Council Reports

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Altar Guild 2019

2019 has been a busy year for Heather Bauer, Altar Guild Coordinator. Western and Central Nebraska did not get meetings this year, but both are scheduled for 2020. Locations and dates to be determined. By the time Annual Council meets, the Eastern Altar Guild group will have had their fall meeting. It will have taken place on September 28th, at St. Thomas' Church in Falls City. Altar Guilds are open to men and women within the Diocese. I am excited for a new year and a new direction for us to go. Serving on Altar Guild is a very sacred and personal ministry. We serve in response to the love we receive from Christ. You cannot serve without having a relationship with Jesus Christ. The men and women serving on Altar Guild throughout the state truly serve with humility and love for Jesus Christ. I am proud to know these men and women, and I look forward to deepening these relationships in the coming months.

Respectfully Submitted,
Heather E. Bauer
Altar Guild Coordinator
Incarnation Monastery and The Benedictine Way were established just prior to last year’s Annual Council on September 15th, 2018. Incarnation is located at 3020 Belvedere Blvd, and St. Benedict’s House is located at 3014 Belvedere Blvd, the two houses located next to the Church of the Resurrection in North Omaha.

The Benedictine Way is one community consisting of three sub-communities: Monks, Benedictine Service Corps (BSC), and Oblates. The monks take vows for life; BSC members commit to one year of service (which may be extended to two years); and Oblates eventually make promises of commitment to the community after a year’s candidacy.

The three pillars of Benedictine life are prayer, service, and community and members of the Benedictine Service Corps and the Oblates are being trained in this way of discipleship by Brother James Dowd.

The incredible story about The Benedictine Way is its growth in the first year of its existence moving from three in the residential community to ten in the residential community, with an additional four non-residential Oblates. We believe this growth is attributable to the life of prayer, service, and community. For example:

1. **Prayer**: We pray five Offices per day and the Holy Eucharist, except on Monday, which is our Sabbath. All services are open to the public and we are often joined by people outside the community. Some attend several times per week.
2. **Service**: We are attached to many different ministries focusing on the hungry, refugees, children’s ministry, priestly ministry (Brother Jerry Thompson), and through work done at Church of the Resurrection and Trinity Cathedral, both in Omaha, and St. James in Fremont.
3. **Community**: Our life of prayer and service, our meals together, and our willingness to commit to one another in a life of Christian discipleship.

In my work as the Monk in Residence for the Diocese of Nebraska, in addition to my work as the Prior of The Benedictine Way, I have visited fourteen churches of our diocese (not including Trinity Cathedral at which I am present at least ¼ time) leading programs in Centering Prayer, the Jesus Prayer, and other forms of contemplative prayer and preaching at the Sunday Eucharist. I also assist the Bishop with organizing the liturgies for Annual Council and the clergy retreat and serve as the Chaplain for the VIR. My work also includes a great deal of Spiritual Direction of both clergy and lay people throughout the diocese.

It is a joy to serve with and among the clergy and people of the Diocese of Nebraska. I thank God for the opportunity to serve in this way.

Respectfully submitted,

Brother James Dowd, OSB
Incarnation Monastery and The Benedictine Way
Bishop Kemper School for Ministry 2019

BKSM is a partnership of four Episcopal dioceses (KS, NE, WMO, WKS). We also collaborate with one Lutheran Synod (ELCA Central States). We are the largest, best resourced local/diocesan formation program in the Episcopal Church. We have robust programs for future priests and deacons as well as lay leaders. We are often invited to share our story at church-wide meetings. We are a leader in the creation of new networks in theological education that will enable sharing of resources and mutual accountability in faithfulness to the Church’s mission today. The quality of our programs has been recognized by Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, MO, and Claremont School of Theology in California. Both accept all our courses for graduate credit and provides full access to their library resources (many now online).

Recent Highlights

- **Enrollment** of new students in fall 2019 continued to grow. We were blessed to welcome three new diaconal students from the Diocese of Nebraska: Mark Fredrickson (All Saints, Omaha), Roy Phillips (All Saints, Omaha), and Rebecca Smith (St. Augustine of Canterbury, Omaha). Marcia White (Holy Trinity, Lincoln) is pursuing the certificate in lay preaching, and Kyle Smith (Trinity Cathedral, Omaha) is finishing his work for the certificate in lay evangelism. Other Nebraskans have joined us for single courses.

- **Location**: While our hub is still the state-of-the-art facility at Grace Cathedral in Topeka, KS, video technology allows us to include students from any location. For instance, we currently have a presbyteral student who joins us from Navajoland. We are forming a cohort of diaconal students in far western Kansas. We are very open to the creation of other satellites. We want our excellent courses to be available to all.

- **Continuing Education**: BKSM offered these summer courses in 2019: Introduction to Asian Religions (part of the curriculum called for by the General Convention, which urges students to be familiar with the variety of faiths in our current society); How to Form Teams for Grief Ministry; and How to Engage in Difficult Conversations. We regularly offer Biblical Greek and Leadership seminars. We hope to announce our courses for the summer of 2020 soon.

- **New Programs**: a generous gift has spurred creation of a lay program in grief ministry. Two summer courses received our strongest enrollments yet. We will plan curriculum for a certificate in grief ministries as soon as possible.

- **Grants**: Thanks to the generosity of our partners at the Iona Collaborative of the Seminary of the Southwest, four BKSM graduates are now participating in the Thriving In Bi-Vocational Ministry program funded by the Lilly Foundation. Cohorts meet face to face with peers from around the country once a year and regularly via video as they pursue work in preaching, clinical pastoral education, and spiritual growth. New cohorts will form for the summer of 2020. We urge additional alumni/ae to apply. This is a high-quality way to receive vital support and continue one’s growth in ministry.

- **Scholarships**: We continue our commitment to making BKSM affordable for all. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we have considerable scholarship funds for persons pursuing both ordained and lay ministry. No one should miss this opportunity due to scarcity of funds.
• **Spirituality:** At BKSM we believe that nurturing deep relationships with God is more important than anything else. We have added a second required course in this area, Anglican Spirituality. We encourage all of our students to have a spiritual director and to consider making vows as associates of a religious order. We are very grateful for the resources provided by the Benedictine Way. We anticipate planning a retreat there in 2020.

The Diocese of Nebraska continues to make such critical contributions to mission. We are so grateful for the firm support and wise counsel of Bishop Barker; the visionary board leadership of Ven. Betsy Bennett (board chair) and Rev. Judi Yeates; the expert financial advice of Beth Byrne; and the first-rate instruction of Ven. Bennett, Dean Craig Loya, Dr. Melissa Tubbs Loya, Rev. Dr. Charles Peek, and Rev. Ben Varnum. It is wonderful to see the growth of our alumni/ae community in Nebraska. As we strive to offer our best service, we trust that great things lie ahead!

Respectfully Submitted,
The Very Reverend Dr. Don H. Compier, Dean
The Rev. Casey Rohleder, Communications Director
December 15, 2018

The newly re-organized Bishop & Trustees of the Diocese of Nebraska met for the first time on Saturday, December 15, at St. David’s Episcopal Church in Lincoln. The group established norms for participation throughout the year to come. Bishop Barker and Canon Easton gave a presentation on values, demographics, and trends in the Diocese of Nebraska and the larger Episcopal Church. Jeff Pirruccello, Treasurer, provided an introduction to the financial structure of the Diocese. Woody Bradford, Chancellor, oriented the group to diocesan property ownership. The group considered a request from the Rev. Ernesto Medina regarding an equity agreement and approved housing allowances for clergy employed by the Diocese. In accordance with the process outlined in Title IV, Canon 16, the Bishop and Trustees approved the appointment of Jamie Street Baker to fill a vacated seat on the diocesan Disciplinary Board. The group considered requests for capital funds from two parishes, denying the requests but recommending that the parishes apply for funding through the Revolving Loan Fund. The meeting closed in prayer.

