



# diakoneo

GREEK: TO BE A SERVANT; TO SERVE

THE ASSOCIATION FOR EPISCOPAL DEACONS | ENGAGING THE DIAKONIA OF ALL BELIEVERS

FEBRUARY 2014

## IN THIS ISSUE

- [Minnesota Ordinations](#) . . . . . 1
- [From the President](#) . . . . . 2
- [From the Executive Director](#) . . . . . 3
- [Sermon: The Feast of St. Stephen](#) . . . . . 4
- [Archives News](#) . . . . . 6
- [Archdeacon & Deacon Directors' Conference](#) . . . . . 7
- [New Books By Deacons](#) . . . . . 8-9
- [Diocese of St. Ives](#) . . . . . 10
- [Newly Ordained](#) . . . . . 12
- [Deacon Milestone](#) . . . . . 12
- [Province VIII Deacon's Conference](#) . . . . . 12
- [Theological Review](#) . . . . . 13
- [News From AED's Board](#) . . . . . 14
- ["The Seven" Update](#) . . . . . 15

This is an interactive pdf.



Please use the navigation buttons at the bottom of each page to move forward, back or return to this table of contents.

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## 13 deacons ordained in Minnesota!



It was an historic night for the Episcopal Church in Minnesota on Thursday, June 27, 2013, as 13 deacons and 4 priests were ordained, witnessed by 1,000 family, friends and guests. One of the priests, Toua Vang, is the first Hmong priest in the Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion. New deacon Eileen Harvala writes, "The emergence toward a missional church by the Episcopal Church in Minnesota was realized last June when The Right Reverend Brian N. Prior ordained 13 new deacons for mission and ministry within the church (two more were ordained earlier in January.) As the ECMN continues to transform into the missional church she is called to be, the diaconate in Minnesota has found itself at the epicenter of that change as deacons seek to empower faith communities across Minnesota to engage in God's mission in new and energetic ways outside the doors of our churches."



See the complete list of deacon ordinations on page 12.



Photos provided courtesy of the Bishop's office, Diocese of Minnesota and Deacon Eileen Harvala.

AED is an association of persons and dioceses working for the diaconate and servant ministry within the Episcopal Church, USA, and Anglican Church of Canada.

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**STAFF AND LIAISON OFFICERS**

- Dn. Lori Mills-Curran  
Executive Director  
lmcii@aol.com
- Dn. Anne Pillot  
Communications Director, Editor,  
Web Deacon  
216-213-9759  
communications@episcopaldeacons.org
- Dn. Jo Weber, Membership Director  
Membership Office:  
PO Box 1160  
Los Gatos, CA 95031-1160  
membership@episcopaldeacons.org

# “Walk in Beauty” Refueling the passion to serve

BY DEACON TINA CAMPBELL



I will be leaving my house soon to go to the Cathedral and help prepare a meal for our local Safe Ground group. Like so many other places, my city has cut the winter shelter program for homeless people and is relying on local houses of worship to shelter folks on a rotating basis. At Trinity we will feed those who show up, chat with them through the evening and then help them settle down for the night in various locations around our Great Hall.

I haven't been to Safe Ground in quite a while, even though I have donated towards its work. It has been a busy year, with lots of new responsibilities. In 2013 I chaired the Design Team for our Assembly in June; the Search Committee for the new

Executive Director, and assisted in the search for a new Communications officer. There were other responsibilities, too. My role on the Commission on Ministry, its Academic Committee, the diocesan Liturgy commission and the Advisory Committee for the University Hospital CPE Program. But in all that work, necessary as it was, as supportive to ministry and the life of the Church as it was, I have felt that something was missing. That Something was hands-on ministry, that Something was personal encounter with those whom (as the Prayer Book puts it) “it would be easy for us to forget.”

Perhaps it is the same for some of you. Deacons, and those with diaconal hearts, can get very busy organizing and planning. You have many parish responsibilities with programs to administrate, liturgies in which to serve. But you long for something more, for the very service that drew you to the diaconate in the first place, for the passion that fueled your earlier work. That is where I am now.

As I prepare to leave, I remember my last turn at Safe Ground. A gentleman asked if he could have a few words with me before I left. So when I was ready to go I went looking for him. I was prepared to listen; perhaps hear a narrative of his situation or a plea for assistance. When I found him though, he surprised me by telling me he wanted to pray over me. He then offered a beautifully phrased prayer asking God to watch over me and to strengthen me in ministry. Not what I expected.

This week my *Weavings* journal arrived. This issue is titled *Bring Good News to the Poor*. Its timing is impeccable. In one of the articles, *Opening the Door to Billy*, the author, Robert Benson, writes, “I worry about us church folks. I worry that we do not open the door. I worry that we drive past people who need our help on the way to places where we talk about people who need our help. I worry that we do not see the Christ among us.”

I worry, too. I long not to be one of those Church folk. And so I am off now to serve with my own two hands, to be blessed by the grace of ministry. May you be so blessed, too.

Tina Campbell, *President*

**Let AED publicize your deacon events**

We'll include your event in our print and electronic materials. Send an email with the event name, date, location and contact person to [communications@episcopaldeacons.org](mailto:communications@episcopaldeacons.org).

*Don't forget to send photos & news of the event afterwards, too!*

## Lori in Wonderland:

### A Quick Tour of AED's Bewildering Financial Responsibilities

BY DEACON LORI MILLS-CURRAN

One of the most confusing recent tasks of my new job as Executive Director has been helping create the 2014 budget. I was astonished by the process. We operate on very little money to do some very unexpected things.

Truth be told, I was never a big financial supporter of AED. For probably 15 years after ordination I knew almost nothing about how AED functioned. Membership was another expensive add-on to a hobby ministry that was already very expensive. Diaconal theology also contributed to my failure to support AED. Years ago I heard a deacon refer to AED as his professional organization. I had been taught a theology which discouraged thinking of my diaconate as anything akin to a profession, so this description of AED simply did not compute.

Only since I took this job have I become fully aware of AED's role as a keystone in the development of our order. AED serves the Episcopal Church and its diaconate in some quite peculiar ways. Maybe things are not as bad as in Wonderland, but we bear some unexpected responsibilities. It costs money to provide these essential functions.

The biggest surprise was finding out that AED is the primary recorder of diaconal ordinations. TEC actually does not have a complete list of all its deacons. For decades, many dioceses did not report diaconal ordinations to the national church. Some dioceses did not regard deacons as ordained in the same sense as priests. Others thought that since the Church Pension Group was charged with responsibility to record ordinations, recording was only for people who would be in the Pension Fund. Whatever the reasoning, AED has for many years maintained the only complete records of our order.

I knew AED had a huge role in forming and supporting deacons, but I did not know how much or how. Implementation of the deacon formation canons is flexible. AED is frequently seen as the authority on how to set up and maintain diaconal programs. We respond to continuous requests for information and speakers. The same applies to

the development of best practices in the diaconate. Every year, AED hosts a gathering of Deacon Directors and Archdeacons, who come from all over to participate in an annual learning lab, designed to respond to issues they face locally. Other denominations do this work with centralized planning and resources.

AED also monitors the development of diaconal theology worldwide, by participation in international diaconal forums. Our Board has seriously debated these expensive trips. But we know TEC's diaconate was renewed in response to international ecumenical stimuli, so we think we should keep it up. It also seems foolish to abandon international community-building when the need for cooperation grows ever more pressing.

