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NAME OF AUTHOR: Eric Charles Tusz-King

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22 Harris Drive
Sackville, New Brunswick
E4L 3X6

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PROMOTING DIACONAL MINISTRY WITH PRESBYTERY EDUCATION AND STUDENTS AND PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEES

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MASTER IN THEOLOGICAL STUDIES IN DIACONAL MINISTRY

By
Eric C. Tusz-King
Sackville, New Brunswick

DEDICATION

I dedicate this to my family, who have shown patience and support throughout the long process to complete this thesis.

I also dedicate this to the diaconate with the hope that this work may strengthen this ministry in the church and the world.

ABSTRACT

Promoting Diaconal Ministry with Presbytery Education and Students and Pastoral Relations Committees is a report on and analysis of a project done with three presbyteries in Maritime Conference of The United Church of Canada to help them better understand and support diaconal ministry.

With the active participation of the Committee on Diaconal Ministry of The United Church of Canada's General Council's Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, and Maritime Conference's Ministry Support and Development Committee, this thesis is grounded in the identified needs and capabilities of the United Church. The assessments done with Diaconal Ministers, conference personnel ministers, and presbytery Education and Students and Pastoral Relations Committees all indicated that, if they were to better promote diaconal ministry, they would need better resource material, supportive educational programmes and leadership developed for these presbytery committees.

Based upon an action-reflection model of adult education, the project developed several print resources and workshop outlines for interpreting diaconal ministry, for use by these particular committees. These resources and workshops, which are included in the Appendices, were trialed and evaluated by the three presbyteries' Education and Students and Pastoral Relations Committees.

Finally, this thesis prepares a set of recommendations for resource development, workshop and the leadership needed to guide the implementation of these recommendations.

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I would also like to thank the Committee on Diaconal Ministry, the Ministry Support and Development Committees, and Bob Campbell, for their committed participation in the project, upon which this thesis is based.

Finally, I thank Margaret, my beloved wife and proofreader, whose support has been vital and greatly appreciated.

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INTRODUCTION

In May 1998 Maritime Conference of the United Church of Canada had candidates for Diaconal Ministry who were ready to be commissioned as Diaconal Ministers and no place settle them. The reason was that no one in their presbyteries or conference had ensured there were pastoral charges or outreach ministries who would accept them in their first ministry. In this first ministry following commissioning it is the church's responsibility to settle Diaconal and Ordained Ministers in a ministry of the church's choosing. Both candidates had some limiting conditions on where they could be settled, but it was recognized by those in responsible positions that the church had let these two candidates down only weeks before they were prepared to commit themselves to a ministry of education, service and pastoral care in the United Church of Canada.

This story, although specific to the Maritime Conference, is a glaring example of what Diaconal Ministers have experienced in different ways since diaconal ministry was recognized in the United Church of Canada.[1] Those engaged in this ministry, under the names of Commissioned Minister, Certified Churchmen and Deaconess thought the actions of General Councils in 1980[2] and 1982[3] indicated the United Church of Canada was committed to accept

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1. When those performing diaconal ministry were deaconesses, it was left up to the individuals, the Women's Missionary Society, or the Deaconess Order to find positions for their members. Even after 1982, when General Council formally recognized Diaconal Ministers as ordered ministry personnel, the church's performance in finding positions to settle commissionands has not been good.

[2] The 28th General Council established there would be one order of ministry made up of those commissioned to diaconal ministry of education, service and pastoral care and those ordained to word, sacrament and pastoral care. (The United Church of Canada's 30th General Council Record of Proceedings, 1980. Toronto: The United Church of Canada. 1980, pp. 956-

and promote diaconal ministry as a valuable and integral part of the ordered ministry. Twenty years later, the stories from students and Diaconal Ministers still tell of the institutional church's lack of awareness of this ministry and show that this earlier optimism was unfounded.

957).

[3] The 29th General Council approved a recommendation that the name Diaconal Minister be used to refer to those members of the Order of Ministry who are commissioned to diaconal ministry of education, service and pastoral care. This act meant that for the most part those who were previously called Deaconesses, Commissioned Ministers and Certified Employed Churchmen would now be known as Diaconal Ministers. (The United Church of Canada's 30th General Council Record of Proceedings, 1982. Toronto: The United Church of Canada. 1982, pp. 75 & 148) .

The primary place where an awareness of diaconal ministry needs to be instilled is within the presbyteries[4]. This court in the United Church of Canada has the direct contact with and responsibility for the ministry in congregations and outreach ministries. It is presbyteries, working with congregations, who respond to individuals who try to discern their call to accountable ministry. The project, upon which this thesis is based, focussed on the presbyteries' Education and Students and Pastoral Relations Committees. These committees have the primary responsibility for and initial contact with inquirers seeking to enter ordered ministry and pastoral charges looking for ministers.

However, identifying the frontline of education only partially answers the challenges facing those called to *diakonia*, a ministry of education, service and pastoral care. Accepting that presbyteries have a frontline role in education, the thesis question is "Will presbytery Education and Students and Pastoral Relations Committees feel that they can better carry out their responsibilities if they have improved resources and a greater knowledge of diaconal ministry?". In this project, existing orientation programmes as well as printed and audio-visual material used in

[4] Presbyteries are the ecclesiastical courts of the United Church of Canada which are responsible for the oversight of candidates for ordered ministry and the placement (appointment or call) of ministry personnel (Diaconal, Ordained, Staff Associates and Lay Pastoral Ministers).

the promotion of diaconal ministry were evaluated. Then, new programs and resources, designed to widen the understanding of and appreciation for diaconal ministry were prepared, used and evaluated. This thesis documents and critiques this project, and brings forward an analysis of the evaluations of Education and Students (E&S) and Pastoral Relations (PR) Committees[5], in response to the thesis question.

If presbytery E&S and PR Committees do not feel they presently are adequately prepared for this responsibility, this thesis project offers new resources and other suggestions as to how they can better prepare themselves. I hoped any recommendations arising from this project, suggesting a programme to better appreciate and promote diaconal ministry, would be supported and implemented by the responsible bodies. To move toward this ultimate goal, it was integral to the project that the committees with related responsibilities develop and participate fully in it.

[5] In order to ease the reading these two presbytery committees I hereafter refer to them as the E&S and PR Committees. In order to distinguish them from the two committees with the same name at the conference level I will use their full names when referring to the conference committees.

The Committee on Diaconal Ministry in the General Council's Division of Ministry Personnel and Education is mandated "to promote public awareness of diaconal ministry".[6] In developing this thesis and the related project, I have worked closely with the Committee and the resources it has produced. In the fall of 1998, following the embarrassing situation referred to above, the Maritime Conference Ministry Personnel & Education Committee created a Ministry Support and Development Unit, which has also been a partner in this thesis project. These two committees' participation and commitment to the project will greatly contribute to the transference of the learnings and follow-up on the recommendations.

The Background and Scope of the Problem

It is important to understand why this education has not been done effectively in the past in order to understand how this project fits into an overall strategy of education of the church with regard to diaconal ministry. Inaction on the part of the church is in part due to the marginalized nature of diaconal ministry.

[6] The Committee on Diaconal Ministry was established by the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education in its annual on February 16, 1984. (Annual Meeting Minutes of the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, February 14-16, 1984. Page 519). The mandate of the Committee was revised in to its present articulation.

Diaconal ministry has primarily been a ministry which women have done in the church. In the early church this was a radical role for women to offer leadership in society and the religious community in this way. This opportunity to serve did not last long and by 600 AD. the diaconate began to disappear, oppressed by a male hierarchy. Since its reintroduction to the church in 1830s in Germany[7], it has remained as a marginalized women's ministry for the most part.[8] Although The United Church of Canada recognized Diaconal Ministry as an ordered ministry in 1980, there are many people with chauvinist attitudes, who continue to keep it marginalized. They are not now going to promote it enthusiastically. Therefore, it is imperative that this project is seen as an attempt by an oppressed group[9] to seek acceptance by a wider, not well-informed, church[10].

This thesis will be limited to the promotion of diaconal ministry as expressed in

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[7] Committee on Diaconal Ministry (1993). Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada (Booklet). Page 9.

[8] Accounts of this ministry and its lack of respect within the Reformed Methodist traditions are well expressed respectively in Elsie McKee's 1989 Diakonia in the Classical Reformed Tradition and Today and Keller, Moede and Moore's 1987 Called to Serve: The United Methodist Diaconate.

[9] This oppression and lack of acceptance is both national in scope and international. The Deaconess Order of The United Church of Canada found colleagues around the world who shared their experiences as they joined the World federation of Deaconess Associations for the DIAKONIA in 1957. Ruth Felgentreff. Diakonia, From Utrecht to Bethel, World Federation of Deaconess Associations, Bethel, 1975.

[10] "The history of diaconal ministry in The United Church of Canada is one of struggle for respect, understanding and change." p. 148. Division of Ministry Personnel and Education (1991). The History of Diaconal Ministry in the United Church of Canada. Toronto: The United Church of Canada..

The United Church of Canada and those commissioned to this ministry as Diaconal Ministers. It will not generally include diaconal ministry practiced by lay people, Staff Associates and Ordained Ministers. To distinguish between the general and formal forms of this ministry, lowercase letters will be used to refer to the general ministry and upper-case letters will be used when referring to those formally recognized by The United Church of Canada to be performing this ministry.

Another limitation of this thesis is that has not endeavoured to discern if the learnings are applicable to Aboriginal people inquiring about Diaconal Ministry and Commissionands seeking settlement. The situation is very different for students, as all candidates for ordered ministry are encouraged to discern their particular emphasis while studying at either the Francis Sandy Theological Centre or the Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Centre. Settlement is also experienced differently, as commissionands and ordinands often return to their home community which has encouraged them to enter the ordered ministry. Given these significant differences, I did not endeavour to determine if the project could be adapted to Aboriginal communities.

Responses to the Problem

Since the Committee on Diaconal Ministry was created in 1982, it has undertaken on several occasions to educate the church about Diaconal Ministry through the production and promotion of several print, visual and video resources[11]. These resources

[11] Diaconal Ministry: All About Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada, a kit which contained workshop outlines, articles on the history and essence of

and the limited number of workshops done for presbyteries were not usually focussed on presbytery Education and Student and Pastoral Relations Committees, but were a general education of all presbytery members, many of whom had no specific responsibility for candidates for ministry or the oversight of ministry personnel. Individual Diaconal Ministers supported the Committee on Diaconal Ministry in this work and made their own efforts to educate presbyteries and Conference Ministry Personal and Education Committees. However, there has never been a focussed, comprehensive and sustainable programme of education for the purpose of gaining the understanding and promotion of diaconal ministry with presbytery Education and Student and Pastoral Relations Committees.

The project, which is the basis of this thesis, hopefully will lead to the preparation

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Diaconal Ministry, and a bibliography on Diaconal Ministry. It was produced by the Division of MP&E, The United Church of Canada, Toronto, 1987.

Nancy Hardy, Called to Serve–A Story of Diaconal Ministry in the United Church of Canada. Toronto: Division of MP&E, The United Church of Canada, Toronto, 1985.

The United Church of Canada, History of Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada 1925-1991. Toronto: Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, The United Church of Canada, Toronto, 1991.

A Task Group of Jessie MacLeod, Don Reid, Martin Rumscheidt, Virginia Coleman, and Mary Anne MacFarlane prepared Educated Ministry: Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada. It is one in a series of papers entitled, Educated Ministry produced by Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, The United Church of Canada. Revised edition September 1986.

of a set recommendations for such a comprehensive programme that will help The United Church of Canada appreciate and promote diaconal ministry. It is my thesis that when such a programme is provided in a manner that is sensitive to the background knowledge of the participants, and specifically tailored to assist the presbytery Education and Student and Pastoral Relations Committees to meet their particular mandates, such an education is appreciated, and that most participants, and the committees as a whole, will be interested in promoting diaconal ministry through their committees' work.

CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL BASIS FOR THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES, RESOURCES AND LEADERSHIP

The educational model used here to respond to the learning needs identified by the presbyteries' Pastoral Relations and Education and Students Committees is usually referred to as the action-reflection model of adult education. The action-reflection model particularly suits this application because it has been developed for adult learners, as are all members of these committees. It acknowledges and values the experience and knowledge learners have prior to the intentional educational experience, which has been designed to meet their particular learning needs and situation. Finally, this action-reflection model is strong in helping learners feel confident with the new knowledge they gain and therefore, enables them to share their learnings in situations that may be less than supportive and/or with people who have no prior knowledge.

The action-reflection model of adult education has been employed in the design of many programmes and resources prepared and used in The United Church of Canada, and in particular in Maritime Conference. Under the name of Educational Design Lab, it has served as the basis for training events at the Atlantic Christian Training Centre (or Tatamagouche Centre) and the Maritime Conference Resource Pool. The origins of the model are probably with adult educators such as Paulo Freire[12] and Bud Hall[13], and other

[12] Pedagogy in Process: Letters to Guinea-Bissau, New York: Seabury Press, 1978., Pedagogy of the Oppressed, New York: Continuum, 1993., Teachers as Cultural Workers: Letters to Those Who Dare to Teach, Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995.

educators have built upon their work. The Centre for Christian Studies also uses a modified version of this educational model in its Educational Ministry Year in its Diploma and Certificate Programmes.[14] An easily read version, which serves as a model for this project, has been written by Carolyn Palmer, and is contained in the Implementation section of The Planner for Lifelong Learning published by The United Church of Canada. This should make it easily accessible to most leaders in congregations, presbyteries and conferences. For its own inherent qualities and its accessibility, the action-reflection model of adult education has been chosen to provide a framework for this thesis.

> The model has generally been depicted in the form of a circle or spiral, indicating that the learning achieved, or new knowledge created, is taken into account in planning the next educational experience. The merit of the circle is that it recognizes that the learning experience can start at any point and is complete and well integrated when the circle is complete. The spiral illustrates the need to move through the different dimensions of the learning experience but adds the notion of moving to another level of learning in subsequent educational experiences. The spiral also has the advantage of a starting point–quite helpful in the planning process. I have chosen the spiral to illustrate the educational model for the project portion of this thesis precisely because it provides a starting point in educational process.

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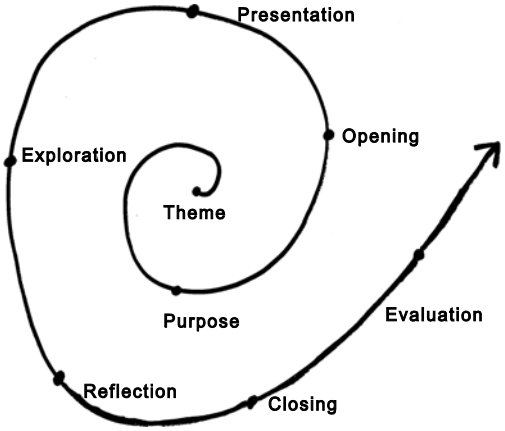
[13] Adult Learning, a Design for Action : a Comprehensive International Survey, New York: Pergamon Press, 1978., Participatory Research : Popular Knowledge and Power. Toronto : Participatory Research Group, 1985.

[14] Educating for a Change, (1991) by Arnold, Burke, James, Martin, and Thomas gives a full description and theoretical and framework for the action-reflection model.

The first step in the model is **assessment**, taking stock of the ways things are at present, including what questions and concerns the learner has expressed. For this project, this step included assessing present resources, programmes, leadership available, and current challenges. Although the focus of the assessment is on the learner, the needs of the learner's context are also assessed.

The second step is **setting goals** -- making intentional goals that address the present situation and the learning needs of the participants. In the project, much of this work was done in concert with the Committee on Diaconal Ministry and the Ministry Support and Development Committees as they considered their participation in the project. Further articulation of goals was done in collaboration with the Steering Group as the project became more sharply focussed and the specific learning needs of the various groups were identified.

The third step of **setting objectives** is the work the leaders of events do in response to particular the specific needs of individual participants. For this project,



objectives were also set for the resources prepared for these events.

Creating and implementing a plan of action the fourth and fifth steps were done in collaboration with the Steering Group. This was critical in order to achieve the familiarity with the content of the programmes and resources developed. It is important to note here that one of the explicit purposes of this project was to potentially create a long-term sustainable educational programme for E&S and PR Committees with respect to diaconal ministry. The role I played in the Steering Committee is further discussed in the section, *Role of Project Leader*.

Evaluation takes the spiral to the questions of assessment against the goals set earlier and identifying any unexpected learnings from the process. The work of Steering Group and the Committee on Diaconal Ministry at this step assisted me in preparing recommendations for both of those groups as they continued to work to improve their educational resources and orientation programmes for their networks.

Designing an educational experience is a second loop of the spiral for in some ways it starts over with clarifying the needs, goals and objectives for the event itself. It leads on to preparing exercises and materials to open the session and present the content of the workshop. An important aspect of the educational design employed in this project is the inclusion of opportunities for exploration and reflection in the process itself. Exploration refers to giving participants the chance to apply, and experiment with the material presented. Reflection "enables participants to make the learning real for themselves, to integrate it into their lives". [15] Following the closing there is an evaluation, which provides the leadership with feedback on how well the purpose of the event was realized and what new learning needs the participants have now identified. In planning for future educational experiences this information is extremely valuable and again regenerates the learning spiral.

[15] Carolyn Palmer, "Implementation", The Planner for Lifelong Learning. Toronto: The United Church of Canada, Page 18.

CHAPTER 2

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Overview of Project

The project assessed the knowledge of the several Maritime Conference presbyteries committees responsible for Education and Students and Pastoral Relations. Based upon this assessment, the Committee on Diaconal Ministry of General Council's Division of Ministry Personnel and Education and Ministry Support and Development Committee of Maritime Conference assisted me in setting goals for the workshops and resources. For example the goal of the workshops was "to become more familiar with diaconal ministry with regard to their committee's work." With the assistance of the Steering Group, I then developed specific objectives for the workshops based upon the needs and interests of the members of the participating committee. The objectives took into account their previous knowledge and experience and whether they were an Education and Students or Pastoral Relations committee. The workshops were carried out or implemented in three presbyteries: Prince Edward Island; Valley; and Truro. I also led the workshop for the Maritime Conference Ministry Personnel and Education Committee, which had representation from most of the 14 presbyteries of Maritime Conference. All workshops allowed an opportunity for evaluation for both participants individually and as a group.

The project's development, implementation and evaluation were done in cooperation with the Committee on Diaconal Ministry in the General Council Division of Ministry Personnel

and the Education and Ministry Support and Development Unit in Maritime Conference.