February 9, 2019

The Bishop and Trustees of the Diocese of Nebraska met on Saturday, February 9th. Members could choose to either meet in person at the Clarkson Center in Omaha or attend the meeting virtually via video conference. The meeting opened with prayer and reflection questions. Canon Easton facilitated a conversation regarding the Bishop’s Society Curacy Program as well as parish transitions throughout the Diocese. A request was made for volunteers to populate the new canonically mandated sub-committees of the Bishop and Trustees. Bishop Barker reported on recent conversations with the leadership of Trinity Memorial in Crete. The Bishop then gave an explanation of how Faith Asking is formulated and how re-assessments are considered. A discussion and thorough review of parish reassessment requests followed. Beth Byrne, Director of Finance, provided a review of financial statements and the diocesan budget. Jeff Pirruccello, Treasurer, provided an overview of First National Bank’s year-end report. The meeting closed in prayer.

April 26 – 27, 2019

The Bishop and Trustees of the Diocese of Nebraska met for a retreat on Friday, April 26 and Saturday, April 27 at St. Mark’s Pro-Cathedral in Hastings. Bishop Barker opened the meeting with prayer and reflection questions. Group norms were posted and reviewed. Canon Easton facilitated a conversation on consensus-based decision making. Bishop Barker reported on a recent meeting with the leadership of Trinity Memorial, Crete, where the congregation proposed transferring ownership of the church building and grounds to Iglesia de Jesucristo, a congregation that has been renting from Trinity Memorial for 23 years. Trinity Memorial provided a written request for the Bishop and Trustees to consider. The Bishop and Trustees voted to accept the proposal for sale/leaseback, subject to negotiation of detailed terms. Jeff
Pirruccello, Treasurer, updated the group of The Rev. Ernesto Medina’s equity arrangement, which the group voted to extend for two months with new terms. Beth Byrne, Director of Finance, reported on loan requests from St. Andrew’s (Omaha) and All Saints. The loan requests were approved. Ms. Byrne reviewed financial statements and provided updates on Faith Asking and flood relief funds. Bishop Barker announced the appointment of The Rev. Deacon Teresa Houser as Vice-President of the Bishop and Trustees. The meeting closed with prayer.

September 7, 2019

The Bishop and Trustees of the Diocese of Nebraska met on Saturday, September 7, at St. Mark’s Pro-Cathedral in Hastings. Bishop Barker opened the meeting with prayer and reflection questions. Canon Easton reviewed group norms and oriented the Bishop and Trustees to their canonical responsibilities as outlined in Canon 14.1. Beth Byrne, Director of Finance, provided a review of the budget-writing process. Bishop Barker reflected on budget priorities and mission imperatives. Brother James Dowd updated the group on the mission and ministry of the Benedictine Way. Ms. Byrne provided a thorough presentation of the draft budget, Faith-Asking, and anticipated income and expenses. A motion to approve the proposed Faith-Asking formula was adopted. Following discussion, a motion was adopted to approve the proposed budget for consideration by the Annual Council. Bishop Barker provided an update on several ongoing property issues in the diocese and informed the Bishop and Trustees that St. Mark’s in Creighton voted to close. The meeting closed with prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
The Rev. Canon Elizabeth Easton
Camp Canterbury 2019

One hundred and eleven youth from twenty DioNeb parishes gathered at Camp Canterbury this summer for a week of fun, friends, and Jesus!

As many of you know, we’ve been trending upward in camp registration/participation over the past five years. We reached capacity early in the registration period this year, and for the first time in my memory, we had to close registration before the deadline. Strong participation is a great problem to have and we will spend some time this fall and winter working on some space solving solutions so that everyone can have a place at camp.

This year our camp theme was KNOWN and LOVED. Through scripture study, stories and small groups we explored who we are, who God is, how we can know God and how God knows and loves us. (Spoiler Alert: God loves us unconditionally!)

We did all the usual camp stuff: we played gaga ball, slothed out in hammock village, and crafted to our heart’s content. We went on nature hikes, hit the swimming pool, and ate s’mores. We came together for meals and worship and singing. And we learned that we are God’s beloved creation. It was a good week. A very good week.

Due in large part to the following amazing people who served on our camp team this summer. Counselors: Rev. John Adams, Deacon Wes Agar, Rev. Tony Anderson, Deacon LaClaire Atkins, Peter David, Rev. Susanna Des Marais, Rev. Amanda Gott, Dean Katie Hargis, Heath Hovendick, Kate Kielson, Chris Mattson, Amy Meyer, Tara O’Shea, Trudy Schnell, Kyle Smith, Francine Watkins, Rev. Pam Williams, and Rev. Keith Winton. Ellen King came on staff this summer as co-camp director. Ellen is a member of Trinity Cathedral and has great experience working church summer camp in the diocease of Kansas. She is a great addition to our camp team!

Mad love to our camp nurses, Schuyler Wilson and Stephanie Burge, who are amazingly skilled healthcare providers that tended to the needs of one hundred and thirty-five people for a week. A shout out to the Rev Mark Selvey for his continued support of camp and to volunteer nature hiker, Cal Williams.

Special thanks to Bishop J. Scott Barker and Canon Elizabeth Easton for bringing the mobile office to camp for the entire week. Your support and participation at camp is priceless and deeply appreciated. And Bishop, your disc golf game is on point.

Thanks also to our generous and talented office staff, Lachisha Baskin and Beth Byrne, who do a great deal of behind the scene work on camp. I have a deep appreciation for their support of camp, but also of me personally. Thanks for helping me keep tabs on the details.

Camp is an amazingly complex puzzle, but each year – through the grace of God - the pieces fall into place. We give thanks for the support we receive each year and are looking forward to camp 2020!

Faithfully submitted,
Noelle Ptomey, Diocesan Camp Director
The 2018-19 academic year was significant for the future of Clarkson College, as a near perfect accreditation report was achieved from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and transitions took place within College leadership and the Board of Directors. The continued dedication of the entire college community to meet our Mission of preparing and educating students has remained the heartbeat and voice of the institution.

Looking back, the academic year also resulted in many accomplishments to be proud of including: 1) the completion of 18/19 projects necessary to fill gaps recognized as we prepared for the HLC reaccreditation site visit in March, 2) national recognition for the eighth year in a row from U.S. News & World Report for our Online Graduate Nursing Program, 3) continued high board pass rates and job placement rates among our graduates, and 4) approval of our Master Plan including the renovation of the skills and simulation lab. Further, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) published the 2019-2020 Strategic Plan entitled The Path to 150 outlining annual projects and multi-year goals (CSFs). This document provides a foundation for a long-term strategic plan that will culminate in 2038, with a celebration of the 150th anniversary of the college.

These examples make me proud of where we have been and give me great confidence in where we are headed as a Mission-led organization.

**ACCREDITATION**

Clarkson College celebrated the successful accreditation visit March 25-26, 2019 from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). In June, the College received reaccreditation affirmation through the 2028-2029 academic year. The only follow-up item to complete is an interim report by January 15, 2020 to reflect board governance updates are finalized and in practice. The College also had a successful accreditation visit from ACEN in October of 2018 for reaccreditation of our BSN program, initial accreditation for our DNP program, and for our MSN focused visit in February 2019. The College is now preparing for reaccreditation visits from CAPTE for our Physical Therapist Assistant program in October 2020 and CAHIIM for specific Healthcare Business Programs in 2020-2021.

**ACADEMIC PROGRAMS & SERVICES**

The commitment to quality education at Clarkson College is evident in the high overall licensure exam pass-rate (96%) and employment rate (98%). All Clarkson College student and program outcomes are annually updated and available on the College website for transparency purposes.

During the last year, academic leadership reviewed program curriculum to recommend updates and ensure course and department materials continue to stay current. The most prevalent program changes this year was the advancement of our Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Degree with the enrollment of BSN-DNP students and to include a Nurse Anesthesia track beginning spring 2020. Additionally, the development of our Medical Assisting Program in Professional Development was completed and launched in January 2019.

**Quality improvement initiatives** are a significant component in our Annual Strategic Plan (*The Path to 150*: Tab 5). The following is an update of the on-going efforts in academics, student services and general quality, along with many annual projects:
• **Academics:** Employees are working diligently to develop a Clarkson College Readiness Program for both traditional and non-traditional students, which will begin in 2020 and be further developed through 2025. New academic programming is also an initiative with focuses in mental health, medical imagining informatics, community health, pre-health degrees, and healthcare business informatics.