Another responsibility that AED bears is encouraging young people to be deacons. In our initiative "The Seven," young adults take part in a diaconal ministry immersion experience. We envision plans to teach local groups to develop such programs. We have funded this with a grant, and the grant is running out. Dioceses and the national church contribute to the Young Adult Service Corps, in which young people are often encouraged to be priests. Where will the deacons come from? For now, AED will be bearing the costs for encouragement of these vocations as well.

Finally, we must pay for AED's incredibly expensive participation in General Convention. The cost of keeping this denomination's diaconal voice at our national table is borne by the deacons ourselves. This voice was heard loud and clear last convention: the entire denomination considered the poor because we deacons asked them to in "The Deacons' Resolved." It costs thousands simply to rent the table at



## calendar what's coming

### ARCHDEACONS/DEACON DIRECTORS CONFERENCE

March 27-29, 2014  
Baltimore, Maryland  
Register at [episcopaldeacons.org](http://episcopaldeacons.org)

### AED BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

March 29-April 1, 2014  
Baltimore, Maryland

### PROVINCIAL EVENTS

#### Prov. VIII Regional Gathering

June 27-June 29, 2014  
Vancouver, Washington

For more information contact Gen Grewell at [ggrewell21@comcast.net](mailto:ggrewell21@comcast.net).  
More info at [www.facebook.com/events/1398209957062354/](http://www.facebook.com/events/1398209957062354/)

### ASSOCIATION OF ANGLICAN DEACONS IN CANADA

#### Tri-Annual Conference

August 14-17, 2014  
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada  
**Keynote:** The Most Rev. Fred Hiltz, Primate Anglican Church of Canada

**Theme:** *Servants by the Sea* - reflecting on Christ's Ministry near, on and with water.

**Register:** [www.anglicandeacons.ca](http://www.anglicandeacons.ca)

### New England Deacons Network, Prov. I Deacons Conference

October 3-5, 2014  
Location: The Sheraton Framingham, MA

For more information contact: [kyle.pedersen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kyle.pedersen@sbcglobal.net) or check the Province I website: [www.province1.org](http://www.province1.org).

### 78TH GEN'L CONVENTION

June 25 - July 3, 2015  
Salt Lake City, Utah

*Continued on page 5*



# St. Stephen: Our patron in leading the Church in diakonia

SERMON BY DEACON JANE O'LEARY, DIOCESE OF MARYLAND, JAN. 24, 2013

It is a real privilege to be here at Church of the Advent, addressing this special service. As we all know, this service was originally scheduled for December 26th, to celebrate the Feast of St. Stephen which falls on that day. On that day, we experienced our only winter weather, until today.

So, today is not December 26, but we will pretend it is, as we persist with our original intention to celebrate the Feast of St. Stephen. This is important to us, first because Stephen was the first martyr, called the protomartyr. Soon after Jesus was killed and resurrected, Stephen was persecuted as Jesus had warned, because he was a disciple. According to the account we heard from the Acts of the Apostles, Stephen had done “great signs and wonders among the people.” But enemies rose up against him, and cooked up accusations that he had blasphemed. Stephen responded by confronting these enemies, claiming that they had betrayed and murdered Jesus, just as their ancestors had persecuted prophets who foretold Jesus’ coming. Stephen’s powerful assertions were too much for the crowd. They became enraged and dragged him out of the city where they stoned him. Saul of Tarsus, who later became the Apostle Paul, was an accomplice in this murder. According to the account, Stephen seemed to embrace his role as a martyr – moving toward a vision of Jesus at God’s side in heaven, and praying as he was stoned to death that his persecutors would be forgiven.

In what seems a very early use of irony, the medieval church designated Stephen the patron saint of stonemasons, and the patron saint of headache relief. Really.

More central to our celebration tonight, Stephen was the first deacon. The passage in Acts that immediately precedes tonight’s reading, tells of the call and ordination of

the first deacons. In the church’s very early days, followers were selling their possessions and pooling their money in the church to take care of community needs. A complaint had arisen between the Greek Jews and the Hebrew Jews, that the widows in one of the groups were being slighted at the food table. The Apostles, the bishops of their day, became impatient that such mundane matters would distract their attention from preaching and prayer, and they solved this by establishing the order of deacons, choosing men known to be wise and full of the Holy Spirit, ordaining them to manage the care of the community.

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*“As all Christians and all churches are called to diakonia, we see St. Stephen’s legacy in the voice and example of deacons leading the church to its diaconal commitment to the poor, the weak, the sick and the lonely.”*

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I can’t speak for all deacons, but I know it has always been very special to this deacon, that the origin and purpose of my specific order is made so clear in the New Testament; that the order was established so very early in the church. I was ordained in the 1980’s, when the order was just re-emerging. There were not a lot of deacons in the church, the understanding of deacons as models of servant ministry was new, and their relevance was largely unclear. Because their role was so unfamiliar, I was given the job of helping my diocese to understand what this strange new order was. I wrote articles and spoke at parishes. I would point out that this is an ancient order, not a new one, and in fact, we could go straight to the Bible to understand deacons.

About 12 years ago I visited Italy, one of the great joys of my life. If you have been there you know it is a breathtaking experience: the history, the art and architecture, the heart of the Roman church. On that trip, a most startling and meaningful discovery came to me in the Vatican Museum – where I saw ancient pictures, paintings, mosaics and tapestries, with the likeness of St. Stephen,

dressed in a dalmatic and deacon’s stole. What a homecoming, a personal touchstone for me. The group I was traveling with had nothing to do with my own role in the church, and I remember my frustration as no one could grasp how significant it was that I had discovered and could identify with this ancient person who was like me.

So St. Stephen, whose life and ministry we honor today, is the deacon’s very own patron saint, our ancient relative if you will. I know it is important that bishops can trace their order back to the apostles. Likewise, we can trace our order back in the same way.

I know this is important to me, but why is this so important to the church?

- Acts 6 tells how and why the deacon’s role was institutionalized in the earliest days of the church. But even more important, it confirms the church’s foundational commitment to the welfare of the whole community, beginning with the poor and the isolated.
- Acts identifies from its earliest days the church’s core functions: prayer, sacraments, teaching and preaching and, equally important, care of neighbors in need.
- The word for this care is *diakonia*, from its Greek root meaning service, the kind performed by a servant, and its Anglicized version, diaconate. This word has come to be associated with deacons, but it really belongs to the whole church.
- Using the tagline, “Engaging the diakonia of all believers,” the Association of Episcopal Deacons, our trade association, is a voice for this. They tell us, “deacons do not – cannot – ‘do’ diakonia on behalf of the baptized, but they help to lead all people, including the ordained, into the servant ministry of all believers.”

And so, as all Christians and all churches are called to diakonia, we see St. Stephen’s legacy in the voice and example of deacons leading the church to its diaconal commitment to the poor, the weak, the sick and the lonely: a powerful legacy indeed.

