

## Shared Ministry

### Definition

Ministry is not a solo act. It is Christ's choice that calls us into ministry. Thus, from the outset, we share in it with Him and everyone He calls.

### Biblical Foundation

The early Church was reported in Acts of the Apostles as "having all things in common." The Apostle Paul writing to the Philippians asked that they share a common mind, and bear one another's burdens, each counting the other as more important than themselves. He also offered an image of the Church as the Body of Christ or as Christ's temple, where each part had a unique function and yet could not function alone but in concert with one another. No part could say "I have no need of you" to another, nor could the whole be made up of only one part. "If all were an eye where is the hearing?" he asked. That same mind of the Christian was nothing less than the mind of Christ - the self-emptying, serving to death - the mind of Christ.

### Theological Foundation

Christians are baptized into Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. They are filled and anointed with the Holy Spirit of God. They are chosen by Christ rather than self-determining in their own choice of Christ. Once chosen they are called to be His disciples and do the works He did and even more than those. St. Luke writes in Acts that, having set out in order all that Jesus did in his lifetime, he is now setting out everything Jesus continued to do through His disciples. We are the extension of that tradition and process.

**Evaluative questions:** *How is the shared ministry of the Church reflected in the life and working of this diocese?*  
*How are we supporting one another?*

### Examples of what a congregation could do

- ❖ Actively participate in chapter activities to support interdependent ministries.
- ❖ Create a culture of discernment for ministry and ministry gifts at every level by offering discernment workshops.
- ❖ Encourage through transparency and incentive full participation in the Diocesan Stewardship Share by every congregation. Create ways to reward participation.
- ❖ Recruit clergy with a strong sense of ministry development of all the baptized.
- ❖ Congregations to share their successes.
- ❖ Be intentionally aware that the word "diocese" always includes us all.

### **Examples of what our diocese could do**

- ❖ Providing justly distributed representation of local communities and regional areas on Diocesan Board, Commissions and Task Forces. This includes consideration of younger representatives from a broad geographic spectrum.
- ❖ Creating ministry centers through our larger congregations both for developing the surrounding smaller communities of faith as well as offering them gathered times for ministry and mission resourcing.
- ❖ Provide budgetary resources for ministry at the Chapter level. One idea would be to work at developing a budget, which is 50/50 - 50% for the Episcopate and Convention agreed ministry, 20% for the National or oversees Church, and 30% returning to the regional level to be administered through Chapters, e.g., for localized ministry hires.
- ❖ Coordinate our growing theological education systems: E-Seminary, Ministry School and Retreat, Education for Ministry (EFM), All Commissions Day, pre-Convention workshops; and both broaden and streamline them to cover all aspects of ministry training, from acolyte, eucharistic ministers, evangelism, stewardship, vestry training at local levels, to broader formation processes - youth and children ministries training, ministry development teams and coaches, preparation for ordained ministry.
- ❖ Create a culture of discernment for ministry and ministry gifts at every level by offering discernment workshops.
- ❖ Continue the work begun in 2007 to refine the Episcopal visit schedule to include more prolonged teaching and sharing opportunities in local situations, and to touch base with each congregation in a calendar year with a personal visit.
- ❖ Encourage, through transparency and incentive, full participation in the Diocesan Stewardship Share by every congregation. Create ways to reward participation.
- ❖ Recruit clergy with a strong sense of ministry development of all the baptized.

## Strengthening Congregations

### Definition

Supporting the work of the Church in all its locations and ministries to the end that all live and work to the glory of God.

### Biblical Foundation

Although the “Church” is one, it is at its most visible and should perform most of its core mission at the individual and congregational levels. This is the Body of Christ; where faith meets works, and life-changing acceptance of God’s enduring love happens. It is also where Christ’s personal invitation to salvation and discipleship happens through the church. *Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many.*

I Corinthians 12:14

The Church needs the strengths and talents of all its members. *Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.*

I Corinthians 12:4-7

A key component of our looking forward and embracing our common baptismal call is doing all that is possible to have each of the many members of the body contributing his or her gifts, services and activities, as the Spirit chooses.

### Theological Foundation

Our grounding for the work of the Church through its various locations is to be found in the *Catechism*.

