

Participation at the Clergy Conference was the most comprehensive I could remember since my first such gathering in November 2002, but it was much more jovial than that. I am grateful for that. I was asked by a newspaper reporter from Davenport to comment on events in Quincy or at least to describe how they affect life in Iowa, and I must say that coming from the Clergy Conference where we had all been together and enjoying one another from across the theological spectrum, I felt that we were in two different worlds. Of course, the year 2008 will not only see us unveil our strategy plan for the future mission of the Diocese, but will also provide some clarity of the various positionings of the Communion which seem to grow more complex each day. This month, we have seen the Primate of the Southern Africa Province distance himself from a communiqué from the recent meeting of the Global South, while at home we have had a meeting of “Windsor compliant” Bishops, and of a new group, which has interested some Iowa clergy called “the Episcopal Majority.” I don’t find this carving up of the middle segment of our Church very helpful at all. I recall criticism of Frederick Maurice for being reluctant to back any one specific movement in the days of Christian socialism, as the church was trying to respond to the enormous challenges of industrialization, and I sympathize with him.

Bishop Mantle enjoyed a month-long visit in which he met with the One World One Church Commission but also with interested persons at various venues central to people from across the diocese: St. Paul’s, Sioux City; Trinity, Iowa City; St. John’s, Ames; St. Paul’s, Durant, and Christ Church, Burlington, and Christ Church, Cedar Rapids. In Cedar Rapids plans for a Companions of Brechin were formulated, and the Bishop returned home with a number of ideas about clergy exchanges and congregational links. In a number of places he saw similarities between the issues we face and the circumstances of doing ministry as well as personalities among the clergy. His history of the Episcopal Church in Scotland and its links with the Jacobite rebellion was intriguing, as was his reference to the Queen of England becoming Presbyterian as she enters Scotland! It certainly shed a different light on the picture of the Anglican Communion as a uniform entity.

After a month-long vacation I returned to a staff busy doing their part as liaisons for the various chapter meetings discussing budget, board representation, and the outcomes of the strategic planning survey. The new dean, Jim Harris, arrived at Trinity Cathedral Davenport where he welcomed Bishop Mantle on September 24th, just as Dean Schiesler had welcomed the Bishop at the beginning of his tour on September 10th. Bishop Mantle was made a Canon of St Paul’s.

The staff and I engaged in two and a half days of anti-racism training led by the Province trainers, along with certain new clergy and people in the ordination process and members of the Multi-Cultural Commission. The new training program offers some insightful segments, which can inform our response to the General Convention resolution regarding slavery. While speaking of race issues, I attended the celebration of the life of Alexander Clarke from Muscatine by attending a reading of a national award-winning paper on Clarke, presented by a young man from Marshalltown. Trinity Episcopal member, Kent Sissel, has restored the Alexander Clarke House in Muscatine. Trinity members have been instrumental in preserving Clarke’s papers and affirming his place in history as an early pioneer of civil rights, almost one hundred years ahead of the main movement.

Issues of global importance continued to be the theme of this past month, as I was asked to speak on behalf of the Iowa Interfaith Power and Light Steering Committee at a symposium at Plymouth Congregational Church organized by a national movement called "Re-Energize America." It was a humbling opportunity to be on a platform with people who are giving themselves to the cause of countering global warming. I am hoping that this will be a theme we adopt for our 2007 Diocesan Convention, and I am grateful to the work of Ben and Sarah Webb and the people of St. Luke's, Cedar Falls, who are leading the way for us in this. There seems little slowing down in our civil concerns in the next few months, as I anticipate participation in the Diocesan Conference on Restorative Justice (Oct 20-21), and a half day of Peace "Talks" to which Judicatories have been invited by the Bishop of Des Moines (Oct 12th).

