

Regular Mentoring Sessions Related to the Pastoral Care Ministry Year

As indicated in the introduction to the mentoring process, while we have suggested an order for these sessions, please determine what approach will work most effectively in your context. From time to time, you may want to focus on a particular session that addresses an issue that has emerged in the field placement. Re-arranging the order of the sessions will not be detrimental to the process. Please do not feel limited by the resources; they are offered to support the mentoring process. At each session it will be important to spend time discussing the spiritual dimensions of the student's journey in ministry.

Session 1: Sharing Learning Goals

Discuss the student's goals for the field placement. (These will have been determined in consultation with CCS Staff and the Learning Facilitator for the placement.)

- Work together to determine your goals, as student and mentor, for the mentoring process. The guidelines for writing learning goals may be helpful in this work. The goals for the mentor need to be related to the role of the mentor and to fostering the mentoring relationship. The mentor may have some learning goals of her/his own related to the Pastoral Care Year that may be appropriate to share with the student.
- Talk together about the student's overall goals for the ministry preparation program.
- Explore more thoroughly the student's hopes and fears related to this Pastoral Care Year field placement.

Session 2: Faith Life Journey related to Pastoral Care

You will need to do some preparation for this session. You may want to draw a graph or a map or various symbols of your life experience in relation to a variety of pastoral care experiences. You might also consider bringing pictures or symbols that relate to significant times of feeling God's presence or sensing God's absence in these experiences.

- Try to create an atmosphere that is relaxed and comfortable. Allow a generous amount of time for each of you to tell the story of your faith from a pastoral care perspective. In what ways has your faith been influenced by learning and education over the years? What images of God have been strongest for you at different points in your life? How have your life experiences shaped your faith?
- Share these experiences and identify the gifts and dilemmas these stories present for you.
- Discuss the significance of pastoral care in ministry. Where and when and from whom have you experienced pastoral care? How has this affected you? What has it taught you about the nature of pastoral care? about the connections between pastoral care and educational ministry? about the connections between pastoral care and social transformation?
- Consider the implications for ministry of a commitment to pastoral care being a key element of vocational identity.

Session 3: Exploration of Gifts for Pastoral Care

- Begin to identify some of the gifts and skills needed for effective pastoral care. Explore together both the practical and theological aspects of pastoral care.
- Identify the experiences that have helped you to recognize your gifts for pastoral care.
- Name some of your gifts. How do you see your gifts enabling you in the work of pastoral care in your current field situation?
- In what ways does pastoral care require gifts or skills in areas in which you do not feel confident? How might you grow in areas of ministry for which need to enhance your gifts/strengthen your skills?

Meeting Prior to Mid-term Review

At the meeting just prior to the mid-year review in January, in addition to the regular agenda items please spend some time reflecting on the questions for the review. This will ensure that feedback is offered on an on-going basis and that there are no surprises for the student.

Session 4: The Place of Pastoral Care in the Work of Diaconal Ministry

- Articulate the convictions you bring about pastoral care. How would you define pastoral care? How would you explain it to children? to youth? to adults?
- For whom do you believe pastoral care is intended? What do you think is the place of pastoral care in the life and work of the church? in congregational ministry? in institutional ministry? in ministry in the community?
- How would you talk about the social justice aspects of pastoral care?
- How would you talk about the educational aspects of pastoral care?
- In what ways are educational ministry, pastoral care ministry and social justice ministry the same? In what ways are they different?
- Where does pastoral care fit within the scope of diaconal ministry?
- How does being grounded in diaconal ministry influence the way in which you approach pastoral care?

Session 5: Historical Connections - Overview

("The History of Diaconal Ministry" by Mary Anne MacFarlane, Carol Stevenson Sellar and Dawn Wood, Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, The United Church of Canada, 1987)

Note: If you have already done this session in a previous theme year, you do not need to repeat it.

However, if the mentoring relationship is new, it might be helpful to work through this session again.