Role of Committee on Diaconal Ministry and Ministry Support and Development Unit

The Committee on Diaconal Ministry reviewed the proposed project (Appendix i) at its regular meeting in fall of 1998. It agreed that the purpose and design of the project was complementary to its mandate and offered support for the project in two ways. The first was a financial contribution, if needed, for the development of interpretative material. The second was that members of committee would read any programme outlines and material created and offer their feedback. The latter was utilized, but the offer of financial support was not needed.

The Ministry Support and Development Unit played a more strategic role in naming three of their members as a Steering Group to assist me in designing and evaluating the project. At its October 1998 meeting they reviewed the proposal and a letter (Appendix ii) posing some questions they would probably want to consider before agreeing to becoming a partner in this project. One member of this Steering Group also participated in the first presbytery workshop. Another member of this group was the Conference Personnel Minister (CPM) who was invaluable in offering insight and access to other conferences' personnel ministers and the presbytery Ministry and Personnel network. The Steering Group as a whole met with me on three occasions.

The Development of the Project

The Steering Committee worked with me to focus the project and identify the

presbyteries which would be invited to participate in the workshops. As it was a Conference committee and therefore had the trust and credibility of the presbytery committees, its chair wrote letters to these committees introducing the project and me, and asking for their participation. This greatly facilitated my acceptance at the time of the workshops.

This group also reviewed with me the material the Committee on Diaconal Ministry had available to promote Diaconal Ministry, the outlines of workshops and the printed material I developed to assist in the workshops.

The Conference Personnel Minister met with me on a few extra occasions when we clarified the approach I would take in doing the assessment in other conferences. This resulted in his writing to six of his counterparts in other conferences, and introducing me and the project. I followed with a telephone interview which asked about the existence of any orientation for presbytery E&S and PR Committees, what their personal knowledge of diaconal ministry was, and if they thought it would be worthwhile to produce something to help these presbytery committees better understand and relate to diaconal ministry (Appendix iii). More detailed results of this assessment appear in the next chapter. However, it is important to note here that this survey indicated that other conferences also were not doing much to increase the knowledge and appreciation of diaconal ministry, and that all of the CPMs interviewed thought the production of something to aid this would be beneficial.

After the presbytery committees were identified and had agreed to participate in the project, I called each of the chairs and asked them about the awareness and familiarity

they and their committees had with diaconal ministry (Appendix iv). Based upon this information, I created a workshop outline for E&S and PR Committees (Appendix v).

Workshops Planned

The original plan had four presbytery workshops–two with E&S Committees and two with PR Committees. This changed to three workshops when the first workshop, held with Prince Edward Island Presbytery, involved representatives from both Pastoral Relations and Education and Students Committees. The second workshop, held in Valley Presbytery, only had representatives from the Pastoral Relations Committee. The final presbytery workshop was conducted almost a year later in Truro Presbytery for its Education and Students Committee.

Prior to each workshop the chairs of the committees participated in an assessment by giving their perception of the prior knowledge, experience and interests of the committee members. At the end of each workshop a two-part evaluation was done. Participants did the first part collectively to determine if the workshop realized its purpose. The second part was done individually to determine if participants had increased their knowledge of and appreciation for diaconal ministry. The list of questions asked in this evaluation is included in the Appendix vi.

The original plan also had a workshop with Maritime Conference Education and Students Committee. Scheduling difficulties made it necessary to postpone this workshop after the conclusion of the project. In its place a two hour workshop was done

with the Maritime Conference Ministry and Personnel Committee. This workshop had representation from most presbyteries. The outline of this workshop had only minor adaptations from that prepared of presbytery E&S and PR Committees in Appendix 5.

Resources Used

Two printed resources were created for these workshops. The first was a list of "Frequently Asked Questions about Diaconal Ministry". Each of the eleven questions was identified in the assessment phase of the project or in the discussion of the Steering Group. I then gave both a detailed and short answer to each question. This document is Appendix vii.

The second resource also grew out of discussions in the Steering Group. Its members felt that most people do not know a diaconal minister or what diaconal ministry looks like in practice. To meet this need I created a two part resource called, "Profiles of Diaconal Ministers." The first part contains the profiles of two retired Diaconal Ministers who are fairly well known in the Maritimes and have some national profile as well–Jessie MacLeod and Don Reid. The second part of this resource contains composite profiles (which I created) of diaconal ministers. In doing these composite profiles, I was able to illustrate in a simplified manner a variety of Diaconal Ministers and not include real details of particular Diaconal Ministers that would make these profiles more complex. This document is Appendix viii.

A presentation introducing the historical, biblical and theological basis for

diaconal ministry was developed as a component of the workshop. This presentation was based upon the booklet, "Diaconal Ministry in the United Church of Canada" which had been prepared several years earlier by the Committee on Diaconal Ministry. This presentation used overhead projection and the booklets were handed out after the presentation.

Each workshop concluded with the reading of the "Statement of Belief" adopted by *Diakonia* of The United Church of Canada in 1992. This document is Appendix ix.

During the workshops I displayed and referred to a variety of books, pamphlets and other resources on diaconal ministry were available for further reading. Many of the books listed in the bibliography for this report were included.

Leadership

I had originally hoped that the leadership would come from other people so we could discern if the workshop could be led by someone else other than me. However, the Steering Committee and I realized early in our meetings, we could not find and train leadership who could do this without using tremendous energy and resources. The Steering Committee adapted this goal by having one of its members assist me at the first presbytery workshop, identifying another Diaconal Minister to work with me at the second workshop, and having the CPM assist at the Conference Ministry Personnel and Education workshop. I did the third presbytery workshop alone. They gave me critical feedback on the overall value of the workshop, but particularly commented on the aspects

of the workshop which would be difficult for other people to lead.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

Assessment

The assessment phase of the project had several components. The initial assessment was done informally with Diaconal Ministers in the Maritime[16] area to discern what was the general problem and what might be done to address the problem. The results of these conversations were used to prepare the project proposal (Appendix 1). The proposal with a covering letter were given to each of the partners in the project: General Council's Division of Ministry Personnel and Education Committee on Diaconal Ministry and Maritime Conference's Ministry Personnel and Education Unit of Ministry Support and Development. As each group considered the proposal they also offered their perspective on what the needs and resources were.

The final focus of the project was determined by the Steering Group which was formed under the Ministry Support and Development Unit's oversight. This group of three (Shawn Redden, chair and Ordained Minister; Ellen Flemming, Diaconal Minister; and Bob Campbell, Ordained Minister and Conference Personal Minister) in cooperation with me guided the project based upon the assessments done.

[16] There were four Diaconal Ministers involved in these conversations, including the two Commissionands who had the difficulty in being Settled in 1998.

The first formal assessment done was with CPMs, to determine the situation in other conferences' and their presbyteries' Education and Student and Pastoral Relations committees. Maritime Conference's Personnel Minister assisted by recommending a selection of CPMs to give a variety of experiences and regional differences. Responses were sought and received from the following six conferences: Montreal and Ottawa, Bay of Quinte, London, Manitoba & Northwestern Ontario, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia. I have provided the questions asked in Appendix 3. A detailed account of their answers is found in Appendix x. Some of the individual comments and common perceptions of CPMs expressed in telephone interviews with them, provide a sense of their understanding and support for Diaconal Ministry.

All the CPMs were quite willing to be interviewed, offer their opinions and assess their knowledge of diaconal ministry. On several questions they were clear that they were not in a position to know the information. Most were unaware if there were any particular questions presbytery Education and Students Committees asked for diaconal candidates. One CPM had heard that a few presbyteries were beginning ask specific questions, but for the most part just made candidates aware of the variety of ministry personnel.

> The CPMs were more aware of and confident in the orientation for conference committees, such as Interview Board, Education and Students and Ministry Personnel and Education. The common statement was, "If there is a Diaconal Minister in the presbytery a good awareness of Diaconal Ministry may intentionally or unintentionally exist, but at the conference level we have Diaconal Ministers on the various committees and it is intentionally done."

They all felt there was a lack of knowledge of diaconal ministry in some of the committees with which they worked. All agreed there was a need for a programme or resources for the presbytery E&S and PR Committees, and that some regular orientation was needed. The type of and nature of the resources needed varied, because of the different contexts in which they would be used. One CPM suggested something be added to the Pastoral Relations Handbook. [17]

All except one felt they were familiar with Diaconal Ministers (four said they knew "a lot", one said fairly good and one was comfortable with a few questions, because he was still learning). None of these conference personal ministers was a Diaconal Ministers. One was lay, the others were Ordained Ministers. However, based upon their answers to question #8 "What do you personally know about diaconal ministry?", not all who said they knew "a lot" actually did. One person could not name two of the dimensions (education, service and pastoral care) of Diaconal Ministry. Three did not know that the Centre for Christian Studies was the only institution for training in diaconal ministry for non-Aboriginal students. Two thought all theological colleges offered programmes, such as Master in Religious Education. Apart from not knowing these

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[17] Published by the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, United Church of Canada, Toronto, 1998.

After thoroughly reading the Pastoral Relations Handbook, I can see why this was suggested. Although there is some explanation of the various types of ministry personnel, this is painfully inadequate for a person who is unfamiliar with any of the ministries that are not in the dominant norm of a White male Ordained Minister in a pastoral charge. As a result the reader is left with the impression that these other less common ministries are not significant for understanding unless a committee member has to. There is no comment on why the United Church feels it is important to have the variety of ministry personnel.

technical aspects, the CPMs were quite knowledgeable about what types of ministry Diaconal Ministers do and the skills they can offer the church. Some CPMs were more creative in gathering resource material on Diaconal Ministry and the issues of ministry identity. A newly appointed CPM was aware that material had been gathered by his predecessor from the Centre for Christian Studies handouts for students, but had not had time to read it yet.

Prior to the final preparation of each workshop with the presbytery E&S and PR Committees an assessment was done with the chair of those committees. The questions (Appendix 4) were asked either in a telephone interview or in person prior to the workshop. For the workshop with Truro Presbytery Education and Students Committee the assessment was done with the members of the committee present. These assessments indicated a fairly consistent low level of awareness of diaconal ministry. All chairs of these committees indicated that they only had one or two members who could represent/interpret diaconal ministry. Only one of the committees had a Diaconal Minister as a member. Their memberships were often equally split between lay people and Ordained Ministers.

Each respondent was asked to rate their level of awareness from knowing “a lot” to not being well informed. Then they were asked to respond to specific information about diaconal ministry which gave some objective reading as to whether they actually did know as much as they said they knew. The chair of Valley Pastoral Relations Committee indicated that she knew “a lot” about diaconal ministry, but the others said they were “comfortable with a few questions.” Only one of the respondents knew that

diaconal ministry included education, service and pastoral care; that person was not the one who indicated she knew a lot. All knew where the training for diaconal ministry is offered. All indicated that a workshop or video would be helpful in order for them to learn more about Diaconal Ministry.

When there was a chance for me to lead the workshop with the full Maritime Conference Ministry Personnel and Education Committee and not its Education and Students Committee, I conducted the assessment of this group informally with the CPM. As this was done differently, I chose to take more time at the beginning of this workshop in listing their questions about diaconal ministry. These are listed in Appendix xi. Their questions generally indicated that some members had a good familiarity with diaconal ministry, while some members had little awareness or experience. A Diaconal Minister is a regular member of this Committee with other members equally representative of lay people and Ordained Ministers. There were also members who were Staff Associates and Lay Pastoral Ministers.

Workshops

Presbytery Education & Students and Pastoral Relations Committees

The first workshop was a combined meeting of Prince Edward Island Presbytery's E&S and PR Committees. Given the assessments that I conducted by phone with the two chairpersons of the committees prior to the workshop, I prepared the outline of the programme agenda as available in Appendix 5. Ellen Flemming, a Diaconal

Minister and member of the Steering Committee, assisted in the leadership in this workshop.

The workshop took place after a regular meeting of presbytery late on a Saturday afternoon. We had scheduled one and a half hours, although we went over that time by about 15 minutes. As it was late in the day after a day of meeting, there was a tiredness with some. The communication between one of the chairpersons and his committee was not clear about the purpose or length of the workshop and therefore, this also contributed to people feeling agitated and some having to leave early. Eight people stayed throughout and returned the personal assessment forms and one person who left early returned hers' by email.

Using the adult educational model (as explained in Chapter 2) for preparing the workshop outline, the components in the programme agenda were: introduction, warm-up, presentation, exploration, reflection & transition to action, closing and evaluation. The modes of engagement were verbal and overhead presentation, brainstorming, questions and answers, discussion, individual reflection, small and large group work, reading printed material, and the symbolic act of reading together aloud the Statement of Belief of *Diakonia* of The United Church of Canada.

The second workshop was only with the Pastoral Relations Committee of Valley Presbytery and I was assisted in leadership by Don Reid, a retired Diaconal Minister, who was a member of this presbytery committee. It took place at a time especially called for this purpose and people were clear about its purpose and the time

expectations. Eight other members of the committee participated in the meeting and returned assessments forms.

The third and final presbytery workshop was with the Education and Students Committee of Truro Presbytery and I was alone in leading it. This workshop was also called especially for this purpose and people were clear about its intention and the time expectations. Six members of the committee participated in the meeting and returned assessments forms.

Introduction and Warm Up

The introduction gave me the opportunity to introduce the leadership and learn the names of the participants. I also reviewed the purpose and programmes agenda that I prepared on flipchart previously. The purpose of the workshop was "to become more familiar with Diaconal Ministry with regard to our committee's work." Given previous experience in interpreting Diaconal Ministry with groups, I also emphasized that the intention was to see Diaconal Ministry as complementary to other types of ministry, such as Ordained Ministry, Staff Associates and Lay Pastoral Ministers, and not in opposition with these other ministry personnel.

In all workshops I solicited and recorded on flipchart the questions participants had about Diaconal Ministry during the introduction. In the first workshop I did so and then went to the Warm Up. In the workshops after that I spent more time soliciting the questions and omitted the Warm Up. The evaluation of the first workshop,

particularly that of the Ellen Flemming, indicated that the Warm Up, in which the types of ministries in which Diaconal Ministers are involved were brainstormed, was not a helpful exercise, and that the participants' questions generated more interaction.

Presentation

Research into the resources available indicated that only one resource was generally up-to-date and available for participants. That is a sixteen page booklet, Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada, produced by the Committee on Diaconal Ministry in 1993. Using that resource as a handout, I prepared a series of transparencies that guided participants through the booklet. My oral presentation included several anecdotal stories and explanations in order to help the participants see better the reality of diaconal ministry.

I developed a second resource used in this presentation. It contained a set of five profiles of Diaconal Ministers (Appendix 8). This suggestion came from the Steering Group following its discussion of the results of the assessment of the CPMs. The Group felt that many people have limited experience with Diaconal Ministers. Therefore, many have difficulty relating to the explanations and descriptions of Diaconal Ministry in generalities.

The first three were fictional composites that I developed from many Diaconal Ministers and their situations. The three profiles were named, "Diaconal Ministers as the Only Ordered Minister in A Pastoral Charge", "Diaconal Ministers in

Team Ministry", and "Diaconal Ministers in Educational Centres and Administrative Ministries". I chose not to use actual biographies, because they become dated quickly, and often a particular personality overshadows the role that is being portrayed. A third reason for not choosing Diaconal Ministers who were active in ministry so I could not be charged with favouritism among colleagues and friends.

I did include the biographies of two retired Maritime Conference Diaconal Ministers that both had fairly high-profile positions in their careers and are pioneers for Diaconal Ministers. The first is Jessie MacLeod, who was the Director of Student Affairs at Mount Alison University in Sackville, New Brunswick and later became the Deputy Secretary in the Office of Christian Development in the General Council Division of Mission in Canada. The second is Don Reid, who was the first man to be Certified Employed Churchman, which was an earlier title for male Diaconal Ministers. Don was also well known in the Conference as a principal for the Atlantic Christian Training Centre and later as Director of Windsor Elms, a seniors residence in Nova Scotia.

This resource was handed out during the presentation and most people had read it before the workshop had ended.

Exploration

The purpose of this phase of the workshop was to allow the participants the opportunity to work with some of the information shared and to fit it into their previous knowledge and experience. In the workshop with Prince Edward Island

Presbytery, we played a short game, in which participants made statements about Diaconal Ministers that have heard or wondered about. The task of the remaining group was to identify which ones were false or true. No discussion was allowed before each person indicated the verity of the statement.

The evaluations from this first workshop indicated that the questions that were generated in the Introduction were merely repeated or rephrased at this point and therefore, the first part of the stage was redundant. In subsequent workshops I returned to the questions asked in the Introduction and did not push people to indicate their personal opinion on the truthfulness of a statement. The experience in the first workshop indicated that some people felt uncomfortable indicating their ignorance to whole group.

Following the listing of these statements, I then shared a second resource that I had developed, called, "Frequently Asked Questions about Diaconal Ministry"(Appendix 7). Although the Programme Agenda for the workshop indicates that this handout would be shared later in the workshop, I always handed it out at this stage, because I felt the participants needed supplementary information to take an informed role in the discussion. This resource is a series of eleven questions that were generated in cooperation with the Steering Committee. In this resource each question is answered twice–once in detail and a second time in one or two sentences. In the Steering Committee this resource was originally referred to as the "Myths of Diaconal Ministry", but it was felt this title may create some testiness and not encourage an openness to learn.

"Frequently Asked Questions about Diaconal Ministry" was handed to each participant and then as a group we tried to determine if the questions listed in the

Introduction were referred to in this resource and what might be answers to them. Individuals often read about their initial question and then entered into the discussion based upon the answers they read and their previous knowledge.

A second part to this Exploration stage was done in groups of three to four people where they would discuss the following questions:

1. Where do you see the church engaged in education, service and pastoral care ministries?

2. What are ministry situations where Diaconal Ministers would be well suited?

3. Why does the United Church have Diaconal Ministers?

These questions were to encourage participants to continue to formulate a conceptual, philosophical and theological framework for understanding Diaconal Ministry.

Reflection and Transition to Action

At this stage I handed out a series of questions that I refer to as "Individual Response Sheets" (Appendix 6) The questions had three purposes. The first was to have the participants identify their learnings and to score their learnings from insignificant to substantial. The second purpose was to start the process of applying their learnings to the work of the committee they served. The third purpose was to begin evaluating the workshop. Individuals were given the opportunity to share a learning or

suggestion for future committee work that they felt would be helpful for the committee. These items were recorded on the flipchart. There was some time available for participants to discuss these statements if they wished.