Another powerful contemporary expression of Stephen’s legacy is Stephen Ministry. I know many of you are familiar with this movement. Founded in the 1970’s by the Rev. Kenneth Haugk, it is based on the reality that a congregation’s many pastoral needs usually exceed its pastoral resources to respond to

*Continued on page 5*

those needs. Stephen Ministry is a highly structured program that trains lay people to become one-on-one Christian caregivers to hurting people, and provides ongoing support and continuing education for this ministry. Stephen Ministry has been implemented in over 11,000 congregations representing over 100 Christian denominations. Over half a million caregivers have been trained.

The effectiveness and reach of the Stephen Ministry organization at the macro level are legacy enough, but here is jewel at

the heart of this ministry: All who do this work at the micro level come to understand that diakonia is transformative for both the care-giver and the care-receiver. Rev. Haugk explains it like this, "When a person allows you into their life and shares their feelings and their hurts with you, they are giving you a fantastic gift, and I think when you listen to them and when you accept their feelings and when you ... share Christ's love to them, you are giving them a similarly powerful gift." In the framework of incarnational theology, it is the healing Christ touching the suffering Christ, a transaction that is so deeply blessed for both. Inspired by our patron, St. Stephen. I find it ironic that Stephen Ministry's mission is taken from Ephesians, "equipping the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ," these words of Paul who was once Stephen's persecutor.

Tonight as we have explored Stephen's influence, we have touched on various aspects of a deacon's responsibilities:

- To remind the church that care for all, beginning with the poor, is a core function of the church.
- To mold and mobilize the diaconal character of the church and all Christians.
- To help Christians to experience the spiritual transformation that comes from being the healing Christ to others.

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*"St. Stephen, whose life and ministry we honor today, is the deacon's very own patron saint, our ancient relative..."*

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The story of Stephen's martyrdom points to another facet of the deacon's role: Stephen died while mouthing off.

The Association of Episcopal Deacons calls us to move beyond politeness, to break the silence, to speak truth to power, even as this threatens the established order and results in persecution. I am reminded of our dear sister Madeleine Beard who modeled that role for us. The Diocese of Western New York, in its Deacon's Guidebook has a statement on Deacons speaking to the church: "Because the deacon brings the concerns and needs of the world to the attention of the institutional church, the deacon is expected to have a voice in all decision making bodies in the diocese and in the parishes and missions of the Diocese. The deacons offer prophetic voices wherever the Church makes decisions."

On this his feast day, we recognize the rich influence of St. Stephen - the first martyr, the first deacon - on the church. And as we do, inspired by his example, we also celebrate the ministry of deacons in the church, which is Stephen's legacy.

AMEN.

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### *Lori in Wonderland, from page 3*

GC where our leaflets are distributed, and we could walk away. But some of us remember when deacons were not even allowed to be elected to General Convention. We had no business speaking in the councils of the church. So we keep spending the money, and make sure we have a deacon at every altar.

This tiny tour of Wonderland is meant to whet your appetite for more information. AED doesn't have a lot of money, we do have a lot of responsibilities, and we are really hustling to spend your money well. AED

is not just a professional organization, and not just a support organization. We actually function in intricate, peculiar, and somewhat hidden ways, to support the essential functions of our order in this church.

I didn't know that. I wish I understood it many years ago. There may be ways to finance all our functions differently, and we are exploring some of them. But for now, we have to depend on you, and on me.

## Host an AED Assembly in 2016 or 2019!

Every three years in June, AED hosts a Triennial Assembly to which we hope to welcome all deacons in the United States, Canada, and associated communions. Most recently we were in Williamsburg, Virginia.

We invite you, your community of Deacons and your diocese to submit a Proposal for hosting this Assembly. The complete RFP proposal instructions can be found on our website, [episcopaldeacons.org](http://episcopaldeacons.org). Or email [communications@episcopaldeacons.org](mailto:communications@episcopaldeacons.org).

*Proposals are due March 1, 2014*

## Share your news with AED.

What's happening in your diocese? Are new ministries beginning to take shape? Do you have collaborative service projects between deacons, parishes or dioceses? Share your news!

We're interested in receiving your information, sermons, theological reflections, photos, etc. Please contact [communications@episcopaldeacons.org](mailto:communications@episcopaldeacons.org).

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## Receive Diakoneo by email!

Members of AED can receive this newsletter as a pdf by email. Quicker than mailing, greener and in full color!

Send an email to [membership@episcopaldeacons.org](mailto:membership@episcopaldeacons.org) with "Electronic Delivery" in the Subject Line.

# Vanishing history... can you help?

BY DEACON GERI SWANSON

When I was first elected to the Board of Directors of NAAD, and later AED, I took on the role of Archivist, not realizing the enormity of the task at hand. In 2007, I began my thesis on the New York School for Deaconesses and its leader, Deaconess Susan Trevor Knapp. I worked closely with the Archivist of the Diocese of New York, Wayne Kempton, in this endeavor. As part of that work, which is on file at General Seminary, I included thumbnail sketches of randomly chosen deaconesses who had served in that diocese. I became more and more drawn into the incredible lives of the women I read about in the documents Wayne so lovingly guarded in the bowels of Diocesan House...the archives reside in the basement.

It made me wonder what other important documents relating to the history of the Diaconate in the Episcopal Church was molding away in basements, closets and file cabinets across this country. I then began a personal quest to locate resources across the ECUSA that deacons, aspiring deacons and other interested parties - including church historians - could tap into when looking for documents relating to the work and lives of those who lived diaconally in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century.

I feared, and still do, that many of our parishes had no idea about the men and women who served individual church communities as either deacons or deaconesses.

One thing I did was to tap into deacons and diocesan archivists, who have graciously sent

diaconal materials they had. After discussion with other members of the AED Board of Directors, including Archdeacon Bill Joyner of North Carolina, we decided that the way to go was to establish electronic links to archival collections of a diaconal nature. The following links have already been established:

- **The Canterbury Project** has quite a collection of original, archival material on diaconal ministries in the Episcopal Church in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Visit <http://anglicanhistory.org/>
- **The Episcopal Woman's History Project** ([www.ewhp.org/](http://www.ewhp.org/)) has been an invaluable ally in this work, as has the Christopher Keller Library at General Seminary (<http://library.gts.edu/vwebv/htdocs/index.html>). Newsletters of the Church Training and Deaconess House (1891-1938) and St. Mary's House - Philadelphia Divinity School (1938-1952), associated with Windham House in New York, can be accessed at: <http://library.gts.edu/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=215185>
- **The New York School for Deaconesses** information and their year books can be found here: <http://www.ewhp.org/resources/nytsd/>

We are hoping this is just the tip of the iceberg, and that there are many AED members who have access to diaconal material they could share electronically. Please contact me at [geri.swanson@episcopaldeacons.org](mailto:geri.swanson@episcopaldeacons.org).

## SPOTLIGHT

### The Episcopal Woman's History Project

#### Purpose:

To promote and encourage research, writing and publication in all matters touching upon the history of women in the Episcopal Church; To promote and encourage the collection and preservation of records and other artifacts of interest pertaining to such history; To foster and promote public knowledge of interest in such history.

The Episcopal Women's History Project:

- Records and transcribes oral histories of noteworthy Episcopal women who have made a difference.
- Encourages research and publication of the lives and works of Episcopal women, past and present.
- Honors Episcopal women living or dead through the annual "All Saints" appeal.
- Raises the consciousness of the Episcopal Church and others about the historic place of women in the Church.
- Encourages the "Save a Life" project of raising up women who have been significant in local parishes.
- Researches the roles of women in the world mission of the Episcopal Church.
- Provides speakers and workshop leaders to help Diocesan or Provincial groups revisit histories of Episcopal women.
- Discovers and inventories sources and publications for use by researchers.

