



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT VENTURE IN MISSION

"The only program that we have to offer is the mission of Jesus Christ. . . . We offer a servant's contribution. There is joy in working together. . . . No one of us knows just how much we have already invested in Venture. There is momentum. Venture is contagious. We are not yet aware of the reservoir of hope that we have touched. Come venture with me in the months ahead."

*The Rt. Rev. John M. Allin  
Presiding Bishop*

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**The Purpose of Venture is—**

- to bring the imperative of Christ's mission, in its diversity and fundamental unity, to every member of the Church;
- to enable all persons to recognize and respond to Christ's claim through offering themselves in service; and
- to enable Episcopalians to further the mission of the Church by giving money.

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**Q. What is Venture in Mission?**

**A.** Venture in Mission is a major effort to rally the spiritual and temporal resources which will enable the whole Church to commit itself to a new life of mission, growth, and service.

**Q. What steps have been taken to emphasize the renewal of the Church through Venture?**

**A.** To ensure renewal, study materials and resources have been developed for use in all congregations. These materials have been condensed and are available in a Forward Movement publication, *Pilgrimage: A Rediscovery of Mission*, by John Ratti, Jr. The purpose is to deepen a mutual awareness of mission through prayer, worship, study and action-outreach.

**Q. Who initiated and authorized Venture in Mission?**

**A.** The General Conventions of the Episcopal Church, in 1970, 1973 and 1976.

The concept of Venture in Mission came into being at the 1970 General Convention in Houston. The Convention called for a program which would enable the Church to fulfill its responsibilities for mission and ministry at home and abroad.

Three years later, at Louisville, General Convention asked the Executive Council to design a specific "strategy to release the human and financial resources of the Church." The Council then developed the Venture in Mission program to achieve the spiritual objective of renewal through commitment to carrying out the mission opportunities of the Church. The program was approved and reaffirmed at the Denver Convention in 1979.

Specific proposals for carrying out this mandate have since been refined until a progression of steps has been worked out to bring the Venture program to the parishes and to enlist the response of all of the members of the Church.

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**Q. What is the financial goal of Venture in Mission?**

**A.** There is no official national dollar goal. From hundreds of mission projects and needs, the Executive Council has approved a group of the most urgent which meet General Convention criteria, totaling \$101,480,224. The real national goal is to meet as many national-world-wide needs as possible, while renewing our commitment to mission in all places, including local.

**Q. How will the Venture money be used?**

**A.** In February, 1978, the Executive Council approved ninety projects, in the following categories:

Evangelism and Congregational Growth

Christian Education for a More Effective Ministry

People with Special Needs in Changing Communities

World-wide Partnerships

Contingency Fund for Unexpected Mission Opportunities

**Q. How is the Anglican Communion represented in Venture?**

**A.** Several funding proposals are in this category. In most cases, requests come through Partners-in-Mission consultations, in which regional groupings of Anglican churches share ministry and mission and a common life.

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**Q. Have the dioceses been consulted?**

**A.** Yes. In fact, the 1976 General Convention insisted that an extra year be given for diocesan consultation before any fund-raising was attempted. During 1977, two visits by lay and clerical representatives of Venture were held with virtually all U.S. dioceses. Diocesan suggestions were incorporated in the list of projects now proposed for funding.

**Q. Have overseas dioceses been consulted?**

**A.** Yes. It is important to note that each of these dioceses has prepared a long-range plan toward financial self-sufficiency and has tested and shared this within the Coalition of Overseas Bishops. These plans are the basis for Venture proposals from the overseas dioceses.

**Q. What is the Venture timetable?**

**A.** Some dioceses have completed their campaigns. Others are laying plans for completion before the 1982 General Convention. Each diocese is invited to call upon Venture in Mission leaders to assist in study and review of mission projects, determining feasible goals and planning schedules.

**Q. How are diocesan goals to be negotiated?**

**A.** The diocesan goals are self-assigned. Although there is no "quota," dioceses are allocating from 10% to 60% of their campaign goals toward national-world-wide mission needs.

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**Q.** If a diocese plans to raise funds to meet some of its own needs, are these then to be combined with the diocesan share of the national goal, so that the official diocesan objective includes both?

**A.** Yes.

**Q.** Who really makes the decisions about Venture?

**A.** Policy proposals are made by the Venture Cabinet, but all decisions are subject to approval or amendment by the Executive Council. The Cabinet is a special committee of the Executive Council, the elected body which represents General Convention between its triennial meetings.

