

Tapestry

Summer 2008

Proclaiming and celebrating the work of the CCS community through the stories of those who are involved in the ministry of diakonia

A Principal Reflection

by Caryn Douglas CCS89



*Audrey Cornell (U52), Eric Tusz-King (CCS78), Mary MacDougall (U45), Caryn and Lori Crocker (CCS80)
– New Brunswick grads in Fall '03.*

At least half of the people responding to news that I was leaving CCS have exclaimed about my retirement. "So, what are your retirement plans?" has been a frequently asked question. Not yet 50 years old, and in no economic state to retire from an income, I have heartily, but maybe not pastorally, responded, "I am NOT retiring" followed by a question of my own, "Do I look that old?" Feeling like I must look older than I feel, a few weeks after the news was out I dyed my hair!

I have been reflecting on why it is that people think I'm retiring. Perhaps it is because I have not paired my resignation with an announcement of a new job. It isn't very common in the church these days that ministry personnel finish a call before having found a new one. A few people have told me that I am courageous, several that I am a fool. What I know is that my capacity to embody the call to CCS has come to an end. I don't know that this is the same thing as my call coming to an end.

Have people concluded I am retiring "because what else could there be to do after CCS?" Is this the pinnacle of my ministry career, I have wondered. Am I like Moses, taken to the edge of the valley to oversee the Promised Land, passing on the leadership to others, given a seat of honour for past achievements as the future unfolds anew? Way too dramatic an analogy, but perhaps it offers some revelation. Unlike Moses, I have not just glimpsed the Promised Land, I've been a guest in its midst. I have given CCS much energy and passion for over 10 years, beginning with work I did on relocation in 1997. I was captured by the vision the community had for CCS as it was being reinvented through the move to Winnipeg. I felt a strong call to facilitate a movement, a national community of grads, friends, supporters, who would manifest the mission of CCS throughout the country, even abroad. There were moments when I felt we were wandering in the desert without a good

Continued on page 2

Centre for Christian Studies

a theological school committed to educational, pastoral and social ministry

A Principal Reflection...continued



map, and there were times when I was participating in the whining about this journey being too tough. I can honestly say, there was never a time when I didn't believe in the vision, largely because while it is still yet to come, it is already here. I may be stepping aside from a leadership role, but my commitment to the vision is too great to

pitch my tent on this side of the Jordan. I have not only glimpsed the Promised Land, I have savored it, and I'm still in for the journey.

At times, I have been embarrassed, even uncomfortable, by the attention being paid to me. In my intellect I can understand it, but my ego, driven by a penchant for "never good enough" wishes it would go away. Also troubled is my spirit, which is holding up a mirror, and singing from my soul, "Look to yourselves!" Anything accomplished in my time has only come about because it was a community effort. It is the brilliant ideas of colleagues, the deep wisdom of Council chairs, the telling narratives of graduates, the tender transformation of students

and the unknowing mystery of godding through it all that has brought us to this place and time. I can never express adequately my gratitude to the people among whom I've been privileged to work.

My plans for what is next are vague. This comes as a surprise to anyone who knows that I usually have myself and half the world organized ahead of time. I hope for some restoration and I want to finish my Doctor of Ministry program. I am also hoping to find some contract work to help pay the bills. Not so vague is the key plan, that of listening and waiting for the next call.

Caryn Douglas has been Principal of CCS from 1998-2008. Participating in the vision of CCS as a community has been a highlight of her ministry.

Caryn's history with CCS

Began diploma studies 1986

Residence Assistant at 77 Charles 1986-1988

Teaching Assistant 1988

Graduated 1989

Con Ed and Diploma Contract Teaching 1989-91

Student Mentor 1994-96

Relocation Feasibility Study 1997

LDM Contract staff 1998

Coordinator 1998

Interim Principal then Principal 1999

ATTENTION TAPESTRY READERS:

CCS is inviting you to consider receiving Tapestry online so we may begin to reduce our ecological footprint. Besides the ecological benefits to receiving your Tapestry online, the pictures are in full colour and each issue can easily be forwarded to friends, family and colleagues who may be interested in one or more the articles contained in each issue!