## Reimagining the Church

The Task Force for Reimagining the Episcopal Church (TREC) is reaching out to the Community of Deacons.

As passed by General Convention in 2012, the Task Force is charged with gathering ideas from all levels of the church about possible reforms to its structures, governance and administration - particularly "to be informed by the wisdom, expertise, and commitment

of the whole body of the Church" especially "those not often heard from."

Deacons are invite to participate. Please visit the website to add your input on four questions. Invite other individuals too! All are needed.

Facilitate small groups in your diocese using the Engagement Process Kit, which is also available on the website. It's suitable for

TASK FORCE for  
REIMAGINING the  
EPISCOPAL structures  
CHURCH governance  
administration

groups of 2-20 and includes instructions and PowerPoint slides.

Complete directions are on the website, [www.ReimagineTEC.org](http://www.ReimagineTEC.org). **Deadline for responses is March 4, 2014.**





# Christ Within Me

## Diocese of NY Deacon's Conference



The Diocese of New York's annual Deacons' Conference was held October 19-20, 2013. The theme was **Christ Within Me**, based on St. Patrick's Breastplate. Keynote speaker was the Rev. Lori Mills-Curran, Executive Director of AED.

The conference included a report on the Diaconal Formation Program in the Diocese of NY by The Rev. Denise LaVetty, the Interim Director of the program, and the first deacon to hold this position. Bishop Andrew Dietsche spoke about his vision of the diaconate.



*Bishop Dietsche and Deacon Gail Ganter-Toback*

### ARCHDEACON & DEACON DIRECTORS' CONFERENCE

## Exploring Deacons' Councils Archdeacon & Deacon Directors' Conference

AED's annual Archdeacon and Deacon Directors' Conference will be held Mar. 27-30, 2014 at the Maritime Institute Conference Center in Linthicum Heights (near Baltimore), Maryland.

The theme this year will be an in-depth discussion of what makes for a successful Deacons' Council, and will include a panel discussion from participants in well-functioning councils. Also included will be an overview of AED's new communications vehicles, and how they can be useful to you in publicizing your deacons' events and news. We will have extensive use of Open

Space Technology, an effective method of facilitation which leads to profoundly productive conversations concerning the challenges you have in ministries with and for deacons. Bring the issues you need to discuss for this opportunity to interact with your peers and get insightful advice.

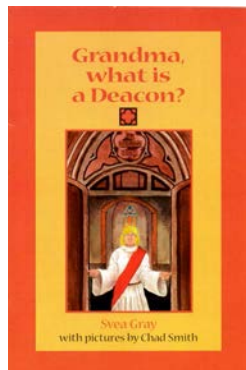
There will also be an update about our Vocational Development and Lifelong Learning Advisory Council's on-going work to refine deacon competencies that should have widespread application for deacon formation throughout our churches.

Conference registration fees for the event

will be \$200, and conference room and board (all meals included) will be \$139 per night for single occupancy (or \$190 double - which can be split between two attendees who book together.) Conference registration is available at [episcopaldeacons.org](http://episcopaldeacons.org). Conference hotel reservations should be made and paid directly to the Maritime Institute Center (which has a free shuttle that can be requested at booking) at [www.ccmit.org](http://www.ccmit.org). Your only other costs should be transportation (closest airport is Baltimore/Washington - BWI), and, if you choose to leave the Center on our free night, costs of a dinner out.

Please join us and invite all of your interested peers. Anyone interested in diaconal formation and lifelong learning should plan to attend this annual learning lab and community gathering.

# Deacons write on teaching, reflection and call



## Grandma, What is a Deacon?

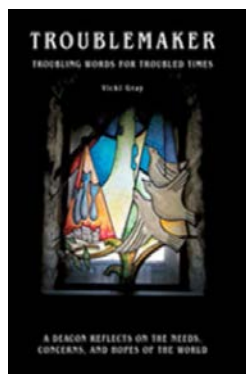
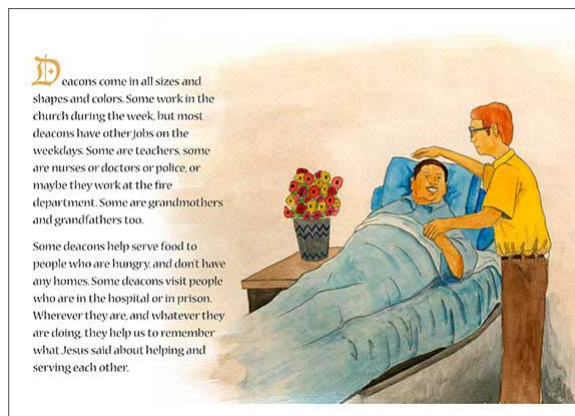
By Deacon Svea Gray

### REVIEW BY DEACON ANNE PILLOT

Do children in the congregation ever ask you, “What’s a deacon?” Dedicated to her grandchildren who asked the question, this new book by Deacon Svea Gray does a wonderful job of explaining diaconal ministry on a level appropriate for children. Written in clear, easy to understand language, she describes the deacon’s charge from the time of Acts 6 through today, including history, liturgy and service in the world. Deacon Gray responds to the unique questions children ask, while conveying the significance of baptism, Eucharist, resurrection and our shared call as servants and helpers to others, in a way that’s accessible for young readers and listeners.

Full color illustrations accompany the text in telling the story of Jesus’ call to service and how that extends to the entire church - to each child. This book is inviting for children to both read on their own or as part of a Sunday School group. Copies of this book can be purchased at [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com).

*Svea Blomquist Gray was ordained in June, 1985. She has served at St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church in Ann Arbor and is now retired. In addition to liturgical functions, she was the director of the Breakfast Program at St. Andrew’s, providing a free meal to all in need every day for the past 30 years.*



## Troublemaker

By Deacon Vicki Gray

*Troublemaker* is not an easy book to read. Not because it is not well written, carefully thought out, or engaging with fresh ideas and insights...but because it is so very honest. In this collection of sermons, Deacon Vicki Gray takes on some of the most difficult subjects of our time: poverty, racism, justice, sexuality, community. Gray speaks with a prophetic voice about many of the things that make our world broken. She does so with passion. She stakes out her territory of grace and calls on us to join her in a deep commitment to change.

This book is grounded in the gospel story of Jesus. It arises from a theology that remembers how Christ always stood with the poor, the marginalized, the vulnerable. Consequently, he stood in the line of fire for those who sought to oppress or ignore others. In this way, Jesus was always getting into trouble. He risked speaking into the silence that masked the poverty and struggle of his people. He was willing to be identified with outcasts and support the rights of the “least of these”. It is this vision of Jesus that Vicki Gray seeks to follow.

*Troublemaker* is an invitation to take discipleship seriously. It is a challenge to practice what we preach. It is the story of one woman’s journey into a lifetime of dedicated service to those on the margins of society or under the threat of war. Reading her sermons may not always be easy, but it will always be enlightening, encouraging and engaging as she lifts up a call to take what we care about out into the world around us. *Troublemaker* is available from Red Moon Publications at [redmoonpublications.com](http://redmoonpublications.com).

