

113th Convention of the Episcopal Church in Utah Report of the Diaconate

Members

- Deanna Sue Adams St. Michael's, Brigham City
- David Christian St. Peter's Clearfield
- Nancy Groshart Church of the Good Shepherd, Ogden
- Marsha Heron St. Elizabeth's, Whiterocks
- Libby Hunter Cathedral Church of St. Mark, Salt Lake City
- Sandra Jones St. Mary's, Provo
- Anita Miner All Saints, Salt Lake City
- Patricia Sanchez St. Peter's Clearfield
- Robert Shoop St. James', Midvale

Mandate

The ministry of a deacon is to represent Christ and his Church in the world, particularly as a servant of those in need; and to assist bishops and priests in the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments.

Goals

To have at least one deacon at every parish within the diocese, with multiple deacons in the larger parishes. We are working with the Commission on Ministry to help people from the congregations of Latinos, Sudanese and Native Americans to discern Diaconal ministries.

Action items

Communication: The value and ministry of the Diaconate is not well known or socialized within the Diocese. We have refined the draft material for a road show to take to each parish.

Education: The current educational requirements for the diaconate are being streamlined.

Most candidates for the diaconate have secular vocations. There needs to be a path to complete the required education that can be accomplished in a timely manner, yet fit in with a full time job outside of the parish.

Analysis of action

We continue to meet with the Bishop regularly to discuss our ministries and work towards a broader understanding of the Diaconate throughout the Diocese.

Findings and conclusions

The ministries of the current deacons are functioning and we provide service to our parishes and the greater world. Expansion of that ministry can only serve to aid in the outreach of the diocese.

Recommendations: No action from convention is required at this time.

Statement of how the group's work fits into the mission strategy of the Diocese (examples)

NG: I have been on the Ogden Interfaith Works steering committee and worked with great folks from many different congregations. We have a lunch meeting every month at a different location with a presentation and those who come, share information about events at their churches and in the community. Annually we have an Interfaith Thanksgiving Service which I organize; the theme is always gratitude. Faiths represented include Buddhist, Muslim, Jewish, Methodist, Lutheran, United Church of Christ Congregational, Unitarian Universalist, Bahai, and more. We always begin with a Native American blessing and then beautiful native flute playing. The American Mothers provide goodies every year at the service. Each person gives a short talk or

reading or a song. We have been blessed to have the Lux Singers join us in the past few years. Multifaith calendars are available for purchase at the service.

DC: The deacons preach every other month, I am the contact person for the prayer chain of the parish, also learning how to maintain the website for the church and take communion to a parishioner who's on hospice care every Sunday that she's strong enough to be able to receive. Occasionally, I lead the adult forum before church.

AM: Coalition of Religious Communities--advocacy for the underserved at the legislature, Rotary Club of Millcreek--serving refugee families, providing meals for families at Hope Lodge and the Ronald MacDonald House. COM deacon liaison, Co-organizer of Latin Day of Discovery, Board member of the Fund for the Diaconate, a national deacon's organization

LH: Even though I officially retired 3 years ago I still remain active at St. Mark's in the traditional roles of servant at the table, proclaiming the Gospel and the dismissal as well as visiting parishioners and taking communion to home bound.

I took to heart the admonition to bring the world to the church and the church to the world and was supported when asked to represent the community on the Board of Wasatch Homeless Healthcare, The 4th Street Clinic. For the past 8 years in this capacity I have become more aware of and sensitive to the needs of the homeless in our community and serve as the Board liaison with the Consumer Advisory Committee.

For many years I have participated in the Coalition of Religious Communities, advocating at the legislature and with elected officials on issues of social justice, attempting to inform and involve parishioners. I have been a member of the Salt Lake Interfaith Roundtable and their February Interfaith Month activities, encouraging the church members and the community to learn more about the faith and culture of our neighbors.

SJ: I have found a particularly interesting niche in this ministry through my involvement with *Flourish Bakery* and its parent *Unshackled*. *Flourish Bakery* is a nonprofit social enterprise that employs individuals in recovery from substance use disorder and/or incarceration in a twelve-month classic apprenticeship in bakery and pastry arts.

I serve the apprentice bakers, hearing their stories and learning about their "needs, concerns and hopes", and by working alongside them not only creating various and wonderful baked goods but also creating a supportive, loving and nurturing community.

As deacons it is one of our charges to "interpret to the Church the needs, concerns and hopes of the world" and with our recent "road show" to St. Luke's and planned trip to St. Mary's (April 15th), *Flourish Bakery* is bringing the bakers and their stories into the church, along with some fabulous baked goods.

When I started on my journey to the diaconate I never imagined a ministry working alongside those with substance use disorder or who had been incarcerated, God does work in mysterious ways and I find always equips us for our ministries.

RS: I have served as deacon at St. James for 33 years. I currently serve at table every Sunday, preach periodically, provide guitar accompaniment at the 8:00 service, and I perform an occasional deacon's distribution for the St. James camp group when the services of a priest are not available. I chair the Pastoral Care Team, co-chair the Worship committee, and lead Morning Prayer for the Tuesday men's group. I maintain the St. James website, convene the diocesan deacons on a periodic basis and am a member of the Diocesan council.

PS I serve at the altar every other month and preach regularly and I visit with residents of St. Mark's Gardens twice a month to provide conversation and manicures. I connect with members of the parish who are ill or shut in. I have been working to help the members of St. Peter's reach

into the community with their time and treasure by offering assistance to with the Fish and Loaves Food Bank and Community Dinners. This Lenten session, I have offered a Parish In-service to update the ribbon inserts in the Prayer Books and Hymnals for our Parish and have two other activities planned for the congregation; a Cross Folding Party on the Saturday before Palm Sunday and a Quiet Day on Wednesday of Holy Week. Each year I have organized a "Night Watch" from the end of services on Maundy Thursday through Good Friday, a Book Study Club and taught Adult Forum. In addition, I am in charge of the Flower Ministry.

DA: I'm still the Utah networker for Episcopal Relief and Development. I go to The St. Mark's Terrace in Brigham City about every six weeks and cut toenails for residents. The social worker, Melissa Lewis, assists with sign-ups and each appointment is for 20 minutes. During the time I'm there, several of the residents come down to visit, some with health concerns to just get an opinion. As a retired R.N. who had been trained in toenail care while I was a Diabetes Instructor in Alabama, I feel qualified to do this as a part of my ministry as a Deacon.