

Summary & reflections

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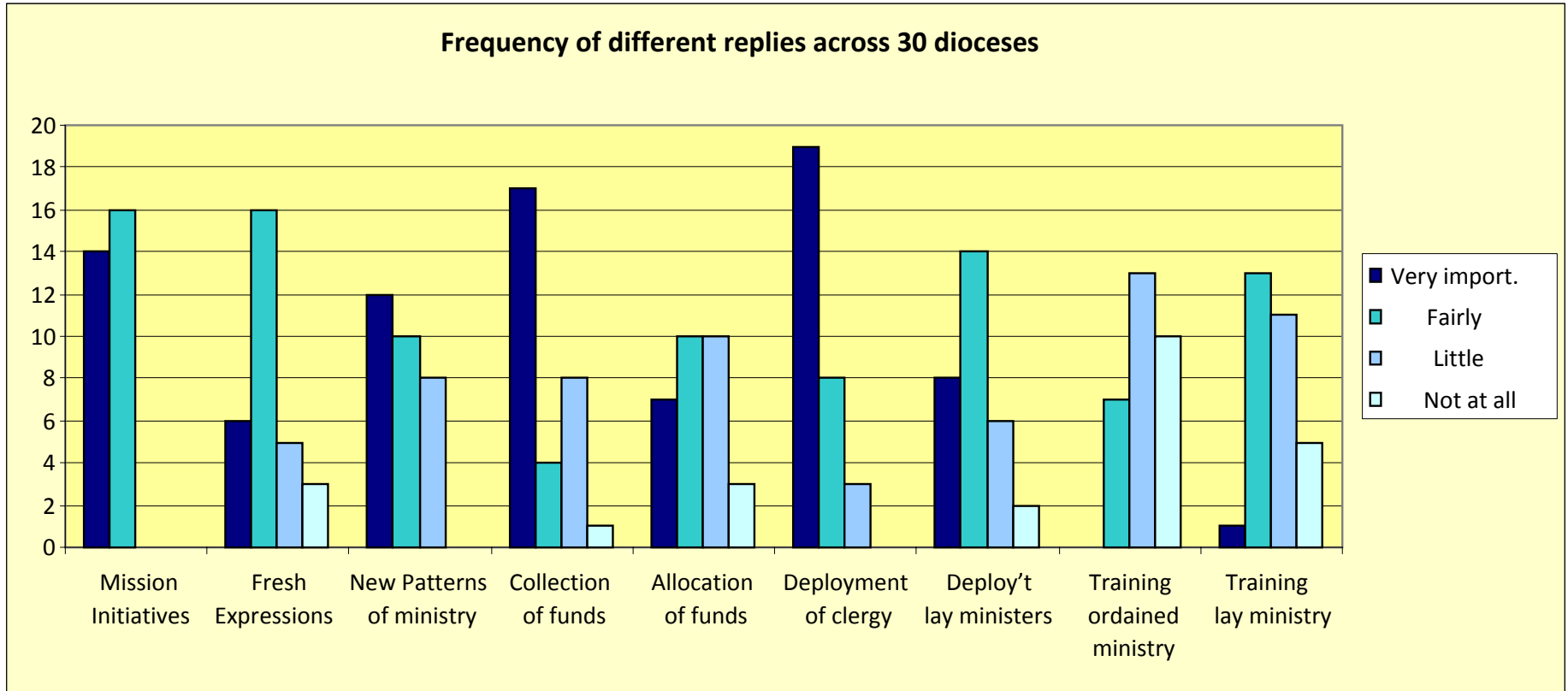
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Developing Deaneries

- 12th National Conference
- Deaneries 'R' Us
- A conference to share experiences of practical initiatives for and serving the community and developing mission and ministry
- Well we have had plenty of that from our speakers: Nick Baines, Martin Seeley, Jean Kerr and Roger Morris
- Do I need to say any more – all that you need was there!
- But I will try and summarise and reflect on what they said

Colin shared survey results



Bishops showed little variation between dioceses, high scores:

1. Deployment of clergy (63 & 27%)
2. Collection of funds (57 & 13%)
3. But Mission was third placed

Nick Baines – Bishop of Croydon

- Nick reminded us that organisations need a purpose
- He proposed our purpose as church is summarised in Mark 1 v 14/15 with 4 statements:
 - The time has come
 - The Kingdom of God is near
 - Repent and
 - Believe the Good News
- Asked us if there is a Happy Future for deaneries?