The only editing a few participants did to the questions was to scratch out "worst" in the second question and replace it with a comment, such as, "there was no worst part." The information from these answers assisted me in redesigning subsequent workshops. Starting with these impersonal questions prepared participants in a nonthreatening way for the third and fourth questions where I asked them to articulate and score their learnings.

The information in the answers from the third question, "What did you learn or relearn about diaconal ministry in this session?" gave me insights into the types of learnings that were happening for participants. For example, if the answers revealed basic information about diaconal ministry, I deduced that their initial understanding of diaconal ministry was limited. If they indicated very little learning, then the workshop was geared at too low a level of understanding for this participant or I had not managed to provide a good learning opportunity for them.

With the information from the third question, the fourth question's scoring of their learnings from insignificant to substantial, and their reasons for their score, I noted whether my insights into participants' learnings were similar to their self-perception. The scoring also gave the participants the opportunity to give a qualitative answer to what they learned. The scoring averaged 4.2 on a scale of one to five, with one being insignificant and five being substantial. The high score also gave some indication of the

commitment to follow-up on their learnings, which I asked them to consider in the final question.

The fifth question, "Has anything you learned or relearned in this session affected the way you feel your committee should do its work in the future? If so, how? If not, why not?" engendered some helpful ideas that often were shared in the group discussion that followed the participants answering their "Individual Response Sheets." Their suggestions included: educating Joint Needs Assessment and Search Committees about Diaconal Ministry; place Diaconal Minister's names before Search Committees; educating their own presbytery committees even more about Diaconal Ministry; educating the wider church about Diaconal Ministry, so their committees are not the only ones bringing this information to the pastoral charge. Some of these ideas were raised again by participants during the "Evaluation" phase of the workshop.

Closing

I decided to conclude the workshop with a unison reading of the "Statement of Belief" adopted by *Diakonia* of The United Church of Canada in 1992 for three reasons. First, it expresses succinctly the beliefs, aspirations and principles of Diaconal Ministry. Second, it encourages participants to become familiar with the booklet, Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada, for it is printed on the first page of the booklet. Third, when read in unison, the statement has a covenant-making quality to it,

and therefore, it allows the participants to commit themselves to diaconal ministry as an expression of their faith. Participants found it a powerful and well worded statement.

Evaluation

Building on the "Individual Response Sheets" where participants had an opportunity to start the evaluation of workshop, I then moved to whole group and asked six questions. They were:

1. Did this session meet its purposes?

2. Has anything you learned or re-learned in this session affected the way you feel your committee should do its work in the future? If so, what? If no, why not?

3. Would you recommend this type of session to other Presbytery Pastoral Relations and Education and Students Committees? Why? and Why not?

4. What suggestions do you have to improve this session for its future use with a similar group as yours?

5. How important is it for Presbytery Pastoral Relations and Education and Students Committees to provide opportunities for education on this topic?

1	2	3	4	5
not very				vital

6. Are there other groups you could suggest who should be contacted to see if they would like such an orientation session for their group?

The answers to these questions were recorded on flipchart. I had two purposes for this large group evaluation. First, it gave me a collective group perspective on the quality of the workshop. Second, and perhaps more important to the group was that it provided an opportunity for the group to hear its members with regard to follow-up that might be taken by their committee.

Conference Ministry Personnel and Education Committee

The workshop with the Ministry Personnel and Education Committee replaced the workshop planned for Conference Education and Students Committee. This was due to scheduling and the Education and Students Committee's workload difficulties. There are still plans to present the workshop to the Education and Students Committee, but it will take place after the conclusion of this project. I felt that this substitute group provided much the same audience and would serve the purpose. The Ministry and Personnel Committee has oversight of the Education and Students Committee and there were several members of the Education and Students Committee present at the workshop with the Ministry and Personnel Committee.

The outline of the workshop was much the same as described above for the presbytery committees, but for three important aspects. The first was that the asked for time on their agenda was two hours rather that one and half hours. I felt this was needed

because there was some concern in the presbytery workshops that more time would have been helpful.

The second difference was that I gave significantly more time in the Introduction to soliciting their questions and then used them more extensively in the Exploration stage of the workshop. This generated much more discussion and not as much question and answer, because there were members of the committee who knew the topic intimately as well.

The third difference was in the Reflection and Transition to Action and Evaluation stages, when their perspective on follow-up was for application in the Ministry and Personnel Committee and several other committees that are represented on this committee, e.g. Internship and Educational Supervision Committee and Education and Students Committee. With this opportunity for the chairs of the various committees to reflect on the implications for their particular committee, there were invitations for me to make a similar presentation to their committee. This is a much stronger mandate than inviting myself on their agenda as part of an academic project.

Resources

Existing Resources

In reviewing the material suggested by the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education in their promotional material on diaconal material I deemed most of them inappropriate for use in a workshop. It was either more substantive than what could be

used in a workshop, e.g., The History of Diaconal Ministry in the United Church of Canada., 1925-1991, with 150 pages, or too narrow, e.g., "Side Road on the Journey to Autonomy: The Diaconate Prior to Church Union", which does not reflect the present context.

In the end I used three resources, all of which are still available. The primary resource was the booklet, Diaconal Ministry in the United Church of Canada, which served as the basis for the presentation I made in the workshops. It provides a good background for interpreting the history, a conceptual framework for understanding Diaconal Ministry and explores some of the issues Diaconal Ministers continue to face . It also has a short list of questions that encourage the reader to explore the implications of what they have read for their lives. The second resource was the Manual of The United Church of Canada, which served to answer questions about the educational requirements of Diaconal Ministers. The third resource was the Centre for Christian Studies pamphlet, "Exciting and Accessible Education for Ministries of Education, Pastoral Care and Social Justice", which outlines the present national regional programme the Centre offers.

Finding these resources insufficient in themselves in responding to the learning needs[18] and contexts of the participants from Pastoral Relations and Education and Students Committees, as discovered in the assessment phase, I also developed three

[18] Questions that particularly relate to their work on these committees would be, "Do Diaconal Ministers learn about the sacraments?" and "What are some of the differences in training and cost and time between Diaconal and Ordained Ministers?"

supplementary resources for particular use in workshops with these committees and for the committees to use in their work with students and pastoral charges.

Created Resources

Although the booklet, Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada, was valuable as a resource for individual reading, it was still too long to be quickly read in the confines of a one and half to two hour workshop. It needed to be summarized. The overheads (Appendix xiiwhich outlined the booklet, supplemented by personal anecdotes, provided the information in the booklet in a more accessible format, and I felt that it gave a good overview of diaconal ministry from its origins up to addressing some the issues Diaconal Ministers face today. It also had a short list questions that encouraged the reader to explore the personal implications of what they had read.

The set of profiles of Diaconal Ministers provided concrete examples of Diaconal Ministers in contexts that would reflect the situations with which Presbytery E&S and PR Committees would be dealing. E&S Committees could use this with inquirers or candidates for ministry to explore the type of ministry they might see for themselves. PR Committees could share it with Joint Needs Assessment Committees or Joint Search Committees, when discerning the type of ministry personnel that might fit with the situation of a particular pastoral charge or outreach ministry.

The third resource, “Frequently Asked Questions about Diaconal Ministry” was also developed for direct use in the workshop and for use in their committees’ work. Its

question and answer style made it very accessible, yet with a detailed answer first, it provided a thorough explanation to the questions asked with regard to Diaconal Ministers. The short answer provided a summary statement that is more likely to be remembered and used by committee members in interpreting diaconal ministry to others.

Leadership

As noted in Chapter 3, I originally hoped to have a few people trained to lead these workshops without my direct participation in the workshops. This plan was abandoned early because of the time commitment that would be expected for volunteers, the Steering Group and me. However, the "fall back" position of having members of the Steering Group and another experienced Diaconal Minister work with me in leading these workshops still provided some benefit. The original goal, to see if a package material could be designed and presented without the leadership of an experienced Diaconal Minister, was not able to be tested.

The members of Steering Group who assisted in leadership both commented that what made the presentation interesting for them were the personal stories and illustrations. They felt that this would be the hardest part for which to find a resource person. The Conference Personnel Minister suggested that the presentation portion of the workshop could be video taped and distributed with the printed material.

The leadership provided by the Steering Group was instrumental in the planning and implementation of this project. They provided a sensitivity to the Maritime context,

good planning skills, and a sincere commitment to diaconal ministry. Their encouraging letter to the presbytery committees, was extremely valuable. It enabled me to test the workshop and related material.

The Committee on Diaconal Ministry's leadership was mostly by individual members responding to my drafted material. Its quick support for the project and offer of financial support, if needed, was very welcomed. Its support provided a legitimacy to the project and helped create an ownership among the diaconal community and Ministry Personnel and Education network.

The analysis of the results of this project was done in cooperation with these two committees through an Interim Report that I prepared particularly for the Committee on Diaconal Ministry meeting in October 1999 (Appendix xiii). This Committee met again in March 2000 and made final comments which are included in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF THE PROJECT'S RESULTS

The first part of this chapter follows the steps of the action-reflection model for adult education introduced in Chapter 2, and the second part uses the structure I used in Chapter 3 to describe the project.

Assessment

The first formal component of the assessment, carried out with the personnel ministers in six conferences, provided helpful information on what was being done, or more often not being done, to provide the education and orientation for presbytery E&S and PR Committees on Diaconal ministry in their conferences. Most were not doing anything intentionally in this regard, and yet all indicated a need for such a programme and resources. This gave a very clear message to the Committee on Diaconal Ministry as to the need for this support to conferences and presbyteries. Unfortunately, because little was done in these conferences, there were no original educational programmes or resources that were identified in this assessment with them. One personnel minister knew his predecessor had photocopied material used in the educational programme for training Diaconal Ministers at the Centre for Christian Studies, but he was new and was not familiar enough with this material.

Several personnel ministers felt they knew a lot and yet only three of the six interviewed knew that the only programme that prepared non-Aboriginal candidates to be Diaconal Ministers

was the Centre for Christian Studies regional programme. When asked to name the dimensions of the ministry in which Diaconal Ministers are trained, four of the six personnel ministers named the three areas of education, service and pastoral care. The other two could name only one and two respectively. Some, who had previous experience in working with a Diaconal Minister, knew not only this factual information, but also had a familiarity with some of their strengths and struggles. A strength celebrated was that Diaconal Ministers had an ability to organize people to provide leadership in service and educational ministries. One personnel minister commented that Diaconal Ministers seem to have "less ego needs [presumably in comparison with Ordained Ministers] in general and are able to meet people where they are."

The primary struggle identified was the lack of awareness the church has about Diaconal Ministers. Therefore, there are "lots of assumptions" made about what Diaconal Ministers can and cannot do. An incorrect assumption identified by one CPM, which is frequently made by others is that Diaconal Ministers cannot serve communion.[19]

> As stated in Chapter 4, they all expressed that there is a lack of knowledge of Diaconal ministry within the Ministry Personnel and Education network, and certainly throughout the general United Church laity and ordained ministers. In comparison with these large groups in the United Church, there is no question that most CPMs do know more. However, the gaps in their knowledge and lack of experience with working with Diaconal Ministers indicate that it would be unwise to rely on them at this point to carry

[19] As noted in greater detail in Footnote 18, this was clarified by the 30th General Council in 1984 and is clearly explained in Section 427(b) of the Manual. Toronto: The United Church of Canada. 1998.

out an orientation for their committees without some prior supplementary education. They recognized this and expressed a desire for this support.

The assessment done with chairs of presbytery Pastoral Relations and Education and Students Committees revealed that they also had a consistently low level of awareness of diaconal ministry. The chairs felt they had one or two committee members who knew quite a bit about diaconal ministry. The chairs' expressions of committee knowledge had two shortcomings. First, the chairs' assessment of their members' knowledge is one step away from the person actually assessing their own knowledge. It is also highly likely that those members, who the chair thought were knowledgeable, may not have been as well informed as the chair thought. The second weakness of the chairs' response is in relying on this as a strategy. The members of these committees go about their work as individuals or sometimes in twos to work with Discernment, Joint Needs Assessment and Joint Search Committees where they are often the only person from their presbytery committee. Therefore, even though, the presbytery committee may have a person or two who is informed, this would be of little help, when a person who knows little to nothing about diaconal ministry is the only presbytery representative working with one of these committees.

It is important to note that the chairs themselves were not satisfied with the level of knowledge of diaconal ministry on their committees. They all indicated that an orientation on diaconal ministry would be helpful, but they did not feel able to resource this orientation for their own committees.

As indicated in Chapter 4, the assessment with the Ministry Personnel and Education Committee was done informally with the CPM. It revealed that, although he had a good awareness of diaconal ministry, the committee membership's knowledge was inconsistent, with some people having a good familiarity and others with little awareness or experience of diaconal ministry. From the questions which the members posed at the beginning of the workshop, this was an accurate assessment.

Workshops

Presbytery Education & Students and Pastoral Relations Committees

The results of the project indicate two things about the timing of the workshop. First, a full two hours was needed at a time set aside for a learning activity and not as another item after a busy day of meetings. Second, the information being presented and the reflective questions posed required an openness on the part of the participants to learn and creatively integrate this new knowledge into their existing concepts of ministry.

Introduction and Warm Up

In the second and succeeding workshops, when I gave much more attention to soliciting the questions of the participants, the interaction was much greater and provided the warm up that was needed to get started in the workshop. Most presbytery committee members had just enough knowledge, misinformation, ignorance or opinions about

diaconal ministry among themselves to build a fairly comprehensive workshop upon these questions. I neither answered nor judged these questions in the initial stages, but allowed the information to come out in the workshop, and have the participants answer their own questions.

Although some participants' questions, such as, "Is there as high a standard of education for Diaconal Ministers as there is for Ordained Ministers?", are demeaning to me and to diaconal ministry, I did not become defensive or confront the participant or the underlying assumptions in the question. On other occasions outside of this study I have identified for myself, and had this corroborated by the Maritime CPM, that some Ordained Ministers enter into a discussion of Diaconal Ministry with a tone of confrontation or belittling of Diaconal Ministers. Some questions asked revealed shades of this attitude. Fortunately, a blatant closed attitude was not exhibited by any of the participants in these workshops, but it would be naive to think this attitude was not still present with some Ordained Ministers and lay people. I will say more about this under the final section of this chapter under, "My Leadership."

Presentation

The overhead presentation, based upon the booklet, Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada, proved to be valuable for most, because it gave a foundation and framework for the later discussion of what Diaconal Ministers do and the issues around their ministry. The biggest challenge with it is that it is hard for someone,

without my knowledge and background in diaconal ministry, to lead it. The CPM suggested that perhaps a video could be made of me making the presentation. My feeling is that this would be a poor alternative and it would be better to use the booklet and anecdotes similar to what I added and create a script for a new video resource. The slide/tape (later made into a video) presentation, "Waiting as Fast as We Can" prepared by Kay Heuer in 1983 for the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education is a possible model that could serve for presenting this information in an interesting and engaging manner. Whatever is created, it is clear that the booklet, Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada is an adequate resource on which to base the script.

The set of five profiles of Diaconal Ministers also proved to be a helpful resource. It was easily read and accessible for it framed the profile of the individual in a way that was consistent with the questions and context of a person on a presbytery PR Committee. Keeping the format simple will allow the addition of other profiles of either a composite nature or profiles of Diaconal Ministers known in particular conferences.

Exploration

The purpose of this section was to have participants collectively answer the questions they posed earlier with the information shared in the presentation or earlier knowledge. According to good educational design, (Palmer, 1991, p18) the exploration phase is a time to "get some hands on experience"and not a time to introduce new material. This was not quite true in these workshops, because I circulated the resource,

"Frequently Asked Questions about Diaconal Ministry" at this time. As there was such a low level of previous awareness, this resource provided information that many participants had not had previously.

However, with this critique, the resource did provide the participants with a framework of questions with which to sort the knowledge they gained in the presentation. The style of having two answers to each question, proved not only novel for the participants, but also constructive. They appreciated a full answer to their questions and then a summarized answer to which they could quickly refer when asked. The simplified answers made it easier for them to fit the new knowledge into their expanding framework and concepts of ministry. However, the fuller answer provided the necessary information to have a comprehensive understanding.

The second part of the exploration when participants discussed in small groups the questions that encouraged them to generate their own conceptual and theological framework of diaconal ministry, provided a helpful moment for participants to ask the faith related questions associated with this ministry in the church. The first question, "Where do you see the church engaged in education, service and pastoral care ministries?" urged people to take off the "Ordered-professional-minister" assumption of who does ministry, and allowed participants to see themselves and those with whom they worked as in diaconal ministry. It also broke down some of the barriers between the Ordained and Diaconal Ministers. I saw this happening in the comments that came from Ordained Ministers or a layperson referring to the Ordained Minister, as often doing diaconal ministry.

I was very careful in the discussion that followed this identification with diaconal ministry to affirm this, but also make a distinction between the Ordained Minister who does diaconal ministry occasionally and intuitively and the Diaconal Minister who commits one's life to it and is trained to develop it. It was in discussion times like this that I was conscious that I was relying on years of discussion and experience to be clear and not defensive. I will refer to this again in the section, "Leadership."

The second question, "What are ministry situations where Diaconal Ministers would be well suited?" helped those in Pastoral Relations Committees to apply their learnings to work with Joint Needs Assessment and Search Committees. Participants were able to look at the needs identified and characteristics sought in the assessment of a pastoral charge and ask, "Do these suit the training, style and commitment of a Diaconal or Ordained Minister?" Previously many assumed that they only had Ordained Ministers to choose from and had to match the profile of the individual with the characteristics sought by the pastoral charge. This question allowed them to look at that situation and ask themselves another question"What form of Ordered Ministry is best suited here?" Unfortunately, although some reference could be made to the Pastoral Relations Handbook, as a CPM said in my interview with him, there is a need for a supplement to this with regard to the various styles of ministry.

My second question was not as easily explored for those on Education and Students Committees. In the Conference workshops the Education and Students Committee members often rephrased it to read something like, "What are the characteristics an inquirer may have that indicate whether she/he may be better suited for

Diaconal Ministry or Ordained Ministry?" I answered this question at the time, by saying the person should be committed to enabling others, wanting to share leadership, and taking a justice stance in ministry. Although these characteristics are ones that should be sought candidates for Ordained Ministry as well, they are ones that are integral to Diaconal Ministers in order for them to do their ministries of education, service and pastoral care. A similar question and carefully worded answers should be added to the "Frequently Asked Questions about Diaconal Ministry."