This coming month will also see a Diocesan Day for Altar Guilds at St Paul's, Des Moines (September 29th), and a Conference on Healing by the Order of St Luke (Oct 20-21). Unfortunately I cannot attend the latter as I will be attending my first National Cursillo Gathering as the new Bishop Liaison for the House of Bishops to the Cursillo movement. It is an appointment, which stirs me to encourage our own revival of plans for Cursillo in the Diocese. I am hoping that we will begin that work at a meeting at Iowa City on October 19th. I hope also in October to drop in on a Forum on Immigration at Davenport as well as a Holy Relationships Conference, at which several of our members are involved as the organizers and sponsors.

Regular care of the Churches has taken me to Christ Church, Clinton, where the congregation has taken the difficult step of deciding which of their two Church buildings to use as their main place of worship and administration. Such a painful decision has obviously not been without hurt feelings and angry responses. We need to take steps to assist them with some reconciling or grief work. Bishop Mantle and I visited St. Paul's, Sioux City, at the beginning of his time and then St. Paul's, Durant, at the end. At Durant we confirmed eight young people and received two adult members. This was the third confirmation of that weekend, as I confirmed members of J2A programs from Christ Church, Cedar Rapids, and Trinity, Iowa City, earlier on Saturday night and Sunday morning. More confirmations were part of my visitation to New Song in Coralville. I met also with their congregation as they move forward to the candidacy phase of their Ministry Development Team.

The Commission on Ministry is thinking hard through the implications of each stage of the Ministry Team process especially as canons come into play for those nominated to ordained roles in the Team. Questions are being asked of this also among clergy at Clergy Conference, especially as they interact with Ministry Team members at the Chapter level and become more familiar with their formation process. Each Team does generate different questions, especially as we face the interplay between old models of ministry and new, and those occasions when new models are being placed too superficially on old understandings of ministry. The Board may want to invite a fuller discussion about this with the Commission on Ministry at a later date. Later today I have asked Willa Goodfellow, our Diocesan Missioner for Ministry Development to make a presentation.

I finish with reference to ministry transitions. Last week I installed Kathleen Milligan as Rector of St. John's, Dubuque and next month I will install Dean Harris as Dean of Trinity, Davenport. Yesterday I met with the new clergy who are priests in charge at

Trinity, Waterloo; St. Alban's, Davenport, and St. Alban's, Spirit Lake. We also reviewed GOE papers and will establish a reading group to strengthen areas of perceived weakness, particularly history and creedal theology. We still have a big job to do in terms of transitions in the northwest, with openings in Sioux City, Emmetsburg and Algona, Fort Dodge and Webster City, and Storm Lake. St. Thomas will be undergoing a routine search process under Curt Moermond, though we need to find an interim to assist Peg Jackson at St. Mark's and The Church of the Good Shepherd, Webster City, as their search process moves ahead. Our openings at Storm Lake and Emmetsburg and Algona are immediate appointments, as we search for bi-vocational clergy, or clergy who might be available to work with the local Lutheran bishop. I expect our Deployment Officer to get to know well the roads of the northwest in the coming months.

By the time we meet again, we will have celebrated together at Diocesan Convention Iowa's proud heritage of ordained women. Bishop Righter placed us high up in the ranks of dioceses with gender-balanced clergy. I have merely acquired what he and Bishop Epting had created, and it is for that reason that I have asked both Bishops to share my address this year. Unfortunately Bishop Righter's health will not allow him to be with us but I am hoping he will send a video clip or some other remarks. Every woman ordained in Iowa has been invited to the celebration. Our guests from Swaziland include the first woman priest at whose ordination I assisted with Bishop Mabuza. When asked about Quincy by the Davenport newspaper, I could only say that while they await Primatial oversight because our Primate elect is a woman, our theme for Convention is to celebrate the ordination of women in Iowa. I added, however, that that does not exclude the respectful right of one of our congregations nevertheless to maintain a traditional position similar to that espoused by Quincy. I hope it says who we are in Iowa, and in The Episcopal Church and in the Anglican Communion.

On a motion by the Rev. Anne Williams, duly seconded, the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. I

Thank you for service on board

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors expresses its thanks and appreciation for their years of service to the following members and Deanery Representatives who have completed their terms of office.