We recognize that e-mail is not everyone's preferred method of receiving information. So...please remember this is an invitation. If you still prefer to receive a hardcopy of Tapestry, please contact **Juanita MacKinnon-Smith** at 204-783-4490 or jmackinnon-smith@ccsonline.ca and we will accommodate your request.

In the next issue of Tapestry, please look for an article on the ecological impact of our newsletter in its current printed form.



Grads, staff and LDM 2008 students represent CCS at Winnipeg's Pride Parade June 2008



Cathy Gordon and WFBDP grads Anne Duncan, Yvonne Naismith and Irene Rainey imagined and stitched the quilted wall hanging, unveiled at this year's ASC.



A Graduation Celebration!

by CCS Staff

Even the best-laid plans can sometimes go astray. Such was the case for the 2008 Annual Service of Celebration when the wonders of technology confounded the 'hobby techies' on hand. After a thirty minute delay, the service was up and running.

CCS is pleased to celebrate with the 2008 graduating class-Tracy Fairfield (Ottawa, ON); Marilyn Shaw (Kitchener, ON); Keith Simmonds (Castelgar, BC); and Kathy Douglas (who currently lives in Winnipeg, MB but has a strong sense of home in Mitchell, ON).

Kathy, Keith, Marilyn and Tracy's journeys in ministry have included leadership experience in: rural, small town, and urban congregations, youth ministry, correctional service facilities, food security work, outreach and social programming projects, and community ministry; and whose Global Perspectives experiences have seen them journey from their respective homes to northern Manitoba, Mexico, and India.

This group of students has struggled, discussed, researched, written, sung, laughed, cried, and prayed about the church and the world and their places in both, and they have worked with others to discern how best to live out their sense of call.

Collectively, they named as core beliefs the responsibility to live respectfully in Creation, to build communities of safety and care, to dismantle structures and belief systems that divide, and that privilege some at the expense of others.



*clockwise from top: Marilyn, Keith, Kathy, Tracy...
"a sense of call to justice-making"*

Each named their sense of call to justice-making and their call to compassionate response to the brokenness in and of the world – be that individual suffering or alienation or be it systemic oppression.

As a learning community, they have demonstrated diligence, determination, patience, good humour, insight, care, and openness. They have developed a deep respect and gratitude for the community of diakonia in which they have become grounded. This is a community that believes strongly that the presence of Jesus is made known, that God is revealed, in the breaking of bread with the stranger welcomed into community and offered hospitality and that God-given resources are to be shared equitably with all.

Tracy, Marilyn, Keith, and Kathy will contribute strength, insight, grace, and passion to the ministry of diakonia. It has been a gift to journey with them and we are honoured to commend them to a ministry of education, service and pastoral care within The United Church of Canada.

Settlements for 2008 graduates of CCS: Marilyn Shaw to Community Ministry in Kitchener, ON; Tracy Fairfield to team ministry at St. Paul's UC, a single point charge in Kindersley, SK; Kathy Douglas to Huron-Perth Presbytery as a Presbytery Youth Minister. After four years of full-time studies combined with full-time employment, Keith Simmonds has opted to enjoy more time with his family and defer settlement for one year.



a pin for friends of CCS

We are pleased to offer CCS pins to those who wish to have a symbol of their connection to the school. Pins are in a spiral design with our "dancing people" logo and are made from sterling silver. There are two designs - one for graduates and the other for friends. The cost is \$35 plus \$3 shipping.

Please contact Cathie at clement@ccsonline.ca or 783-4490 or simply send a cheque if you wish to order a pin. Please indicate in your correspondence which design you would like.



2008 Companions of the Centre

by CCS Staff

Ken DeLisle

On April 6 2008, CCS announced Companion of the Centre awards to Ken DeLisle (WFBDP) and Shelley Finson (U54).