The third question, "Why does the United Church have Diaconal Ministers?" pushed participants to see the discussion as a question of faith and to articulate their own theological rationale for diaconal ministry. Participants, some for the first time, explored the breadth of what their response could be to God's call, as expressed through Jesus of Nazareth, to be a neighbour, even to those who are outcasts in your society, (Luke 10:36-38). For most participants, they started with two models of social ministry. One model was a lay person who made a personal decision to be faithful to this call in their personal life as a volunteer. And the second model was that of the Ordained Minister who responded to this call "professionally" on an occasional basis as a supplement to their vocation as a preacher. Two new options were opened in the discussion. One was to be a Diaconal Minister who "professionally" responds to this call to serve others and intentionally enables others to do likewise. The second new option was for lay people to volunteer themselves to this social ministry, but do so with the purpose of enabling others to do the same. A full discussion of this question often got short shrift because of insufficient time, but for some it got them thinking beyond the practical aspects of

promoting and explaining this ministry and allowed them to expand their vision of ministry and the mission of the church.

Reflection and Transition to Action

The participants' responses to the questions on the "Individual Response Sheets" (Appendix 6) provided most of the content for this section. The first two questions"What was the best part of the session?" and "What was the worst part of the session?" started participants thinking about the workshop with some distance as evaluators. The questions were very simple and easily understood.

Participants' answers to question one, naming the best part, were often similar to their answers to question three where they named their learnings. Several of the forty people who participated in the presbytery workshops felt that the best part was learning about diaconal ministry and what Diaconal Ministers do. Participants' "best parts" and "learnings" were often exactly my "hoped for results" for the participants, as individuals, in the workshop. Some of the items identified from among the forty presbytery participants were: "better understanding of the difference between Ordained Ministers and Diaconal Ministers," "clarified myths and misunderstandings of Diaconal Ministers," "presentation, was NEW to me and was presented in a manner easy to follow," "history of diaconal ministry," and "broadened my concept of what Diaconal Ministers offer."[20]

[20] Valley Assessment

I was encouraged by some of the learnings identified in Question 3 and seeing them picked up again as suggestions for future work in question five. A participant from a Pastoral Relations Committee learned that Diaconal Ministers are a definite possibility in pastoral charges and then felt committed to making "sure local Joint Needs Assessment and Joint Search Committees know the possibilities (of Diaconal Ministers)[21]."

The evaluations as a whole provided very good information for me to use in planning subsequent workshops and to prepare my recommendations to the Ministry Support and Development Committee and Committee on Diaconal Ministry.

I feel the three purposes of the questions were all met. The process gave participants the opportunity (1) to identify and score their learnings, (2) apply their learnings to their committee's work, and (3) start the evaluation of the workshop itself.

Closing

The unison reading of the "Statement of Belief" of the *Diakonia* of the United Church of Canada, proved quite powerful for most participants. Although it was done after the individual response sheets were prepared and therefore, I do not have any quantitative data on participants' reactions, several people expressed their feelings of affirmation immediately upon reading it or afterwards in the informal discussion following the

[21] PEI Pastoral Relations Assessment

workshop. My initial reason for including it was to give an opportunity for participants to experience the commitment and vision Diaconal Ministers have to their ministry. With each successive reading it became clearer to me that participants found it meaningful at various levels. Although I never asked for reaction to the Statement, there were many verbal and nonverbal affirmations indicating that they found it a meaningful and powerful statement. They were impressed by the commitment and vision Diaconal Ministers expressed in the statement. They also found it to be quite inclusive as an expression of their ministry and the mission of the church. Finally, because of this later value, reading it aloud and in unison, it gave the participants an opportunity to express their learnings and faith in a covenant with each other and God. This later meaning was implicit and not explicitly drawn out in the Closing.

Evaluation

The six questions, which were either displayed on a flip chart or read orally, elicited comments on (1) whether the workshop met its purpose, (2) if the learnings might affect the future work of their committee, (3) whether they would recommend this workshop for other Presbytery E&S and PR Committees, (4) improvements in the workshop, (5) the importance of educating their committee on this topic, and (6) identifying other groups who might benefit from this workshop. The two purposes for this portion were to assist me in evaluating this workshop and to provide an opportunity for the group to hear its members on their ideas and commitment on follow-up.

The participants felt that the workshop easily met its purpose “to become more familiar with Diaconal Ministry with regard to our committee’s work.” All participants could easily see the implications of their learnings for the future work of their committee. Their suggestions, which were offered earlier in the “Reflections and Transition to Action” phase, were offered again at this point. Most of the ideas focussed on education of themselves and others. Some suggested educational events and others felt changing the wording on forms such as those used by Joint Needs Assessment Committees would be a constant reminder to ask the questions related to Diaconal Ministry.

The fifth question, which asked the importance of education about Diaconal Ministry, showed most people rated it as four on a scale of one to five with five being vital. This allowed the group to show itself the importance its members ascribed to continuing this work.

The last question, which asked them to identify other groups who might be contacted, evoked suggestions such as the whole church, all presbytery members, all inquirers, and all students and staff in theological schools who prepare candidates for Ordination.

Resources

Existing Resources

Of the three existing resources I used, two were produced by the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education and one was prepared by the Centre for Christian Studies. The primary resource, Diaconal Ministry in the United Church of Canada, was positively reviewed by those who had a chance to read the booklet prior to or scan it during the workshop. Most of the comments on this resource came from the Ministry Personnel and Education Committee workshop informally after the workshop. The comments indicated that they found it easy to understand and yet it introduced quite a bit of new information. When the Committee on Diaconal Ministry and Steering Committee met to discuss the whole project they each agreed that this was a good foundational resource upon which to base the presentation portion of the workshop. The Committee on Diaconal Ministry agreed that with minor revisions it would be republished.

Having a copy of the Manual of The United Church of Canada was helpful to show the integration of Diaconal Ministers in the United Church and to specifically answer questions related to educational requirements of candidates and how Diaconal Ministers and Ordained Ministers can move to each other's form of ministry.

The Centre for Christian Studies' pamphlet, "Exciting and Accessible Education for Ministries of Education, Pastoral Care and Social Justice" provided helpful information on the present programme offered for students preparing to be a Diaconal Minister. The programme, which is accessible throughout Canada and available to

laypeople and Ordained Ministers, was also seen as an illustration of how diaconal ministry is seen to invite all church members into this ministry.

Created Resources

Both of the printed resources I created, the profiles of Diaconal Ministers and "Frequently Asked Questions about Diaconal Ministry", were well received by workshop participants, the Committee on Diaconal Ministry, and the Steering Committee. Participants felt the resources were well conceived, corresponded to level of awareness and met the needs of most members of presbytery E&S and PR Committees. With some minor editing and some additional information the Committee on Diaconal Ministry is exploring the possibility of publishing one or both of these resources.

The oral presentation with overhead slides which I developed, although seen as valuable, was judged not to be easily used by other leaders. In taking the basic resource Diaconal Ministry in the United Church of Canada and making it more interesting, I also made it dependant upon my personal stories. The Committee on Diaconal Ministry has requested that the funds within the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, available for the production of videos be allocated for a resource that will serve a similar purpose in such a workshop.

Leadership

The initial assessment with Diaconal Ministers in the Maritime Conference, although informal in nature, proved invaluable as it not only identified the focus of the proposal, but also identified the two partners in the project--the Committee on Diaconal Ministry and the Ministry Support and Development Unit. The early identification of these partners, and their participation in each phase of the project from that point, gave the project a practicality that was immeasurable.

Committee on Diaconal Ministry

The Committee on Diaconal Ministry gave critical leadership in helping this project reach its national goals. It did this through endorsing the project, reviewing the material produced and by offering financial assistance, if the need arose.

Although the Committee's endorsement seemed easy at the time, it eventually gave the project a credibility that was extremely important. The Committee's endorsement in the letter of introduction established a trust with the CPMs that afforded me the opportunity to ask and receive information quickly and honestly. The Committee's endorsement helped the Maritime participants develop a sense of pride in a national project in which they were providing the significant leadership.

Reading and commenting on the material produced also prepared the way for a better transference of the resources to other conferences following the completion of the project. Having been participants in the development of the resources facilitated the

Committee's agreement to produce one or both of the written resources and possibly produce a video resource to support this workshop.

Finally having the Committee's offer to provide financial assistance in the production of printed resources relieved any financial concerns if they arose. Fortunately I was able to develop and print the resources used with little cost. However, having the money set aside in 1999 for this possibility made their decision to produce the material in its final form much easier.

The final contribution they made occurred quite unexpectedly at the meeting in which I presented a final report of the project. This meeting coincided with the Women in Ministry and Pastoral Relations Committees, which are also committees of the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education. In our common agenda time with the members of the Women in Ministry and Pastoral Relations Committees, every person was asked to comment on two learnings from the project. The two learnings were summarized by the facilitator for this common meeting in words similar to this, "Presbytery E&S and PR Committees do not have sufficient knowledge of and experience with diaconal ministry to be able to adequately interpret this ministry to the committees with which they work, e.g., Discernment and Joint Needs Assessment Committees." The second learning was that, "After being given the opportunity and resources to learn about diaconal ministry the members of the these presbytery committees were quite keen to interpret and promote it."

All members of these two committees individually made their comments on these statements from the perspective of their presbytery, indicating whether their experiences

could affirm these learnings. The result was quite overwhelming! From approximately forty people, the total number in the combined group, we heard an almost unanimous endorsement of these statements! This meant that from the perspective of these participants, which represented more than a third of the presbyteries in the United Church of Canada, there was unanimous agreement with the learnings of this project. An added value in asking these questions and receiving the overwhelming affirmation of these two learnings with the General Council Pastoral Relations Committee is that this Committee may be open to assisting the Committee on Diaconal Ministry or taking their own initiative on programmes of education about diaconal ministry with their pastoral relations network in the presbyteries and conferences.

Ministry Support and Development Unit & Steering Committee

The other partner in this project was the Ministry Support and Development Unit of Maritime Conference's Ministry Personnel & Education Committee. As a unit they primarily entrusted the Steering Committee, which they formed, to give the detailed advice to the project. However, the Unit's endorsement provided credibility so the presbyteries contacted would participate. They also met with me following the completion of the project to examine the learnings and to determine the implications for their work. Detail of this meeting is not included in this report, but the meeting was very encouraging and indicated their commitment to implement several things that will promote Diaconal Ministry.

The Steering Committee was instrumental in focussing the project and in providing an initial assessment of needs and creative ideas for resources that might meet those needs. They also read all the material produced and gave critical feedback to improve them before they were used. Only one member of the group was able to share active leadership in a workshop, but that opportunity was the first workshop and her critique was very helpful in revising the outline for future workshops. The CPM was a participant in two of the conference workshops, one of which was held after the project was completed.

Having the full cooperation of the Conference's Personnel Minister in these meetings and at other times was invaluable. Of particular note was the letter of introduction he wrote to his counterparts in other conferences. This complemented the endorsement of the Committee on Diaconal Ministry and allayed any fears that this request from a national committee was suspect, because it was being supported by an experienced and trusted peer.

My Leadership

As noted in "Leadership" section in Chapter 3, a component of the project that required omission was the plan to develop leadership other than me who could lead such workshops. Although I feel it was the correct decision, it was unfortunate, and contributed to the critique of the presentation portion of the workshop being dependent upon my leadership.

Although I did not ask evaluative questions about my leadership, I did receive unsolicited comments affirming my breadth of knowledge about diaconal history and policy, and skilful and sensitive handling of possibly contentious questions. These comments provide an indication of qualifications of leadership for this workshop.

With regard to the comments about my knowledge of diaconal history and policy, my knowledge is probably held by most Diaconal Ministers who have been commissioned in the last ten years and by some who were trained in earlier years. Around that time, St. Stephen's College included a significant component in the Western Field-Based programme for training Diaconal Ministers on "Diaconal History, Style and Formation." Following on St. Stephen's College's initiative, the Centre for Christian Studies also did the same. I co-led this component in the St. Stephen's programme, and from discussion with recent graduates from the Centre for Christian Studies, I am confident that most graduates have an adequate familiarity with diaconal history and policy to lead this workshop.

Dealing skilfully and sensitively with contentious and sometimes complex questions is a characteristic of leadership that may come more easily to a more seasoned Diaconal Minister, but I feel that with adequate training and interpretative material, most Diaconal Ministers could introduce this material and respond to provocative and contentious questions.

However, saying that most Diaconal Ministers could lead this workshop, given a good training programme, gets close to assuming that only Diaconal Ministers can provide the needed leadership. It may be true that Diaconal Ministers are probably the

best ones to interpret their ministry, but are there are three problems that preclude the assumption that they the only ones who can do this. The first problem is that it means that Diaconal Ministers are again would be solely responsible for educating the church about diaconal ministry. This sidelines the committees and courts of the church who have a role to play in this task. If the wider church is committed to promoting Diaconal Ministry, it has a role in bringing the level of awareness of its interpreters of Ministry Personnel and Education policy to a level where they can share this responsibility. As I pointed out in the Introduction, the lack of appreciation of Diaconal Ministers is a form of oppression by the wider church. As Uma Narayan's assessment indicates, when speaking about groups who are the repentant oppressors or sympathetic outsiders, "they must recognize that their concern for a form of oppression must be reflected in their willingness to actively educate themselves about it." [22]

[22] Uma Narayan, "Working Together Across Difference: Some Considerations on Emotions and Political Practice", in Hypatia, Vo. 3, No. 2, Summer 1988 p. 37.

The second problem with Diaconal Ministers solely assuming the role of educating and promoting this ministry is that in many areas of the country there are insufficient numbers of Diaconal Ministers to carry out the task, e.g., Newfoundland and Labrador Conference has one active Diaconal Minister. A third problem is the expectation this makes of Diaconal Ministers to be available to do this education. Doing this task keeps them from being able to participate in other areas of ministry where their skills and insights are also needed. Narayan's comments about feminists who are urged to limit themselves to clearly named feminist struggles have value here. "Women philosophers and philosophers of colour I know, who are interested in areas like mathematical logic, are offended by implications that 'someone like them' should be devoting themselves to political philosophy and /or feminist theory. Outsiders who imply this fail to see why, of 'someone like them', it may be a matter of pride to excel in an unconventional (for people like them) and difficult field like mathematical logic."[23]

There is another option other than limiting the leadership to Diaconal Ministers. Based upon my conclusion that many Diaconal Ministers may also need a training session to adequately lead this workshop, I believe there are lay people and Ordained Ministers who would join with Diaconal Ministers in this training programme. They may need to increase their knowledge with regard to Diaconal history and policy, but I have had experience of several lay people and Ordained Ministers in the course of this project

[23] Ibid, p. 45.

who have taken the initiative to become familiar with the basic information and the troublesome questions, who could easily be trained to lead this workshop.

As noted in the above section, “Introduction and Warm Up,” I was fortunate not to have any particularly confrontational experiences in the workshops that I conducted. The reasons for this need to be explored further, as this has not been my previous experience, nor the experience of other Diaconal Ministers who have interpreted this ministry to their fellow presbyters. The question is, “Why did I not experience this behaviour in these workshops?”

Part, and unfortunately too big a part is because I am a man. From past experiences I sadly acknowledge that as a male, I am less likely to receive negative reactions than my Diaconal colleagues who are women. I say sadly, because this is an admission that my gender still gives me power and privilege over my sister Diaconal Ministers, even when they are interpreting their own ministries to other men and women. This is a sensitivity of which I must constantly be aware in interpreting this ministry and particularly the sense of marginalization felt by my women colleagues.

My position of being on the staff of Maritime Conference no doubt also brought with it some credibility, which would not be available to many potential leaders. Although I was not acting as a Conference staff in these workshops, many of the participants would have known me otherwise as Conference staff.

My educational background also gives me credibility with some people. Having had a successful year at the Atlantic School of Theology, earned a Master of Adult Education, and now working on my Masters in Theological Studies, indicates that I am

not a Diaconal Minister because I wanted to take the easier academic route. This is a common myth associated with Diaconal Ministers.

A related reason is that the participants knew that I was conducting these workshops as a project for my thesis. Therefore, they knew I was reporting on what I learned. Perhaps even the possibility of their poor attitudes and behaviour being documented may have kept it in check.

A question of regional context is another dimension that needs to be considered with regard to the reception I received and what the reception might be in a different conference. Maritime Conference has had a very supportive and knowledgeable personnel minister who has done good interpretation of Diaconal Ministry when possible. Also, there have not been significant disputes about recognizing Diaconal Ministry as a respected dimension of Ordered Ministry in this Conference. Unfortunately, those two preconditions have not been in place for several other conferences.[24]

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[24] Over the years the Diaconal community have told many stories of lament that their conferences' personnel minister is not only uninformed, but hostile to Diaconal Ministers. In 1984 Belleville Presbytery of Bay of Quinte Conference contested the licensing of Diaconal Ministers to conduct the sacraments of communion and baptism (The United Church of Canada's 30th General Council Record of Proceedings, 1984 Petition no. 578, p. 556). The 30th General Council (The United Church of Canada's 30th General Council Record of Proceedings, 1984 p. 74) rejected their petition and upheld their 1982 (The United Church of Canada's 29th General Council Record of Proceedings 1982, p. 75) decision which gave the criteria when a Diaconal Minister **may** be granted permission to conduct the sacraments. In contrast to Bay of Quinte Conference's objection, Maritime Conference Executive passed a supportive policy for Diaconal Ministers, when it said that using the same criteria that was affirmed by 29th General Council and continues to be the policy (Section 427(b) Manual. Toronto: The United Church of Canada. 1998), "Diaconal Ministers **will** be licensed within a specified assignment and for the duration of that appointment, upon application from a presbytery or its executive." (Maritime Conference Executive Minutes. Sackville: Maritime

A final reason I suggest for this generally warm reception is that the project and my leadership were introduced to them by the Ministry Development and Support Committee and therefore, had the support of the CPM. That person, and that committee less so, are well known to them and part of their Ministry Personnel and Education network.

To be fair to myself, along with the reasons named above, which are somewhat outside of my influence, I am also a very experienced facilitator of workshops with adult learners. I have honed my skills in focussing on the growth of participants and not reacting to participant's belittling comments in a manner that stops the participant from learning.

Several of the probable reasons for my easy ride challenge me to look at the implication of these attitudes on other leaders of similar workshops in the future. Clearly, it is neither possible, just, nor wise to try to duplicate these privileges in future leaders. Several of these are privileges which need to be challenged, and not accepted. These concerns need to be addressed and the risk of abuse need to be reduced for other leaders assuming the leadership of such workshops in the future. This will be discussed further in the recommendations discussed in Chapter Six.

Overall Evaluation of the Project

Conference, April 8-09, 1994. P. 54(94).