Nick Baines

- He explained the 43 Dioceses and 1 in Europe all do it differently
 - we should celebrate difference
 - no one organisational way or
 - is this anarchy?
- Structure changes nothing its people who make change
 - Law of unintended consequences is prevalent
- Charles Handy, management guru, reflected 20 years after his first book – Understanding Organisations – decided it was silly of him to think they could be understood!

Nick Baines

- What is end point we want?
- Dioceses, Deaneries, Parishes are the means to an end, not an end in themselves.
- If focus is to get money in and aid staff deployment
 - these are not very important in purpose of church
- Vocation of church is to fulfill God's desire
 - that is our vocation – anything else is fraudulent
- If people do not touch Jesus when they touch church
 - we fail in our fundamental task
- We need confident humility
 - about who we are
 - about our tradition
 - about our culture
- God is our happiness; our torment, is the wide space of our hope

Nick Baines

- Job of the church is to create a space in which people can find that they have been found by God
- How to create different spaces for different people to find that they have been found by God?
 - not slaves of a structure
 - make structure to suit the purpose
- Deanery as a locus of mission, as a locus of theological reflection
 - With different perspectives of churchmanship
 - Retelling story in different languages
 - Supporting each other when tough
 - Sharing resources
 - Have we selected right people as Area/Rural Deans and Lay Chairs?
 - Need inspirational leaders not educationalists

Nick Baines

- Gospel is an account of some who could and some who could not
 - Ditch bureaucratic ecumenism
 - Do not do endless meetings on ecumenism
 - Only do things that focus on the message
- Do action things together
 - Street angels & pastors
- Ecumenism is hidden if you mix with those who think the same as you.

Martin Seeley

- Stories of Isle of Dogs deanery – East Enders
- Deaneries will come into their own as they become the normative structure with Parishes as sub-sets
- Many deaneries find it hard to work together
 - Need to learn to work together
- Organisational anxiety – church organisations show symptoms
- Forgotten our own gospel message – our mission
- A challenge to be present in the undefended territory where Christ is
- Anxious Groups
 - ways of avoiding difficult challenges
 - become an introvert church
 - Worry over numbers and money
 - Only apparent Diocesan contact or interest

Martin Seeley

- Tower Hamlets numbers issue
 - Solution was not top down
 - with no consultation
 - But our own solution developed through extensive consultation, open sharing, listening, exploring conflicts and deciding together
 - Vitality focus more than Viability
- Living creatively with change
 - Very creative deanery day to agree final solution report together
 - recommending agreed mergers, new deployment plan for staff, new deanery-wide posts for admin and regeneration.
- Difficult areas:
 - Leadership changes – continuity of strategy
 - Leadership crises – illness
 - Unplanned lack of top-down leadership
 - Plan overlooked Inter-faith dimension – but being addressed by Parishes

Martin Seeley

- Why groups don't work well together
 - Leaders have tail of other interests to be managed
 - Poor Rowan Williams has a huge tail of interests to hold onto!
- Learning to work together:
 - Faith & trust
 - faith in God – conversation and celebration
 - Leadership
 - clarity & continuity
 - Vision & Task
 - contagious

Jean Kerr

- “Everybody’s friend”
- “Ocean Village Godmother”
- Been invigorated by attending deanery meetings
 - God is at work
- Need to know the mission first and foremost
- Context is changing
 - Dormitory villages
 - Gated communities
- Called it Mission & Ministry
 - Reach out to those on the edge
 - Creative laity not allowed to flourish, but want to
 - Needs spirit of congregationalism
 - We are the Diocese
 - We are the gathered community

Jean Kerr

- All deaneries are different
 - “you do not understand **our** deanery”
 - different but the same
 - are you on a secret post cutting mission?
 - no ‘How to grow the Kingdom’
 - too many parishes paying for own priestly needs and stopping there – stifling mission
 - too many with a narrow focus on self interests
 - too few know their patch
 - Mission strategy needs driving by laity
 - need to help them see possibilities through questions