*Deacon Vicki Gray currently serves at Christ the Lord Episcopal Church in Pinole, California and at the San Francisco Night Ministry’s Open Cathedral, in San Francisco’s Tenderloin.*

*Review from [redmoonpublications.com](http://redmoonpublications.com)*





## What Do the Others Do?: Reflections from my Deacon Thinkin' Journal

By Deacon Lynn Werdal

REVIEW BY DEACON GERI SWANSON

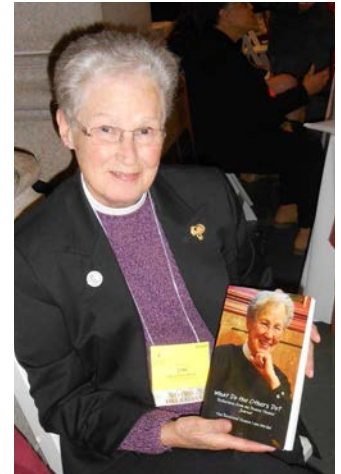
Lynn Werdal had a forty five year career in health care as a hospital nurse and later as a hospital administrator. Additionally, for nineteen years she has been the deacon at St. Thomas Church in the town of Mamaroneck, New York, a suburb of New York City. Lynn has served as mentor and instructor for the Diaconal Formation Program in the Diocese of New York for many years. During her tenure at St. Thomas, she wrote reflections for their newsletter; her monthly column is called “Deacon Thinkin’”. It is from this collections of writings that Lynn has compiled this book of short reflections on every topic imaginable.

From “Dealing with Change” to “Being Human” and “Persistence”, Lynn has presented us, in her direct and no-nonsense style, with both insight and challenges as to how we live our lives as Christians. I particularly enjoyed Lynn’s imagined tweeted and texted conversations of the apostles - referred to as Tom, Andy and Pete - as they try to make sense of the miracles of Jesus, and how they impacted their lives. In the same short piece, Lynn comes to grips with her reluctant adoption of social media, notably Facebook and Twitter. Lynn reminds us in this piece that as important as communicating our thoughts and insights might be, it also behooves us to prayerfully listen to each other.

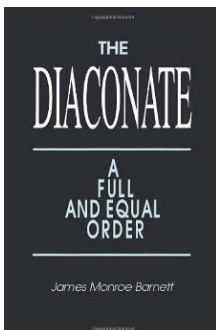
The best aspect of this book is that you can pick and choose what to read. It can be read in title order, but does not have to be. One can open it to any section and read it randomly, or, since it is divided into topics, can be read in a more directed way.

Lynn’s insight into the core of her diaconal soul and work is evident in all of her entries, and gives us excellent insight into how the mind of a deacon works.

The book can be obtained by contacting Lynn at [paly618@aol.com](mailto:paly618@aol.com). The cost including shipping is \$20 per copy. Twenty percent of all proceeds will go to charities effecting the lives of children, including Carpenter’s Kids, Smile Train and Faces.



## author in memoriam



James Monroe Barnett, author of *The Diaconate: A Full and Equal Order*, died on April 18, 2013. A priest in the diocese of Nebraska, Barnett was a major figure in the revival of the diaconate. His scholarly book was considered by many as the definitive work on the Office of the Diaconate in the Church. Originally a Ph.D. dissertation at Sewanee, his book was published in 1981, and a revised edition came out in 1995. In it, James called for a restoration of the Office of the Deacon to its original place as a full and equal order. Additionally, he served on the board of NCD/NAAD in the 1980’s.

His complete obituary can be found at [www.legacy.com/obituaries/omaha/obituary.aspx?pid=164616659](http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/omaha/obituary.aspx?pid=164616659)

The fictional Diocese of St. Ives is a recurring column in *Diakoneo*, dedicated to exploring solutions to “problem moments” in diaconal ministry. The situations are true, but the names have been changed to protect the innocent and guilty. Each issue features responses to the prior chapter situation, plus a new “case study” with an opportunity for comment.

## Chapter XVIII - response

# An apple for Eve

BY DEACON KEITH MCCOY

It's been a while since there was an update from the Diocese of St. Ives. In case you don't have the 2012 issues of *Diakoneo* close at hand, this last chapter dealt with Deacon Eve McKnight, whose rector proposed over lunch that she consider becoming a priest.

I have had more than a few people over the years ask me if I ever feel like becoming a priest. My response is always: yes – but after I take two aspirin and lie down for a while, the feeling goes away. In reality, I just have never felt the call to priesthood. I like being a servant minister, it “fits” me.

There is probably no way to dodge the presumption that every deacon seeks a promotion to priest. So long as The Episcopal Church continues to follow the hoary notion that every student for the priesthood needs to marinate as a deacon for six months (despite three years of academic training and testing for their real vocation), the question will be unavoidable. The arguments for *per saltem* ordination (direct to the presbyterate) have been made elsewhere, so I won't recount them here. However, deacons need to see these inquiries as teaching moments, helping parishioners understand the difference between a deacon (called and ordained as such) and a transitional deacon (on an historical journey). Think of it as an opportunity to proselytize for our order, rather than as a misunderstanding of our ministry which needs to be righted.

That deals with the external questions. But, what about the internal questions? What if you have the feeling that you aren't in the right place, in terms of ministry? That deep in your soul, a voice is whispering: I need to change?

Some calls do change. The priest in this chapter had a later-in-life awakening, which the church heard and confirmed. We probably all know people who have embarked on second careers in mid-life. There are probably in your diocese a few former clerics, who at one time felt they had a call, then after some time decided that ordained ministry was not what they were

suited for, and now work in the secular world.

Deacons can hear the Holy Spirit differently at various points in their lives, as well. What called you to work as a hospice chaplain at one point, may not be where Wisdom leads you a decade later. Humans tend to grow continually—intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. Your call to ministry at age 40 is probably true and real, especially if it was tested by the institutional church through its ordination process. But ten years out, you could have one or more major events impact your life: health issues, births and deaths and changes in marital status, employment disruptions, or simply greater self-awareness. Any of those could alter your approach to life and to ministry.

Any deacon who acknowledges such feelings needs to do a lot of discernment. Am I bored with being a deacon, or am I jealous of the priest's privileges? Do I crave digging deeper into my faith? Why didn't I consider X when I was in discernment years ago (and why didn't anyone ask me about X, either)? Do I want to be a shepherd or a sheepdog?

Being called beyond the diaconate to the presbyterate is an entirely separate faith journey; it can't be layered onto what you did before. You need to return to Go, despite your previous stop at the bishop's feet. You should step aside from your diaconal duties, and contemplate if God is calling you elsewhere, and where that may be. A questioner should also start a

dialogue with his or her spiritual advisor.

In addition, you should know that the church will be skeptical of your new call. The institution is always on the lookout for those who think they have found a short-cut to the priesthood. You will need to have done some serious self-examination before you present yourself for a change in vocation. The question goes beyond “why do you want to be a priest?” to “what is different now from before?” You were once fully formed as a deacon; you will need to be fully formed as a priest, not as a deacon with a bit extra layered on.