The data that has been gathered, and upon which I have reflected in the sections above, supports the value of the resources produced and the workshops carried out for presbytery Education and Student and Pastoral Relations Committees. However, two more general questions remain, "Is more and improved educational programming for these committees going to result in a better appreciation and promotion of Diaconal Ministers" and more concretely, "Are these improvements going to result in more appropriate ministerial positions being available to Diaconal Ministers?" The answer to this question cannot be a simple yes or no.

First, I am not advocating that education, by itself, is going to solve the problem of Diaconal Ministers being poorly appreciated by the church. Education, although it is a political act, can ready the learner to use other social change tools.[25] Education by itself, particularly if it is focussed on the primary players, in this case the presbytery E&S and PR Committees, cannot be sufficient to mount such a programme or sustain it. Other parts of the church need to be educated and possibly refocused, in order to support these efforts. Even education of other parts of the church will not be sufficient to reach the goal of better appreciation of Diaconal Ministers. As noted in the discussion of the privileges of my leadership, many of the attitudes, such as gender prejudice and academic biases, are shared with our wider Western culture. A full outline of how to achieve such

[25] In examining Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy, Ira Shor, notes that "This pedagogy challenges teachers and students to empower themselves for social change, to advance democracy and equality as they advance their literacy and knowledge." (Shor, I. (1993) "Education as politics; Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy" in p. McLaren and P. Leonard (eds.), Paulo Freire: A Critical Encounter. New York: Routledge.

change in the church is not the focus of this thesis, but it must still be noted that even the modest change being hoped for in this project is still dependent upon the attitudes and behaviour of the wider society. This does not decrease the importance or urgency of this project, but rather accepts it limitations, and places it in the wider church and society.

Diaconal Ministers showed they would not rely solely on the education of the church to fully gain their place in the United Church when they formed their own professional association. In June of 1984 the Diakonia of The United Church of Canada (DUCC) was formed, based on Diaconal Ministers' experience of the church's lack of support for them. Glenys Huws, a lay professional, and one time staff of the General Council Division of Ministry Personnel and Education has commented, "Diakonia [of The United Church of Canada] is needed to provide ongoing support, lobbying, networking, and advocacy. History had shown that the Church would not "take care of everything for [Diaconal Ministers]."[26]

However, continuing the education in the church is vital. The experience of not doing it has been evident in the data collected in the initial assessments–few people knew very much about Diaconal Ministers and many had erroneous impressions of how they were trained and what their ministry entailed. An education of some type will go on–partial and misinformed. The future of Diaconal Ministers in The United Church of Canada is parallel to Paulo Freire's (1998) comment about the viability of Brazil.

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[26] Committee on Diaconal Ministry, Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, The United Church of Canada. History of Diaconal Ministry in the United Church of Canada 1925-1991. 1991. Page 143.

> Far be it from me, nevertheless, to insist on the curriculum of the postmodernly progressive school, to think that the "salvation" of Brazil lies in it. Naturally, the viability of the country does not rest solely in the democratic school's preparing critical and capable citizens, but Brazil's salvation will happen because of the democratic school; it needs the democratic school, it won't be accomplished without the democratic school. (p. 65)

The viability of Diaconal Ministers does not solely lie in the education of the presbyteries, but the full acceptance of the Diaconal Ministers will not be accomplished without this education. Therefore, it is vital that this education be done well–the resources need to be accessible and yet provide necessary information and concepts; the process needs to be thorough to include all parts of the Ministry Personnel and Education network that educate, promote and administer personnel policy; both the resources and the process of education need to be monitored closely to ensure they are receiving adequate and ongoing support.

CHAPTER 5

RECOMMENDATIONS

This project was grounded in the actual workings of The United Church of Canada's committees and organizations. The partners in the project were not only important in guiding it, but they also invested their human and financial resources in it. In the process of considering what has been learned from it, they were also heavily invested in identifying the recommendations they would make to themselves and other participants. I have not often identified the sources of the recommendations, as often the ideas were shared across groups by those who were members of more than one of the participating committees or groups.

I have categorized the recommendations into two major sections. The first section "Programme Recommendations", includes items that relate to resources and workshops. I have not provided all the detail that some ideas had attached to them, as this would go beyond the scope of this project and thesis.

The second section, "Recommendations for Leadership", sorts the recommendations according to the committee or group that has responsibility for the particular work being suggested. Prior to the specific recommendation I have also given a short explanation as to what this group's or committee's mandate is in order to clarify why I am suggesting this particular action for this group.

Programme Recommendations

Resources

Given that there were few resources to provide a general background on Diaconal Ministry, and no resources specifically intended for the presbyteries' E&S and PR Committees, I offer the following recommendations:

- The booklet, Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada, should be updated and republished. This resource can serve as a basic backgrounder for the general reader as well as for the readership who are the focus of this project.
- A fifteen to twenty minute video resource based upon the information contained in Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada should be developed for use in the workshops recommended below. The video should be related to the mandate, context, questions and opportunities of the MP&E networks related to conference and presbytery E&S and PR Committees. Along with the historical and Biblical basis of diaconal ministry, this video resource should include some of the concerns and stories of Diaconal Ministers.
- As many people have not met or heard much about Diaconal Ministers it would be extremely helpful to prepare a set of profiles of a variety Diaconal Ministers that would provide a wide assortment of examples of Diaconal Ministries. It is my recommendation that this production be comprised of both composite profiles created for this production and biographical profiles of actual Diaconal Ministers. These profiles should include short introductions to the stories of commitment and challenges of Diaconal Ministers.

- A resource similar to "Frequently Asked Questions about Diaconal Ministry" (Appendix 7) should be written in order to respond to the assumptions and misinformation that too readily surround a discussion of Diaconal Ministry. This resource should be focussed particularly on the questions of presbyteries' E&S and PR Committees. This resource is not intended to be comprehensive in providing an orientation to Diaconal Ministry, but to be one in a set of resources to carry out this purpose.
- At the workshops recommended below, a selection of more in-depth resources on Diaconal Ministry should be displayed and be made available for loan. Many of the references listed in this thesis' Bibliography can be exhibited. There are a few basic resources that I recommend including in any selection of resources. For a historical foundation on diaconal ministry I suggest History of Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada 1925-1991 and Diakonia in the Classical Reformed Tradition and Today. To be able to respond to questions about the present programme of studies for Diaconal Candidates, it is important to have the most recent calendars and introductory material from the Centre for Christian Studies, Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Centre and the Francis Sandy Theological Centre. And finally, for those who are concerned about church policy, the most recently published Manual of The United Church of Canada should be available.

Workshops

I trust I have made my case that print and audiovisual resources by themselves are not sufficient to fulfill the goal of providing the presbyteries' E&S and PR Committees with necessary orientation to Diaconal Ministry in order for them to effectively carry out their mandates. The members of these committees need to be exposed to and be in dialogue with someone who is well-informed and committed to promoting Diaconal Ministry. Having arrived at this conclusion, I make the following recommendations:

Orientation Workshops

- It is imperative that a set of orientation workshops be developed. It is important to tailor each workshop to address the particular mandate and context of the committee or group participating.

  Of this set of orientation workshops, two should be developed to introduce the presbytery E&S and PR Committees' members to the history, theological foundations of, and policies related to Diaconal Ministry. The workshop for E&S Committees should be quite specific in exploring the issues and policies related to the discernment process for inquirers. In the second workshop, for PR Committees, the focus should be on the Joint Needs Assessment and Joint Search process. Allow at least two hours for these workshops.

  All workshops should introduce the participants to Diaconal Ministry and its related policies, and also explore with participants how their own faith is and/or might be expressed in terms of a diaconal ministry of education, service

and pastoral care. This reflection-on-their-faith component provide an opportunity to integrate the information into their own worldview and not keep the material at an intellectual level. Workshops can be developed using the outlines (Appendices 6, 7, & 8) prepared for this project with the following comments:

- Give adequate time to solicit, discuss and respond to participants' questions and comments about diaconal ministry and the policies related to Diaconal Ministers.
- Provide time during the "Reflection and Transition to Action" section for participants to identify and share their learnings, and for the group to apply these learnings to the committee's work.
- Use the "Statement of Belief" of the *Diakonia* of The United Church of Canada, in the closing, as it is a well-expressed and affirming articulation of diaconal ministry and participants.
- Include opportunity in the "Evaluation" for both written and oral evaluation – the written evaluation for personal direct feedback and the verbal evaluation for public acknowledgment of the diversity of reactions in the group – thus promoting further group understanding.

The third in this set of orientation workshops, should introduce CPMs to the history, theological foundations of Diaconal Ministry, and the General Council policies affecting Diaconal students, Commissionands and Diaconal Ministers. This should be an in-depth programme, of at least a day in length.

A fourth orientation workshop, developed with CPMs, can introduce conference committees, such as MP&E, Education and Students, Pastoral Relations Settlement, and Interview Boards to the history, theological foundations of, and policies related to Diaconal Ministry. This workshop should be similar in design to the ones for presbytery E&S and PR Committees, but will also provide sufficient time to reflect on their particular conference's experience of, supports for and challenges with regard to Diaconal Ministers.

The last in this set is really a "re-orientation" workshop as it reintroduces the basic information on diaconal ministry and any updates on policies or issues affecting Diaconal Ministers. While the initial orientation workshop might be offered every two or three years, these refresher workshops should be offered on the years in between, due to the high turnover on committees. This workshop although designed for the new context of the particular committee participating, would be patterned on the others in this set.

Training Workshop

In order to have adequate leadership for these orientation workshops there must be trained people to offer them. The trainees should be drawn from the Ministry Personnel and Education network and the Diaconal Ministers' community. They should be people who commit themselves to participate in the training session and to provide volunteer leadership for the "orientation workshops". The CPMs may be key in identifying potential leaders.

The action-reflection educational model should be used as the basis for this training, and various experiential exercises should be employed. Some examples of the experiential exercises I am suggesting are: “fish bowls” dealing with complex questions; role plays in handling confrontational behaviour; and experientially-based theological reflection. All participants should be asked to articulate for themselves and share their answers to, “Why do we in The United Church of Canada have Diaconal Ministers who are members of the Ordered ministry?” Diaconal Ministers might lead worship and these experiences might be examined to discern if they reflect any diaconal principles.

As I discussed in Chapter Five, there may be occasions when participants are belittling and antagonistic to the leadership, because of the topic. The training session must allow an opportunity for people to talk about this possibility and how they might handle it. I have two suggestions for that discussion. The first is that, as often as possible, leaders work in teams of two. The second is that, after every workshop, there be an intentional debriefing with a person or small group, that would give an opportunity for the leaders to shed comments that are hurtful, and not carry them as personal criticisms.

These workshops should include opportunities for participants to talk with and hear the stories of Diaconal Ministers. Some of these stories should be in a written format for participants to take home and reflect on further.

Although the focus of these training workshops should be upon diaconal ministry, participants should be encouraged to articulate their own style of ministry. I recommend this, so, trainees do not see this workshop as an attempt to force people to see ministry

only from the diaconal perspective. This workshop should not force participants to replace the dominant Ordained model of ministry with the diaconal perspective, as if, it now should be the model for all. However, trainees should also be challenged to "Try to describe ways your ministry, or how you act as a faithful Christian, are expressions of diaconal ministry–education, service and pastoral care." This is to help participants to be familiar with using these categories for looking at ministry and living in the world, not to force conformity.

Prior to this in-depth educational experience, trainees should be provided background information on the history of and policy pertaining to Diaconal Ministers. This is important as there will be too much for participants to learn at the training session itself.

I anticipate that such "training workshops" could be offered every second or third year in a conference, in order to have an adequate number of leaders for the orientation workshops on an ongoing basis. This schedule for training would develop a sense of expectation and ownership as the Ministry Personnel and Education Committees assume this responsibility.

Recommendations for Leadership

Beyond the leaders trained for the orientation workshops, other committees and groups have significant leadership responsibilities to ensure this work is carried out. The

primary committee at this point in history is the Committee on Diaconal Ministry.[27] As a Committee of the General Council's Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, it has the mandate to recommend policy to the national church and educate the church about Diaconal Ministry. Although this is the Committee's mandate, many of the recommendations I make to it would be best done in collaboration with other General Council Division of Ministry Personnel and Education Committees such as the Pastoral Relations and the Ministry Vocations. Therefore, even if the Committee on Diaconal Ministry accepted and wished to implement the following recommendations, the actual collaborative project might vary from the recommendation significantly in order to respect the mandates, resources and plans of the partner groups. This is to be anticipated and accepted.

I also make these recommendations appreciating that the Committee on Diaconal Ministry has made efforts to do broad-based education with displays for annual meetings of conferences and General Council Triennial Meetings. My recommendations are not to indicate that these are not important, but my recommendations are focussed on the groups that I have shown to be instrumental in promoting Diaconal Ministry in the congregations and with inquirers for the ordered ministry–the presbytery E&S and PR Committees.

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[27] As this thesis is being written, the General Council is in the midst of restructuring itself and the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education. No one knows where the responsibility for promoting and supporting Diaconal Ministry will lie in the future. The present committee members will need to ensure that this mandate be clearly assigned a successor. The Diakonia of The United Church of Canada (DUCC) will need to monitor and possibly intervene if the restructuring results in a diminishing of this mandate.

Within this context my recommendations to the Committee on Diaconal Ministry are the following:

- It should prepare and steer a comprehensive plan of education about and promotion of Diaconal Ministry that would include resource production, leadership development, a timeline and budget for the plan. This plan needs to articulate this committee's commitment to and leadership role in carrying out this plan and its expectations of the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education in supporting this plan. The overall purpose of this plan will be to significantly increase the awareness and appreciation of the presbyteries' E&S and PR Committees to the ministry of Diaconal Ministers. A measurable objective of the plan will be to increase the number of ministry positions for which Diaconal Ministers are sought. Components of that plan should include:
    - The following resources:
        - An updated and republished booklet, Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada.
        - A fifteen to twenty minute video resource based upon the information contained in Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada as described above.
        - A set of profiles of Diaconal Ministers that provide a wide spectrum of the ministries of Diaconal Ministries.
        - A resource, using a question and answer format, that respond to the most commonly asked questions.

- Designs for orientation and re-orientation workshops for the following groups:
    - Presbytery Ministry Personnel and Education, E&S and PR Committees
    - Conference Ministry Personnel and Education, Education and Students, Pastoral Relations, and Settlement Committees and Interview Boards.
- A design for a training workshop for preparing leadership to conduct the above workshops.
- Opportunities to meet with CPMs to seek their support for and collaboration in designing, implementing and promoting the workshops and training session as outlined above. Other tasks are to develop an orientation plan for new CPMs and to schedule regular meetings of CPMs with the Committee on Diaconal Ministry to identify and address ongoing and/or emerging issues, and introduce new resources.
- Strategies for communicating its learnings and plans, resulting from this project, with the wider Ministry Personnel and Education network of committees, e..g,. General Council – Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, and its Committees of Pastoral Relations, Women in Ministry and Ministry Vocations; Conferences – Ministry Personnel and Education, and its Committees of Education and Students, Pastoral Relations, Settlement; and Presbyteries – Ministry Personnel and Education, and its

> Committees on Education and Students and Pastoral Relations. This correspondence should attempt to solicit wider support for and participation in the proposed workshops and training programmes in their areas.

As the Ministry Support and Development Committee was a partner in this project, its investment and the role it can play are different from any counterpart committees in other conferences. It need not wait for the initiative of the Committee on Diaconal Ministry, although collaboration with these two committees would be best. I recommend that the Ministry Support and Development Committee encourage more presbyteries within Maritime Conference to participate in this educational venture. In the future and in concert with the Committee on Diaconal Ministry a letter of endorsement with its critical support would be very helpful in encouraging of conference to participate.

At some point the Committee on Diaconal Ministry will be seeking collaboration with Conference Ministry Personnel and Education Committees and CPMs to design, test and implement the resources, workshops and training sessions proposed above. The Ministry Support and Development Committee is well-resourced for these tasks and might consider offering itself to this effort.

Given the major structural changes that are contemplated in the General Council Divisions (see footnote 27), and the potential that the promotion of Diaconal Ministry may receive less support in a new structure, there is an important role for the Diakonia of The United Church of Canada. It is essential that it monitor this situation closely, and

intervene where and when necessary to ensure that a body in the General Council national structure has this mandate as well as the resources to carry it out. If such a mandate and resources are not given to a committed group, the Diakonia of The United Church of Canada should create alternative plans for forwarding these recommendations.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The goal of the project, upon which this thesis is based, was to prepare a set of recommendations for the development of a church-wide programme to help The United Church of Canada appreciate and promote diaconal ministry. The partners in this project–the Committee on Diaconal Ministry and the Ministry Support and Development Committee—chose that the work should be focused on the presbytery Committees of Education and Students and Pastoral Relations. These two committees are respectively the United Church's first contact focal point for inquirers about becoming ministry personnel and for pastoral charges seeking ministry personnel to assist their congregations. Their work is critical in promoting a better understanding and appreciation of diaconal ministry.

It was evident from the interviews with conference personnel ministers and the workshops that these committees are the appropriate vehicles for this education. Unfortunately, they had been, for the most part, largely unaware of Diaconal Ministry. They reacted very positively to the workshops, and were quite keen to share their new knowledge with the inquirers and candidates they would interview and the pastoral charges with which they would work.

This thesis also explored the historical context of Diaconal Ministers and why diaconal ministry, as a service ministry historically and primarily performed by women,

had been undervalued in the church. Although The United Church of Canada said that it wanted to promote a better appreciation of this ministry and had the infrastructure in place to carry out the task, twenty years later it still had not done this effectively. In our present context, the church needs diaconal ministry to be better understood and practiced in order to respond to the challenges of today. If the church is not intentional about this education, this minority ministry has the real potential to be lost.

Using the principles and the action-reflection model of adult education to guide the resources and workshop designs, I created, experimented and later evaluated them using this theoretical framework. This model served the project well, for it encouraged participants to reflect on their work in the committees represented. Participants easily identified their learnings and discerned the implications for future work within this framework.

It is noteworthy that the project as a whole, and the workshops, in themselves, also provided a model of diaconal ministry for anyone who participated in it. Therefore, the learnings cannot be reduced to the information they learned in the workshops and the resources themselves. Their personal learnings and reflections upon their faith were to some degree a by-product of the project, but yet were valuable for the participants and important in showing integrity in project.

The recommendations that resulted came out of a process of consultation, reviewing and reinterpreting older resources, creating new resources, testing of both the resources and process with sample groups, and listening to participants' evaluations. The recommendations also have an added value in that two committees who share a

mandate and commitment to this effort have collaborated fully both in the project and in the preparation of the recommendations.