Jean Kerr

- How do you inspire people?
 - by letting the Spirit inspire you
- Analysis paralysis
 - What is fresh?
 - What is expressions?
 - What is church?
 - Fear of fresh expressions drawing resources from traditional church
- But God is nudging us out into new ways
 - That is why spiritual hunger exists
 - Listen to deep call of the Spirit
 - ‘Make new disciples’
- God says he will build his church
 - Lot of unfocused action
 - We are part of the problem – are we the solution?
 - No, but God is gracious
- Why cannot the status quo be the way forward? !!
 - Need a kinetic and prophetic way of learning
 - Fresh expressions example of Sunday Teatime
 - We have That Sunday Thing – breakfast, papers and a thought for the day
 - Bromley by Bow example
 - Local Pub

Jean Kerr

- “Old ladies are good”,
 - Pub group – no steps
 - New sacred spaces
 - Mission Shaped Introductory Course available on web
 - 600 people trained free in each and every one of 17 deaneries
 - Inspiring stories – so important
- but ...some old ladies reminiscent of church
 - Love them to bits
 - But, never going to change!

Roger Morris

- ‘Thanks to organisers for the critical non-essentials’
- Bridge report challenged need for Deaneries
 - Little relevance to church life
- “Pamela found herself elected to Deanery Synod” cartoon but too true?
- People do not give their talents to things without a purpose
- Parish share discussions = Poor vision for deanery
- Prophets say Deanery can be much more
- Deaneries should be units of cooperation in mission
- Deaneries have power to collaborate with other institutions
- Deaneries can coordinate resources and activities for church’s mission
- Deaneries have potential to bring human and financial resources to consider mission beyond parish boundaries
- Deaneries can share prayer and encouragement

Roger Morris

- Mobile Society has enlarged area in which people travel:
 - For work
 - For play
 - For shops, etc
- People belong to multiple communities:
 - Work
 - Professional
 - Travel
 - Sport
 - Play
 - Culture
- Parish and Benefices have little sense of Deanery
 - but few parishes can survive alone
 - need to recognise they are in a Network
 - Deanery becomes essential for mission
- Need to grow what deanery can be
 - Clergy feel more isolated
 - Chapter could help
 - Sense of belonging to something bigger where clergy release themselves into deanery
 - Lay chair can encourage cohesion – visiting parishes

Roger Morris

- Deanery Cohesion
 - Lay chair visits
 - Deanery newsletter & website
 - Social events and competitions
 - Fewer ‘business’ meetings and more genuine meeting
 - More open meetings with good speakers
 - Quiet days and retreats
 - Added value joint services
 - Joint choir, key speaker,
 - Deanery resource pool
 - Library, courses, events, house groups
 - Activities and Skills directory

Roger Morris

- Next level of cohesion – raise the game
 - Open sharing of PCC reports and accounts
 - Collaborate on allocation of Parish share
 - Encourage mutuality – we are in this together
 - Develop a deanery MAP – Mission Action Plan
 - or MMAP even
 - Identify places needing coordinated ministry or response
 - Secondary school
 - Businesses
 - New ‘township’ – major building
 - Deanery skills audit
 - Develop expertise groups

Roger Morris

- But, look out if
 - Deanery has no geographic sense
 - Insufficient step up from Benefice to deanery
 - Optimum size
 - Hard to see how parish, benefice and deanery relate – needs effective model working out
 - Federal model
 - Minster model
 - Hybrid model
- Most important team is not the one you lead
 - but the one you belong to
- Mission Shaped Church report points to deanery
 - as central and essential to strategy
- Resources for deaneries
 - Involves unlocking the gifts and talents already there

Some statistics

- 72% of UK in 2001 said they were Christian
 - Source National Census
- Gallup Poll said 70% of them believed Jesus was the Son of God = 49% of UK
- Less than 10% attend any church regularly
 - and it is still declining
- Where is the Church for the 60+%
- Has the Church lost its market place
- If most people do not come to Church does
 - Church need to go to them where they are?
 - Where should the focus of paid ministers be?
 - Is it about getting 'bums on pews' ? or
 - Getting people back to God?