And, perhaps, the feeling is just a flight of fancy. We all have moments when we believe we could run the country better than the president, or manage the football team better than the current coach. It may not be your orders that need a change, as much as your ministry, or even your place of ministry, needs to change.

Socrates said, “The unexamined life is not worth living.” The fantasy of being a priest may simply be a call to examine where you are in your faith life. With the help of a few advisors, you will probably find that your original call to the diaconate was the right one, but it is the circumstances around you which need alteration. You should stop and hear exactly what the Spirit is saying to you, before jumping to a conclusion and a different place in the Church.

## Chapter XIX

# A Bench of Deacons

BY DEACON KEITH MCCOY

The deacons of the Diocese of St. Ives had gathered once again at St. James in East Riverside. Once everyone had their coffee or tea, Archdeacon Melanie Spunk rapped her mug with a spoon and called the group to order.

“Thank you all for coming out on this dreary Saturday morning. I'm sorry to report Bishop Rocco couldn't be with us; he had to go up to Lock Harbor to do Canon Wilhelm's funeral, as you all know. But, he did want us still to meet, because he feels the deacons can do so much

for this diocese, and he has some great ideas he asked me to share with you.”

After taking a sip of her caffeine, Melanie told the group about the new bishop's plans to recruit more deacons, and expand the Diocesan School to handle it. There were several nods of approval at that news. She also reported that Bp. Strozapreti wanted to have a deacon with him at every parish visitation.

“The bishop and I also talked about my role as archdeacon,” she continued. Eyebrows went

*Continued on page 11*

up. “And I can tell you that I have agreed to serve for another two years as the archdeacon.” A round of heartfelt applause went up from the group. When the clapping subsided, Melanie went on.

“I told him I would like some help, however. Bishop Rocco said that he would like to broaden the oversight of deacons, in the same way that the deacons in his former diocese do it. He wants us to set up a Council of Deacons, which would take on the role of planning retreats, social gatherings, continuing education, and anything else that would make us a better community in Christ’s service.”

Joe Birdcall was the first to interrupt. “You mean he’s appointing a Council of Deacons to do this?”

“No,” responded the Archdeacon. “It’s a suggestion. He wants us to create it. He wants it to be organic.” To which someone whispered, “Oh – we have to bring our own mugs now.”

Joe had the floor, and persisted. “So, how is this Council going to happen? We’re all pretty busy.” Melanie reported that the bishop would like some volunteers to start meeting to draw up a charter, do some strategic planning in the context of the diocesan vision, develop a budget,

and start working on some events. Frank Rodriguez rolled his eyes and muttered, “Jesus, save me. More meetings!”

Charitably, the discussion became more free-flowing at that point. Anxieties about being told what to do, or how current ministries would suffer because of the time spent on “diocesan stuff” were voiced. A few deacons offered support for the concept, but demurred at the suggestion they take a leadership role.

Someone asked if this council had to go into the diocesan canons, and Melanie reported that it wasn’t the case where the bishop came from. Another deacon asked about money, and would the diocese really budget for this. The archdeacon passed on that one. There were complaints about having to travel more, but then there was support for getting to know the other deacons better. Melanie said it would all be a matter of prioritizing one’s time.

As the conversation seemed to peter out, Fragrance Hippolyte stood up. “I don’t know anything about councils, but this seems like a good idea. So, I would be willing to help on this.” Kevin Wong-Allan added that he thought it had great possibilities for a radical restructuring of ministries in St. Ives, so he

volunteered. At which Joe Birdcall said he would serve, too, “so that this doesn’t get out of hand.” Marta Hamancavage quickly jumped in, saying that she would be on the committee “so that Joe doesn’t get out of hand,” which produced some snickers and a pout from Joe.

“Great!” Melanie exclaimed. “We have our working group. It’s been an interesting and deep discussion, so let’s take a break for twenty minutes, while the five of us compare our calendars. Then let’s come back and catch up on all our ministries and our families.”

And thus started a new chapter in the life of the diaconate in the Diocese of St. Ives.

**What would you do?** Please send responses with your take on rectifying the matter to [kmccoy1@optonline.net](mailto:kmccoy1@optonline.net) or 14 Second St., Edison, NJ 08837. Comments received within a month will be taken into consideration when writing the response.

*Deacon Keith McCoy has twenty plus years as a deacon and manager of public agencies.*

*Editor’s note: Coincidentally, the upcoming Archdeacon & Deacon Directors’ Conference will discuss Deacons Councils. See page 7.*

## Lessons from the dirt

A REFLECTION BY DEACON DIANNE LOWE, WHILE HELPING WITH A COMMITTAL SERVICE

**D**eacons do whatever is needed. Several weeks ago, at a committal service, it was raining, and the memorial garden area was very wet. Wet soil makes it very difficult to take the dirt and liturgically cast the soil upon the urn and say “ashes to ashes, dust to dust ...”. Actually, on that particular Saturday, it was more like a ball of mud that went “kerthunk” on the urn. (I was probably the only one who heard that sound.) When it came time again to inter another soul, the priest wisely asked that dry dirt to be provided. I was the “bearer of the dirt” in the procession from the nave to the memorial garden.

While songs were sung and the commendation said, time stopped as I gazed into the aluminum bowl stained with ashes from Ash Wednesday now filled with dry dirt.

The dirt seemed lifeless at my first gaze; there were broken twigs, soil, distracted remnants of leaves, and one tiny budded infant pinecone with divine intention to become a mighty tree. Then, I saw a tiny spider, no bigger than 2 mm, who was scurrying over, around, and under the twigs, leaves, pine needles - all the ingredients that make up soil. Movement - the dirt was alive!

As I gently fingered the soil, I then saw what looked like a glistening “jewel” in the dirt. It seemed out of place. However, the more I delicately fingered the dirt, the more “jewels” I saw, no doubt the result of eons of heat and pressure, not enough to make them diamonds, but still beautiful quartz.

What seemed to be lifeless dirt, was clear and convincing evidence of life. Evidence of life before, life existing in the moment, and with that tiny infant pinecone - a

declaration there was life to be lived.

All components in that bowl seemed nourished in their natural community of broken twigs, bits of the remnant of leaves, soil, and a few jewels. That bowl of dirt was teeming with life even as we are also, in our own natural community: broken, budded, dirty, and with a few jewels.

Then, these words sprang to life in my soul: “Even in the grave (of dirt that teems with life) we make our Alleluia.”

Thanks for listening to this deacon’s heart.

*Deacon Dianne Lowe was ordained in 2012 in the Diocese of Spokane and serves as a parish deacon at Saint James’ Episcopal Church in Pullman, Washington.*



## Recent Ordinations

We celebrate the following Deacon ordinations that have been reported to AED. If you know of other ordinations, please contact our membership office at [membership@episcopaldeacons.org](mailto:membership@episcopaldeacons.org).