Elected board members: The Rev. Cathleen Bascom, The Rev. Donald Payer, The Rev. Melvin Schlachter, Mr. Bill Early, Ms. Kim McIrvin, Mr. William Smith and Canon Paul J. Meginnis, II (Treasurer).

Deanery Representatives: The Rev. Alexander Aiton, The Rev. Artis Ferrel, Ms. Elinor Kornhauser, The Rev. Melvin Low, and The Rev. Dian Ong.

Financial Report

Mr. Robert Joy reported on the Budget Comparison for 2006 (January through August), noting that it represented two-thirds of the year. Income was at 61.3 percent of budget and expenses were at 66.7 percent. The expense side includes payments for one-time and full-year obligations.

Mr. Joy presented the 2007 Budget with requested adjustments. He stated that in its original form \$35,000 for the Deployment Officer’s salary was included the line for E-Seminary Tuition, Gifts & Grants. However, there is no funding stream for the Deployment Officer in that item. He recommended a budgeted-expenses adjustment to line 34 in that amount. The board made additional adjustments to cover the additional \$35,000.

The board requested that the name “International Development Grants” in line 27 be changed to “Millennium Development Grants (MGDs) to coincide with the Episcopal Church’s terminology.

On a motion by Ms. Phyllis Melton, duly seconded, the following resolution approved presentation of the adjusted budget at Diocesan Convention in November:

RESOLUTION NO. II
Amended 2007 Budget

BE IT RESOLVED That, the 2007 budget be amended as follows and presented to Diocesan Convention:

| | From | To |
|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Line 13 | \$ 89,400 | \$ 54,400 |
| Line 18 | 210,000 | 200,000 |
| Line 39 | 10,000 | 8,000 |
| Line 40 | 89,400 | 50,400 |
| Line 34 | 0 | 35,000 |
| Line 49 | 12,000 | 6,000 |
| Line 142 | 18,000 | 17,000 |
| Line 144 | 5,500 | 4,500 |
| Line 145 | 5,000 | 4,000 |
| Line 149 | 20,500 | 19,500 |
| Line 150 | 4,000 | 3,000 |
| Line 151 | 7,000 | 6,000 |
| Health Ins | 7,000 | 7,000 |

The Rev. Wendy Abrahamson explained the background around the “formula for funding” and “format for stewardship share” resolutions developed by the Strategic Planning Task Force to be voted upon at Diocesan Convention. Comments from regional chapter meetings were distributed for discussion. Text of the two resolutions follows:

Formula for funding for Congregational Askings

The annual Stewardship Share¹ of each congregation in the Diocese of Iowa will be determined thus:

1. From the Total Operating Income of the previous fiscal year² according to the annual parochial report, the Diocesan Minimum Clergy Compensation³ will be allowed as a deduction for congregations supporting a full time cleric.⁴ This deduction will be pro-rated for congregations that support a cleric less than full time.
2. The Stewardship Share shall then be 20% of the Total Operating Income of the previous year, after the clergy deduction is taken.

3. No congregation will have an increase in their Stewardship Share of more than 10% from one fiscal year to the next.

¹ This was felt to be a more accurate description of our financial life together as a diocese than the term “Asking.”

² The current formula uses a three-year average as a base. Changing to the most current year is a significant change, intended to make the base number closer to the contemporary financial reality of a congregation.

³ This figure changes. As of 2006, the basic minimum cost is about \$65,000.

⁴ The idea for the clergy deduction came from two places: 1) The Episcopal Church offers a similar deduction to each diocese, based on the average minimum expense for having a Bishop. 2) From the three surveys sent out by the *Task Force on Strategic Planning and Asking* to a random sample of laity, all Vestry and Bishop’s Committee members, and all clergy, the greatest financial concern of most congregations in our diocese is being able to afford a priest. Having a priest was also ranked as one of the highest priorities for congregations. The deduction here is intended to respond to that desire.