Ken is a graduate of the Western Field Based Diaconal Program (WFBDP). He has embodied pastoral presence, courage, loyalty, creativity, organization and laughter throughout his life. As dramatist, minister, administrator, advocate and foster parent he has shared his spirit of dedication and commitment, his vision of equality and right relationship.

Ken's educational background includes a B.A. in Political Science, and an MA in International Affairs. In 1989 Ken began preparation for ministry as a Diaconal Minister, completing his studies in 1999 with a Masters in Theological Studies in Diaconal Ministry. Upon commissioning in 1994, he was settled to ministry with the Winnipeg Church of the Deaf and committed to learn American Sign Language in order to communicate with his congregation! A delegation from the Deaf community honoured Ken by attending the Annual Service of Celebration.

In response to the award, Ken said, "*You call me a companion but a companion doesn't work alone, cannot work alone. Everyone I have encountered in my work is a companion to me, and shares in this honour. How many companions can a companion companion if a companion can companion companions? That is not easy to say or to sign or to answer!*"

Ken named four companions who have influenced his journey: John Robertson his spouse and soul mate who challenges and supports him and shares in the risk taking; Aileen Urquhart (WFBDP), a sister in spirit, who introduced him to the UCC and Diaconal Ministry; Betty Marlin (U61 and also a Companion of the Centre), Program Staff for the WFBDP who encouraged him to ask the hard questions about himself, and ministry; and Linda Koskie, a strong spiritual woman, who served as his mentor and teacher within the Deaf culture.

Ken went on to Rainbow Ministry, an outreach ministry of Winnipeg Presbytery that helps to create



Linda Koskie and Ken DeLisle – "Come with me – to a place of perfect harmony."

a bridge between the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two spirited and queer (LGBTQ) community of Winnipeg and the Church. This ministry serves as an advocacy group for its members as well as an educational resource for the Church at large. Following that, he served as the United Church Chaplain to the University of Manitoba. Ken's current ministry setting is at Selkirk – Cloverdale in Manitoba, which he will be leaving as of June 30th.

Since 1998, Ken has been actively involved as a volunteer with CCS having served on the Program Committee, the Volunteer Recruitment & Support Committee, and as co-chair of the Central Council. He also served as treasurer of Affirm United for nine years and was the first General Council Commissioner to declare his sexual orientation openly.

CCS wishes to thank Ken for his courage and loyalty, his creativity and laughter. We have been blessed by his spirit of dedication, determination, and commitment and his prophetic vision of equality and right relationship. It is an honour to recognize Ken as one of the 2008 Companions of the Centre.

CCS is working, through education and social integration, for the welcoming of and inclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons in the life and work of the church.



Living a theology of justice

Shelley Finson

When people first hinted about nominating Shelley Finson to be a Companion no one would have imagined we would be presenting this honour posthumously.

Shelley was born in England, spent her childhood years in Jamaica and came to Canada in 1956. She completed a BA at University of Waterloo and then became a student at Covenant College, in the joint Bachelor of Religious Education program with Emmanuel College. She was strong willed, high spirited, passionate, and perhaps even a little bit stubborn. She became part of a community of like-minded women in which she was held in love, a community which called forth the best in her. In 1965, she was designated a Deaconess by the United Church of Canada. She later earned a Master of Social Work at U of T and a DMin from Boston University and was awarded an honorary doctorate by United Theological College.

Fifteen years after graduation, Shelley returned to CCS as the Director of Field Education. She could be a formidable presence, a force with which to be reckoned... and yet, Shelley's capacity to be uncompromising did not mask the depth of her care, her ability to be present to the encounter with the pain and fear involved in taking oneself and one's world seriously, an encounter she demanded. She profoundly shaped the students she worked with, politicizing them as they learned skills for ministry. She went on to become Associate Professor in Pastoral Theology at the Atlantic School of Theology, a position she held until her retirement in 2001.