• **Students Services:** Employees are creating a college-wide framework to engage new potential partners and to better nurture existing relationships. The long-term outcomes focus on increasing enrollment, preserving a strong reputation, and creating widespread awareness of the College with action plans through 2025.

• **General Quality:** As the College builds future initiatives on a solid foundation plans are underway in developing a well campus, implementing the College Master Plan for facilities and student learning, and support continued compliance with all applicable regulatory bodies. The College is also reviewing best practices for online testing, an in-depth review of College scholarships, tuition, and fee structure, better alumni outreach using advanced technology, and further developing a campus safety program. Our general quality initiatives lead to top quality students, employees, and overall outcomes.

• **Assessment** is a continual process on our campus: We have focused this year on further developing academic, service department objectives, and connecting department outcomes to our institutional goals, which are our five student success skills (communication, critical thinking, technology, professionalism, and diversity). We have also focused on measurement of co-curricular assessment that are defined as activities, programs and learning experiences outside of the classroom that complement student learning, are intentional, and support academic success. Students overall remain satisfied as shared in a few samples below:

  o New Student Experience Survey (Fall 2018): students reported the following advantages of Clarkson College versus competitor schools: “smaller class sizes, outstanding reviews, flexible school schedule, reputation, and better clinical opportunities, higher standards, and our staff and teachers”.

  o Graduation Exit Survey (Fall 2018): students reported the following advantages of Clarkson College versus competitor schools: “Clarkson is caring and compassionate about their students’ wellbeing, more clinical time, excellent culture, staff is helpful and professional, and reduced tuition with Nebraska Medicine”.

  o Assessment action plans are also located on the College Profile page of the Clarkson College website.

**FINANCES & PERSONNEL**

The 2018-19 Academic Year closed with a positive variance to the Operating Budget of $225 thousand, with credit going to the College directors for fiscal discipline throughout the year. Clarkson College practices accountability through monthly variance reports and budget explanations during Operations Council.
The 2019-20 Academic Year budget was approved including a modest tuition increase and new positions to ensure students will have the support needed for success:

**Tuition** was approved to increase 3.0% maintaining our proud stance as the most competitive of all private colleges in Nebraska.

The Employee Opinion Survey was conducted in January 2019 (prior to leadership change) with a 75% participation rate (115 employees) resulting in an overall positive engagement score of 85.1%. Although we are proud of the score, administration recognizes there is still work to do to increase trust in leadership and support from the Board of Directors based on the survey results. Employee feedback overwhelmingly recommended improvements such as more transparency from leadership, the lack of resources, outdated facilities and the need for long-term planning. Within the past six months, the Executive Leadership Team has focused on these important topics of concern and are making considerable strides. Beyond these areas, the following are a few of the outstanding comments made by employees on the survey:

- “This is a quality organization with a great reputation. I would recommend anyone work here.”
- “Clarkson College Values are strongly demonstrated by our Community.”
- “I feel that Clarkson College is my family/home away from home!”
- “Not a better place to work in Omaha!”

**ENROLLMENT**
The 2018-19 enrollment goals continued to be a focus throughout the year with 506 new students to the College and 1,178 students overall.

**FACILITIES**
Several capital improvements were completed in 2018-19, the Master Plan was approved in September 2018 by the Board of Directors identifying top gaps and needed improvements including the lack of classrooms, student study space, office space and maintenance repairs. In April 2019, a building condition assessment was complete providing critical, poor, fair and good categorizations of the general architectural, mechanical and electrical systems throughout campus. Based on the condition assessment the College acknowledges a near $10M deficit in deferred maintenance of which a four-year projected capital distribution recommendation was presented to the Board of Directors in June 2019.

The science lab renovation and a water intrusion repair in the residence hall were complete by the fall 2018 semester giving students updated, safe learning, and living environments. A renovation of the simulation and skills lab was approved, and the project is scheduled for completion prior to the start of the fall 2019 semester.

Finally, in March 2019, Clarkson College obtained occupancy of the former Clarkson Family Practice building located on the corner of 42nd and Douglas streets for renovation. The building space provides three new classrooms, student study spaces, a faculty training area with the relocation of our Center for Teaching Excellence and 31 faculty offices. During the summer 2020 semester when the renovation is complete, the new space will allow all faculty currently with offices in the student residence hall apartments to relocate into proper office facilities. Students, faculty and staff are looking forward to the much-needed expansion on campus.
CONCLUSION
The Clarkson College Master Plan (2018) and the 2019-2020 Strategic Plan, including The Path to 150, (three to five-year projections) are published and the administrative team has presented to the Board a thorough assessment and projection of the College needs and opportunities for growth in both academic programming and campus facilities. Currently, the College environment is positive as we move into the next academic year, with consistently high outcomes including student and employee satisfaction. As health care demands continue to change, Clarkson College stands ready to meet the needs of our community partners through continuing to graduate high quality, ethical and compassionate health care professionals.

Respectfully submitted,
Aubray Orduña, Ed.D., MSN, RN
Interim President, Clarkson College
Clergy Compensation Committee 2019

The Bishop’s Advisory Committee for Clergy Compensation conducts an annual review of the financial compensation of the full-time clergy of the Diocese of Nebraska and prepares guidelines to assist congregations with their negotiations with clergy for compensation.

In order to successfully call and retain clergy to serve Nebraska congregations, we must compensate clergy at a level that is competitive on a regional and national level.

The 2019 recommended compensation schedule includes only a minimum salary standard for the diocese. Parishes should consider years of service; cost of living adjustments; merit increases when appropriate; and market conditions when negotiating salary. The diocesan office can provide resources to help a parish determine current market rates for clergy compensation.

Other Recommendations:

- It is a best practice for the Vestry and Rector to arrange for an Annual Mutual Ministry Review.
- It is a best practice that conversation about compensation be held at a time separate from the Mutual Ministry Review. Compensation conversations are a good time to discuss any “merit” or “time in service” increases.
- Annual planning retreats for Vestry and Clergy provide good opportunities to discuss the goals and work plans of Clergy and Lay Leadership for the next year.
- **We recommend a 2% cost of living adjustment for all clergy for 2019 to account for inflation.**
- Travel expense reimbursement is to be paid at the current IRS rate. (See exception for supply clergy below)
- Full time clergy should be covered only under the Diocesan Medical Insurance Plan or have insurance that is fully comparable to that of the diocesan plan through spousal insurance or other preexisting insurance. If the diocesan “high deductible” plan is selected, parishes are required to cover at least ½ of the deductible. The parish should fund the clergy’s Health Savings Account at the beginning of each quarter.
- All incoming full time should be paid 7.65% in addition to their cash compensation to offset “SECA” taxes. See notes under “base for clergy compensation”.
- It is a best practice for priests serving in full–time paid cures to take a time of sabbatical leave every seven years. Clergy should negotiate the terms of sabbatical leave – including how supply coverage and sabbatical support will be paid for - at the time of their hiring or during their annual review.
- Family leave for newborns and adoptions are important for both mothers and fathers. Per CPG guidelines, we recommend at least twelve weeks of leave for birthing parents, and at least three weeks of leave for non-birthing parents.

Supply Priest Compensation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Rate</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One service, one location</td>
<td>$100 plus travel reimbursement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two services, one location</td>
<td>$135 plus travel reimbursement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each additional service on location</td>
<td>$35.00 per service extra</td>
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For example, if a church has four services over a weekend, the compensation would be $205 plus travel reimbursement. Travel reimbursement rates may be negotiated by the parish and clergy for supply work. A reimbursement rate of 28 cents per mile is recommended.

2019 – Base for Clergy Compensation

The minimum compensation standard for a priest in the Diocese of Nebraska working full time is $50,000 except for curates, whose compensation shall be negotiated between the priest, the diocese, and the parish to whom the curate is assigned.

“SECA” tax of 7.65% of compensation should be added for all new incoming clergy and should be strongly considered by those parishes who do not currently offer it. *

The total compensation figure above does not include health, life and disability insurance or other benefits as may be negotiated between the clergy and parish.