Format for Stewardship Share

1. The Stewardship Share represents each congregation’s expected contribution to our shared ministry in Jesus Christ.¹
2. The Stewardship Share will be sent to each congregation of the diocese in the Fall.²
3. If a congregation is not able or not intending to meet its Stewardship Share, its clergy and lay leadership shall be invited to meet with the Board of Directors to engage in a conversation to which the congregation shall give the Board a full explanation of its financial situation.
4. A congregation that does not meet its Stewardship Share for three consecutive years shall lose voice and vote at Diocesan Convention unless the Board of Directors recommends to Convention that the congregation has good cause.

¹ The Task Force thought it fair to set out exactly what the Stewardship Share is.

² This is a dramatic change from the current process, where the Asking is due in May for the upcoming year, long before budgets have been set and Fall Stewardship Programs have been done. The desire was to free congregations from having budgetary guesswork, and to shift it to the diocesan level.

On a motion by the Ms. Phyllis Melton, duly seconded, the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. III

Funding Formula and Format for Stewardship Share

BE IT RESOLVED, That, the Board of Directors recommends to Diocesan Convention the two resolutions on Funding Formula and Format for Stewardship Share.

Mr. Thomas Carpenter reported that St. Paul’s Church in Grinnell had met all the requirements to be designated a parish. On a motion by Mr. William Smith, duly seconded, the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. IV

Parish status for St. Paul’s, Grinnell

BE IT RESOLVED, That, the Board of Directors approves parish status for St. Paul's, Grinnell.

The Rev. Willa Goodfellow presented information about the work of the Ministry Development Teams. She noted that this approach requires significant commitment of the local church and the coaches. It should not be seen as a quick fix when a congregation cannot afford a priest. Instead it is a discernment process for spiritual leadership and the roles the church wants filled and by whom. (*See attachment A.*)

On a motion by Ms. Phyllis Melton, duly seconded, the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. V

Consideration of Amendment to Resolution 153-B

BE IT RESOLVED, that after due consideration of the Amendment to Resolution 153-B from the 2005 Diocesan Convention, the Board of Directors declines to recommend this resolution to the 2006 Convention.

Regional Chapters: They have been meeting to discuss funding and format resolutions, BAGS programs and 2007 budget.

Commission Reports:

Multicultural Commission: Sponsored Anti-racism Training

JPIC: Criminal Justice Conference scheduled for Oct. 20-21

One World One Church: Hosted Bishop Mantle at Sept. meeting. They are also developing plans for what more needs to be done for the school in Swaziland and making preparation for the Swazi women who will be in Iowa for Diocesan Convention. Ecumenically, they are working toward a Church Day on March 3.

The meeting adjourned at 2 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy A. Morton, Assistant Secretary

APPROVED:

Ms. Phyllis Melton
Secretary of the Episcopal Corporation
of the Diocese of Iowa

ATTEST:

The Rt. Rev. Alan Scarfe
President of the Episcopal Corporation
of the Diocese of Iowa

The Iowa Curriculum

Introduction

Purpose:

The purpose of the Iowa curriculum is to develop the gifts of the Spirit within congregations to be in mission with Christ through each and all. In baptism we are gifted and empowered by the Spirit, and called into a community of ministers, to be Christ's body and Christ's life for the world. The curriculum seeks to develop these gifts.

The curriculum trains ministry developers. That is what it does. It will be used with a group of people who have been identified and commissioned by the congregation to be its ministry developers, that is, to help each member of the congregation to exercise his/her own ministry.

Content:

Christian ministry is a function of an entire person, not merely the product of book learning. The curriculum is grounded in consideration of four aspects of a minister: identity, attitude, skills, and intellect. Through individual and group study, prayer, group work, discussions, practice, teamwork and self-reflection, each of these aspects is addressed.

The "Questions" are the center of the curriculum. They come from the curriculum written by Phina Borgeson and Alan Scarfe for St. Barnabas Church, Eagle Rock, California. The questions address aspects of identity, attitude, skills, and intellect, and ask the team member to consider where he/she is in development as a minister and to what he/she needs to attend for further development. Hence the questions serve both to evaluate progress and direct further study. This is where the learning objectives are to be found. It is no accident that they are in the form of questions, not tests to be passed or marks to be hit.