After her retirement Shelley again placed much of her energy in CCS as she became an active volunteer of the Program Committee where her skills in critical thinking, animation and educational assessment were deeply valued.

On February 9th, 2008, during a service of Thanksgiving for the life of Shelley Davis Finson, CCS Program Staff Ann Naylor spoke sharing her reflections: "Bernice Johnson Reagon wrote and sang with Sweet Honey in



Shelley Finson (U54) "One of the strongest leaves of our tree, one of the treasured teachers of our sound."

the Rock, these words... 'They are falling all around me, the strongest leaves in my tree. Every paper brings the news that the teachers of my sound are moving on.' Shelley Finson was indeed for many people connected with the Centre for Christian Studies one of the strongest leaves of our tree, one of the treasured teachers of our sound."

Shelley's partner, Diane Carter Tingley, wrote: "I rejoice that you have chosen to honour Shelley by including her among the Companions of the Centre. I remember well the delight that shone through her the day her Companion Pin arrived in the mail! I assured Shelley I would take care of her pin and, to that end, it is attached to another valuable item that belonged to this staunch feminist woman: fifty-two year old "Thread Bear" who now accompanies me as I make my way through the next leg of my life in Shelley's absence. With gratitude for what has been and with deep appreciation for the honour you have bestowed upon my beloved Shelley!"

A Call FOR NOMINATIONS for the 2009 Companion of the Centre Award

Do you know someone who is:

- A graduate who through her or his life and ministry, has brought distinction and honour to the Centre for Christian Studies and/or
- A member of the Centre for Christian Studies community (friends, volunteers, staff, students, so on) who has made a significant contribution to the work of the Centre and/or
- An individual in the wider community whose life and work epitomizes the ideals of the Centre

Nomination forms are available online by visiting our website www.ccsonline.ca

If you require further information, please contact

Cathie Clement at (204) 783-4490 or cclement@ccsonline.ca



Images of CCS

by Edith Shore A58

Weaving a Changing Tapestry, the history of CCS explores the many ways the school has shaped and been shaped by the church. In this excerpt from the manuscript by former Principal, Gwyn Griffith, a few of the images associated with the school are identified.



It used to be called the United Church Training School, and Toronto women who just couldn't get decent help used to call up and ask the Principal if she had any girls who were ready to go out and do housework. Church women, who knew better than that, called it the "Deaconess Home". Clergy, who should have known better than that, called it the Angel Factory, and those who saw its graduates as ideally trained to be ministers' wives called it the Clergy Reserve. (The United Church Observer, 1983)

Naming the school as "Centre" in 1970 was an intentional act, dissociating itself from House, Home, School, or College. Its purpose was to identify itself as a place where people came together to learn, incorporating head, heart and hand learning. The name also expressed an educational methodology where designated learners and teachers gathered to enable one another to learn. It also signaled that the institution was different from the colleges of the Toronto School of Theology.

There is a community spirit at the Centre, not often seen among faculty and students...In numerous ways, the Centre prepares students to work with people and not just with ideas. (The United Church Observer, 1983)

CCS at 77 Charles Street West (Toronto) was not only a centre for those learning and teaching there; it was a centre for the diaconal community and for the progressive and social justice community in the area surrounding Toronto. Ecumenical coalitions had many of their meetings and events there as did some secular justice groups. It was the centre for the Christian Feminist community.

Since 2000, those involved in CCS have struggled with

the ambiguity of the image of "Centre" for a place where people want to stand in solidarity with those on the margins. Difficulties have arisen with the concept of the administrative program offices being described as "the Centre" with other parts of the national network seen as being on the periphery. The term "CCS" is therefore being used more frequently.

Although the joking reference to CCS continued to be "the Angel Factory", increasingly in the 1970s and since, the label of feminism that was often used indicated the concern of many that CCS had become too radical. For the first years, there was ambivalence about owning the label; CCS did not name itself explicitly as a feminist institution until the early 1990s. Yet most, staff members especially, were very clear that they were feminists, and a plethora of feminist events were offered through the late 1970s and 1980s.

