

Maria Joyea Shepherd

Year Commissioned

She was commissioned at the All Native Circle conference in Fisher River on May 27, 2001.

Program of Formation

Maria studied at the Dr Jessie Saulteaux Centre in Beausejour Manitoba for 5 years, graduating in 2001.

What called you to Diaconal Ministry?

Her call to ministry was gradual but persistent. She was raised in the United Church and along with her siblings walked 2 miles to church on Sundays. While her parents did not attend the church, they did support it in many ways and did not prevent them from attending, just cautioned them to be careful. As Maria grew older she left the White Bear Reserve in Saskatchewan and lived in Regina but life there as a single parent was a struggle and very difficult. When she moved back to the reserve at White Bear she began helping the ministers in the church, primarily with the children's programming. Maria would give leadership to Sunday School and other gatherings of the children. She would call in the elders so that they could also learn some stories from their own tradition. She found this to be fulfilling as she trained for two years under the supervision of Dan Manning and Jake Naganosh. Maria served the church in this capacity for over ten years before beginning her studies towards ministry.

Describe some of your experiences of ministry

Maria has never been interested in preaching and does not preach. Instead her ministry is a ministry of service. These days she attends St Knox United Church in Regina and works in the area of pastoral care doing home visits as well as hospital visitation. She also participates in the leadership of Round Dances which offers healing as she leads in prayers encouraged by the Spirit.

How I explain Diaconal Ministry to others ...

Maria understands diaconal ministry to be a mixture of education, pastoral care and service as she works to determine and meet the needs of her community.

Written: 12 December 2005