Church pension fund payments are mandatory for all regularly employed priests and deacons. The definition of regularly employed applies if one of these are met:

- You have a letter of agreement (or other contract of employment) your employer
- You are duly called to your position by your bishop, vestry, or rector
- Your position has a formal title (for example, rector or priest-in-charge) indicating an ongoing substantial relationship with your employer
- Your employer issues you a Form W-2 (or equivalent)
- You are scheduled to work at least 20 hours per week

IRS rules for clergy are different than for a normal employment situation.

Compensation (excluding benefits) can be divided between “salary” and “housing”.

Please contact the diocesan office for guidance in how to set each category, especially if the parish supplies a rectory as part of compensation. Otherwise, clergy can designate whatever portion of total compensation they wish as “housing allowance” within IRS guidelines and as designated by the vestry each year in December.

WHEN ISSUING A W-2 FORM FOR CLERGY PLEASE CONSULT WITH BETH BYRNE AT THE DIOCESAN OFFICE.

*Clergy are considered “self-employed” for IRS tax purposes and pay the full 15.5% tax on their earnings.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Dr. John Schaefer, Clergy Compensation Chair
The Commission on Ministry (COM) met twice during 2018. In January we met with 3 aspirants for the priesthood and recommended them for postulancy. In August we met with two postulants and recommended them for candidacy for the priesthood.

Several members of the COM participated in the Vocational Inventory Retreat this summer. This retreat allows the COM members to get to know the aspirants much better prior to their meeting with the COM.

The COM provides each postulant/candidate with a liaison to help them through the ordination process. This person maintains contact with the postulant/candidate, prays for them, and is a contact with the Diocese of Nebraska. The liaison program has been popular with both the COM members and the postulants/candidates.

Respectfully Submitted,
Margaret Schaefer
Chair Commission on Ministry
Cursillo 2019

The Cursillo Ministry maintained the focus of offering a weekend to “Help on Your Spiritual Journey” for Christians. The Secretariat did not have candidates to offer Cursillo #27 come forward the fall of 2018 nor the beginning of 2019. A recommendation was presented to Bishop Barker that a weekend for the year 2019 not be held. His response was to begin the process for the year 2020.

Cursillo #27 has been accepted by Co-Rectoras Heather Bauer, St. Matthew’s – Lincoln and Erin (Sloan) Rhian, St. Augustine’s – Elkhorn. Pam Wright, St. Augustine’s – Elkhorn and Natalie Garden, Trinity – Norfolk will assist the Co-rectoras. The Immaculata Monastery & Spirituality Center in Norfolk will accommodate this event in the weekend of May 28, 2020 – May 31, 2020. Please mark your calendars and save the date! I am pleased to share that the Cursillo #27 team formation is work in progress. Here is your opportunity to share your gifts and be involved.

Here’s an update on the Secretariat activity – due to retirement plans, our Cursillo Advisor – Nancy Benton-Brown has moved to Wisconsin. Nancy is supported by family and church members. Darryl Brown now resides in the Omaha area where he, too, can be near family. It is with deep gratitude that I offer a BIG THANK YOU to these caring, sharing people. The many hours of time, direction, driving and listening are appreciated. Nancy shared these thoughts for going forward in life – Relax, Trust God and Do Not be Afraid.

The Cursillo Ministry will go forward and be offered in the Diocese of Nebraska – with God’s help.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Hejl, Interim Lay Director
Daughters of the King 2019

Officers:
President - Carol Ott, St. Augustines, Elkhorn
Vice President - Mary Falkowski moved to PA - to be replaced by Nan Smutko, Blair
Secretary - Carol Schlismann, Bishop XI Chapter, Norfolk
Treasurer - Marjorie Shaw of St Martha’s, Papillion
Chaplain - Mother Ruth Jaynes, Daughter at Large, Blair

Membership
Nebraska Assembly has 104 members with 11 Senior Chapters; however, two are inactive. Joyfully, in June 2019 we had a service of Institution for a new Bishop XI Chapter with 5 Daughters at Large now who have transitioned to it. We believe it is the first Bishop’s Chapter in the nation to meet monthly via Zoom video conferencing. The North Platte Chapter had been inactive for several years, but 10 new members were admitted September 23, 2018 and the chapter was re-dedicated.

Progress on Current Goals
1. *Increase number of new members by piloting videoconferencing for formation classes to reach women across Nebraska.* Completed the first in nation Zoom videoconference formation classes in Fall 2018 with 9 attending and Sandra Squires leading. Membership has increased across all chapters by 16.
2. *Enhance communication and sharing among Chapters and DALs.* Secretary and President have actively share news and information via emails to Nebraska Daughters. A new Zoom Chapter Presidents Club was enthusiastically initiated in May and will meet quarterly.
3. *Continue diocesan-wide service project with Friends of Tamar and Magdalene Omaha.* Highly productive tote sewing day in February when 53 totes were sewn and 32 more cut out. Daughters have participated in two Tote Packing parties filling 100 totes each time with supplies needed when leaving an abusive situation.
4. *Organize and staff the prayer room at Annual Council.* Accomplished in Scottsbluff and participating in 2019 In Bellevue.
5. *Start one new Junior Daughters Chapter.* No interest to date.
6. *Develop guidelines to improve clarity of fiscal responsibilities and officers’ roles.* Budget was developed for 2nd year with a minimum treasury amount set at $1,500. Audit checklist was developed and audit was completed. Treasurer Reporting Form and Request for Reimbursement Form was developed. Guidelines for Duties of the Diocesan Officers were developed as a 5-page working document to be refined over the next year.

Other Activities:
- Participated with ECW in the planning of Nebraska’s *The Post Triennial Convention Reporting and Worship Day* that was attended by 30 women and 4 men summer 2018.
- Proposed amendments to the Bylaws were passed at June 2019 Annual Meeting.
- Participated as host for August 2019 Diocesan Assembly Leadership Instruction (DALI) and for Province VI Retreat at St Benedict Center near Schuyler, NE with 41 attending. We were blessed with Bishop Barker’s greetings and lunch with us. In addition to 30 sets of new towels and 22 new sets of bed sheets, our offering of $1,003 was given to Christian Outreach Program of Elkhorn to families affected by the floods.

Nebraska Daughters are pleased to serve Our Lord, Our Bishop, Our Priests, and Our Parishes. May we continue to *Walk His Way* and be part of the Episcopal Branch of the Jesus Movement.

Respectfully Submitted,
Carol Ott, President, Diocesan Assembly of Nebraska
Deacons Report 2019

In the past year, deacons in the Diocese of Nebraska have continued to gather some Saturday mornings for Conversations for Deacons. Bishop Barker was able to join us for our summer and early fall conversations, providing an opportunity for us to hear about his expectations and hopes for deacons in our diocese. Each conversation focuses on a different topic. We plan to continue these gatherings in the year ahead, aiming at meeting quarterly. Dates and locations are announced through the Ministry Memo and Spreading the Word. We have expanded our invitation to include postulants and candidates for ordination to the vocational diaconate as well as those already ordained.

In June, I attended the Association for Episcopal Deacons (AED) Triennial conference in Providence, Rhode Island. The theme was The Power of Hope: Transformation through Reconciliation and Relationship. The AED leadership had hoped to increase the value of these Triennial conferences for those who attend, and this was an outstanding conference. We don’t yet know the location for the 2022 conference, but our hope is to have some support available for a number of deacons from Nebraska to attend and be inspired by the opportunity to network with deacons from other dioceses and learn more about the understanding of our vocation in the Episcopal Church today.

Our deacons continue to serve people in need in a variety of settings, and to advocate around issues that affect human welfare. Three people from our diocese have entered the first year of diaconal studies at the Bishop Kemper School for Ministry this fall. With all that is happening in our nation and our world that affects the well-being of us all, the Church needs more deacons than ever to lead in the ministry of serving people in the margins and of interpreting the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world to the Church. We are looking for people who are faithful members of a worshipping community but whose passions and interests extend beyond their own parishes and families to their wider communities, and who have the ability and willingness to interpret the concerns of the world to the Church.