A primary image from the mid-1970s on was that of a spiral. The educational methodology that has shaped the program and experience of students was first envisioned as a spiral in 1975. Several of those interviewed identified "spiral" as their image of CCS, both when they were students and in the present.

An image that worked for me is a rainbow spiral...The colours aren't all present at the same time and aren't all moving, but they shift and change... Somewhere there has to be that first single stroke of new colour; it moves in a new direction and begins to change the former colour to a new colour. The colour left behind may still be present in many ways.... And there's a sparkling thread all the way through which is the Spirit lifting and moving the colours. (Laura Hunter, CCS04)

In the 2000s, graduates as well as persons who were named "Companion of the Centre for Christian Studies" receive a pin in the shape of a spiral.

Advanced copies of the book can be ordered using the coupon below. Launch events are being planned for early 2009. Watch for details!

Edith Shore is a frequent contributor to Tapestry and a former member of the editorial committee. She lives in Sutton West, Ontario.

Expected to be launched in late 2008.

History Book Goes on Sale!

Weaving a Changing Tapestry Pre-order Form

**ADVANCED SALE PRICE
ONLY \$22.00**

Name _____
 Address _____
 Phone _____

Postal Code _____
 Email _____

Advanced sale price of \$22.00: (plus GST of \$1.10, shipping will be extra and invoiced with delivery)
This is a \$3.00 (12%) saving over the full price of \$25.00!

Please send me _____ copy/copies at \$23.10 each = \$ _____

Anticipated Publication date is late 2008. Your receipt will accompany the book. Please make cheque payable to CCS.

OOPS!

During the mailing of the last issue of Tapestry the Spirit was alive and well at CCS. It wasn't until we began receiving phone calls from observant readers that we realized a technical glitch had occurred! Some of you received your copy of Tapestry bearing the correct address but the name of another recipient of the newsletter. To the best of our knowledge everyone did receive a copy. Thanks to all for your attention to detail!

Graduation Anniversaries

We're pleased to remember significant anniversaries for these Grads from CCS and its predecessors.

Grads of 1938	70th Anniversary	Lois Heritage	AWTC
Audrey Forster	AWTC	Ruth Jefferson	AWTC
Grads of 1948	60th Anniversary	Nancy Jenner	UCTS
Cellia Bennis	AWTC	Barbara Joiner	UCTS
Jean Macdonald	UCTS	June Lockhart	UCTS
Joan McDonald	UCTS	Gail Marshall	AWTC
Janet Randall	UCTS	Gertrude (McClintock) Sproule	AWTC
Alison Yoshioka	UCTS	Edna Meader	UCTS
Jean Angus	UCTS*	Violet Naylor	AWTC
Nina Josechko	UCTS*	Pam Niblock	AWTC
Velma Parker	UCTS*	Edith Shore	AWTC
Josephine MacKenzie	AWTC*	Gwen Shynkar	UCTS
Grads of 1958	50th Anniversary	Joyce Thomson	UCTS
Edith Bolton	UCTS*	Sally Whitney	AWTC
Barbara Bonnard	AWTC	Betty Wickham	AWTC
Margaret Carruthers	UCTS	Grads of 1983	25th Anniversary
Elinor Cox	UCTS	Janis Chapman	UCTS*
Grace Craig	UCTS	Pauline Graham	UCTS
Marion Current	UCTS	Lynda King	UCTS
Frances Evans	AWTC	Lillian Morrison	UCTS
Mae Gracey	UCTS	Jean Mosher	UCTS
Doris Grierson	UCTS	Heather Riedl	UCTS*
Audrey Hammond	UCTS	Debra Schweyer	UCTS
Joan Harding	UCTS	Alison Woods	UCTS

**indicates a Lost Grad*

Where Are They?

Sometimes we lose contact with grads. If you know the whereabouts of any of these women, please get in touch with CCS.

