

## BC Diaconal Ministers Report

**Number of Diaconal Ministers in Conference:** 26, includes students

**Number of Students in DM Training:** 7

### Concerns:

SU: BC Conference will only provide extra travel allowance/bursaries if I attend VST Native Ministries - they don't consider other courses (last year I wanted to take Native Drum Making at Naramata - with one of our village folks leading - and I was told to take it in the village - they missed the whole point of me going to build relationship and support his leadership outside the village, and taking something with more relaxing setting after 7 years of study study study... greater bursaries and travel allowances should be based on how far folks are from centres.... e.g. it takes 2.5 days to get to Edmonton to take con ed at St. Steve's... or fly to Rupert, fly to Vancouver... then fly to Edmonton... folks in remote areas are not encouraged to stay because of this kind of isolation! I asked to be part of the consultation for Ministry Compensation, and was told I would be included by a telephone consultation... to which I agreed, but then no one contacted me... others were paid to travel to Kelowna and the lowermainland for inperson consultations... but I couldn't afford to take all that time off (and it would have cost national so much...) but now I feel totally left out of the process... as well as uncompensated for this kind of isolation. I love being in ministry where I am... but I need the church to be financially involved in making it just as easy for me to connect in person with other colleagues as if I lived in a major centre, or else these little places will never have ministers.

BC: The continuing lack of knowledge/acceptance of Diaconal ministers is still a concern. Folks have been refused interviews in the pastoral relations process, or minimised within their congregations. Adding to this is the incredible diversity of opinion within diaconals about who we are. When ever someone starts talking about "diaconal positions", I start to feel limited and ghetto-ised.

LE: still calling us Commissioned Ministers, still no real understanding of Diaconal Ministry, are we valuing Educated Ministry, we have many little congregations who need 1/4 -3/4 time and congregations look for the cheapest option, when can we talk about the justice of part time work for trained ministry people, how are we supporting educated ministry people to get the jobs, here it is ordained or Lay Pastoral Minister

### Celebrations:

- SU: love being in a small native village setting. Sunday School now running weekly, pastoral presence is growing strong... I'm going to England with the Grade 10 class from the local band school in April!
- BC: Still working away after 24 years! The 20th anniversary of my commissioning is this June...egads!! I am celebrating the arrival of Brian Thorpe, who will be my colleague in ministry. And, I have become a new step-grandmother and great aunt of twins!
- LE: enjoy congregational transformation work, in ministry now for 32 years, do interesting women focused Bible Studies, getting into stewardship and trustees work, also find myself being invited to give leadership in these areas which I thought I would never want any part of

### **Church Involvement:**

- SU: Minister at Grace United Church - Lax Kw'alaams (formerly Port Simpson).
- RC: RC: single "ordered" person on Salt Spring Is.
- BC: Full time ministry at Ryerson United in Vancouver
- LE: full Time Team Ministry, am called the Lead Minister

### **Congregational focus:**

- SU: Actively involved in the village life, even the pentecostal lay ministers in town from the local pentecostal type church call me "our minister" .... Other than NRC which is tiny, and connected to the Independant Alliance of pPentecostal churches, the United church is the only and focal centre of village spiritual life... I am the only minister in town - other than the Pastor Ted Ryan (who has cancer)I preside at all weddings, funerals (they last a week!), etc. There is great respect from most for my ministry here. - it is a largely pastoral and village involvement role...
- RC: pastoral care, re-building the Social Action com., active on Kairos cmt.; encouraging "In from the Cold" emergency overnight care; encouraging political pressure to look at affordable housing projects
- BC: Education and pastoral care. Add to that: Liturgist, preacher, congregational growth, ministry with women and gays/lesbians and ethnic families, special event planner, personnel co-ordinator, weddings, funerals and and and....
- LE: Sunday worship, jazz vespers, stewardship, congregational transformation, working on Holy Conversations as a strategic planning and spiritual process for congregations, community outreach, currently involved in developing a bus mobil for health services in the community, additional transitional housing units for all kinds of folks, and a Dream Center-sort of Community Living Room and am on a Housing Coalition, developing a Drumming Circle for the fall

### **Presbytery:**

- SU: Presbytery Prince Rupert Presbytery - I am currently working on a JNAC Committee in Haisla (Kitimat Village), and a Discernment Committee with

someone from Terrace, and just finished working on the Search Committee to hire the Central Mainland Marine Minister (circuit minister for old Crosby circuit on North Coast of BC)... I may take on secretary of Presbytery in 6 months

RC: Program (Outreach) cmt., currently working on a Discernment cmt.

BC: Education and Students Committee, and Christian Education.

LE: incoming Chair of Education and Students, pastoral oversight for two congregations

### **Conference:**

SU: hasn't been a Conference meeting since I was commissioned in 2003, but I attended a Global Justice Workshop in Feb 2004 in Vancouver... haven't been invited to any more... and would need full travel costs to consider it

RC: Interview Board

BC: Sexual Harassment consultant and regular planner for the celebration of ministry services

LE: Sexual Harassment consultant

### **National:**

SU: nothing so far... if full travel were covered... I'd consider it...

RC: not on any ctee, would consider

BC: Mentor for diaconal student, workshop leader for VST summer school

LE: no UC involvement but am mentor for Diaconal Student, supervisor for LPMiT,

### **Diaconal Ministers in BC who responded to the Questionnaire**

Sharilynn Upsdell: [spiralspirit@telus.net](mailto:spiralspirit@telus.net)

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I am disappointed that so few responded to this questionnaire. I was trying to make it easier for everyone. Not sure how to help us as a Diaconal Community. Disappointed that I am the only one from BC. We will get together at Conference this year. I now have a list of all the folks in DM, retired, active, students thanks to Daphne Rogers and I will try and develop a support system for us in BC.

Please support us.

Submitted by  
Linda M. Ervin  
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