Q. What is the mission of the Church?

A. The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.

Q. How does the Church pursue its mission?

A. The Church pursues its mission as it prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love.

Q. Through whom does the Church carry out its mission?

A. The Church carries out its mission through the ministry of all its members.

**Evaluative Questions:** *In what ways have we demonstrated a renewed and expanded commitment to carrying out the mission of the Church?*  
*How are we strengthening congregations?*

### **Examples of what a congregation could do**

- ❖ Actively engage in new definitions of stewardship, including talent, dollars and property. This could include an assessment of how resources are spent that both aids ministry and impedes ministry.
- ❖ Improve ways of sharing programs and best practices among congregations, e.g., stewardship plans, youth development, leadership training, sharing of faith, newcomer welcome and incorporation.
- ❖ Participate in leadership skill development, e.g., comprehensive vestry training.
- ❖ Establish ways to support spiritual growth for members, such as Daughters of the King, Brotherhood of St. Andrew, Order of the Holy Cross, quiet days, etc.
- ❖ Provide opportunities for Christian formation/education for all ages, e.g. Education for Ministry, Journey to Adulthood, *The New Church's Teaching Series*, and via media.

### **Examples of what our diocese could do**

- ❖ Build the endowment so that fewer dollars are required from congregations to fund the Bishop and Diocesan staff, and more is available for local and regional ministry, as we work toward the 50/50 ratio.
- ❖ Focus ministry grants to be used as seed money for programs at the chapter or congregational level, primarily in support of new ministry initiatives.
- ❖ Establish a training program for vestry/bishop's committee members to build leadership skills grounded in scripture and Christian ministry. Hold sessions annually in each Chapter for incoming vestry members.
- ❖ Provide training on strength and scriptural-based strategic planning for congregations.
- ❖ Complete and support a congregational discernment process that is forward-looking and based upon realistic goals for congregations.

## Next Generations of Faith

### Definition

Sharing the Good News with every person. To share the ‘best thing’ ever—Jesus Christ. We evangelize people who may have no idea that God loves them and that God values every person.

### Biblical Foundation

We share what we have been taught—that all people are invited to know God’s love.

***We want to share God’s love**    Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*

Matthew 28:19-20

***We who know God’s love are a light to all**    I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. I am the LORD, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols.*

Isaiah 42:6-8

***There are other flocks who belong to the Lord**    I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.*

John 10:16

***All are God’s**    There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.*

Galatians 3:28

### Theological Foundation

- 1) God is outgoing—the Father reaching to the Son and sending him to us, the Son reaching to the Father and to us, the Spirit reaching back in love to both and to us--all in God reaching out and receiving in what the others give. We are made in the likeness of this giving/outgoing image, we are made to reach out in love.
- 2) Throughout his earthly life Jesus sought those who were not “in” or who were ignored by religious leaders and the State.
- 3) God’s message is for all humanity. There are other sheep that belong to our Lord whom we might not recognize—but they are invited too. We, as his voice and hands on earth, given

his Spirit, are given the privilege of seeking them out—just as God seeks us out—to let them know they have a good shepherd.

**Evaluative questions:** *How have we stretched beyond ourselves to connect with, welcome, and/or serve new groups or individuals?*  
*How are we engaging the next generations of faith?*

### **Examples of what a congregation could do**

- ❖ Innovative ministry with other groups... Some groups we might reach out to are:
  - New immigrants to Iowa
  - Youth (teens)
  - Young Adults (20's & 30's)
  - “Boomers”
  - The Unchurched
  - Seniors
  - Others... prisoners, homeless, those with mental illness...
- ❖ Intentional invitation to involvement in congregational ministry, by a wide variety of groups--especially when focused on their particular group.
- ❖ Learning to share your faith story.
- ❖ Emergent style congregations or worship services (e.g., Solomon's Porch) in areas with large number of 20's & 30's.
- ❖ Establish storefront or home churches.
- ❖ Young adult-led (with clerical assistance) campus ministry, parish-based or stand-alone.

### **Examples of what our diocese could do**

- ❖ A standing Diocesan Evangelism Commission.
- ❖ Identify and support church plant(s) in areas of potential (could be high-growth areas, or underserved areas or populations).
- ❖ A Spanish Language missionary.
- ❖ Transformation of ministry grants to support unique evangelism initiatives.

## Anglican-Episcopal Identity

### Definition

The Episcopal Church is an expression in the United States of the worldwide Anglican Communion, marked by comprehensiveness and founded on the balance of scripture, tradition and reason. Each member of the communion bears witness to our own local expression.

### Biblical Foundation

*But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, beloved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. To this he called you through the gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, stand firm and hold to the traditions (or teachings) that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.*

*Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.*

2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

*I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you. For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.*

2 Timothy 1:5-7

### Theological Foundation

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that ***things which were cast down are being raised up***, and ***things which had grown old are being made new***, and that ***all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made***, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The whole church, that wonderful and sacred mystery, is all of us living into our baptismal vows. The above prayer calls out to us from the heart of our Prayer Book in the Easter Vigil (BCP 291), and again in our ordination services for Bishop (515), Priest (528) and Deacon (540), all icons for ministry for members of the body. We can each see represented in our lives the ministry functions of oversight (episcopos), that of teaching and pastoring (presbyter), and of servanthood (diakonia). Together and individually, as the church, as the body, we are called to be Christ in the world.

