

Stevenson School for Ministry Annual Report - 2015

Total Ministry Approach to Leadership Development in the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania

In 2015 The Stevenson School for Ministry continued to serve the Diocese, Commission on Ministry and Bishop in resourcing people and congregations to equip and strengthen leadership for mission and ministry for the church now and in the future.

Administration:

Higher purpose: Theological Education and training is an imperative for mission in every diocese. SSFM is an academic, formation hybrid opportunity that takes A Total ministry focus—in Theological Education for All. Supporting the vision of formation from the Bishop and the work of the COM, The Stevenson School for ministry (SSFM) includes; the School for the Diaconate, Worker Priesthood and Laity (canonical areas of worship, administration, pastoral leadership) along with education modules and workshops during THRIVE. This hybrid formation system is designed to resource every parish in the diocese to build up and send out disciples into the world to engage in God's mission, being nourished by the community of faith.

2015 was a year of transition.

A. Development of a Board of Advisors to become the Board of Directors – The Rev. Canon David Lovelace – Chair, and includes members from the Diocese of Pittsburgh who are Board members include; the Rev. Dr. Canon Jay Geisler (Diocese of Pittsburgh); The Rev. Cliff Johnston, The Rev. Dr. David Zwifka, The Rev. Dr. Ellen Wondra (Bexley-Seabury), The Rev. Dr. Herb Sprouse.

- a. Bi-Annual meetings were held to engage in strategic priorities
- b. Tasks to complete: Consistent Grading Rubrics, course content and design, meeting with Examining Chaplains, meeting with Commission on Ministry for collaborative support.
- c. Budget implications for THRIVE and for course structure.

B. Courses:

1. Courses offered for spring and Fall semesters included Missiology, Homiletics, Anglican Approaches to Scripture, taught by The Rev. Dr. Duncan Johnston, Hebrew Scripture; Prophets taught by The Rev. Dr. David Zwifka, Ethics II, taught by The Rev. Dr. Ellen Wondra, and Church History II and Celtic Spirituality, taught by the Rev. Canon Dr. Mark Scheneman and Exploring Your Ministry, taught by The Rev. Canon Kate Harrigan. Dr. Marion Schwartz became our writing

- tutor and faculty. We continue to evaluate through testing, and through narrative.
2. Student enrollment-Average class size 4 for a total of 26 vocational students. We have four postulants for the Diaconate; Lori Robinson, Michael Nailor, Cathy Rippeon, Eric Henry. We have 6 others discerning a call to the priesthood, and the remaining students are engaged in strengthening their lay leadership.
 3. Four Orientation Sessions (3 day gatherings for class and formation) were held during 2015 with a total of 22 students participating during each Orientation Sessions and 5 faculty teaching.
 4. Linda Arguedas is key in developing the on-line registration for orientation, classes and lay leadership days (THRIVE)
 5. Sarah Rathbun continued to be our technology support. as support— use of Moodle, our learning platform, and developed transcript reporting; course catalogue, and brochures.
 6. Five discernment internship placements through 2015.
 7. Four THRIVE events were held with a focus on Stewardship, Eliminating Racism, Formation and Jump Start (Church Building Fund.) Average attendance is between 50 to 80 participants.

Task Force group support created to resource congregational leadership:

- 1) Eliminating Institutional Racism- planning for training and action in the Diocese of Central PA now co-chaired by Kevin Barron and Marion Schwartz
- 2) Stewardship Development – work with Episcopal Church Foundation
- 3) Rites of Institution- to develop a protocol and resource list for CPA

New Development during 2015 is the Vital and Effective Leadership Institute, VELI, for newly ordained clergy and clergy new to their cures in the Diocese of Central PA. Began July 2015.

1. The Vital and Effective Leadership Institute:

- a. Two year commitment of parish leadership and new clergy to a learning and mentoring process.
- b. Faculty develops 10 relevant modules per year with on-line support and reflection.
- c. Parish Lay leadership development through training which compliments the training of the clergy in VELI congregations: St. Luke's Altoona and Holy Trinity Shamokin and St. Stephens' Mt. Carmel.
- d. Offered at no cost to the congregations, accept a commitment to continuing education.

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Vision for 2016 includes: 1) Discussions and collaboration with Virginia Theological Seminary, Bexley-Seabury, and Gettysburg Seminary and Lower Susquehanna Synod. More Diocese as stake holders. 2) Develop CE units as well as hopefully by 2016 3) courses that have transferable credits.

Other areas of training and support offered through the Stevenson School for Ministry:

1. Diocesan wide Safe Church Training:
 - a. Safeguarding God's Children & People-held and supported eight training sessions.
 - b. On-line training updated and administrated by The Rev. Brenda Taylor, Deacon, and All Saints Hershey.
 - c. Support and updating of Diocesan Safe Church trainers, including training and information about the new PA laws on mandatory reporting.

Respectfully submitted,

The Very Rev. Robyn Szoke-Coolidge
Dean, Stevenson School for Ministry