Late Harry Williams said:

- While we are thinking of Christian unity, we must consider at least the possibility that God's kingly rule may no longer in future be exercised through ecclesiastical institutions at all. From *Living Free* published in 2006.
- His example:
 - In 1960s the civil rights struggles in Alabama. There was a community that consistently fought for the right of black people to full citizenship inevitably formed a community. A community made up of Christians of all sorts, Jews, some Muslims and a considerable number of agnostics. He suggests that in Alabama, during this period, it was the civil rights community that was the Body of Christ through which God's kingly rule was being established. And the old ecclesiastical institutions were so much deadwood. Perhaps the Church is now being called by God to *crop up*, to crop up here, here, anywhere where there is a need for things to be done and witness to be borne. It maybe God's purpose that the cropping up church should replace the old established institutions. This is not to deny that in time the cropping up church will in time become an institution. But a very different institution to the institutional churches as they now exist.
 - He said that the cropping up Church will in time be institutionalised. That he regards as not only inevitable but as beneficial. Institutions are houses to live in, and we cannot do without houses to live in. But we must not be hung up on one particular type of house. We must always be prepared to move when the old house becomes unsuitable for present needs.
 - He goes on to say that in the past one of the not least important functions of the churches was institutionalisation of emotional gratification, he then apologises for this mouthful of jargon. He explains that what he means is that in the past, the institutional churches provided the milieu that met people's deepest emotional needs for meaning and reconciliation. It offered wisdom and understanding and enabled them to feel , ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven. But he goes on to say that the churches no longer supply this emotional gratification, because, by and large, they continue answering questions that no one is asking, and offering medicines for ailments from which no one is suffering. The result is that people do not know what to do with their emotions, hence the over-emphasis on sex, the flirtations with sadism, the lust for entertainment and consumer goods, and the drugs scene.
- Last week in Poland this is highly visible from full churches in 1990 to empty ones now.

A thought

- One million Roman Catholics worship each Sunday in UK
 - In 10,000 churches
- One million Anglicans worship each Sunday in UK
 - In 54,000 churches
- Is this sustainable?
- What does it do to clergy?
 - Spreads them thinly

Church Army Statistician

- Thanks to Revd Steve Hollinghurst
 - Researcher in Evangelism to post-Christian Culture at Church Army Sheffield Centre
- For 1,000 years we lived within a Christendom system
 - to be British was to be Christian
 - the reality was that not everyone practised the faith they were brought up in
 - hence evangelistic ministries grew to address the gap
- If Britain remains a Christian country
 - but one in which people have stopped going to church
 - we need more evangelism and possibly 'back to church' strategies
- If the country is no longer predominantly Christian however
 - we would need a very different approach treating UK as a foreign mission field
- Hence Mission-shaped Church report regarding 'non-churched' population
 - so fresh expressions of church are necessary
 - to reach the un-churched

Church Army thoughts

- Cross-cultural mission principle – double listening
 - listen to the culture we find ourselves in
 - assume we will find God speaking to us there
 - God is there long before we get there
 - then we can discern how to share our faith in that place
- While church attendance has dropped
 - religion is the norm
 - belief remains high – but may be changing
 - “Believing without belonging” – Dr Grace Davie, University of Exeter
 - People rarely go to church but are keen for churches to be part of landscape
 - “vicarious faith”
 - 70% believed in God; 26% in a personal God; 44% in a life-force
 - Survey in 2000 for BBC’s *Soul of Britain*
- 50% believe in life after death; but 25% believe in re-incarnation!
 - UK World Values survey 1981 to 1999

Church Army thoughts

- If these statistics are “believing without belonging”:
 - It is increasingly not connected to Christian faith
 - 85% of over 60’s called themselves Christian in Census;
 - Only 59% of 18 to 30 year olds did
- Ipsos Mori Polls says Christianity in UK is in decline:
 - 1992 – 83% Christian
 - 1997 – 78%
 - 2001 – 74%
 - 2007 – 66% (with 79% over 65’s and only 40% for 18 to 25 years)
- However decline in Christianity is not leading to secular atheism
 - But to a new consumer-orientated religiosity with links to:
 - New Age, holistic medicine, and paganism (Herts police has 2 pagan chaplains!)
within which elements of Christianity and other world faiths are incorporated.
- The decline in Christianity is not due to
 - a rise in secular atheism – despite Dawkins and Hawkings
 - But a form of secular religion associated with new spiritualities