From A48
Josephine (Seabrook) MacKenzie

From U48
Nina Josechko
Velma Parker

From A58
Sally (Armstrong) Whitney
Margaret Morewood
Gertrude McClintock

From U83
Heather Riedl

Sturdy Hope

by Beth Kerr CCS02

"Sturdy Hope" was a continuing education program offered by CCS that explored connections between justice and spirituality. Of all the things we talked about, it is the course title, "Sturdy Hope", that has stayed with me. How do we nurture a hope that is sturdy enough for justice-making in our world?

When I look around, I see a lot of denial and cheap optimism. Many people have their heads in the sand, unaware of injustice. At times, I'm one of them. Fatigued by the demands that awareness places on my heart, sometimes I don't want to know how my clothes are made, where my food comes from, how much flying to visit family costs the environment, or who is hurting in my community or on the other side of the world. I can feel the pull of cheap optimism too. Simplistic solutions to complex problems appeal because they allow me to feel as though I am doing something at very little personal cost. When I buy fairer trade coffee is it a symbol of my will to participate in a change in the global economy so that farmers, all farmers, are paid a living wage, or is it a way to ease my conscience while not really changing much?

On the other hand, there is the temptation towards despair and paralysis. Awareness of the depth and complexity of the injustice in our communities and the world can be overwhelming. It can leave me feeling helpless and hopeless about the possibilities for change. While despair probably is a first-world luxury, it is one that I'm prone to from time to time. Further, despair can easily lead to paralysis. When I feel overwhelmed and discouraged by the problems of the world, I don't do much about them. After all, what difference does it really make in the grand scheme of things if I buy the more expensive washing machine because it uses less water and soap?

Nevertheless, the world needs neither denial nor despair. What the world needs is hope -- genuine, deep-rooted, sturdy hope. I wish I could say that "Sturdy Hope" provided a formula for sustaining hope in the struggle. There probably is no such formula. However, the retreat did remind me of some ways that my hope gets strengthened

My hope is strengthened through an intentional practice of gratitude. Sometimes I look around and see everything that is wrong. The problems are real and I don't want to ignore them. All the same, I also need to look for what is right. Whether it's a small plant growing in a crack in the pavement, or a simple act of kindness, or a stirring of growth in my own heart, I need to be attentive to the hopeful, the positive, the possible in the world. The problems are

real, but so too is an underlying abundance, the Spirit's overflowing generosity permeating all creation.

My hope is also strengthened by the practice of claiming space and time. We live in a culture which values busyness. I can easily get sucked into a rhythm of life



Sturdy Hope participants. Beth CCS02 middle row center; My courage to risk is strengthened by the knowledge that there are people who will catch me when I stumble.

which allows little time for reflection, for spiritual practice, for rest. I need to remember that sometimes faithfulness is not about doing more but about doing less with more integrity, thoughtfulness and depth. Staring out the window and watching the snow fall is not wasting time, it's claiming space for the Spirit.

Finally, the relationships in my life which go deep sustain my hope. I had the courage to ask for a change in pastoral relations in January without knowing where I was going because I believed it was the right thing to do and because I knew there were people in my life who would never see me homeless while they had a roof over their heads (and to whom I would offer the same). My courage to risk is strengthened by the knowledge that there are people who will catch me when I stumble.

Vaclav Havel wrote: "Hope is a state of mind, not of the world. Hope, in this deep and powerful sense, is not the same as joy that things are going well, or willingness to invest in enterprises that are obviously heading for success, but rather an ability to work for something because it is good." This is the sturdy hope I long for. This is the sturdy hope I glimpse. This is the sturdy hope that takes root in my soul from time to time.

Beth Kerr is a Diaconal Minister excited to be moving to Portage la Prairie where she will be serving in team ministry at Trinity United Church.