Respectfully submitted,

Archdeacon Betsy Blake Bennett
Diocesan Archives 2019

Again in 2019, the Diocesan Archive has had a busy year, not so much for the organization of, or acquisition of, new materials, but for research. Probably the most “fun” I have is digging on a query for someone seeking more information about a church or person in the diocesan past. There have been multiple such requests for information during the year for which the data in our archives has assisted in providing answers.

I continue to work on the short biographies influential Nebraska Episcopalians. As before, my primary focus remains on women, laity in general, and people of color. We have had few submissions this year, but we continue to post those entries we do have. I am grateful to Kyle Smith of the Trinity Cathedral offices for posting the biographical submissions to a Facebook page each month. I believe it is important to continue adding individuals to that list. I have several ideas about how we might use information about the contributions of those figures beyond this year. I would encourage any and all of us to continue to submit the names of individuals important to the work of the Diocese of Nebraska. Each submission should:

1) Name the individual, his/her parish, and an important date. That can be a birth date, consecration date, ordination date, death date, date a group (such as a guild) was formed. It is helpful to have more than one potential date in case we have another entry for that specific date.

2) About 150 to 200 words of biographical info – specifically to include why the person is important to the parish – e.g. she like to cook, or he led Bible studies.

3) Include the name of the submitter.

4) Send them to me at jlbhrens@unomaha.edu

Through the year, I have continued to research and write short essays about aspects of diocesan history. This year I have worked primarily on short narrative histories of the parishes memorialized in the Cathedral clerestory. Of the thirty-two parishes represented by windows in the clerestory, one-half no longer exist. But their congregations were an important part of civic and church history in their respective communities. I have prepared charts of the many parishes, missions, and preaching stations that have existed over the years in the diocese. The charts are organized by year, from 1856 to 2013. More than anything, these help me to reference sources of information, but if you have a question about a parish or mission, please ask.

Lastly, don’t hesitate to contact me to seek information about anything related to diocesan history. I love researching the responses. I can be reached at the above e-mail. And many thanks to all of you who “Keep the Faith.”

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Behrens, Historiographer and Archivist
Communications 2019

This past spring, I was in Denver for the annual gathering of the Episcopal Communicators group when we all heard the news of author Rachel Held Evans’ untimely death. This seemed to be an appropriate group to be in the midst of when we lost such a formidable figure in contemporary Christianity. “RHE” as she was affectionately known on social media, wrote about radical inclusiveness and diversity in the church, and did not hold back in challenging us all to seek an authentic engagement with our church. In the weeks which followed, I was reflecting on her works and came across a quote from her last book, Inspired, which perfectly describes what I am trying to do in my role as Director of Communications: “We are storytelling creatures because we are fashioned in the image of a storytelling God. May we never neglect the gift of that. May we never lose our love for telling the tale.”

As this is my second Annual Council as a member of the Bishop’s staff, I am inspired every week by the stories of the God’s work in our Nebraska communities.

The Presiding Bishop and his staff have established several church-wide evangelism efforts with a simple, but powerful mission statement: “Episcopalians are passionate about proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ in our words and actions. Through the spiritual practice of evangelism, we seek, name and celebrate Jesus’ loving presence in the stories of all people - then invite everyone to MORE.”

As the curator of the diocese-wide channels of communication, I feel the best way we can seek, name and celebrate together is to share each other’s stories of good news, good work, and opportunities to seek to better know Jesus.

Here is a bit of what we accomplished this past year:

2019 Communications highlights:

- The primary method for routine communication continues to be the weekly diocese Ministry Memo email, which is sent to over 1,000 people weekly and is now archived on the diocese website.

- The diocese webpage, www.dioneb.org, has been refreshed aesthetically and navigation simplified.

- The diocese Facebook page at facebook.com/dioceseofnebraska has over 1,000 followers and continues to be an easy way to communicate simple messages to the diocese, arrange for events, share photos and videos, etc. This year, I integrated the diocese prayer calendar to Facebook each week. Further, with the help of diocese archivist Jo Behrens, I created a new Facebook page dedicated to telling the stories of Nebraska Episcopalians who came before us. Be sure to “like” facebook.com/DioceseofNebraskaArchives.

- This spring, during the floods which devastated many Nebraska communities, I worked with the Episcopal News Service and others to help tell the story of the disaster and the heroic work of so many.

- Finally, I believe photos can tell our stories in ways that sometimes words along cannot. Every week, in the Ministry Memo, I try and include a photo which tells a story of God’s work in the Cornhusker State. If you have a photo to share, please let me know!

I am thankful for this opportunity to work with Bishop Barker, the staff, and all of you. I look forward to a new season of storytelling and evangelism together. Let’s never “lose our love for telling the tale”!

Respectfully submitted,

Kyle Smith, Director of Communications
ksmith@episcopal-ne.org
Diocese Disaster Preparedness 2019

This past year has been a very trying for the state of Nebraska. We had the following cities in Nebraska the diocese assisted folks with gift cards for gas, food and clothing: Bellevue, Columbus, Falls City, Fremont, Kearney, Nebraska City, Norfolk, North Platte, Peru, Plattsmouth, Verdigre, and Winslow.

We which to thank everyone who contributed to the Disaster Relief Fund for the Diocese.

We strongly suggest that each church in our diocese complete at least the Bronze Plan that was passed out to all churches. If you need a new copy or help filling the plan out, please let us know. When you complete the plan, copy it and send a copy to Dn Wes Agar care of the diocesan office.

It is better to be pro-active then reactive to these plans. You don’t what to write one after you have had a flood, fire, or lost your roof to a hail storm or the whole building from a tornado. Think positive as you work through them.

We want to work with each parish if they would like our help and have them all create a disaster preparedness plan and file a copy of it with the Diocesan office. Please call us to schedule a meeting to fill out the paperwork and/or help with the forms. Phone numbers are Deacon Wes Agar 402.981.9111; Charles Plantz 308.360.2025; Mother Mary Hendricks 308.340.8996.

We would like to make presentations to each deanery and provide some guidance for all the parishes.

We look forward to working with all the churches in the diocese and sharing ideas and best practices.

Deacon Wes Agar, Charles Plantz, and Mother Mary Hendricks
Co-Chairs Diocese Disaster Preparedness
Education for Ministry 2019

Education for Ministry (EfM)—a program designed to enhance adult formation offerings in your parish. An EfM group can come from one parish, a variety of parishes, or meet online.

The earliest form of EfM was published in 1975, as a 4-year course for adults called “Theological Education by Extension.” It grew significantly and within 5 years, there were 4,000 people enrolled. EfM now has contracts with 93 of the 100 dioceses of the Episcopal Church and dioceses in other countries. It has become a learning and community building experience—many call it transformative.

Many of us have about an 8th grade knowledge level of scripture, church history and theology. Our “church” learning may have ended with confirmation classes except for an occasional Bible study. EfM takes us beyond that with a focus in Year One on the Old Testament, Year Two on the New Testament, history of the Church in Year Three, and theology in Year Four. Woven throughout the entire EfM experience are two important components—spiritual autobiographies and theological reflection. In addition to the readings mentioned for each year are common readings on contemporary topics. What EfM adds to a person’s life can be life changing.

Fr. Ernesto Medina, former EfM Diocesan Coordinator, retired from the diocese this past year, and this summer the Bishop appointed me to coordinate the program. I hope to increase the number of groups, help connect students to a parish group when one is not available or offer EfM online to reach parishes with only 1 or 2 interested from far-reaching parishes.

University of the South in Sewanee offers training for mentors who can be either clergy or lay persons. Mentors are not required to have completed EfM prior to serving as a mentor, but they must complete mentor training. All our Nebraska groups are co-mentored, and EfM groups are 6-12 people. While some groups are multi-year groups, others start a group and complete the 4-year study all together.

Save this date: our next mentor training in Nebraska is March 19-21, 2020, in the Omaha area.