The recommendations given are quite extensive and their value remains to be seen. However, as some of the recommendations made are already being implemented, it gives me some confidence that my suggestions will be taken seriously. I was encouraged, during the assessment, that the conference personnel ministers believed that an educational programme on Diaconal Ministry would be helpful. I am therefore hopeful that their support and participation in implementing the recommendations would be forthcoming.

It should be noted that even if these recommendations are accepted and implemented quickly, measurable results may take a few more years to be evident. This educational effort is focused on the presbyteries' work, but it is in the work of these presbytery committees in the congregations, especially with regard to the pastoral relations process, where results need to be shown. The impact of this project's work with Education and Students may be more readily realized, as one might anticipate more inquiries about Diaconal Ministry studies and an increase in the number of Diaconal Candidates.

Having the General Council's Committee on Diaconal Ministry and Maritime Conference's Ministry Support and Development Committee as partners in this project has meant that the success of the project has already been partially achieved. The key actors in carrying out the recommendations are already developing plans similar to my recommendations and are committing resources to the production of some of the

resources I have suggested. Although the workshops were carried out exclusively within Maritime Conference, the General Council's Committee on Diaconal Ministry is confident the resources and workshops can be effectively used in other conferences. Its members, drawn from various parts of Canada, felt that although the contexts may be somewhat different, the issues in other conferences were basically the same, and predicted the easy transfer and application in other conferences.

There remain two challenges. The first and most immediate challenge is to garner the understanding and support of conference personnel ministers for this project. They are critical in promoting this educational effort with their conference and presbytery committees. Without this support, the goal to make more people in presbytery committees aware and supportive of Diaconal Ministry will be difficult to realize. I am hopeful that their support will be forthcoming, if the approach to them is respectful of their ministry.

The second challenge is with regard to maintaining the General Council's support for promoting and advocating for Diaconal Ministers. With the changes in structure that I noted in the last chapter, this provides an opportunity for The United Church of Canada to say that Diaconal Ministry, along with other minority ministries, such as Women in Ministry and Aboriginal Ministry, have a special need for support and advocacy. The decisions of the next few months will indicate whether the twenty-year history of support and resources committed by the Committee on Diaconal Ministry indicates a transformation of attitude within The United Church of Canada, or represents an aberration from what Diaconal Ministers have unfortunately come to expect from

ecclesiastical bodies. The United Church of Canada has the opportunity to show that it can learn from its history and prepare new paths for Diaconal Ministry in the future.

Appendix i. Project Proposal

Masters in Theological Studies in Diaconal Ministry

Thesis Proposal

Eric King

September 27, 1998

Proposed Title: Promoting Diaconal Ministry and Ministerial Positions

Area of Study: When Diaconal Ministry was recognized by the United Church of Canada in 1981 the members of this ministry knew that the struggle to have their ministry valued was far from over. Unfortunately, the level of acceptance of Diaconal Ministry has not advanced significantly in the last two decades. This thesis will examine the resources and programmes that have been developed to promote Diaconal Ministry in those years and to assist the church in utilizing Diaconal Ministers in pastoral and social ministries.

For twenty years I have been a Diaconal Minister and whether it has been in pastoral ministry, in the General Council's Division of World Outreach or as a Maritime Conference Minister of Outreach, Stewardship and Mission Support, I have always had to interpret what Diaconal Ministry is and how this ministry can benefit the church. I have been active in various committees of the church, whose role it was to promote Diaconal Ministry and yet they knew very little about it. I am a founding member of

Diakonia of The United Church of Canada, which has been there to monitor what the church is doing to promote this ministry.

I am disappointed that today there are few printed resources available for the promotion of Diaconal Ministry. There are no up-to-date audio-visual resources and in most conferences, there are no coordinated efforts to assist congregations in learning more about Diaconal Ministry and its potential benefit for their situations.

This thesis will be limited mostly to the promotion of Diaconal Ministry as expressed in The United Church of Canada and those commissioned to this ministry. It will not generally include diaconal ministry practiced by lay people, staff associates and ordained ministers. To distinguish between the general and formal forms of this ministry, lowercase letters will be used to refer to the general ministry and upper-case letters will be used when alluding to those recognized formally in this ministry.

Purpose: The purpose of the project will be to evaluate the printed and audiovisual material used in the promotion of Diaconal Ministry. The project will also develop a promotional programme utilizing these prepared resources and the human resource of Diaconal Ministers themselves. This thesis will document a project that will prepare, use and evaluate programmes and resources designed to widen the appreciation of Diaconal Ministry and to increase the number of positions utilizing the training, education and vocation of Diaconal Ministers.

The programme and resources that are developed will respond to needs identified in Maritime Conference and be field tested in this Conference, but they will be developed with the oversight of the Committee on Diaconal Ministry of the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education. In this way it is intended that the programmes and resources will be field tested and be available for transference to other contexts in the United Church of Canada.

Methodology: A needs assessment will be done with Diaconal Ministers and conference personnel ministers as to the level of understanding, appreciation for Diaconal Ministry in the church and the need for programmes and resources for the development of ministry personnel positions suited to the training, education and vocation of Diaconal Ministers.

The second aspect of the research will be the resources and programmes developed and utilized by the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, conferences and Diakonia of The United Church of Canada (DUCC). The purpose of this portion of the research is to discern what is available and what has been helpful or not. This work will be done in cooperation with the Committee on Diaconal Ministry and DUCC.

Based upon the results of this research into the needs for and the resources and programmes available, a new programme and sample resources will be developed and tested within Maritime

Conference. This work will be done in collaboration with the Ministerial Support Committee which has as one of its mandates to promote Diaconal Ministry. The resources prepared at this stage will be reviewed and assessed by the Committee on Diaconal Ministry for their transferability.

After participating in the promotional programme, people will asked again about their understanding and appreciation of Diaconal Ministry to assess their learnings about Diaconal Ministry. An analysis will be also be made to see if there has been an increase in the number of ministry personnel positions suited to the training, education and vocation of Diaconal Ministers.

The final stage will be the preparation of recommendations for the development of a church wide programme to help The United Church of Canada appreciate and promote Diaconal Ministry.

Validation: The participation of the partners identified in the project portion of this thesis should provide an authenticity and utility of the resources produced. I am seeking the cooperation and participation of the Committee on Diaconal Ministry, the Ministry Personnel and Education Committee of Maritime Conference, and Diakonia of The United Church of Canada. Each of these groups are mandated to promote Diaconal Ministry in their constituency. If one or all the above are not able to participate, the project can still be developed, but the field testing will be more limited and vetting with a more diverse constituency will be hampered. This should not significantly impair the inherent value in the resources

and programmes to be prepared, but it will frustrate their transference and use in other locations.

Literature: The project of developing programmes and resources for promoting Diaconal Ministry will be done within a framework of theological literature on diaconal ministry, which explores its Biblical origin, historical decline, growth and resurgence. A significant portion of literature reviewed will have been written in the last 30 years when diaconal ministry has moved to analyzing and describing its own character of what it does and away from who does it, or in other words as seen as the best option from women's ministry. The literature will reflect the ecumenical and cultural diversity, and richness that has been encouraged within the international sisterhood of DIAKONIA.

The second body of literature to be considered is in the field of adult education. I will explore this literature for the purpose of establishing a framework that will guide the development of programmes and resources for the promotion of Diaconal Ministry. Therefore, literature in this field will primarily be in the areas of educational design, presentation skills and leadership development. Some of this literature will drawn from publications of The United Church of Canada so it can assist in the transferability to other regions of Canada. Other literature produced by adult educators who work with non-governmental organizations will be reviewed to benefit from their experience of the task of promoting their concerns and programmes in general public.

The third field of literature to be reviewed is the printed and audio-visual resources prepared for the promotion of Diaconal Ministry. This will primarily be drawn from The United Church of Canada publications, but will also include material used in other denominations in Canada and other countries.

Time Lines:

October 1998

Finalize the thesis proposal and start the research and development of research tools.

Check with and obtain the cooperation and participation of the Committee on Diaconal Ministry, the Ministry Personnel and Education Committee of Maritime Conference, and Diakonia of The United Church of Canada.

November 1998

Review the literature related to adult education, educational design and programme development for the purpose of evaluating present resources for the promotion of Diaconal Ministry.

Conduct research into the understanding and appreciation of Diaconal Ministers in a selected area of Maritime Conference and the awareness of interpretative material available on this topic. This data will be used as a baseline and compared with data gathered following exposure to new resources and interpretive programmes.

December 1998

Conduct an evaluation of resources The United Church of Canada

presently has. This evaluation will seek to discern the value of each resource from congregations' and Diaconal Ministers' perspectives.

Review the literature in the field of diaconal ministry from other denominations and cultures for the purpose of gleaning helpful materials that might be used in the production of new resources.

Prepare new programme and interpretative materials based upon the framework developed from the adult education literature.

Prepare and submit to the advisor the chapter(s) related to literature reviewed.

January 1999

Field test the newly prepared programme and interpretive materials in selected sites in Maritime Conference through the Ministry Personnel and Education Committee.

Vet the resources produced with the Committee on Diaconal Ministry and Diakonia of The United Church of Canada.

Conduct the second round of research into the understanding and appreciation of Diaconal Ministers in a selected area of Maritime Conference and the awareness of interpretative material available on this topic. This data will be compared with baseline data gathered in November 1998.

February 1999

Prepare an analysis of the data gathered, identify learnings and propose recommendations for future work in this area.

Submit those chapters related to the project and its evaluation.

March 1999

Review the responses from the advisor(s) to those chapters submitted.

April 1999

Revise and resubmit those chapters completed and the final chapter.

June 1999

Revise and resubmit after reviewing responses to the complete thesis

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Appendix ii. Letter To Ministry Support and Development Committee - October 28, 1998

To: Ministry Support and Development Committee

From: Eric King

Re: Participation in Thesis Project - Promotion of Diaconal Ministry

Greetings!

I regret I am not able to share this request with you personally, but I am attending the Committee on Diaconal Ministry meeting in Winnipeg at this time.

I am presently working on a Masters in Theological Studies in Diaconal Ministry from St. Stephen's College and as part of the requirements for this degree I hope to do a project on developing programmes and resources on the promotion of Diaconal Ministry, The attached

proposal which has received tentative approval from my advisor and I am checking it with the Committee on Diaconal Ministry at this meeting. I hope that both the Committee on Diaconal Ministry and the Ministry Support and Development Committee agree to work with me in this project.

To assist you in your discussion of this request, I have posed some questions I anticipate you will ask and have answered them as best as I can at this time. If there are other questions, I have left a phone number where you may reach me.

1. What do I want the Ministry Support and Development Committee to do?

   a. to assist me in **identifying and reviewing the present printed and audio-visual resources** that are available for the promotion of Diaconal Ministry. Most of these are published by the Division of MP&E and there are not many.

   b. to assist me in **identifying and reviewing the processes now used for the promotion and interpretation** of Diaconal Ministry. This would include those used in the discernment and pastoral relations processes.

   c. to assist me in **developing processes and resources for the promotion of Diaconal Ministry and opening more ministerial positions** better utilizing the training, education and vocation of Diaconal Ministers.

   d. to identify areas (conference, presbytery and congregational sites--one site for each) where I would test these programmes and resources.
   e. to team with me in testing these materials if this can be conveniently arranged.

2. What roles will I play in this work?

   A. provide the staff resource to this project. I would do the research, mailings, arrangements for meetings, etc. This would not replace Bob in his responsibility for staffing the Committee.
   B. write new programmes and resources, if found to be needed.
   C. prepare evaluation tools for new programmes and resources

3. What financial obligations would your committee have?

   A. the expenses of committee members to participate in this project, e.g., travel, phone and postage. I do not think this should be beyond the expenses that would be beyond the anticipated expenses of the Committee in carrying out its mandate. The copying materials and other costs in the production of resources will only be assumed by your Committee if a resource is deemed valuable and probably will

be done in cooperation with the Committee on Diaconal Ministry.

4. **What will the relationship between this Committee and the Committee on Diaconal Ministry?**

The CDM will be doing some of the same work, but will have a national perspective. My role will be to coordinate the two groups so to facilitate communication and coordination of tasks.

5. How many people from your committee do I foresee being involved in this project?

I would like to see 2 or 3 people, mostly for the value of including a variety of perspectives in the review of present material and vetting of new resources. Therefore, a good group would have a layperson, a Diaconal minister and an Ordained minister.

6. When will the work begin and end?

I would like to begin as soon after the middle of November as possible and I foresee the project ending sometime in February 1999. The conclusion of the project will depend upon the speed in which events can be set up to test the materials in Conference, presbytery and congregations. If a group is identified at this meeting, I would ask that a date be set for any date except the weekend of November 20-22. I would estimate that the first meeting will take 4 to 5 hours.

7. What are the advantages of this project for the Committee?

This project is directly in line with the Committee's mandate and functions as developed by the Ministry and Personnel Committee. To "assist with education, promotion and introduction of resources related to pastoral relationships" and "to act as a resource for special Pastoral Relations/Pastoral Oversight interests such as: . . . the development of Diaconal Ministry positions." My work with the Committee will provide significant staff resource, therefore, accelerating the attention to this part of the Committee's mandate.

I appreciate your taking the time to consider this request and hope we may have the opportunity to work together.

Together in ministry,

Eric King

Appendix iii. Questions Asked of Conference Personnel Ministers

Other Conferences' E&S and Pastoral Relations processes

Questions that will be used in the phone call to search for more detail on what they know about diaconal ministry.

This is an exercise to get an accurate reading on what the present situation is and is not a test on your knowledge of diaconal ministry. Your response will not be identified with you personally, but will be combined with the responses I receive from other CPM.

1. Do you feel you are familiar with diaconal ministry well enough to be able to answer most questions a candidate may have or to explain it to candidates? a Joint Needs Assessment Committee or a Joint Search Committee may have?

2. What committees do an orientation for themselves about the varieties of ministry personnel the United Church trains? has available for settlement/call/appointment?

Presbytery E&S
Conference E&S
Presbytery Pastoral Relations
Conference PR

3. What is the series of interviews E&S committees (Conf & Presbytery) have with candidates?

4. a) Is it presbytery or conference E&S Committees that introduce Transfer and Settlement issues with candidates? When?

b) Are there particular questions that are designed for diaconal candidates?

5. a) Are there particular topics raised with pastoral charges considering a call/appointment of a Diaconal Minister. If, so please, expand.

b) Are there particular topics raised with Diaconal Ministers if they are seeking a call/appointment in your conference and its presbyteries?

6. What is the level of knowledge and familiarity with diaconal ministry in your committees:

(a) all members are very familiar
(b) one or two members represent/interpret it
(c) little or no knowledge or ability to interpret it

7. How much do you personally know about diaconal ministry?

(a) a lot
(b) comfortable with a few questions
(c) nothing

8. What do you personally know about diaconal ministry?

(a) 3 dimensions of diaconal ministry - education, service and pastoral care

(b) training opportunities

(c) types of ministry that Diaconal Ministers do

(d) strengths Diaconal Ministers bring to ministry

(e) any limitations on their ministry

9. In responding to these questions, did you use any background information? If so, what?

10. Do you know of resources where you could learn more about diaconal ministry or to educate others?

11. Do you feel it would be worthwhile to produce a resource or develop an orientation programme on diaconal ministry for committee use?

If yes, why?

If yes, what?

If no, why?

Appendix iv. Assessment of Presbytery Education and Students Committees

Questions that will be used in the phone call to search for more detail on what they know about DM.

1. How many members are on your committee?
   - Breakdown: lay
     ordered ministry
     OM
     DM

2. Has Education and Students Committee had any inquirer/candidate its work?

3. What is the level of knowledge and familiarity with Diaconal Ministers in your committee:
   (a) all members are very familiar
   (b) one or two members represent/interpret it
   (c) we have little or no knowledge to interpret it

4. How much do you personally know about DM?
   (a) a lot
   (b) comfortable with a few questions
   (c) nothing

5. What do you personally know about DM?
   (a) You are probably aware that OM are ordained to the word, sacrament and pastoral care; what are DM commissioned to?
   (b) Where and how do DM receive their training?
   (c) What types of ministry are DMs involved?
   (d) What are some of strengths DMs in general bring to ministry?
   (e) What are any limitations DM in general have in their ministry?

6. In responding to these questions, did you use any background information or talk with someone to prepare?
   (a) If so, what? who?
   (b) How helpful was this preparation?
7. Do you know of resources where you could learn more about DM or you could use to educate others? If, so what are they?
8. (a) What would be helpful to you in order to learn more about DM?
   (b) How might our committee help better inform those involved about diaconal ministry?

Appendix v. Workshop Outline For Presbytery Education and Students, Presbytery Pastoral Relations and Conference Ministry Personnel and Education

Programme Agenda

Assessment of Understanding: Talk with chair of Committee to answer questions

Time

5 **Introductions: (to introduce agenda & leadership, clarify expectations)**
- Introduce leadership and committee members
- Review Purposes and Programme Agenda on flip chart
  Purpose: To become more familiar with DM with regard to our committee's work. Clarify that the intention is to see Diaconal Ministry as complementary with other types of ministry, such as Ordained Ministry, Staff Associates and Lay Pastoral Ministers, and not in opposition with these other designated ministries.
- Clarify expectations of this session

5 **Warm up: (to start people remembering what they know)**

- What are the questions members have about Diaconal?
  Record them on a flip chart. Use them to start the statements in **Reflection (A).**

10 Presentation: (to provide an intro to DM, its history, character and place in UC)

- Using overheads, flip charts or handouts present a brief overview of the material found in Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada.

- History
  - Biblical, early church, German revival, and United Church
  - **Profiles of Diaconal Ministers** to illustrate past ministries
- 1980's
  - name change - Diaconal Ministers
  - training - educational methodology
    - action/reflection - adult education principles
  - **Profiles of Diaconal Ministers** to illustrate present ministries
  - four forms of designated ministry in United Church

20 Exploration: Fact or Fiction (to examine what they knew and was presented)

(A) 1. Using the questions in **Warm Up** prepare some statements they could test for being true or false. Leadership and members not saying if they are true or false. Many will be neither true or false.

2. With no discussion, take a vote on each one's truthfulness and record if the majority said True or False.

3. Taking each statement get the group to fill in more information and determine if it is actually fact or fiction. The facilitator would use **Frequently Asked Questions about Diaconal Ministry** to help determine a statements truthfulness. The facilitator could also use **Frequently Asked Questions about Diaconal Ministry** to bring up other statements made that common questions.