We recognize that it is out of our gifts that we are called into the world and called to restore a balance in our world. Our Anglican heritage gifts us with a foundational balancing and interconnectedness of scripture, tradition and reason as the sources that mediate Christian faith, inform the understanding of that faith, and shape the order and discipline of the church. Our tradition within the church holds many riches, treasures to be celebrated. Some have been tucked away perhaps and could well be revisited for a fuller appreciation of the breadth of what we have to offer in and through the Episcopal Church. We are reminded, though, that *reason* as understood by Richard Hooker and early Anglican tradition is a practical wisdom, a participatory knowledge -- To know something was to experience it, to share or participate in something.

From The Baptismal Covenant:

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <i>Celebrant</i> | Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?                                 |
| <i>People</i>    | I will, with God's help.  |
| <br>             |   |
| <i>Celebrant</i> | Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?                      |
| <i>People</i>    | I will, with God's help.  |
| <br>             |   |
| <i>Celebrant</i> | Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being? |
| <i>People</i>    | I will, with God's help.  |

*Book of Common Prayer* (p. 305)

**Evaluative question:** *How do we demonstrate clear expressions of Anglican/Episcopal faith?*

**Opportunities for our Church in Iowa to explore and embrace, expand and reach out from within our Anglican-Episcopal identity individually and corporately:**

**Understanding the tradition – Education**

**Evaluative question:** *How and where do we articulate our Anglican-Episcopal faith?*

**Examples for Congregations and the Diocese**

- ❖ Opportunities for continuing education of clergy.
- ❖ Opportunities for continuing education of laity.
- ❖ Web-site set-up with common theme and Anglican-Episcopal identity focus.
- ❖ Participate in conversation with others interested in the pursuit of unity in the Anglican Communion.
- ❖ Liturgy & Music Committees (diocesan and congregational) explore an appreciative inquiry of Anglican-Episcopal practices and services, including home traditions.
- ❖ Use of Anglican-Episcopal resources, e.g., *The New Church's Teaching Series* and via media.

## **Global connections within the Communion**

**Evaluative question:** *How and where do we see ourselves in partnership with the Communion?*

### **Examples for Congregations and the Diocese**

- ❖ Continue and celebrate companion diocese relationships; explore sister-parish relationships, or those with other dioceses.
- ❖ Support participation in regional, national, and worldwide ministry by laity and clergy and bishop – especially mission work of young people.
- ❖ Pray daily for members of the Anglican Communion.
- ❖ Recognize non-traditional parishes and practices within the Diocese, and how they relate and fit into the big picture.
- ❖ Continue to practice and extend hospitality to others who differ from us within this communion.
- ❖ Commit ourselves to study ways of reconciliation.

## **Build ecumenical relationships toward greater unity**

**Evaluative question:** *How and where do we see ourselves extending from a place of informed distinct identity as we relate to those of other faith traditions?*

### **Examples for Congregations and the Diocese**

- ❖ Support relations with other judicatories.
- ❖ Other relationships – such as Iowa Religious Media Services, ecumenical clergy associations, etc.
- ❖ Continue to emphasize opportunities for common worship and mission with ecumenical partners, in particular Lutheran (*Called to Common Mission-CCM*) and Methodist (*Interim Eucharistic Sharing*) partners.
- ❖ Shared education, youth, and service activities with Lutheran and Methodist partners.

## **Deed-based Evangelism**

**Evaluative question:** *How and where have we actively sought justice and peace among all people, respected the dignity of every human being, and represented Christ in the world?*

### **Examples for Congregations and the Diocese**

- ❖ Explore the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and where we are being called into the world to be the Good News of justice and peace, to help realize a vision of the human community, like those great visions of Isaiah with every person fed, no more strife, the ill healed, prisoners released.
- ❖ Become knowledgeable of and participate in the work of the Episcopal Policy Network, etc.; become more vocal in public discussion and policy, particularly around peace and justice issues.
- ❖ Contribute to MDG Fund from which MDG grants are awarded (also known as International Development Grants).
- ❖ Choose local MDGs and join in specific opportunities for leadership work with another local Anglican church, e.g., St. Paul's Indian Mission.
- ❖ Get involved personally and corporately in the *Cool Congregations* initiative.