Data from 2018-2019
33 students enrolled; 11 graduates:
- Church of the Holy Spirit, Bellevue—Judith Darrell, Kenneth Gomeringer, and Steve McLaughlin
- St. Augustine’s, Elkhorn—Barbara Alf
- St Luke’s, Kearney—Janie Bower-Hansen, Arthur Hansen
- All Saints (to graduate in November) Elizabeth Gabbert, Maureen O’Conner, Craig O’Connor, Kimberly Phillips, Roy Phillips

Mentor Training Held in Papillion in September 2018.
- 10 Attendees from Nebraska
- 1 Attendee from Iowa

EfM Groups, Location and Mentors
1. All Saints Episcopal Church, Omaha, mentors Woody Bradford, III and Deacon Bryan Peterson
2. Church of the Holy Spirit, Bellevue, mentors Ruth Richter and Cynthia Pekarek
3. St. Augustine’s of Canterbury, Elkhorn, mentors Dr. Bill Smith and Jack Ott

If you have questions or would like to start or join an EfM group, please contact me at Sandra Squires, sksquires@cox.net or 402-397-4059 phone or 402-536-9781 text.

Submitted by Dr. Sandra K. Squires, EfM Coordinator, Diocese of Nebraska
The Episcopal Diocesan Committee on Scouting in Nebraska 2019

The Episcopal Diocesan Committee on Scouting in Nebraska is still in search of more members, especially from the Girl Scouts, Camp Fire, and 4-H programs.

Our mission is to promote the God and Country program to all youth and adults across the Diocese. Your members of Scouting BSA, Girl Scouts of America, Camp Fire, 4-H members, Sunday school classes, Vacation Bible School, Confirmation classes, and other church groups can earn these awards.

We have a new program for the God and Country Awards for the Episcopal Church for Scouting BSA and Girl Scouts of America.

- Grades 1-3 Baptism
- Grades 4-6 Holy Communion
- Grades 7-9 Confirmation
- Grades 10-12 Relations

To receive the booklets for each award please call 402.981.9111, email: EagleDeacon1@gmail.com, or write Deacon Wes Agar, 2315 Georgetown Place, Bellevue, NE 68123-1050.

The following youth completed their God & Country Awards this past year:

- St. Martha’s - Papillion:
  - Vivienne Agar – God and Me Award
  - Samir Best – God and Me Award
  - Sadiq Best – God and Family Award
  - Kei’Von Smith-Martín – God & Family Award
  - Kei’Daesha Martin – God & Family Award
  - Kei’Mari Martin – God & Church Award
  - Demari Greaves – God & Life Award

- Church of the Holy Spirit – Bellevue:
  - Evelyn Cummings – God and Me Award
  - Vince Cummings III – God and Me Award

If you know of any other award recipients please let us know. Call Deacon Wes Agar at 402.981.9111 or email EagleDeacon1@gmail.com

The St. George Award was presented to the following two individuals this past year:

- St. Martha’s church:
  - Beth Agar – Daughters of the King
  - Lou Ann Kluch – Boy Scouting

We strongly suggest that each parish use this program in their religious education programs. Programs of Religious Activities with Youth 1.800.933.7729. Mailing address: P.R.A.Y., 11123 S. Towne Square Suite B, St. Louis, MO, 63123. Fax 314-845-0038. Or P.R.A.Y. can be contacted at www.praypub.org

Student, Mentor, and Counselor manuals are now $4.50 each. And questions please PRAY at the number above or Deacon Wes Agar at 402.981.9111 or email EagleDeacon1@gmail.com

We also want to have each parish look at its adult members and help us recognize the adults in Scouting BSA, Girl Scouts of America, 4-H and Camp Fire programs who have been active in those programs, their
church, and deserve recognition. The Episcopal St. George Award can be presented to those adults who have provided outstanding service to youth.

We hope and pray that more youth throughout our Diocese will take on the challenge to earn these awards and be recognized.

Respectfully submitted,

The Reverend Deacon Wes Agar
Chairman, Episcopal Diocesan Committee on Scouting in Nebraska
Missions 2019


Our goal, as co-vicars, is to reestablish a regular and fruitful schedule of mission/pilgrimage trips for both youth and adults. To that end, we have plans for four different types of engagement for the year 2020 at different times. These include a youth mission trip to the Dominican Republic, an adult mission trip to the Dominican Republic, a youth mission trip to the Rosebud Reservation and a combination youth/adult trip to smaller congregations in Nebraska to do work together with those churches on various projects. The dates for these trips have yet to be firmed up. Every effort will be made through various communication channels to inform every one of the dates as we lock them into place. One avenue we wish to reestablish is mission section on the diocesan website.

Even though we are reestablishing a regular schedule, it does not mean that mission trips have not taken place! Both St. Andrew’s Church, Omaha and St. Matthew’s Church in Lincoln have sent down adult and youth to the Dominican Republic in the past several years. St. Matthew’s Lincoln plans to send down another youth team in the summer of 2020.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. John Schaefer and The Rev. Thomas Jones
The Friends of Tamar is an umbrella organization coordinating a number of initiatives to support survivors of sexual violence in all its forms. The vision for this work was to write a redemptive ending to the biblical passage known as the rape of Tamar (2 Samuel 13: 1-22), so that no survivor of sexual violence in any form (including rape, domestic violence, and sex trafficking) ever had to be without community support in the aftermath of such violence. Thank you for being such an important part of ensuring that the Tamars of our world feel your love and support, and for all you have done to answer the call to combat violence with love!

We remain awed by the generosity of the amazing people of DioNeb who have given so much time, talent, treasure, and prayers to support this effort. Since we delivered our first New Beginnings bag at Trinity Cathedral to a woman named Mary on Christmas Eve 2014, together we have delivered over 1,200 bags (and counting) to survivors in the Omaha area (including surrounding communities) who went through trauma so severe that they could not return home and had nothing with them. That effort generously is supported by several churches throughout the diocese, and we are so deeply grateful for all you have done to make these rays of hope possible. Your donations, collection drives, and the gorgeous totes handmade by very talented volunteers at several churches -- including our Lutheran partners -- made this possible! We celebrate our diocesan partners -- churches in the following communities either have contributed to support the Cathedral’s efforts in the Omaha area, created their own local partnerships with social service agencies to offer other survivor support, and/or held awareness events: Alliance; Bassett; Bellevue; Blair; Chadron; Elkhorn; Fremont; Grand Island; Harrisburg; Harvard; Hastings; Holly; Kearney; Lincoln; O’Neill; Papillion; Plattsmouth; Scottsbluff; and Seward. We also are blessed to have received enormous support for the Friends of Tamar and Magdalene Omaha from Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church in Omaha, which has opened the doors of many other Lutheran churches to us as well. They have run donation drives, attended our events as volunteers, hosted their own awareness events, and provided much-needed medical support to Magdalene residents via their wonderful health clinic.

Magdalene Omaha began as a Friends of Tamar project, then became its own separate 501c3 in 2016. We offer survivor-led programs of healing, recovery, and economic self-empowerment to survivors of sex trafficking/prostitution, trauma, and addiction. Since our founding, we have emerged as a leading voice throughout DioNeb in raising awareness about sex trafficking, and we are so grateful to so many of you for hosting us and attending our events. Magdalene Omaha consists of three distinct programs:

- Our long-term Residential Recovery Program (opened in 2017) provides up to two years of rent-free living and comprehensive, trauma-informed care for adult women survivors – including addiction treatment, therapy services, medical and dental care, legal assistance, and educational support;
- Thistle Lights, our survivor-led small business (opened in 2018) offers employment experience for women in our residential program and strengthens their economic self-empowerment opportunities; and
- The Magdalene Campus (opened in 2019) offers healing and learning opportunities for survivors of sex trafficking/prostitution – including all gender identities. Although we have not formally
announced this program yet, within one month of beginning to let survivors know support was available here in late July, interest grew dramatically. In just six weeks (at the time of this writing), we already are serving over 20 survivors – including men, women, and transgender individuals – through the individual and group therapy services we provide for survivors, free of charge. This includes women survivors who are incarcerated, through a partnership we created with Douglas County Corrections.

The Campus is our innovative approach to meet survivor needs that we realized in analyzing our own residential program data. Since we opened the residential program in late 2017, nearly 100 survivors have reached out for help through that program, but our long-term residential program was not the best fit for all of them and their unique needs, as determined through conversations with them. We thus created the Campus, designed to transfer the best of our residential programming to this non-residential setting, in addition to providing crucially needed trauma-informed therapy services.