Church Army thoughts

- Dawkins, like the Church, is trying to hold an early 20thC debate with a 21stC culture
 - no longer asking these questions
 - people have moved from a model based on reason to one in which personal experience is paramount
 - what is true for me may not be true for you
- Fresh Expressions comes from an Ordinal charge to express the Gospel afresh in each generation
 - or we become like tourists speaking louder who don't know the language
 - we find it embarrassing ; they are likely to push us away
 - we fail to realise how wedded to Christian culture evangelism has been
 - in early 1990's research showed 76% of people who became Christians as adults had had a church background
- Children raised (or socialised) into Christian culture
 - 80% at start of 20C
 - 15% now!

My own observations

- Young people distrust organised religion
 - but still see themselves as spiritual
 - but do not see the church as a natural home of spirituality
- Faith groups love their religion
 - but distrust spirituality
 - despite their own being informed by their faith
- A paradox we need to resolve by getting next to them, where they are

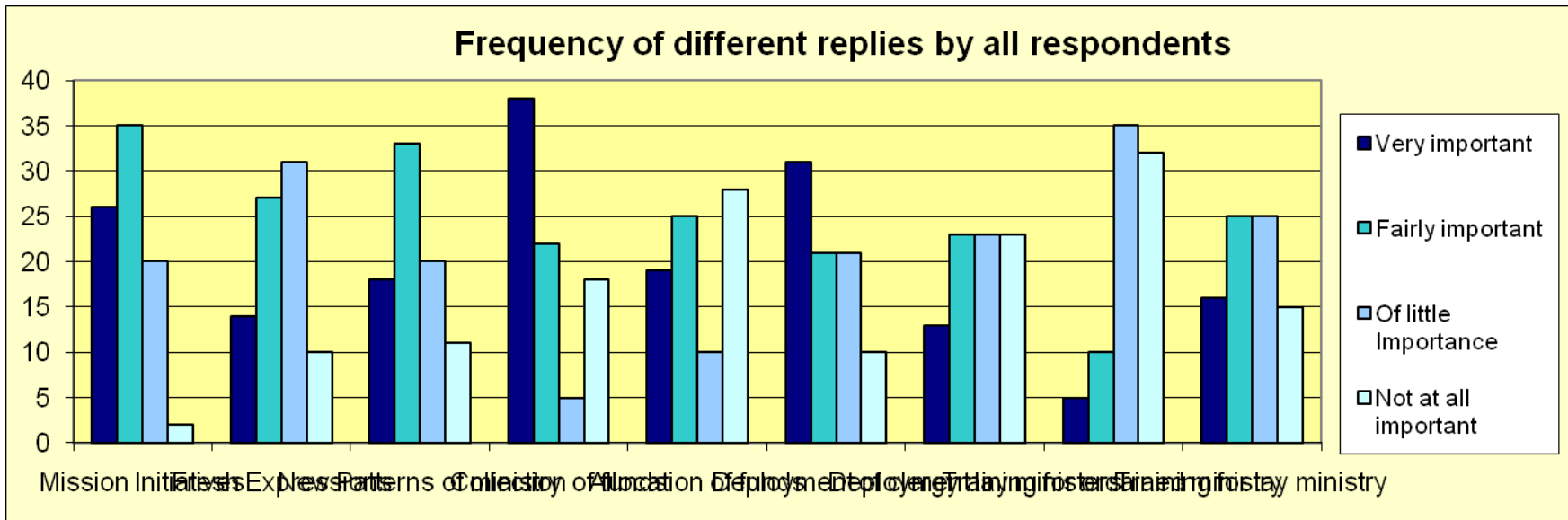
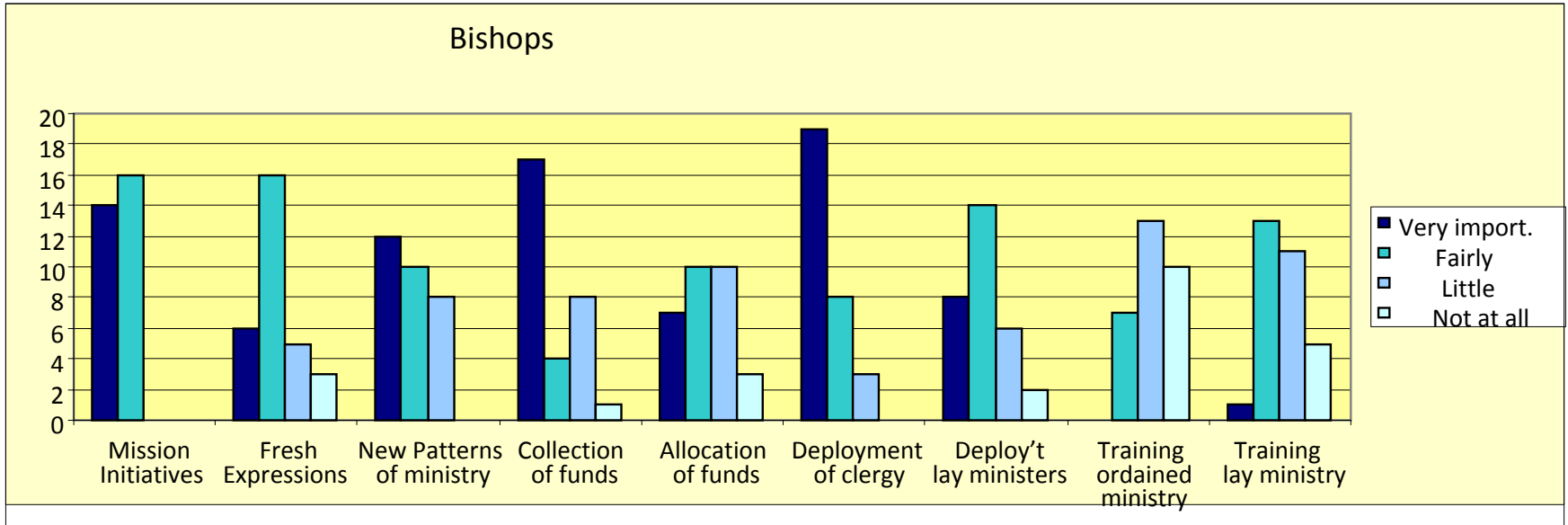
In summary