**APR. 6, 2013**

**Diocese of the Virgin Islands**  
Aida Ramirez-Nieves

**APR. 7, 2013**

**Diocese of the Virgin Islands**  
Marigold Browne  
Reginald Hodge

**APR. 11, 2013**

**Diocese of Olympia**  
Eric Johnson

**JUNE 22, 2013**

**Diocese of Arizona**  
Sharon Gladwin Dalrymple  
Lane Perdue  
Benjamin Daniel Rodenbeck  
Stanley Warner Wagaman

**JUNE 27, 2013**

**Diocese of Minnesota**  
Judith Des Harnais  
Guy Drake  
David Gemmel  
Morris Goodwin Jr  
George Ham  
Eileen Harvala  
Brenda Hoffman  
Matthew Johnson  
Maureen Otwell  
Barbara Scaia  
Harlan Strong  
John Sullivan  
Rena Turnham

**JUNE 29, 2013**

**Diocese of Maine**  
Jane S. Chatfield  
Corey Walmer  
Elizabeth (Lanny) Wenthe

**Diocese of Utah**

Sandra Lee Spoar Jones

**SEPT. 30, 2013**

**Diocese of Ottawa, Canada**  
Peter Cazaly  
Christine Jannasch

**OCT. 5, 2013**

**Diocese of Long Island**  
Anthony E. Jones

**Diocese of Toronto, Canada**  
Mark Stephen, TSSF

**OCT. 19, 2013**

**Diocese of Nevada**  
Kenneth Rackley

**OCT. 26, 2013**

**Diocese of El Camino Real**  
Tina Jeanine Heidmann

**Diocese of Hawaii**  
Steven Costa

**Diocese of Indianapolis**  
Brantley Alexander  
Alan Berry Cramer

**NOV. 2, 2013**

**Diocese of Hawaii**  
Cris South

**NOV. 9, 2013**

**Diocese of Olympia**  
Eric Stroo  
Pauline (Polly) Shigaki

**NOV. 16, 2013**

**Diocese of Western Massachusetts**  
Terrence James Hurlbut

**DEC. 7, 2013**

**Diocese of California**  
Marcus Jacob Crim  
Susan Foster Napoliello

**JAN. 5, 2014**

**Diocese of Los Angeles**  
Valerie K. Ward

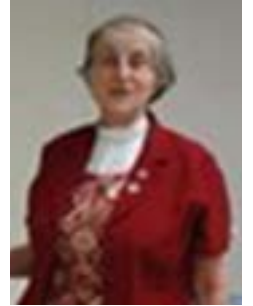
## Deacon Milestone: Susan M. Reeve elected President of Standing Committee

BY DEACON LORI MILLS-CURRAN

Deacon Susan M. Reeve has recently been elected President of the Standing Committee in the Diocese of Northern California. She is one of two deacons serving at St. Brigid of Kildare Episcopal Church in Rio Vista, California.

Deacon Reeve's primary ministry is with the Kairos Prison Ministry program, an international organization which conducts spirituality programs for incarcerated adults, youth, and their families. She is currently part of a group intending to serve in the Central California Women's Facility at Chowchilla.

Deacon Reeve states: "Although I can be strong as a pioneer, I do not function well as a lone wolf. Over the decades God has increasingly opened my heart to the woundedness of our society at the place where the criminal justice system intersects with the way we treat people with mental illness. So Kairos is my spiritual workplace. It is in the formation of small groups, the building of trust through song, prayer, laughter and tears, that God brings hope and healing."



### PROVINCE VIII DEACON'S CONFERENCE

## Poverty on the Homefront: Service and Solidarity on the Front Line

BY DEACON MAUREEN-ELIZABETH HAGEN

### Province VIII Deacon's Conference

June 27-29, 2014 • Vancouver, WA

Province VIII Deacons invite you to Vancouver, WA, to learn, network, and worship. Learn about programs that partner with veterans so that their homecoming can be more productive and healthy. Meet Native American deacons who are working among their people to improve lives and advocate for justice. Talk with those who have immigrated to America and the struggles they encounter on a daily basis. Meet and network with people working in the areas of homelessness, hunger, housing, employment and poverty in general.

Set in the beautiful Pacific Northwest, this conference has much to offer for everyone. More information regarding registration and lodging can be found online at <https://www.facebook.com/events/1398209957062354/>

# Review: “Exodus From Privilege: Reflections on the Diaconate in Acts”

Anglican Theological Review 95:2 (2013); pp. 275-292.

BY DEACON LORI MILLS-CURRAN

**B**ishop Tom Breidenthal of Southern Ohio has written an article that will soon be essential reading for those preparing for diaconal ordination. It took this deacon’s breath away.

When a bishop proposes that the diaconate be regarded as the wellspring of all ordained ministry, he gets my attention. Breidenthal asks, “What would it be like if the diaconate were the basis on which our understanding of other ordained ministries was built?” He then proposes an answer that resolves, for me, many perplexing questions. For deacons, these are questions of personal identity.

My identity as a deacon has been reconstructed again and again. I have lived in four dioceses. Each one had a fully developed diaconal theology, rooted in scripture, resulting in policies governing diaconal life. I joke with deacon friends that somehow, these theologies often ended up requiring behaviors that were exactly the opposite of the previous diocese. Often, they had no relation to diaconal reality. When I had small children and was required to change churches every two years because “deacons were prophets” and shouldn’t get too rooted, I despaired that these policies made it impossible for me to fulfill the diaconal requirements of 1 Timothy 3:12; I wasn’t at all sure that I could hang onto my one spouse, or manage my children’s faith lives well! So while musing about diaconal theology may be a luxury for some, it isn’t for deacons. What deacons determine how deacons live.

To set the context, Breidenthal retraces the tired old debates. He charts how some view diaconal renewal as undercutting lay ministry, believing it repossesses the servant ministry that is constitutive of baptismal identity as work of the ordained. Others, who assume laity are on the bottom of a hierarchy and bishops are on the top, experience renewing the diaconate as the path to lay presidency for the Eucharist. Some call into question retaining the transitional diaconate.

Breidenthal invites us past these familiar

hurdles to a very new place. At first reading, I wrote in the margin the words “breath-taking whimsicality,” a characterization I now regret. Because after I read the article half a dozen times, I realized: I want to be a deacon in the world Breidenthal proposes.

Bp. Breidenthal is no Pollyanna. He knows that much of this theological debate is about turf. I might take issue with him as he traces the turf wars, calling out laity, deacons and priests for being protective of their authority in ways that distract them from God’s project. I wanted to propose that much of diaconal turf-posturing is about hurt. I experience many deacons as expressing their hurt in anger, as they seek to maintain equilibrium in the face of myriad challenges to their vocation. Deacons live out our lives being nibbled to death by ducks, as we explain and explain and explain ourselves into being, in a world that demands we position ourselves in a hierarchy where we don’t make much sense.

Breidenthal proposes an identity free of hierarchy for all orders. He asks us to “imagine an institutional structure that addresses our drive for privilege head on.” Then comes his most profound proposal: “Our recovery of the diaconate, as flawed and confused as it has been, demonstrates our capacity both to imagine such a structure and to implement it.”

Delving deep into an exegesis of Acts as a window into the early church’s self-understanding, Breidenthal describes a proto-church, without any formal structure to govern the “peaceful mob” of those converted by Jesus. This proto-church lived in perfect koinonia, radically rejecting privilege and rank. Its foundational practices (teaching and fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer) were revolutionary means by which people were called into a new community, rejecting ethnic barriers and committed to providing for all. “There was not a needy person among them” and all this was done with “glad and generous hearts.”

This early perfect koinonia ran afoul of sin.

