

# Stewardship Formation Team Charter

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## Background and History

Stewardship is the spirituality which underlies the Bishop's vision for our diocese as published in the Pastoral Plan "Go Out and Bear Fruit":

*It's about recognising our gifts and using them for the Lord and for the community. It's about recognising and using our time, our talents and our treasure and it challenges us to use our gifts generously for God and for our brothers and sisters. - Bishop Crispian (Lent 2009)*

In response to this, the pastoral area of North East Hampshire has decided to create the Stewardship Formation Team to explore stewardship and its implications and to find a way to introduce and keep alive this spirituality in our Pastoral Area. Stewardship in this environment should be seen in its widest possible context as it covers our entire lives as Christian Disciples.

In addition, the intention is that the Stewardship Formation Team should reach across parish boundaries and bring people together, building a sense of community and shared vision across the Pastoral Area. The team should also look for ways to acknowledge and value the huge efforts made by people who are part of the wider community, working together to recognise God's gift of love in those with whom we share our lives.

## Purpose

The purpose of the team can be best summed up in the words of Jesus:

*I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already! – Luke 12:49*

Our purpose is to set our Pastoral Area "on fire" with the spirituality of stewardship, making opportunities available for both initial and ongoing formation. We are to recognize the gifts within our Pastoral Area so that together we may bear much fruit as Disciples of Christ.

We acknowledge that sometimes we will need to gather sticks by preparing people; sometimes we will be able to light small fires with the hope of them spreading, but we should also not be afraid of starting a big fire. At other times the most appropriate action will be to fan existing fires into flame.

The team is committed to a process of prayer and discernment in order to find the best opportunities of bringing stewardship to life. The team is open to direction in this search based on the priorities set by the Pastoral Area Leadership Team.

## Principles

The team will act in the role of being a catalyst, encouraging and challenging ourselves and others to put God as the highest priority in our lives. Our intention is to work through PACT and leadership teams within each worshipping community to bring about an environment where the fire of stewardship spirituality can flourish.

The team will do this by offering suggestions to PACT and the individual worshipping communities. The team will back up these suggestions with the resources and leadership skills to make them a reality and to get things started.

Once a particular fire has started, the team will hand over the job of "fanning the flames" to others so that it may focus on starting other fires within the Pastoral Area.

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## **Membership**

The team is formed with representatives from each worshipping community so that we have some understanding of the environment throughout the entire Pastoral Area. The focus of each team member should be on the Pastoral Area as a whole and not their particular community.

New members are welcome to join the team, although this has to be done slowly so that there is not a dramatic change to the team dynamics. It is envisaged that at most, one or two new members should be admitted per quarter.

Ideally, anyone joining the team should have been through a stewardship formation process, although that being said there should be no barriers to people joining the team. If there are a few people wanting to join the team, then ideally they would work through stewardship formation material together before (or in parallel with) joining the team.

The team is committed to its own ongoing formation and periodically (at least once per year) will spend time working on deepening its understanding of stewardship.

## **Practices**

The team will work using a combination of bi-weekly face-to-face meetings and electronic collaboration using a Google Group that allows information to be shared and worked on together in between meetings. Over time, it is hoped that the frequency of face-to-face meetings will gradually reduce in favour of more electronic forms of collaboration.

Decisions are made within the group by consensus and the meetings are chaired on a rotating basis. Each meeting starts and ends with prayer and team members are expected to pray for the work of the team daily.

## **Finances**

From time to time the team may request financial support from PACT for a particular initiative.

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*Father - Fill us with your Holy Spirit and help us, as a Stewardship Formation Team, to recognise and share with others the many gifts you have given us; to serve you and bear much fruit in our wider community, as disciples of your Son Jesus Christ. Amen.*