4. This exercise is to be fun, not competitive nor judgmental

(B) In small groups of 3-4 ask the following:

1. Where do you see the church engaged in education, service and pastoral care ministries?
2. What are ministry situations where DMs would be well suited?
3. Why does the United Church have DMs?

Handout the **Frequently Asked Questions about Diaconal Ministry** after this section of the programme

5 Reflection & Transition to Action: (to identify learnings and what to do now)

- Handout the Individual Response Sheets and ask participants to answer them.
  -Ask if anyone has any particular learning (#3) they feel would be helpful for the group to know or suggestion for future group work (#5)
- Record these on flipchart
- Discuss what can be done individually or in the committee to act on any learnings or address topics for their future committee work.

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5 Closing:(to summarize the whole experience in symbolic act)

- Read together the statement of Belief adopted in 1992 by *Diakonia* of The United Church of Canada.

10 Evaluation:(to get reactions to the workshop and suggestions for changes)

- Write the questions on a flipchart and introduce them to the group.

1. Did this session meet its purposes?
2. Has anything you learned or re-learned in this session affected the way you feel your committee should do its work in the future? If so, what? If no, why not?
3. Would you recommend this type of session to other Presbytery Pastoral Relations and Education and Students Committees? Why? and Why not?
4. What suggestions do you have to improve this session for its future use with a similar group as yours?
5. How important is it for Presbytery Pastoral Relations and Education and Students Committees to provide opportunities for education on this topic?

1	2	3	4	5
not very				vital

6. Are there other groups you could suggest who should be contacted to see if they would like such an orientation session for their group?

- Address each question and record the comments on flipchart or ask a participant to record on a separate sheet.
- Collect the Individual Response Sheets
- Thank the group for its participation and say good-byes.

Appendix vi. Individual Response Sheets (Sample used with Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committees)

The Pastoral Relations Process and Diaconal Ministry
An Orientation Programme for Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committees

1. What was the best part of the session?

2. What was the worst part of the session?

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3. What did you learn or re-learn about diaconal ministry in this session?

4. Were your personal learnings of diaconal ministry substantial or insignificant?

1	2	3	4	5
insignificant				substantial

Reasons for your answer:

5. Has anything you learned or re-learned in this session affected the way you feel your committee should do its work in the future? If so, how? If no, why not?

Appendix vii. Frequently Asked Questions

This appendix has been revised to correct some factual misinformation contained in the original document distributed in the project.

Frequently Asked Questions about Diaconal Ministry

1. *Do Diaconal Ministers receive as high a quality of education as Ordained Ministers?*

Diaconal Ministers receive 3 to 5 years of theological education from the Centre for Christian Studies, or if a native candidate from one of the two native training schools. A prerequisite for entrance is usually an undergraduate degree or being accepted as a mature student. The number of years of education/training is therefore almost the same as Ordained Ministers, who receive 3 to 4 years of theological education after receiving an undergraduate degree or being accepted into the Short Course if over 35 years of age.

The United Church Manual (730-732) states that candidates for diaconal ministry studies must include: **Christian education**--educational theory, and leadership development; **pastoral care**--personal and social; **social ministry**--social analysis and contextual theologies; **biblical studies, theology, ethics, church history; church polity and administration; diaconal history and diaconal vocational identity; and Christian worship**--including sacraments and preaching. It includes 2 terms of **field education** in each of a congregational setting and a social ministry setting. The **method of education is to model diaconal ministry** and therefore, stresses the integration of academic studies, field education and learning in community.

For the candidates for ordained ministry the Manual states their studies must include:

biblical studies--including their critical interpretation; **theology**--historical and current; **Christian ethics and church in society; church history**--including Canadian; **mission, ecumenics, and culture; religious pluralism**--including the social dimensions of religion and world religions; **theology and practice of ministry**--including preaching, pastoral care, Christian worship, Christian education, leadership, personal and pastoral identity; **field education; and church polity and administration.** The **method of education** can be lecture, seminar or tutorial as determined by the college. **Candidates must complete a programme of supervised internship**.

Comparing these two study programmes it is not accurate to say that the quality is higher or lower, but different.

A short answer is that the quality of education of Diaconal Ministers and Ordained Ministers is much the same, but each is geared to the type of ministry that is expected of the Diaconal or Ordained Minister in their respective ministries.

2. *Do Diaconal Ministers preach or only teach?*

Diaconal Ministers are called upon to preach in most ministries. If they serve a pastoral charge by themselves, they preach regularly. If they are in a team relationship in a pastoral charge, they usually preach on a regular basis (50% or less). If they are in a social ministry they preach when it is part of their ministry, i.e. as an outreach ministry of a pastoral charge, or when interpreting their ministry as a guest preacher. In order to be adequate in their preaching they receive some training in their course of studies.

However, teaching or education is a primary focus of diaconal ministry and therefore, they are better trained in education than preaching. Many Diaconal Ministers are intentional in bringing their commitment to education into their leadership of worship and preaching and include educational goals and an attitude of worship.

A short answer is that Diaconal Ministers primarily teach, but can preach as well.

3. *Do Diaconal Ministers need to work with an ordained minister?*

Diaconal Ministers are expected to work with colleagues in designated ministry or by themselves. Often because of the complimentary types of ministry, Diaconal Ministers work with Ordained Ministers in a pastoral charge, but this is not a requirement. Diaconal Ministers called to a pastoral relationship are not supervised by a presbytery appointed supervisor. (Manual 120-128)

A short answer is that Diaconal Ministers are trained to work with other ministry personnel and lay people, but they also are able to work as the only ministry personnel in a pastoral charge.

4. *Can Diaconal Ministers celebrate the sacraments or conduct weddings and funerals*?

In 1982 the General Council gave the authority to Conference to licence Diaconal Ministers to administer the sacraments of baptism and communion [Manual 427.1(b)]. The pastoral charge takes the initiative, seeks agreement from presbytery and conference may grant this if the following criteria are met:

1. the Diaconal Minister is part of a team where the administration of the sacraments is seen as part of the shared function of the team; or
2. the Diaconal Minister is the only member of the Order of Ministry on the Pastoral Charge; or
3. the Diaconal Minister is involved in pastoral care functions such as chaplaincy in hospitals or other institutions or visitations of shut-ins; or
4. the position description and needs of the context in some other way are deemed to warrant it.

The difference between Ordained Ministers and Diaconal Ministers in this regard is that the Diaconal Minister's licence is granted with a specified assignment for the duration of the appointment. The Ordained Minister to whom the administration of the sacraments is primary, are granted the licence at their ordination and lasts for their life time.

Licencing for weddings is a provincial government concern with each denomination determining who they feel should be so licenced. United Church conferences usually treat a request for a Diaconal Minister seeking this licence by applying the same criteria as above.

There is no licence to conduct funerals and Diaconal Ministers regularly take leadership in funerals and memorial services.

A short answer is that Diaconal Ministers can usually administer the sacraments and perform weddings, if the pastoral charge/chaplaincy requests it of presbytery because it is part of the position description.

5. *Do Diaconal Ministers have as much authority in the courts of the church as Ordained Ministers?*

Since 1964 Diaconal Ministers, at the time called Deaconesses, have been members of the presbytery and in 1982 General Council determined that Diaconal Ministers and Ordained Ministers were both members of the Order on Ministry. (Manual 6.1)

A short answer is that Diaconal Ministers and Ordained Ministers have the same responsibilities, rights and accountability to Session(Unified Board or Council), Presbytery, Conference and General Council.

6. *Do Diaconal Ministers need to go back to school to get more education in order to be as well trained as Ordained Ministers?*

As noted in the response to Myth #1, the difference in education is in style and focus not in quality or length of study. It is true that Diaconal Ministers would need more education in order adequately prepare for ordination. It is also true that Ordained Ministers would need more education in order to adequately prepared for diaconal ministry. (Manual 029)

A short answer is that both groups of ministerial personnel would need to take further education in order to enter the other form of ministry.

7. *Are Diaconal Ministers primarily women, because men are better at preaching and women are better at teaching?*

The origins of the gender separation between Diaconal Ministers and Ordained Ministers is that for many years women were encouraged to enter Diaconal Ministry and men were encouraged to enter Ordained Ministry. This was subtle on occasions and sometimes explicit. Men were not allowed in Diaconal Ministry until 1962. The first man to graduate and become Certified Employed Churchman was Don Reid, of Falmouth, Nova Scotia.

Now approximately 50% of those entering Ordained Ministry are women, but less than 10% of those entering Diaconal Ministry are men. Although women are now actively encouraged to enter Ordained Ministry, however most men are still encouraged to enter Ordained Ministry and not urged to explore Diaconal Ministry as a fulfilment of their call to ministry.

A short answer is that Diaconal Ministers are women because we are still living with the legacy of gender stereotyping with regard to the form of ordered ministry women and men are encouraged to explore.

8. *Does it matter whether a person is an Ordained or Diaconal Minister? Isn't finding a match for a pastoral relationship just a matter of personal fit?*

Finding the right fit between the minister and the pastoral charge is extremely important and a Joint Search Committee needs to be as free and resourceful as possible to identify the best person for the position. In the search process prior to selection it is important to have the best group of applicants from which to choose. Before categories of ministers assumed or names of particular ministers offered, it is important to look carefully at the position description and determine the skills, training and experience that are required.

Often position descriptions are not written in the language that correspond to that used in the general definitions. When a position description says the work entails Christian Development, community outreach and visiting the sick, it is necessary to interpret this as education, service and pastoral care, and therefore, Diaconal Minister would probably be a good applicant.

Knowing that the church has trained personnel especially in the different areas of ministry and what each category of ministry generally has to offer, then the Joint Search Committee can search for applicants in that category. The search need not be limited to that category for there are individuals who are able to cross the general definition of Diaconal and Ordained Ministries, and therefore, would make valuable applicants.

A short answer is in searching for a good group of applicants from which to make a selection, it is important to know the areas of ministry in which both Diaconal and Ordained Ministers are educated and experienced, but finding the correct fit is still the determining factor.

9. *Do Diaconal Minsters have the depth of education or experience to handle a very difficult pastoral relationships where an Intentional Interim Minister may be appropriate?*

As noted in #1 through #6 the education, responsibilities and authority of Diaconal Ministers is similar to Ordained Ministers. In recent years as more Diaconal Ministers are settled and called to be the only ordered minister in a pastoral charge, it has been noted that Diaconal Ministers in general are particularly well trained for difficult situations. This would include situations that have recently been named as needing an Intentional Interim Minister. The reason for this is that a significant component of their training involves group needs assessment and the development of a learning community. Often two aspects of difficult situations that need to be addressed.

It needs to be said that although Diaconal Ministers in general are well suited for such difficult ministries, not all Diaconal Ministers would feel able to be minister in this type of pastoral relationship. One of the characteristics of difficult situations is tension and not all Diaconal Ministers would feel comfortable working in this environment for a sustained period. There are many Ordained Ministers who would shy away from such ministries as well. For those who feel called to this specialized area of ministry the church provides further in depth training that builds upon their previous education and experience.

A short answer is that the particular training and experience Diaconal Minsters have often makes them well suited for very difficult pastoral relationships or where an Intentional Interim Minister may be appropriate.

10. *Are all Diaconal Ministers very liberal in their theology, worship styles, etc. and therefore find it difficult to minister in a more traditional pastoral charge?*

Diaconal Ministers are as individually different as Ordained Ministers are--some are liberal, some are traditional, some are conservative and some are radical. There are many examples of Diaconal Ministers who have excellent pastoral relationships with pastoral charges that would consider themselves to be fairly traditional.

A short answer is that Diaconal Ministers are individuals who are committed in their faith and are able to minister in a wide variety of types of pastoral charges.

11. *If an inquirer is not sure what type of ministry he/she feels called to, is it a good option to suggest the diaconal ministry stream, because it does not take as much commitment as it does to go into Ordained Ministry?*

As noted in statements #1 to #6 some people still operate with the assumption that there is higher status and therefore a greater commitment of Ordained Ministers over Diaconal Ministers. The commitment required of both streams of ministry is very high, and this type of rationale for choosing Diaconal Ministry leads to frustration for the candidate, Education and Students Committees and theological colleges. It is important that the candidate and

Discernment Committee assist the inquirer to identify her/his gifts and sense of call.

A short answer is the commitment and degree of difficultly for both Ordained and Diaconal Ministers is comparable. It is important that Discernment and Education and Students Committees match the interests, training and experience of the inquirer with the proper area of ministry and the preparation programme for that ministry.

Appendix viii. Profiles of Diaconal Ministers

Profiles of Diaconal Ministers

Diaconal Ministers As the Only Ordered Minister in A Pastoral Charge

In recent years there have been more Diaconal Ministers who are called by a pastoral charge to work as its only ordered minister. The reasons for this are varied, but the ministry usually has one of two emphasis.

Gloria is carrying out the responsibilities that many would assume would fit the training and education of an ordained minister. Added to those regular duties she has a special emphasis on developing the leadership of the pastoral charge. For several years the church had been functioning well with a small group of committed leaders, but the health of some of these leaders and changes in the community have left the church with insufficient numbers of and inexperienced leaders. Gloria was asked to give a priority to developing the leadership skills of the laity in worship, a full range of educational programmes and the committees of the church. Gloria's training as a Diaconal Minister in education and leadership development, plus her general skills in the full range of pastoral responsibilities, made her a good fit for the ministry needing to done.

Roberta was looking for a challenging pastoral relationship that would use her skills in helping congregations face major changes in their ministry. East Trinity Pastoral Charge provides her with those challenges and supports in just that type of ministry. East Trinity is a pastoral charge with four congregations along different rural roads in communities that are declining in population. They were aware that they were also the nearest United Church ministry to a growing bedroom community. They were not sure if they wanted to or were able to offer ministry to these new neighbours. What they knew was something had to be done for their own sake and to meet the needs of the newcomers. The Joint Needs Assessment Committee had identified the needs very clearly, so when the Joint Search Committee was formed they knew they needed to find someone with the skills and commitment to do this task. Roberta's

application and interview indicated that she had both. Roberta now draws heavily on her Diaconal training in needs assessment to help the congregations determine what resources and needs they presently have. She also uses her experience building cooperative working groups to break down the barriers among the congregations and between them and their new neighbours.

Diaconal Ministers in Team Ministries

In the 1960's when there were many children and youth involved in Christian education programmes, congregations started hiring deaconesses to be coordinators of these programmes and to train their leadership. In the decades that followed there continues to be many Diaconal Ministers who have similar ministries, but now they often have added responsibilities for visiting and pastoral care and outreach into the community. Today the Diaconal Minister is often in a Team Ministry sharing equally the responsibility with one or more lay and Ordained ministers.

Gordon has been in this congregation for 6 years and as a member of 3 different teams. His major responsibilities still include the support and training related to the Christian development programmes, including the adult Bible study groups and confirmation class. However, after that his duties have changed with each new situation. In the first team there was a retired Ordained Minister who visited the shut-ins and sick on a part-time basis and an Ordained Minister who coordinated worship and many of the committees of the congregation. The first change came after his retired colleague fully retired. Gordon was asked to assume his responsibilities and give some of Christian development duties to a part-time Staff Associate. His training in pastoral care enabled him to do that and to train lay visitors in doing more of this ministry. Last summer he started his third team in this congregation, when a Ordained Minister joined the staff. Her strengths were in worship and pastoral care, so they agreed that she would take on the visiting and support of lay visitors and he would move into develop their outreach ministry in some areas that were identified in the latest needs assessment. He had not been very active in this area of ministry since he had come, so he had to reacquaint himself with his training in social ministry when he was a student at the Centre for Christian Studies.

St. Stephen’s congregation is growing very quickly in numbers, but there is a high turnover of leadership in this transient community. Janice has only been here for 3 years, but she is often seen as the one who has been around the longest. Her team has been consistent during that period and able to provide the stability the congregation needs. Her duties are combination of Christian development and the very active new members programme. Her role is to coordinate the welcome of new members and to develop and maintain an orientation for them to the congregation and the community. She has had to learn about the many services in the community for new immigrants, particularly for those who English as a second language instruction. She does not see her or her Ordained colleague’s responsibilities changing very quickly. They provide the continuity needed in a rapidly changing congregation.

Diaconal Ministers in Educational Centres and Administrative Ministries

The training Diaconal Ministers receive enables them to be quite versatile in the areas of ministry. Some are able to string a series of different ministries together and then serve the church in being a valuable resource to others. Ministry in the congregation is changing so quickly that lay and ordered ministers look to experienced colleagues for continuing education or for day to day support in their challenges. Diaconal Ministers move into these supportive roles fairly easily with their training in a leadership development. Diaconal Ministers are found working in Presbytery, Conference and General Council offices as well at educational centres for lay people and theological schools.

Jennifer has had a variety of ministries. After she was commissioned to Diaconal Ministry in 1978, she worked in a congregation with responsibilities for Christian Education and pastoral care. She worked in that congregation for many years and had involvement with every aspect of congregational life, from worship to stewardship. After that she worked in another congregation in what was called youth ministry, but it really expanded to include working with young adults. It also got her involved in the community, because the youths' and young adults' lives were so integrated into the neighbourhood. She was tired after that ministry of ten years and took time out to complete a Masters Degree of Adult Education before returning to active ministry. Now, she is responsible for programme development at the conference's lay training centre. She draws upon her experience of congregational life to develop programmes that try to meet the changing needs of the church. She has been asked to give particular attention to programmes for children, youth and young adults.

Martha also has been a Diaconal Minister for almost twenty years and had a variety of ministries. She worked for a women's community health centre when she was first commissioned. It was the first time the presbytery had recognized an ecumenically supported community ministry as a presbytery accountable ministry. When she left there she was replaced by a Roman Catholic sister who was also a social worker. Martha then went to work with a First Nations congregation in British Columbia. They were are struggling congregation with many social problems. She and a group of elders reintroduced some Aboriginal customs and teachings into their life as a community and church and they found it helped them address some of the social concerns. She left there to work in a congregation in rural Saskatchewan that used to have an adjoining native congregation, but she was disappointed that by the time she arrived the native community did not want much to do with the town congregation. Martha stayed in that congregation for eight more years sharing ministerial responsibilities with a neighbouring minister in another pastoral charge. They operated like a team, but were accountable to different pastoral charges. The two rural pastoral charges loved it, because when they needed it, they had the skills and training of a Diaconal and Ordained minister. Now, Martha works in London Conference office as the Conference minister responsible for outreach and rural ministries. Along with these programme responsibilities, she also administers the Mission Support grants within the Conference.

