7.pdf

Diocese of Chichester MAP page
<http://www.diochi.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=activities.content&cmid=227>

Mission Action Planning and Church Growth <http://www.churchmaps.co.uk/>

Mission Action Planning – The Diocese of London <http://www.london.anglican.org/MAP>

National Church Life Survey home page <http://www.ncls.org.au/>

National Mission Facilitator's home page (Anglican Church of Australia)
<http://www.anglican.org.au/nco.cfm?SID=9&SSID=149>

Net Results magazine for church growth and evangelism (North American)
<http://www.netresults.org/>

Resources for Church MAPs from the Church of England <http://www.churchmaps.co.uk/>

Resources for Mission Action Planning from the Diocese of London
<http://www.london.anglican.org/MAP>

Robinson, S.P. *Starting Mission-Shaped Churches*. St. Paul's Chatswood. 2007
www.stpauls.org.au

Robinson, S.P., Smith, C. & Wilson, M.K. *Mission Action Planning – The M.A.P. for Churches and Organisations in the 21st century*. Anglicare, Diocese of Sydney. 2004.

Strategic Thinking <http://www.hainescentre.com/essence/strategic-thinking-defined.html> and
http://media.wiley.com/product_data/excerpt/30/07879650/0787965030.pdf

The Healthy Churches' Handbook Robert Warren Church House Publishing 2004
<http://www.chpublishing.co.uk/feature.asp?id=69165>

Victoria Government www.VictoriaOnline.vic.gov.au

What do you value?
<http://www.hr.unsw.edu.au/osds/pdfdocs/What%20do%20you%20value.pdf>