

Listening in Spirit



Shaping Our Future
Together

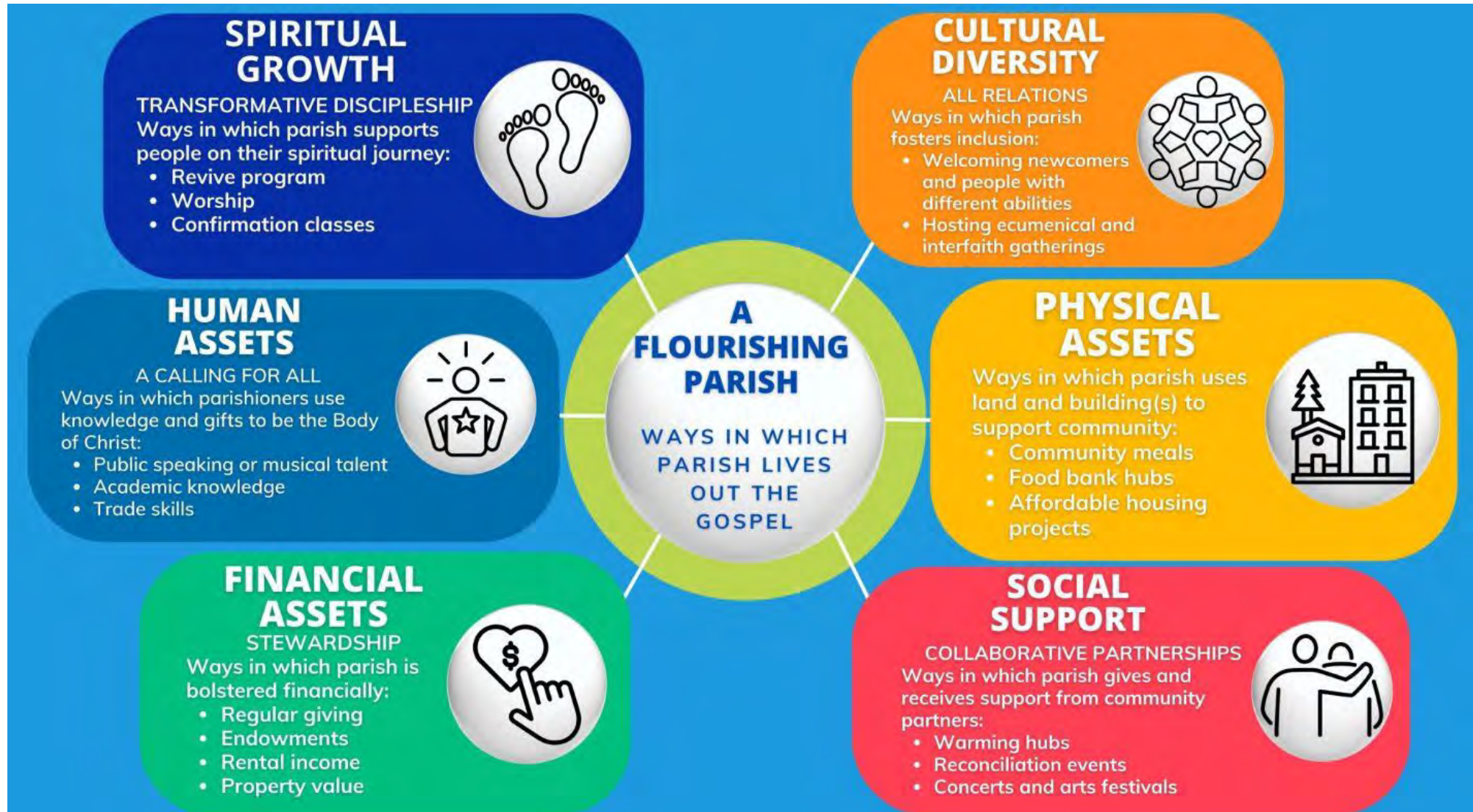
SUMMARY OF PHASE 1 FINDINGS

Prepared by: *Another Way*

PURPOSE

- + **Explain** the process and methods used
- + **Share** the findings, focusing on strengths and weaknesses of the Diocese
- + **Explore** the opportunities and threats facing the Diocese

FOUNDATIONAL APPROACH: ASSETS



Process and Methods



Hundreds of
people
involved

- Quantitative data (2017 - 2023) from Synod office
- Surveys of 46 parishes - members, priests and lay leaders
- 18, 1:1 interviews
- 46 parish engagement session + 1 Synod leadership session

Just the Facts...