We remain so deeply grateful to all of you reading this – it is thanks to you that together we faithfully answer needs, launch programs, and stand with survivors. **Know that we need you now more than ever.** Please contact me at teresa@magdaleneomaha.org with questions and to join our circle of hope for survivors by donating your time, talents, and treasure – **Help Thistle Lights Shine in 2020!!**

**Please remember Thistle Lights for all your holiday shopping needs** (shipping IS available):  
www.magdaleneomaha.org

**The 22 Guiding Principles of the Magdalene Program (revised by Becca Stevens, 2019)**

1. Come together
2. Find your place
3. Celebrate lessons from the past
4. Think of the stranger as god
5. Take the longer path
6. Let God sort it out
7. Stand on new ground
8. Forgive and feel freedom
9. Live in your body
10. Laugh at yourself
11. Consider the thistle
12. Listen to a new idea
13. Lose gracefully
14. Remember your ditch
15. Walk behind
16. Live in gratitude
17. Love without judgement
18. Stay on point
19. Pray for courage
20. Travel light
21. Leave thankfully
22. Reach back

Respectfully submitted,
The Reverend Deacon Teresa Houser
Recovery Commission 2019

“We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.”

~ “The Promises,” AA Big Book, pages 83-84

Since Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) was founded in 1935, millions of people have found a new way of living. AA and other 12-step recovery programs modeled after it, such as Narcotics Anonymous (NA), have offered a path for addicts to break through the darkness and enjoy “happy, joyous, and free” lives. The Twelve Steps are a spiritual program, and the heart of 12-step programs is helping the addict to restore right relations with God and others. Those who have spent time working the 12 steps are familiar with this expression: We have a daily reprieve from our addiction contingent upon the maintenance of our spiritual condition.

Many know the names of AA co-founders Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob. Not as many people know about Father Samuel Shoemaker, who Bill W. and Dr. Bob credited as being the spiritual mentor of the AA movement – a movement hailed, by the way, as one of the greatest inventions of the 20th century!

Samuel Shoemaker was an Episcopal priest. He was born in Baltimore in 1893 and ordained a priest in 1921. In 1925, he became the Rector of Calvary Church in New York City, where he worked for 16 years, and from where he became involved with the founding of AA. It was there where he had the courage and compassion to go out past the church walls and into the neighborhood. He saw the devastation of addiction – the suffering of those caught in a cycle of alcoholism, and the pain their disease wrought on their families. He welcomed even the most marginalized people to come to the church for comfort, company, and unconditional love. The Church commemorates him on January 31.

We call on you to follow Samuel Shoemaker’s example and go into our neighborhoods to serve those who struggle with addictions. We encourage you to welcome them into the church for worship, and the church basement (or hall) for the healing that comes from AA, NA, OA, Al-Anon and other recovery meetings and connections.

We Want to Help!
❖ We want to celebrate the excellent efforts already underway throughout DioNeb, so would love to hear from each parish about what you already are doing in this area. Please let us know by emailing Deacon Teresa at teresa@magdaleneomaha.org.
❖ We also would like to hear about how we can do more to support efforts you would like to begin in creating a healing path for those affected by addictions. We will be building additional resources in the year ahead – but also want to hear from you to ensure we are developing the tools you hope to see. Let us know any ideas, suggestions, and/or requests you have!

❖ As we continue to re-form this commission, we invite anyone interested in being a part of that to reach out to me as well. We especially hope to achieve representation from throughout DioNeb.

❖ For those who seek a little inspiration to consider how your parish could do more to support those in recovery, we offer what often is considered Samuel Shoemaker’s greatest writing, most often referred to as the “I Stand by the Door” poem. It is too long to reprint here, so we invite all of you to take some time to read it via this link: http://silkworth.net/pages/aa/istandatthedoor.php. Know that whether you are a person in recovery or someone who feels called to engage more in supporting them – we are here to support you. I also can be reached by telephone at (402) 934-8599.

Respectfully submitted,
The Reverend Deacon Teresa Houser, Chair
The Standing Committee has met twice this year via Zoom to accommodate the distances between members (June 1 and June 8). We have had four different diocesan ordinations to consider along with many consents for episcopal elections throughout the world (see below.) Through those meetings it was determined that in order to best facilitate our responsibilities to the diocese we would be well advised to develop a group of questions for people in various stages of seeking ordination that would not overlap with the Commission on Ministry’s diligent and consistent good work. That work is now underway. We will also be meeting with the Bishop and Trustees later this year to make sure this committee is current with the goals and operations of our diocese. Special thanks to Carol Schrader for providing us with electronic signature documents for the elections through dotloop.

**Consents for Episcopal Elections:**
- The Rev. Canon Lucinda Ashby Bishop Diocesan of El Camino Real (California)
- The Rev. Bonnie Perry Bishop Diocesan of Michigan
- The Rev. Dr. Shannon MacVean-Brown Bishop Diocesan of Vermont
- The Rev. Dr. Jonathan H. Folts Bishop Diocesan of South Dakota
- The Rev. Canon Kathryn McRosen Ryan Bishop Suffragen of the Diocese of Texas
- The Rev. Thomas James Brown Bishop Diocesan of Maine
- The Rev. Canon Megan Traquair Bishop Diocesan of Northern California
- The Rev. Canon Susan Snook Bishop Diocesan of San Diego
- The Rev. Phoebe Roaf Bishop Diocesan of West Tennessee
- The Rev. Mark D. W. Edington Bishop in Charge, Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe
- The Rev. Kimberly D. Lucas Bishop Diocesan of Colorado
- The Rev. Jennifer Anne Reddall Bishop Diocesan of Arizona
- The Rev. Canon Cristóbal Olmedo León Lozano Bishop Diocesan of Ecuador Litoral
- The Rev. Dr. Cathleen Chittenden Bascom Bishop Diocesan of Kansas

**Diocese of Nebraska Ordination Process:**
- The Rev. Keith Winton for Priesthood
- The Rev. LeClaire Atkins for Transitional Diaconate
- The Rev. Kimberly Culp for Transitional Diaconate
- The Rev. Greg Burke for Diaconate

**Standing Committee Roster**
- The Ven. Betsy Bennett
  - Church of the Resurrection Omaha
  - 1st term ends 2019
  - Nicole Cloudt
    - St. Mary’s Blair
    - 1st term ends 2020

- The Rev. Susanna DesMarais, President
  - Church of the Holy Trinity Lincoln
  - 1st term ends 2020

- The Rev. Colleen Lewis
  - St. Luke’s Kearney
  - 1st term ends 2019

  The Very Rev. Craig Loya
  - Dean of Trinity Cathedral
  - 1st term ends 2021

  Carol Schrader
  - Trinity Cathedral Omaha
  - 2nd term ends 2020

  Bill Reno
  - St. Matthew’s Alliance
  - 2nd term ends 2019

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Susanna DesMarais
Standing Committee President
St. Monica's Home for Women

St. Monica’s Life Changing Recovery for Women has had some life changing events this past year and we are gearing up for even more in 2020! We hope you have noticed our beautiful new logo and website. It has been wonderful process and we hope you agree a beautiful representation of our work.

We had to close our Early Childhood Center due to years of financial strain. It was just too difficult to continue sustain the financial loss so we closed the center in the spring of 2019. We are proud to continue to serve families in Project Mother and Child, one of only 3 programs in that state that allows women to keep their children with them while they complete treatment. We now work with local childcare centers to provide care during the daytime hours women are in treatment.

We are thrilled to be offering step down sober housing for 6 women as the need for this service is significant. It is the biggest barrier upon graduation and we hope to continue to expand the basic human right to safe affordable housing.

We are most excited about a Capital Campaign that you will hear more about in the coming months. The project will allow us to improve our aging facilities as well as add facilities to create a Campus of support and opportunity for women and children for years to come! We look forward to partnering with our Episcopal friends across the state in securing a healthy and stable financial future for this great organization.

