

## 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.

## Appendix B Additional Examples/Ideas for Discussion

### **Shared Ministry**

#### Congregations

- ❖ Congregations provide and participate in 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.
- ❖ Develop chapters as viable places of interdependent ministry in a given region. Use the county map as a Chapters mission field.
- ❖ Develop web-site as a tool to connect and draw the many e-connected.
- ❖ Continue to emphasize the importance of learning from one another in such projects as Synagogy.
- ❖ Congregations to explore the development of multiple points of mission beyond their usual constituency.

#### Diocese

- ❖ Building on the Cathedrals as icons of local community representation, and yet as centers for offerings which gather us in larger communities.
- ❖ Explore how can we create a diocesan cathedral council of advice.
- ❖ Emphasize in the Diocesan staff a high degree of ministry versatility to respond to the shifting needs of the Diocese, but also consider ministry specific experts (e.g., Spanish-speaker, high-tech person) for a particular ministry cycle. Expect staff to have a comprehensive vision of their ministry as resource people with capacity to engage communities at any end of the Diocese in shared ministry.
- ❖ Offer diocesan assistance to develop web-sites at every congregation.
- ❖ Establish a diocesan-wide system for centralized supply of resources such as office supplies, clustered administration where possible.
- ❖ Continue to emphasize the importance of learning from one another in such projects as Synagogy.
- ❖ Consider opportunities for traveling Board or Convention.