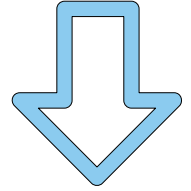
- + 2/3 of parishes are in the greater Edmonton area; 1/3 in small towns.
- + On average, in 2023, 52 people attended Sunday services. 1/3 of parishes have less than 25 attendees.
- + # children in Sunday school declined 42% between 2017 - 2023.
- + 40% of parishes have full-time priest. Average of 2 formal lay leaders per parish.
- + Insurance replacement value \$125,866,162.
- + In 2/3 of parishes less than 50 people use the church building outside of Sunday/week.
- + Staff costs = 50% all expenses; building costs = 20+% (not including insurance)
- + Average donation = \$2,463 per member in 2023.



STRENGTHS

- Steadfast spiritual commitment
- Strong lay and priest leadership
- Welcoming and affirming spirit
- Frugal money management

WEAKNESSES

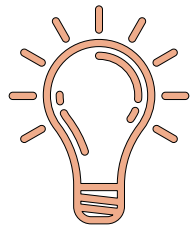


- Lack of human resources (numbers and ages)
- Lack of financial sustainability
- Communication problems
- Outdated facilities

SWOT ANALYSIS

- Stronger community engagement and partnerships
- Use of social media
- More structured member integration

- Increasingly post-religious society indifferent or hostile to church
- Other forms of Christianity have more resources and different voices
- Rising expenses/fewer resources



OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS



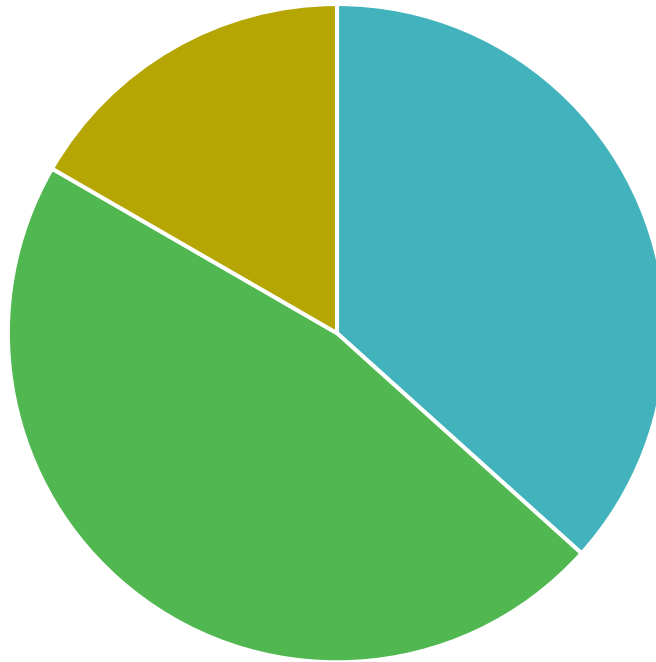
Themes Arising from Interviews

- + Need new models for clergy and empowered laity. Have examples of this!
- + Need to examine role of church buildings. Can become community hubs to maximize impact, increase partnerships, and bring in \$\$.
- + Children are vital to the future of the church; this work needs investment. BIPOC parishes are natural leaders in this area.
- + Lack a common understanding of diversity/inclusion. Have Indigenous and intercultural models to learn from. Minority voices want to be heard.
- + Need to reset relationship between Diocese leadership and parishes.

Consultants Observations

- + Have More in Common than Not - Urban vs. Rural Myth
- + Love of, and Dedication to, God is Palpable
- + Lack of Money is Not the Problem - Lack of Intergenerational Turnover is the Existential Threat
- + Clear-headedness Prevails
- + Tension Between Self-direction and Leadership Needs Attention

Health Status Metaphor



■ Palliative ■ Chronic Health Issues ■ Healthy

In Your Own Words

“We have a wonderful vibrant growing parish. We are eager to know God more and serve others well. We need to learn to do things differently in order for the church to survive and thrive in the next generations.”