Ananias and Sapphira faked commitment, and their conduct sparked a recommitment to the dream of God, followed by signs and wonders as their behavior is rebuked. But breakdown in the perfect koinonia comes again, as the Hellenist widows are neglected. Again, recommitment is needed. But this time, Breidenthal argues, the maturing community institutes an adaptive, not a technical, “fix.” The first deacons are selected by all the people after *episkepsomai*, looking over all the possibilities. They are set aside by the people. The apostles, Breidenthal says, merely affirm the people’s choice. Again, signs and wonders confirm the path chosen to assist “circulation of power for the common good.”

For Breidenthal, orders, not simply deacons, came into existence in this newly ordered church. This first order served not merely to help with food distribution, but as “the church’s conscience to ensure that the church is not permitted to forget its poor.” Later orders came into being to serve this same goal in other ways: priests to help the local congregation name its resistance to koinonia and work to overcome it, bishops to form “a people that is universal without being monolithic – present everywhere, yet as regards privilege, always outside.” All orders are means to make sure that the church is fully equipped to remember its identity, again and again, as a community that “seeks, in its best moments, to be an exodus people” as we journey from privilege. “Some of us are invited by the baptized to be deacons, priests and bishops, in order to help the whole body stay the course when so many forces urge us to turn back.” As the first adaptation of a new institution, deacons are the wellspring of all orders, and every order should be “stamped with the character of the order which provides them both with their context and point.”

Much more in the article remains to be digested than can be addressed here. Breidenthal’s careful tracing of the parallels

*Continued on page 14*

# Happy Retirement to our Webmaster, Bryan!

BY DEACON TINA CAMPBELL, PRESIDENT

The AED Board held its quarterly meeting by phone on November 22, 2013. We began with the Deacon's Resolved question, "How does what we do affect/involve those living in poverty?" Our sharing brought out the point that the role of deacons is essential in empowering the faith community, and we in our leadership role among deacons help shape that role.

We then heard a variety of Committee Reports. Lori, our Executive Director, described her activities and the ways in which she continues to familiarize herself with the Association. While you will learn more in her report elsewhere in *Diakoneo*, her work has involved traveling, representing us in various locations, working with formations programs and engaging with other staff and Association leaders.

Anne Pillot, our Communications Director, joined us in the call. The group was pleased with her first efforts at *Diakoneo* and Deacon Update, our electronic newsletter. At the time of the meeting she was working with Lori and Bryan in preparation for taking on the additional role of Webmaster. Bryan retired from this work December 31, 2013. The process of online sales through our website is being reviewed and changes to the website will be apparent shortly.

The Board spent a good portion of the call reviewing the proposed budget which Michael Kitt, our Treasurer, had circulated. We passed that budget at an extra phone meeting that was held in December.

In closing, I want to thank Bryan England for his service as our Webmaster. He has faithfully updated our site and handled online memberships, conference registrations, and sales over the years. Additionally he has been the proverbial "non-anxious presence" in the last minute rush that often precedes our gatherings. I, personally, am appreciative of his patience with the many questions, changes, and concerns he fielded as we prepared for last year's Assembly in Williamsburg. My prayers and best wishes go with him and Linda as they enter this next phase of the journey. Happy Retirement!

Tina Campbell, *President*



*Review, from page 13*

between the early church and the Exodus people has received short shrift in this necessarily brief review, and requires careful reading before his perspective can be fully appreciated. I marvel that I never noticed the parallels before.

I still have questions. At times, I wondered how Breidenthal could be so idealistic as to insist that orders without hierarchy were even possible. I find it worrisome he might be read as encouraging the powerful to disclaim they have power. "There's no privilege here," Breidenthal states, referring to orders. Can we will such a world into being? I was dragged kicking and screaming into owning my authority as a deacon, when I discovered that my theological disapproval of hierarchy was irrelevant when I was wearing a black shirt. Orders have been identified with hierarchy so long that even those not captive to the neoplatonism Breidenthal criticizes might have trouble living into this new world.

Another question might be that Breidenthal does not address the issue simmering in diaconal circles, and beginning to be identified as a barrier to younger diaconal vocations. Some younger people are newly turning

to our church precisely because diaconal identity attracts them. They want a public persona defined by its commitment to the needy. They are surprised when told that they can't make their living at it. Knowing both theologically and politically that money is power, they wonder what it says about a church that its conscience is unfunded. The fact that priests and bishops are paid to bear their share of the burdens of maintaining *koinonia*, while deacons usually can't be, is surely not irrelevant for the discussion.

These concerns aside, my heart sang through much of this article. I must come clean that I am relieved that he seems to have found a theology which allows us to retain the transitional diaconate. I saw in ecumenical work that TEC's consideration of abolishing it created problems with other denominations with whom we would like to be closer. (I was even more thrilled his view did not require priests and bishops "to remain" deacons, in that way that seems so dismissive of us.) I chuckled when Breidenthal called out "the unholy alliance between the ordained and the laity" when their relationship becomes that of service provider to client. This language

fell sweetly on this cranky deacon's ears, as she struggles to find ways to awaken hearts for *diakonia* in consumers engaged in church shopping for the best programs. Maybe I am a prophet after all!

This article kept the AED Executive Board humming with hope in our last meeting. I hope to thank Tom Breidenthal someday for a fresh way of thinking about the diaconate that comforts me tremendously. Maybe there is a way to clarify diaconal identity that does not entail us parroting again and again and again what we are not.

*Bishop Breidenthal's article can be found at [anglicantheologicalreview.org](http://www.anglicantheologicalreview.org). Select READ, the Previous Issues, Spring 2013.*

<http://www.anglicantheologicalreview.org/read/article/1533/>



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My diocese: \_\_\_\_\_

## "THE SEVEN" UPDATE

# "The Seven" Young Adult Program Fields Group of Five in 2014

BY DEACON LORI MILLS-CURRAN

Deacon Kyle Pedersen has successfully recruited a group of four men and one woman to AED's young adult diaconal mentoring program, who began participation in January 2014. They will participate in a newly streamlined format that will run through June. Participants hail from California, Nebraska, Texas and Connecticut. A sixth additional candidate was in

discernment at press time. Each of these participants is matched with a deacon in his/her community.

The program began with an introductory teleconference for participants in January, in which they reviewed the program schedule, expectations and communication tools. Deacon mentors will also participate in regularly scheduled teleconferencing, and

Kyle is working to integrate state of the art conferencing tools available through Province I's Executive Director, Julie Lytle, who is a specialist in distance learning. An additional program goal this year will be to explore new ways to involve past participants and mentors in this learning/discernment community. You can reach Deacon Kyle Pedersen at [kyle.pedersen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kyle.pedersen@sbcglobal.net).

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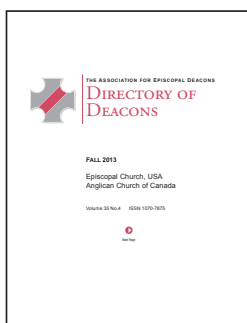
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## 2013 Deacon Directory

The 2013 Deacon Directory is available as a pdf for downloading at [www.episcopaldeacons.org](http://www.episcopaldeacons.org). The Directory is updated once a year and the 2014 edition will be published in December. Please send any updated information for the new Directory to [membership@episcopaldeacons.org](mailto:membership@episcopaldeacons.org).