

MISSION CLUSTERS

In some cases, within the Diocese of Willochra and most particularly within the Ministry Districts it may be appropriate to create clusters of congregations which are in reasonable geographic proximity to each other.

The risk that faces congregations, which by themselves are unlikely to be able to fully embrace being a Ministering Community in Mission, is the development of a dependency for Creed, Sacraments, Orders and Holy Scripture by defaulting to those who come from outside the community of faith.

Where a cluster is formed a Cluster Mission Support Team will be developed drawing its membership from the cluster rather than from a single congregation.

By so doing the cluster is able to be Church.

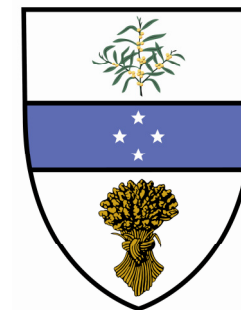
A stipended Priest's role is still one of enabling, in this case enabling the cluster to be a full expression of church in its own right.

Members of the Mission Support Team will have a leadership and enabling role across the cluster rather than exclusively to a congregation.

Building up of a sense of cluster community will need to be a priority if the Mission Support Team is to function as insiders and not outsiders; us rather than them.



Diocese of Willochra



Mission Clusters

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BACKGROUND

We aspire to be a Diocese where...

Each congregation is a self-sustaining unit of the Church of God where the Sacraments are celebrated and the Word proclaimed, where each member's gifts are recognized and their ministries encouraged, and where the love and care within the congregation spread out to the community beyond so that Christ's love will be experienced and known by all.

The underlying principles in forming the church as Ministering Communities in Mission are that each ministering community will be enabled to be the Church, it will have received (the order of what follows is not hierarchical but follows that of J.D. Payne, see footnote):

- ⇒ a creed, a teaching containing the 'simple gospel' involving a doctrine of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit in conjunction with ... [at least] an oral tradition of the foundational facts behind the death and resurrection of Jesus, rather than the formal (Historic) Creeds
- ⇒ the sacraments
- ⇒ the orders – deacon, priest and bishop. Also lay ministries licensed by the bishop or authorised locally, see the pamphlets – *Licensed Lay Ministers* and *Locally Authorised Ministry*
- ⇒ the Holy Scriptures – proclaimed and preached. ¹

¹ The Legacy of Roland Allen: Part Two-His Philosophy of Missions by J.D. Payne, 2008.

BEING THE CHURCH

Roland Allen put forward the view that the church exists where it is able to 'receive', in its own right, creed, sacraments, orders and Holy Scripture.

Where a congregation is unable to 'be' Church this has most likely occurred as a result of:

- ⇒ the size of the congregation being prohibitive
- ⇒ not having a fully developed understanding of the ministry of all the baptised.

In some cases what is required is:

- ⇒ further learning on the nature of Ministering Communities in Mission; this may be achieved by using the study guide *A New Vision for the Church: Becoming Ministering Communities in Mission*
- ⇒ a second wave of local discernment see the publication *Called to Ministry: The Discernment Process in the Diocese of Willochra*