Genuinely,

Mary Barry Magsamen
**United Thank Offering 2019**

**What is UTO?**
The United Thank Offering is a ministry to promote thankfulness and mission work in the whole Church. Known worldwide as UTO, United Thank Offering awards grants for projects that address human needs, alleviate poverty, and promote Becoming a Beloved Community and Racial Reconciliation, in The Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion.

Since the 1880's, when two women who were counting a small collection, talked about how to increase giving for mission work at a Women's Auxiliary meeting. One suggested that if people knew what they were giving for, they might give more. And that was the conversation and the idea that started the United Thank Offering. That next collection built a church in Alaska and sent a woman missionary to Japan for a year.

Funds are collected once or twice a year in parishes, usually around Thanksgiving, and again in the spring. On those Ingathering Sundays, churches often host a coffee hour celebration with blue cake, blue drinks and blue food. All those funds from the little Blue Boxes, checks, and envelopes are then awarded the next year in grants throughout The Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion. In 2019, $1.5 million ($1,535,740.55 to be exact) was awarded in grants.

**Has Nebraska received grants?**
Yes. Over the years, several. Our most recent grants were in 2019 and 2015. In 2019, Nebraska received its first Young Adult Grant, awarded to Columba Maynus and Abigail Zimmerman for $5,000 to the Benediction Way, our Benedictine Service Corps, to increase their living space to accommodate more people. Congratulations to Columba and Abigail!

In 2015, Trinity Cathedral received a $33,000 grant to support Friends of Tamar a ministry for women and children escaping domestic violence, congratulations to Deacon Teresa Houser!

**What kinds of grants are available?**
Two types of one-year grants are available, with emphasis on innovation:

Small grants to Young Adults (19-30-year olds) and Seminarians (of any age) for innovative ministries. (Guidelines out in August, and deadline for submission in November.)

Regular grants to churches and dioceses. These are for start up ideas, innovative ministries, salaries, building projects, and vehicles. (Guidelines out in December and submission in March.)

**Is Nebraska doing its part to support UTO?**
This year there has been a huge drop in giving from $9960.78 in 2018, to $4748.48 this year as of September 1, 2019. I know parish collections have been given to those experiencing flooding. I support that, but also encourage your continued giving to UTO as well.

There is also a new procedure of sending money directly to St. Louis where UTO funds are collected rather than through the diocesan office. This is making it a little harder to know which parishes have given to UTO.

That address is for UTO donations is: The United Thank Offering—DFMS, P.O. Box 958983, St. Louis, MO 63195-8983. If you submit your funds directly, please send me a copy of the amount, parish and address for acknowledgement at sksquires@cox.net.
Is there help for Parish Coordinators?

Each year for the last 3 years, I have offered pre-Annual Council training for UTO Parish Coordinators, clergy, and others. Feedback is that the training helps better understand UTO. Last year Scottsbluff hosted us and we had 10 coordinators and clergy present. Thanks to those who attended and thanks to Scottsbluff for hosting us!

A great resource is the UTO website: unitedthankoffering.com. It has all kinds of resources, including ideas for teaching children about UTO.

UTO Prayer Books, UTO buttons, and Blue Boxes are available at the UTO table.

Submitted by Sandra Squires,
Nebraska UTO Coordinator,
sksquires@cox.net
402-397-4059 Home
402-536-9781 Text
Women’s Ministries 2019

The mission of Women’s Ministries is to help the women of the Episcopal Church carry on Christ’s work of reconciliation in the world and take their places as leaders in the life, governance, and worship of the church. Women’s Ministries includes the ministries traditionally done by women and the board has representatives from United Thank Offering, Altar Guild, and Daughters of the King. It also includes a chaplain and secretary. Representatives for Church Periodical Club and The Bishop’s Trunk as well as a communications position are open.

The board is committed to offering opportunities for spiritual growth for all women in the diocese. A retreat was held at Camp Comeca on March 22-24, 2019. The leader was the Very Rev. Katie Hargis, dean of the Pro-Cathedral. The theme was The Way of Love and we were thrilled to have the Presiding Bishop send us a videotaped message to encourage us in our use of The Way of Love in our everyday lives. To help defray some of the costs of the retreat, including full and partial scholarships, we sponsored a silent auction at Annual Council. This, in addition to a generous personal contribution to Women’s Ministries, has helped us in our ability to offer these scholarships to women who may not have been able to attend.

The Province VI ECW meeting was held in Casper, WY in August 2019 and several women from the Diocese of Nebraska attended. Rev. Lindsay Hardin Freeman was the speaker. Heather Bauer, president of Province VI ECW, chaired the meeting.

Our next retreat will be held April 17-19, 2020 at St. Benedict Retreat Center near Schuyler. The leader will be Rev. Judi Yeates. Another opportunity for fellowship and study will take place in October 2020 when the National Episcopal Church Women’s Board will meet in the Rapid City area. Women from Province VI are invited to meet with the Board and attend the Province meeting to be held in conjunction with the NECW Board meeting. Dates and places will be announced later.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Agar
Rebecca Smith
Co-conveners, Women’s Ministries
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LEXINGTON, St. Peter’s
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LINCOLN, Church of the Holy Trinity
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LINCOLN, St. David’s
Sue Thompson

LINCOLN, St. Mark’s on the Campus
Johnny Austin
Martha Davies
Michelle Puls
Ron Wiley
Bob Zimmerman
Ethelene Wounded Shield

LINCOLN, St. Matthew’s
Justyn Tada
Daniel Remigio
John House
Stephen Carveth
Lorraine Cornish

McCOOK, St. Alban’s
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MITCHELL, Holy Apostles
Peggy Baird

MULLEN, St. Joseph’s
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NEBRASKA CITY, St. Mary’s
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NORFOLK, Trinity Church
Jan Mackey
Jayne Beverly Nixon

NORTH PLATTE, Our Savior
James Keller
Phyllis Shavlik
Tonchita Palmisano
Carmen Sherman
Helen Kamino
Peter Wade Black

OMAHA, All Saints
Keith M. Wise
Lois Headrick
Susan Hokanson
James Slater
John B. Davis
Susan Butler
Kathy Gray
Gene Splittgerber
Jeanne Cady-Buscher
Richard Johnson
Gerry Kelly
Marianne Murray
John Bauerle
William Farrell
Darlene Greer
Jack Barnhart

OMAHA, Church of the Resurrection
Darlene Taylor

OMAHA, St. Andrew’s
Nancy Kirk
Tim Witty
Harry Koch Jr.
Cyndi Hartman
Joe Goecke

OMAHA, St. Martin of Tours
Donald T. Sunday
OMAHA, Trinity Cathedral
Catherine Lynn
G. Woodson “Woody” Howe
Joan C Reynolds
Vollyn B. McKenzie
James Richard Chapple
James Vorel
Jerrold Lee Strasheim
Kathryn J. Alevezos
Richard Brown
Marc Tetreault
AW “Larry” Murphy
Lowell Henry Matheson
Richard Joe Hearn

PRIESTS DECEASED SINCE LAST COUNCIL
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Delmer Funk
Anne McConney

DEACONS DECEASED SINCE LAST COUNCIL
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OSHKOSH, St. George’s
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PAPILLION, St. Martha’s
Lucy Cavanaugh
Evin Harriman

PLATTSMOUTH, St. Luke’s
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RUSHVILLE, St. Mary’s Holly
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SCOTTSBLUFF, St. Francis
Lyla Moran Tuttle
Georgene Curran
Lillis Grassmick
Helen Eigenberg

SEWARD, St. Andrew’s
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SIDNEY, Christ Church
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TECUMSEH, Grace Church
None Reported

VALENTINE, St. John’s
None Reported
### Diocese of Nebraska

#### Vital Statistics of Congregations and Missions

Year in parentheses is last year of filing if not 2018

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## Vital Statistics of Congregations and Missions

Year in parentheses is last year of filing if not 2018

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<th>City</th>
<th>Congregation</th>
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<th>Communicants in Good Standing</th>
<th>Others Active</th>
<th>Average Sunday Attendance</th>
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## Financial Statistics of Congregations and Missions

Year in parentheses is last year of filing if not 2018

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<th>Total Revenue</th>
<th>Operating Expense</th>
<th>To the Diocese</th>
<th>Outreach &amp; Development</th>
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