- Share your response to the article.
- Identify some of the surprises in the article and questions that have been raised for you.
- Name some of the patterns in the history of diakonia -the challenges and the opportunities
- Determine what aspects of diaconal history you need and want to explore in more depth.
- Discuss how the history of diakonia affects your understanding of your ministry and place in diaconal ministry.

Session 6: Historical Connections - The Medieval Period

pages 72 - 96 of Chapter 2 "Constantine to Luther: The Fourth to the Fifteenth Centuries" from One Ministry Many Roles - Deacons and Deaconesses through the Centuries. Jeannine E. Olson. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO. 1992

- Discuss how what was happening in the church and in the world at this time influenced the ways in which various expressions of diaconal ministry were shaped?
- Which aspects of the history of diaconal ministry in the church in this period excite, challenge, discourage you?
- Indicate similarities and differences between diaconal ministry in this time and in the church today.
- Discuss your understanding of how the concepts of mercy and charity have endured/changed and how these concepts related to diaconal ministry then and now.
- In what ways does the concept of diaconate as a "stepping-stone to the priesthood" (page 81) affect the understanding of diaconal ministry today in the Anglican and United Churches?
- Discuss the possibilities for sharing this history in your field placement and/or Diocesan/Presbytery groups. What would be the benefits in sharing this history in interpreting a vision of diaconal ministry?

Session 7: Historical Connections - The Beguines and the Beghards

i) *Beguines and Beghards* - entry from *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. II. Robert Appleton Company, 1907. Online Edition copyright 1999 by Kevin Knight. Imprimatur +John M. Farley, Archbishop of New York.

ii) "The Beguines: Feminine Piety Derailed" from *Spirituality Today*, Spring 1991, Vol. 43 No. 1

- What parallels do you see between the Beguines and the Beghards and diaconal ministry today?
- What contributions did the Beguines and the beghards make to their society?
- In what ways did the beguines pose a threat to the institutional church of their day? What connection do you feel with their commitments?
- What contributed to the demise of the movement of beguines? What, if any, connection do you see between those pressures and the pressures experienced by diaconal ministry today?
- What is the spiritual legacy of the beguines?
- Many of the beguines were viewed as heretics. What is your response to this designation? How do you understand heresy? In what ways might aspects of your theology be viewed as heretical by some within the church? In what ways does being part of a history of such accusations affect you?
- In what ways does the place of the beguines and the beghards in diaconal history affect the image and understanding of diaconal ministry in the church today?

Session 8: The United Church of Canada 1982 - A Turning Point

Chapter 5 "1982 - 1989" in *History of Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada 1925 - 1991*. Produced by the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, The United Church of Canada, 1991.

- What does this chapter reflect about the importance of naming, particularly for marginalized groups?
- In what ways did commitment to those within the diaconal network/community and commitment to the work of what we understand as diaconal ministry affect the way that the decisions were made and the outcome of the decisions?
- What do you believe was the immediate and enduring impact of the 1982 consultation?
- What is the importance of having:
 - an official representative voice within structures?
 - an organizational base for groups that are marginalized within a larger group?
- What do you understand to be the purpose of diaconal ministry today? What images of diaconal ministry are important for you?

Session 8 (or separate): Final session of closure for the year

This session might be a part of the previous session or could be a special session of sharing time together over a meal as you debrief from the year's experience of your time together as mentor and student. In addition to the regular agenda items, please reflect together on the questions for the student's final assessment (see pages 52-56).

- What things have you appreciated about your time together this past year?
- What might you like to see done differently another year both in terms of the actual sessions you had together, and the resource and outline for the sessions?
- What have been some of your learning this past year in terms of pastoral care?
- Reflect together on aspects of your spiritual life during the past year. In what ways do you need to be attentive to your spiritual well-being in the coming year?
- What would be the advantages of continuing to work together for the coming year? the disadvantages?