The competencies are developmental competencies. It is the responsibility of the learners, in consultation with the coaches, to decide which areas need the most work at present and which will be pursued in greater depth at a later date - with the understanding that none of them can be skipped!

The four major subject areas covered by the curriculum are Keryma (the Church's proclamation and teaching), Leiturgia (worship and liturgy), Koinonia (community life) and Diakonia (service). Identity, attitude, skills and intellect are formed in relation to each of these topics. While one subject area is emphasized over the others in each unit, to some extent each is considered in each unit.

The course is organized by a cover to cover reading of the core text, the bible. Topics are considered as they arise from the books of the bible in cover to cover order, (with some variation - one gospel is read in each of four units.) For example, family systems is introduced along with the book of Genesis; anti-racism training is associated with the book of Ezra; and evangelism is considered while reading Luke/Acts.

The curriculum does not attempt to replicate a seminary course in biblical studies. Almost every session includes bible study, using a variety of methods. Some methods are experiential; some include the use of the tools of "higher criticism." In the main, the bible is treated as the story of God reaching to humanity and humanity reaching to God within the community of faith. This story was preserved in order to invite others into this relationship within community. It is studied in this curriculum with that aim in mind.

This curriculum is not intended to cover all that anyone would want to know. It is the basic course for ministry teams, the first course. The Questions introduce a process of continued self-evaluation and direction for continued education. It is expected that each team within each community will determine its particular needs beyond the basic course.

Process:

The congregation selects a team in consultation with the bishop, working closely with the member of the diocesan ministry development team whom the bishop assigns.

Some congregations may call a team without identifying particular roles for each member. Others may have specific ministries in mind for each, such as stewardship coordinator, diaconal coordinator, pastor, preacher, priest, etc. In either case, the bulk of the training is the same for every member of the team in the basic course.

A coach will work with the team throughout its training. The coach will be assigned by the bishop. He/she will attend most sessions, but need not - and should not - attend all. The teams that work best are those that learn early in the process that they can direct their own learning. When at all possible, there will be two coaches working with each group, modeling shared leadership and the wisdom of not relying on the strengths of only one person.

Each session has several sections, including devotions, bible study, short presentations, group exercises, discussions, and personal sharing. It is intended that the members of the team themselves lead most of these sections, with support from the coach and each other as needed. Team members will draw on their own expertise, build that expertise, and sometimes assign a research topic for one individual. This shared leadership includes the moderation of the session. The coach may begin as moderator, but eventually the team members will take over that role. To aid in assignments, each session outline is handed out at the prior session. Some teams have found it helpful to receive an entire unit at a time, and to divide up responsibilities for a few sessions at a time.

The curriculum works when it is experienced fully, and used for the purposes for which it is designed.

- It is not adequate preparation for a person who will function as a vicar or priest in charge. The curriculum intends to develop teams that support each other and share the gifts of ministry. The "priest in charge" model requires a different formation.

- It is not appropriate for a "study group" that wants simply to learn more about the bible or church tradition. The curriculum engages the team members in processes that involve personal and corporate transformation.
- It will not work if there are one or even two teachers and several students. Each member needs to try new skills in group leadership, even when these skills are not the member's natural strengths, in order for the concept of shared leadership to take root.
- Nothing will happen until team members take risks to know and be known by God, by themselves, and by each other. The curriculum offers many opportunities for this kind of growth. Each person and each team will make their own decisions about which opportunities they engage fully and which they pass by.
- Changes in the curriculum are inevitable. A person who was responsible for a presentation will be unable to show up. A particular issue for the congregation will take precedence. The group is responsible for its own learning and its own use of time. That said, substituting one exercise or topic for another should be done with great care and a thorough understanding of what the original was intended to accomplish in terms of development of identity, attitudes, skills and intellect. If the learning objectives are not self-evident, consult with the diocesan missionary for congregational development first.

Welcome!

As you engage this material, you will be joining a developmental process in the life of the diocese. You will be joining a growing number of teams who are living more fully into the spirit and the challenge of the ministry to which we have been called in our baptism. Stay in touch. Keep making suggestions. Share what you learn. God bless you!