- First we need to be in these other communities and not expect them to come to us
 - at work, commuting, professional groups, etc.
 - Transform Work UK can help
- We need to develop our understanding of these communities and their needs
 - and respond
- Build church where people are
 - will involve new ways of being church
- Let go of some old buildings and parishes if necessary to focus on new communities
- Reorganise by Diocese and Deanery freeing resources for fresh expressions and old traditions

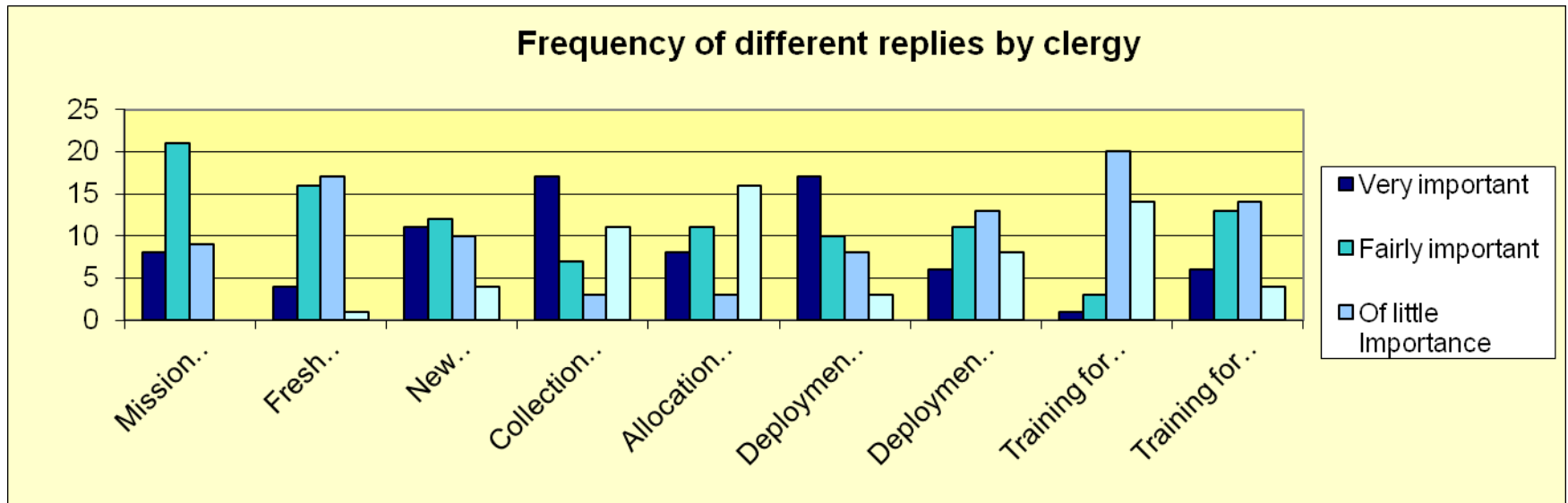
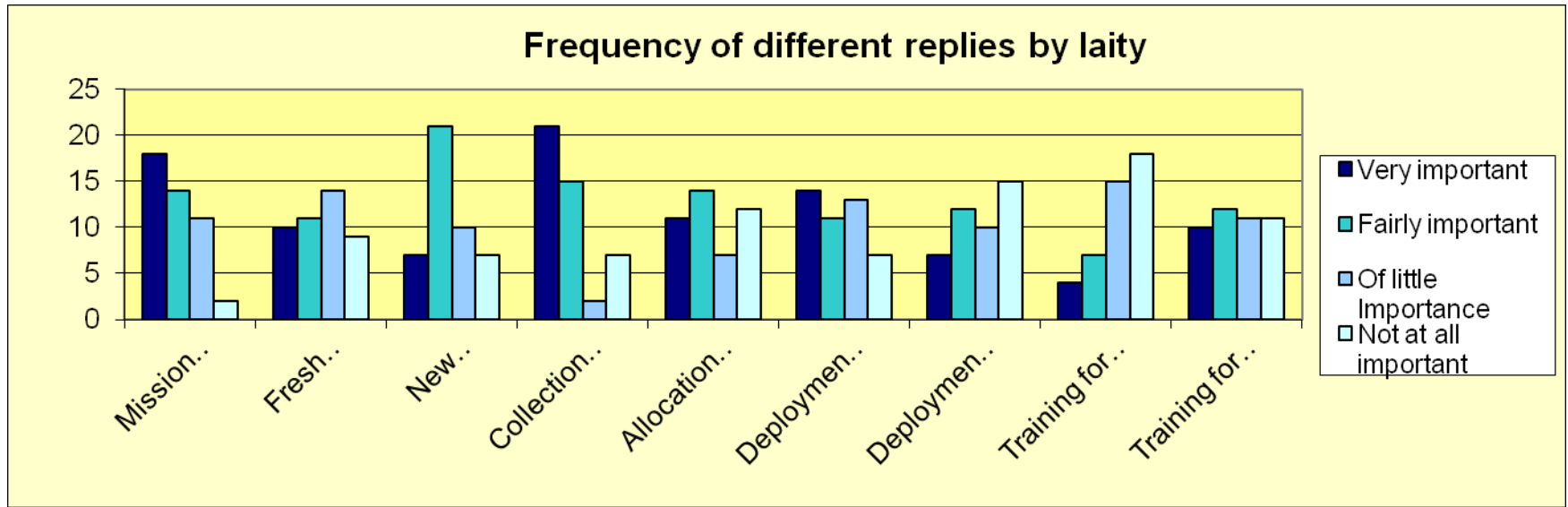
And finally that survey result

- Colin will be doing more analysis but here are the results:
 - of our total group compared to Bishops
 - then comparing us as clergy and laity

Bishops/Conference



Laity/Clergy



Finally

- Please discuss the results in your group for a few moments
- Then please write on a piece of paper for yourself:
 - three points to remind you tomorrow, or for your next deanery occasion, that you plan to take action on as a result of being here for last three days
 - as pragmatic actions as possible for you, not others