**Q.** How about the accountability of funds contributed to Venture?

**A.** A special Venture in Mission Process and Funding Committee has been appointed to oversee the administration of funds under supervision of the Executive Council.

**Q.** Can a diocese designate how its funds will be spent?

**A.** Yes, designations are encouraged. It is suggested that an early notification be sent to the Venture Mission office, so that arrangements can be made to reserve a project in the name of a diocese, parish or individual. Additional interpretative information can also be supplied.

**Q. What are the General Convention criteria?**

**A. The Venture Criteria are as follows:**

1. Each project to be funded must be a response to the teachings of Jesus Christ, reflecting the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).
2. There must be a clearly stated way by which the funding of a project may be expected to transform rather than simply maintain the status quo of the project for mission and ministry.
3. Funding should usually be a one-time event without anticipating additional funding from the General Church Program budget, with only local funding thereafter if necessary.
4. Each project must be communicable to the whole Church and should educate the Church to larger dimensions of the total mission and ministry, the mutual responsibility and interdependence of the whole Church.
5. Each project must benefit a significant number of people, with the need well documented.
6. Each project must have clear goals and a planned schedule of implementation.
7. Funding for each project through Venture in Mission must appear to be the most appropriate channel for funding.
8. Each project must have approval after review by a Partners in Mission consultation, coalition or diocese where appropriate.
9. The Executive Council shall have final responsibility for the allocating of undesignated funds, and will be responsible for dispensing the funds that are designated by the several dioceses.
10. The Executive Council, as agent for the General Convention, shall see that the criteria are met and report back to the next General Convention.
11. The Executive Council shall provide criteria for receiving annual reports of implementation of program and projects that have been funded.

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**Q.** How are diocesan campaign expenses to be paid?

**A.** They should be included in the total campaign objective and deducted from campaign receipts.

**Q.** Will Challenge Gifts diminish the fundraising strength of the dioceses?

**A.** No. The national committee will concentrate chiefly on seeking 50 to 100 top gifts. This means very few within any one diocese.

**Q.** Can you clarify the campaign process?

**A.** A general outline of the campaign plan is given in a manual entitled "Campaign Plan . . . a Handbook for All Parishes," and other materials contained in a special Venture manual available to all campaign Directors and Chairmen upon request from the national offices. Copies are available from the Venture office on request.

**Q.** Some parishes and dioceses are struggling to meet annual expenses under the pressures of inflation. Isn't this a bad time to ask them to be engaged in Venture in Mission?

**A.** Experience suggests just the opposite. A national fund-raising effort will provide valuable stimulation. Going all out in organizing for Venture in Mission will tend to upgrade all giving—not automatically, but with proper follow through.

**Q.** Are additional copies of the study material and guides available?

**A.** Yes. Address the Venture office.

**Q.** What is the policy for under- and over-funding?

**A.** Each diocese is requested to set its own policy in this regard, and state it in writing. Such "ground rules" should be simple. For example, a diocese may decide upon a fixed percentage to be assigned to the national Venture effort whether the combined goal is over-subscribed or under-subscribed.

**Q.** How can a diocesan Venture committee get help in planning and organizing its effort?

**A.** National organization assistance includes:  
Mr. K. Wade Bennett, Chairman, National Diocesan Campaigns Committee  
Mrs. Pam Chinnis, Chairman, Venture in Mission Cabinet  
The Rev. Thomas H. Carson, Executive for Stewardship/Development  
Mr. Harold T. Treash, Consultant for Venture in Mission

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*A call to action* has been issued by the Cabinet of Venture in Mission, a group of Episcopalians representing a broad cross section of the Church.

Venture in Mission is a call to all Episcopalians to take a bold new step, as twentieth century missionaries, in their partnership with Christ in his universal movement of reconciliation and love.

Venture in Mission lifts up the vision of a renewed life of prayer, worship and service. It calls on Episcopalians to make that vision their own and—through their sacramental offering of money—to turn that vision into a reality which will sustain and transform our mission and ministry.

Venture in Mission will allow us to give fresh attention to the relevance of religious faith to our daily life; to heighten our determination to evangelize and witness personally to Jesus Christ; to deepen our awareness of the power of prayer; and together to recognize the compelling need for compassionate caring of the poor, the lonely, the neglected and the oppressed.

Our work together in Venture in Mission, to paraphrase St. Paul, is "the part we are taking in the work of the Gospel."

For additional copies of this brochure, please write:



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