

quick and/or obvious success on initiatives and do we walk away when the going gets tough? On the other hand, are there existing initiatives that we need to let go of?

- Do we ever reflect on and assess the results of mission endeavours or general church activities? Are there negative subtexts in our corporate psyche?
- How will we regularly reconnect to the Source of our energy?

### **Chapter 11: An apostolic adventure**

Read Mark 1: 16-20, 1 Corinthians 2: 6-9.

- Do we agree with the author's argument that we need an adventure to stretch us?
- What boundaries - "moral, cultural, social, physical" - may we need to cross?
- Do we seek to look after all within our physical parish boundaries? How have we reacted when other parishes, or churches of other denominations, have crossed into our boundaries?
- How will we follow the Spirit into adventure?

### Individual or Small Group Study Questions for **Mission-Shaped Spirituality by Susan Hope**

Prepared by the Diocese of Fredericton Spiritual  
Development Team

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Mission-Shaped Spirituality by Susan Hope is an engaging and empowering book for congregations, mission and outreach committees, church study groups, and vestries. Published in 2010, it is one in a series of books which respond to the Church of England's 2004 Mission-Shaped Church report. This series "is designed to resource thinking, reflection

and action as the journey (of understanding God's mission) continues".

In particular, Ms. Hope's contribution is primarily concerned with how we move out from our congregations and buildings towards those outside who have never heard or do not remember the Gospel. She presents a compelling case for why we must do so, and indeed, should want to do so; and also addresses the

inertia that holds us back. She helps readers to seek the energy and the confidence for this much needed apostolic spirituality. Scattered through the book are what she refers to as stories from the front - stories of real congregations' efforts at mission within their own communities and contexts.

In the author's words, this book "is an attempt to get at the inner workings of what happens to us when we go in mission, of what is going on inside us, of who we become when we start going - and of how this present tide might just change us, and change the Church." It is not a how-to but an "aid to reflection", and "will work best where its contents are chewed over, argued over and prayed over."

To that end, the Diocesan Spiritual Development Team offers the following set of questions to aid persons and groups in their reflecting.

For each chapter, we suggest:

- Start with the provided Bible passages, which include each chapter's header verse.
- Have each person discuss which mission story in the chapter resonated most with him/her.
- Work through some or all of the suggested questions allowing the Spirit to lead the discussion focus.
- End with prayer, particularly asking God for the wisdom to know where He is guiding and the grace and courage to follow Him.

- Do we each see and 'understand' our own faith? Do we believe and proclaim the message that Jesus is alive?
- Are we each able to share a personal testimony about our faith in Jesus? (Practice now with one another.)

### **Chapter 9: Helping to heal the world's woe**

Read Matthew 10:8, James 5:13-16.

- How broad is our definition of healing?
- What are our fears with respect to healing ministry? Can we go in our powerlessness? Do we "own Christ publicly"?
- What are signs of the kingdom and also disappointments that we have seen in our own or others' healing ministry?
- "How are we going to get the healing out?"

### **Chapter 10: Learning, laughing and the long haul**

Read Luke 9: 10-13, 23-26, Ecclesiastes 3: 1-14.

- How might we incorporate more rhythm in our personal and corporate faith lives?
- Do we have the described quality of detachment, leaving the results to God? Or, do people expect

- Do we believe that what we have to offer the world is good, is wanted and is being sought?
- How well do we do community? Do we have healthy, honest relationships among ourselves and are they open to newcomers? Is Jesus invited into these relationships?
- Being specific, what does our Net look like, or not look like, in our congregation? Where does it need attention?

### **Chapter 7: Prayer, promise and struggle**

Read Luke 11:5-13, Acts 4:1-31

- How can we better pray for the work we are called to do, even when we don't know what that is?
- How do we respond to struggle, barriers and challenges in our mission work?
- Are we filled with the Holy Spirit? (Spend some time in prayer asking for this.)

### **Chapter 8: The message and the messengers**

Read Matthew 10: 5-8. 1 Corinthians 2:1-5.

- In our current mission work, what is the message we are communicating? Do we embody or reflect that message? Is this good or not?

### **Chapter 1: From come to go**

Read Luke 10:1-9, Matthew 28:16-20.

- What first comes to mind when we think about the term apostolic or mission-shaped spirituality?
- Why is it so hard to move from “come” to “go”? How can we move beyond expecting those who wish/need to hear the gospel to come and get it on a Sunday morning?
- What powers missions/outreach already in place in our context? What stories of mission ('successful' or otherwise) are part of our parish's identity?

### **Chapter 2: Called and sent**

Read Luke 9:1-6, Mark 1:16-20.

- What are the signs of inertia in our local church? Do we need to be "re-energized" and how might this be accomplished?
- How might our parish discern anything beyond the "general call" to mission in our context?
- Do we see ourselves as missionaries? How can we be better rememberers of the gospel call to go?

**Chapter 3: Living trustingly**

Read Matthew 10: 26-33, Romans 15:13.

- Do we truly know and believe that we are greatly loved by God? Do we show this “authentic Christian confidence” such that onlookers might be drawn to want to know this God we worship and serve?
- How can we face our fears together and begin to talk more freely about our relationship with God amongst ourselves?
- Do we trust God enough to take a risk with something that might “fail”? Why or why not? Why is failure often thought to be “not an option”?
- Why is the love of God for everyone not often communicated in outreach work?

**Chapter 4: Seeing**

Read Matthew 9:27-38, Matthew 13:10-17.

- A “willingness to see” is an early step in discerning the mission work of a parish. How willing are we to see the needs around us? How might we be encouraged to be more open to this?

- When were we last “intentional” in trying to see the particular mission to which we are called? How can we begin or be more so?
- What traditions and prejudices cause us to be blind to the needs around us?
- What do we believe “freedom to fail” really means? Do we act that way?

**Chapter 5: Take nothing for the journey**

Read Luke 9: 1-6, Hebrews 12:1-3.

- How well do we, as individuals and together as a faith community, trust in God for provision?
- How do we (or might we) be able to respond to Jesus' call to “take nothing for the journey” in our mission work? Why do we so often resist this?
- How can our vulnerability (or lack of resources) actually strengthen our ability to make connections with others in mission efforts?
- What might be our “ecclesiastical baggage”, our preconceptions and our package?

**Chapter 6: Two by two**

Read Luke 10:1-4, Acts 4:32-35.