Maritime Pioneers in Diaconal Ministry

Diaconal Ministers have only used that name since 1982. Prior to that in the United Church of Canada they were referred to as deaconesses, certified churchmen and commissioned ministers. Along with work in congregational ministries, they served in outposts in Newfoundland, worked with overseas partner churches, welcomed immigrants to Canadian cities, and provided comfort to those in hospitals and jails. Their continuity with those presently in active Diaconal Ministry is direct. Jessie MacLeod and Don Reid are just two of many from Maritime Conference who have shown outstanding leadership in the diaconal community.

Jessie MacLeod had no idea her ministry would affect as many people as it has, when she began her work at Chalmers United in Ottawa in 1950. When she helped found the University of Religion for lay people in Ottawa little did she know that it would continue for nearly fifty years.

She probably did not expect that her influence would be felt on both the east and west coasts. In British Columbia she served with the Board of Christian Education and the Board of Women, where she helped develop volunteer leadership, the Conference United Church Women and with native communities. In 1970 she moved to the Sackville, New Brunswick as Associate Director of Student Affairs at Mount Allison University. Here she helped students in individual counselling, and assisted them in their house councils.

For those who know Jessie and her ministry, you will probably know of her work in the Division of Mission in Canada as Associate Secretary for Leadership Development and later as Deputy Secretary in the Office of Christian Development. Her ministry there began in 1974 in the midst of regionalisation with the development of Conference offices. Although her work was heavy in administration and supervision of staff, Jessie never relinquished her belief that lay people needed to be intimately involved in the leadership of the church.

Her next area of ministry took her again east, but to Halifax, where she was pastor in residence at the Atlantic School of Theology. What she had learned in working with Mount Allison University undergraduates came in handy in her chaplaincy with theology students and their families.

Prior to retirement in 1990 she returned to congregational ministry in Sydney, Nova Scotia, where she worked in a multiple staff ministry. There she supported Sunday School teachers and mid-week leaders, preached and gave leadership in worship, adult Christian Education, and performed pastoral responsibilities such as visiting, marriages, funerals and grief work.

The final story is of Don Reid, the first man to be designated as a Certified Churchman in 1963. Thankfully that bureaucratic handle did not last long, because they needed to find a name that was inclusive of both women and men in this ministry. Don was among several men who came to this ministry at this period through the instigation of the Board of Men.

Before Don was designated, he worked for two summers at Brunswick Street Mission in Halifax. For another year and a half after being designated he returned to the extensive outreach

programmes this congregation had in the inner city. There were summer camps for children who could not normally leave the city in the summer, along with more traditional services such as a clothing depot and emergency food assistance.

In 1965 Don moved to be director of the recently established Atlantic Christian Training Centre in Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia. These lay training centres were created to provide programmes in educational design, personal growth, and had an active winter course for young adults who wanted to explore their future from a faith perspective. Don stayed there until 1978 when he moved to Windsor, Nova Scotia to be Director of the Windsor Elms, a seniors residence with nursing care. He retired from this ministry in 1990, but is active in the diaconal community and as well as being a mentor to diaconal students.

Appendix ix. Statement of Belief

DIACONAL MINISTRY IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

"We are called with all God's people to
be responsible agents of creative transformation
support and caring
liberation and reconciliation
justice and mercy
inviting all into a pilgrimage of
dignity and well-being,
and a ministry of accompaniment.
And we are called with all God's people
into a life of discernment and risk.
Our roots are within the church's earliest traditions,
and we exist today within a world-wide
expression of diaconal ministry.
Diaconal ministry exists within the ministry
of the whole community and is the
responsibility of that community.
The primary task of diaconal ministry
is mutual empowerment
through education, service and pastoral care.
This includes working together
to maintain relationships that are life-giving
and sustaining of community

to meet immediate needs
and to work to create a just and loving world.
We offer an intentional commitment
to stand and be with others on the periphery.
Seeking to be faithful to the gospel,
diaconal ministry remains flexible and
responsive to the needs of the Church and the world,
wherever that may lead."

Statement of Belief adopted in 1992 *by Diakonia* of The United Church of Canada

Appendix x. Summary of Responses from Conference Personnel Ministers

Responses were sought and received from the following six conferences: Montreal& Ontario, Bay of Quinte, London, Manitoba & Northwestern Ontario, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia.

Overall Response to Project:

All the CPM were quite willing to be interviewed, offer their opinions and assess their knowledge of Diaconal Ministry(DM). On several questions they were clear that they were not in a position to know the information.

They all felt there was a lack of knowledge of DM in some of the committees with which they worked. They all felt there was a need for a programme or resources for these two committees, and that some regular orientation was needed. The type of and comprehensive nature of these resources needs to vary, because of the various contexts in which they would be used.

All except one felt they were familiar with DM (4 said they knew “a lot”, 1 fairly good and 1 comfortable with a few questions, because was still learning). None of these CPM were Diaconal Ministers. One was lay, the others were Ordained Minister(OM). However, using their answers to question #8, not all that said they knew “a lot” actually do. One person could not name two of the dimensions of DM. Three did not know that the Centre for Christian Studies (CCS) was the only institution for training Diaconal Ministers. Two thought all theological colleges offered programmes, such as Master in Religious Education. Apart from not knowing these technical aspects, the CPM were quite knowledgeable about what types of ministry Diaconal Ministers do and the skills they can offer the church. Some CPMs were more creative in gathering resource material on DM and the issues of ministry identity.

Details for each question

1. Familiarity with DM
   - 5 - yes
   - 1 - no, newly appointed

2. What committees do an orientation on varieties of ministries in United Church?

Presbytery E&S	2 yes
	1 - yes presbytery E&S chairs - not sure with whole committees
	1 yes in some, not sure about others
	1 theoretically, but don't really
	1 - not sure
Conference E&S	4 yes - (1 twice a year)
	1 ongoing, not intention or formal
	1 they are presently planning
Presbytery PR	1 some presbyteries when Diaconal Ministers are present or in relation to DM type of position
	1 yes, if needed
	1 CPM does with some presbyteries
	2 as part of training in new process, includes types of ministries
	1 no
Conference PR (or counterpart)	
	4 yes with Settlement, which meets twice a year
	2 no

3. Series of meetings for E&S
   - 3- presbytery does everything to prepare for 1 final interview with conference E&S
   - 3- presbytery prepares candidates for 2 interviews with E&S

4. (a) Conference or Presbytery who raise Transfer and Settlement issues
   - 2 - presbytery - at inquiry stage
   - 5 - presbytery E&S interviews

   (b) Particular questions for DM candidates
   - 3 - no
   - 3 - don't know

5. (a) Particular topics raised with a pastoral charge considering a call/appointment of Diaconal Minister
   - 3- not sure
   - 1 - what is the flavour of ministry they want - not necessarily using DM name

1 - depends on the presbytery, urging to look at all options
1 - yes, look at job description and skills needed

(b) Particular topics raised with Diaconal Minister seeking a call/appointment
1 - no
1 - possibly some negative questions, but unsure
1 - some students with regard to Transfer and Settlement options
1 - probably not. If so, would check out assumptions--do you want to do worship
1 - yes, what is your emphasis in ministry. Is education at the forefront or do you want to do Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care?
1 - yes, why are so many Diaconal Ministers the only minister in pastoral charge? Relatively few doing education and outreach; those positions are filled with Staff Associates

6. Level of knowledge of committees:
1 - all very familiar (1-most OM know)
2 - most are fairly familiar (1-most OM know)
3 - one or two members know (1-lots of misinformation)

7. Self-assessment of personal knowledge of DM:
4- a lot
1- fairly well
1 - comfortable with a few questions

8. What do you personally know about:
(a) 3 areas of ministry
1 - education and pastoral care
1 - education - teaching
4 - education, service and pastoral care
(b) training opportunities
1 - Centre for Christian Studies, St. Stephen's and MRE from another institution
3 - Centre for Christian Studies - regional programme
1 - Centre for Christian Studies & St. Stephen's
1- Centre for Christian Studies, St. Andrew's and other theological colleges e.g. Emmanuel
(c) types of ministry done by Diaconal Minister
1 - education, preaching & worship, pastoral care & outreach
2 - everything everyone else does, team ministry with word and sacraments
1- trained in all, called to education, outreach and pastoral care
1- music, curriculum development, Christian Education., youth & young adults, team ministry, and social ministry
1- education(adult, youth, confirmation and Christian Education), pastoral charge

(women's groups), social ministry (prepare people for educate people about social ministry, organize justice ministry)

(d) strengths of Diaconal Ministers

1- organizing people to service ministry, training people in leadership, education, adult and Christian Education.

1- passion for social justice, familiarity with education, well prepared

1 - less ego needs, creative, meet people where they are--not preachy, walk the talk, where the non-church is

1 - integrated style of training

1 - education and teaching - highly skilled in programming

1- training they bring to enable lay people

(e) limitations of Diaconal Ministers

2- lack of knowledge general laity have of DM (1- lots of assumptions)

1- see none, very prevalent in churches

1- not sure, more personal

1- some not able to lead worship, a hurdle--can they serve communion?

1 - will there be differences between graduates of CCS in Toronto and Winnipeg, ability to do pc

1- not for priestly role

9. Any resources you use:

1 "Ordered Ministry and Pastoral Identity" - John Young (30 pp), Creative Disorder - R. Osborne (1991)

1 Printed and photocopied material - Tapestry

1- MPE resources - clustering modules from CCS

1- CCS and MP&E materials

1- CCS, articles and pamphlets

1- no, newly appointed

10. Where you could go;

1- nothing specific, Candidature, Needs Assessment, Women in Ministry and CDM pamphlets

1- CCS, articles and pamphlets

2- CCS and MP&E materials

1 Printed and photocopied material - Tapestry

11. Worthwhile to produce something for an orientation:

1 - yes, there is a lack of information known

1- yes, need updates, presbytery E&S have difficulties with inquirers

PR - too many Staff Associates, not as open to Diaconal Ministers

1- yes, probably

3- yes, something

If yes what

1 - yes - pastoral relations resources, need for 4 types of ministry, add on to PR Handbook
1 - more pamphlets from CCS - Winnipeg
1 - DM and discernment
1 - not that extensive(20-30 minutes) to more extensive programmes
1 - a compact resource for introducing DM--Questions and Answers
1 - helpful for Conference Interview Board(lay People) they have little experience of DM

Appendix xi. Participant Questions Asked in Workshop with Maritime Conference Ministry Personnel and Education Committee

Questions about Diaconal Ministers:

- What are the educational requirements and prerequisites for Diaconal Ministers?
- Is diaconal ministry a ministry of education?
- What is the difference between Diaconal and Ordained. Ministers?
- What is the difference between Diaconal Ministers and Staff Associates?
- What gifts are needed for candidates for Diaconal Ministers?
- Do Diaconal Ministers learn about the sacraments?
- Are Diaconal Ministers normally in a team or solo?
- What are the challenges Diaconal Ministers encounter?
- Why don't we know who Diaconal Ministers really are?
- Why do we have Diaconal Ministers? Why not have everyone Ordained?
- Are there different specialities?
- Where is the church going with diaconal ministry?
- How do Ordained Ministers feel about Diaconal Ministers? Resentment?
- How do congregations perceive and receive Diaconal Ministers?
- What are some of the "obstacles" Diaconal Ministers might anticipate?
- What are some of the differences in training with regard to cost and time between Diaconal and Ordained Ministers?

Appendix xii. Overhead Sheets for Presentation

Page 1
Diaconal Ministry

A Presentation for Education and Students and Pastoral Relations Committees

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Based upon
"Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada"
Produced by the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education

Page 2
What is diaconal ministry? (pp. 2-5)

Ministry of education, service and pastoral care.

Ministry of Education
activities of education and educational perspective for all aspects of ministry

Ministry of Service
responding to the needs of Christian community and the world
diakonia - service
Jesus washing the feet of his disciples

Ministry of Pastoral Care
responding to individuals and communities in need of spiritual, emotional and physical care - addressing immediate circumstances and underlying causes of hurt

Page 3
What is diaconal ministry? (pp. 2-5)

Style and Vision:
- 3 functions are inseparable
- accompany, walk beside, share leadership, collaboration
- ministry belongs to all, not "owned" by Diaconal Ministers
- evolving sense of ministry - responsive to ever changing needs
- has a world-wide expression, community and reference point
- pioneers - creative edge, on the fringe of the church and community
- service is focussed on the poor and marginalized
- help the whole church move towards becoming "this creative edge"

Page 4
Roots of Diaconal Ministry (pp. 6-13)

Jesus - Model of Ministry
Ministry of Service
- washing his disciples feet
- empowerment of others

- vision of a new community - led by love and service

Early Church

New church embodied this in *diakonia*

- all were called
- women and men were both leaders

Offices of deacon, presbyters and bishop emerged

- deacons -- Phoebe and Stephen

Offices started to become hierarchical and not interchangeable. Reasons:

- loss of vision of new community
- prevailing social norms

By 600 A.D. diaconate begins to disappear

By 700 entirely gone in western world

Page 5
Roots of Diaconal Ministry (pp. 6-13)

European Revival

1800s - Belgium, Holland, France and Germany

Reasons: - services needed for those suffering from the Industrial Revolution
- women wanted significant leadership in the church

1836 - Germany - Kaiserworth Mother House

- nursing, teaching and social work - sisters

1861 - Great Britain - Wesleyan Deaconess Order

- an association of independent women
- congregational ministry - teaching, evangelism
- inner city - social workers

Page 6
United Church of Canada (pp. 11-14)

1890s - Methodist and Presbyterian Orders formed

1925 - Union - joined the Orders and formed one raining school

- United Church Training Centre - Covenant College - now the Centre for Christian Studies

1930s - 1960s - diaconal ministry and women's ministry seen as synonymous

1965 - first man - Don Reid - Certified Employed Churchman

1980 - one order of ministry- two streams

- commissioned to ministry of education, service and pastoral care
- ordained to ministry of word, sacrament and pastoral care

1982 - Diaconal Minister -- formerly called: deaconess, certified employed churchman, and commissioned minister

Page 7
Educational Preparation (pp. 5-6)

Pedagogy or Methodology:
- must consistent with the integrative emphasis of diaconal ministry
- action/reflection - adult education principles
- academics and practical work are done concurrently

Educational content
- outlined in Manual

Practical Experience
- congregation and community ministries
- planning programmes based assessment of needs and resources

Learning in Community
- collaboration is preparation for shared leadership and team ministry

Centre for Christian Studies - Winnipeg, Man.
3 year residential
5 year regional
Francis Sandy Theological Centre, Paris, Ont.
Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Resource Centre, Beausejour, Man.

Page 8
Designated Ministries
The United Church Of Canada

Designated Ministry	Ministry of Education, Service and Pastoral Care	Ministry of Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care
Lay Ministry	Staff Associate	Lay Pastoral Minister
Order of Ministry	Diaconal Minister	Ordained Minister

Appendix xiii. Interim Report to Committee on Diaconal Ministry

The work on this project has been on pause since I returned to work last spring. Up to that point I had: conducted an assessment of several Conferences' practises of the E&S, Pastoral

Relations and Settlement Committees; completed two workshops with Presbytery E&S and Pastoral Relations Committees; and have been regular contact with the Ministry Support and Development Committee in Maritime Conference.

I still had to complete one more Presbytery E&S Committee workshop. The workshop that was planned before the end of my extended study leave was cancelled because the presbytery was not interested in a workshop for their committee, but was willing to invite me to give a presentation to the whole presbytery. I declined this invitation because this constituency was not the focus of my thesis.

In the fall I was able to be in touch with a different presbytery E&S Committee and it is considering inviting me to a future meeting for a 2 hour workshop. I also have scheduled a workshop with the Conference E&S Committee in the winter, but this will not necessarily be part of the thesis project.

Preliminary Learnings

The assessment of the E&S, Pastoral Relations, and Settlement Committees was done through the conference personnel minister (CPM), by telephone after Maritime Conference Personnel Minister introduce me by E-mail. I talked with six CPMs. A summary of their response follows.

> *All the CPM were quite willing to be interviewed, offer their opinions and assess their knowledge of DM. On several questions they were clear that they were not in a position to know the information.*
>
> *They all felt there was a lack of knowledge of DM in some of the committees with which they worked. They all felt there was a need for a programme or resources for these two committees, and that some regular orientation was needed. The type of and comprehensive nature of these resources needs to vary, because of the various contexts in which they would be used.*
>
> *All except one felt they were familiar with DM (4 said they knew "a lot", 1 fairly good and 1 comfortable with a few questions, because was still learning). None of these CPM were DM. One was lay, the others were OM. However, using their answers to question #8, not all that said they knew "a lot" actually do. One person could not name two of the dimensions of DM. Three did not know CCS was the only institution for training DM. Two thought all theological colleges offered programmes, such as MRE. Apart from not knowing these technical aspects, the CPM were quite knowledgeable about what types of ministry DM do and the skills they can offer the church. Some CPMs were more creative than others in gathering resource material on DM and the issues of ministry identity.*

I did 2 Presbytery workshops with E&S and Pastoral Relations Committees. The workshop took about 2 hours and had the following purposes:

> *To become more familiar with DM with regard to our committee's work.*

To clarify that Diaconal Ministry is complementary with other types of ministry, such as Ordained Ministry, Staff Associates and Lay Pastoral Ministers, and not in opposition with these other designated ministries.

I used the first two resources listed below that were already available. The other resources used I prepared:

- *DUCC's Statement of Belief* adopted in 1992
- *Diaconal Ministry in the United Church of Canada* booklet
- Overheads to introduce the information from this booklet
- *Profiles of Diaconal Ministers*
- *Frequently Asked Questions about Diaconal Ministry*
- *Individual Response Sheet* which asked for statements of learning & evaluation

In general the responses were positive to the workshops and most felt they learned a lot about Diaconal Ministry. Many of them expressed the opinion that they wished they known the information before they had to work with a particular pastoral charge or discernment committee. I have not summarized the results of the presbytery workshops, but will do so when I finish the last E&S workshop.

Summary

The general learning is that there is great lack of knowledge with diaconal ministry and the policies and practices related to candidacy and settlement of DM. There was a general openness to learn more about this ministry and related policy, but their education often happening without any direct experience with Diaconal Ministry. Therefore, a educational programme for theser groups has to involve stories, profiles and anecdotes to make it real for the participants. This may mean that such a programme may best include video resources where local personnel cannot do this easily.

My intention is to finish the project and the thesis by June 2000.

Prepared for Committee on Diaconal Ministry, October 28-31, 1999.

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