STAFF NOTE: *The Program Committee is currently reviewing the possibility of offering this program again in 2009. Check the Fall 08 issue of Tapestry for further updates.*



CCS Hosts A Retreat

by Gail Golding, Editor

In April, CCS hosted Images of Diaconal Ministry: A retreat day for the MNWO Diaconal Community, with CCS staff providing the leadership. Along with the scripture and prayers of the opening worship were a power point presentation on The Cloud of Witnesses; a reflection by participants on diaconal ministers who had mentored them; and Diaconal Saints, a song with words by Caryn Douglas "with a few phrases adapted from Kate Galea." Following worship participants were invited to visit a variety of interactive theme stations.

In addition to members of the Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario diaconal community, participants included several special visitors. For this article, I contacted two of them: David Giuliano, the Moderator of the United Church of Canada and Freda Alexander, a diaconal student from the Scottish Episcopal Church. David described the retreat as, "A great day." He expressed appreciation for the local Committee who planned his six day visit to MNWO Conference, that included a full day in retreat at CCS. Spending the day in reflection, and in the camaraderie of the CCS community was a nice change from the normal busyness of his schedule. This opportunity to reflect in community was a highlight.

When asked what stood out for him, David mentioned first the foot-washing station. It was a call to servanthood. Words read from John 13:4: "He removed his outer cloak," were particularly moving. These words referred to Jesus' preparing to wash the feet of the disciples, and they also refer to a call to us to remove the things which separate us and insulate us from the world around us. As he sat reflecting on the meaning and significance of foot-washing in the Christian tradition, he remembered having once read of how the people of First United in Vancouver were washing the feet of the street people who came to them. "What would it be like," he wondered, "if our central act of worship were the washing of one another's feet? What difference would that make?"

As David Giuliano looked back on the retreat day, the servant theme returned. Diaconal ministry is about servanthood. He had previously realized that diaconal ministers were trained in a particular way for human rights, social justice, education and pastoral care and that the priorities of congregations often resulted in that special training not being honoured. He came away from the day at CCS with a deepened understanding of the tension in the diaconal community between needing to offer oneself as a servant and wanting to have one's gift of servanthood appreciated and affirmed.

Freda and I took advantage of modern technology and communicated by email. She wrote, "I am in my second and final year of training for possible ordination to the permanent diaconate in the Scottish Episcopal Church (Anglican Church in Scotland). Since we have just eight deacons, my placement this year was a visit to Canada

to explore the Diaconatethere. The plan was for me to visit Toronto and Winnipeg. When I contacted CCS I learned about the retreat and arranged my visit to include it."

Freda wrote that it was difficult for her to say what it was about the retreat that meant the most to her. Finally she decided it was what Caryn had described to her the previous day as the "style of the deacon." The style Caryn referred to "includes reciprocity, mutual accountability and sense of community." It is a "style" that is addressed in Matthew 23:3-5: ". . . do not follow their practice . . . They make up heavy loads and pile them on the shoulders of others, but will not themselves lift a finger to lighten the burden." For Freda, Jesus instruction according to Matthew was reflected most clearly in the integration station, which showed that deacons are "committed to practising what they preach; combining action and reflection, worship and work, play and prayer, mind and heart; challenging theological dualisms and performing the tasks of ministry in a holistic way."

She was impressed by the way in which the diaconal style was embodied in all participation at the retreat, and especially in the leadership of CCS staff. At any given time, one staff member would be leading and the others "just melted seamlessly into the gathering." No one claimed any special authority. No even the United Church Moderator! Freda is now back in Scotland and she says, "I am delighted (that I was able to arrange to be at the retreat) because the experience was truly transformational for me."



if our central act of worship were the washing of one another's feet what difference would that make?



Teaching and Learning Together

by Paul Campbell, Friend of CCS



*Caryn Douglas, Principal,
models historic deaconess outfit.*

Ask a few questions about what it's like to have a CCS student working in a field placement and you discern a familiar theme: a student enters a situation designed to help her or him to learn, and behold, s/he ends up also being a teacher.

Like other ministry students, diaconal students benefit from the hospitality of congregations, educational centres, correctional facilities and personal care homes, where doors open to the experience of the practical realities of Christian vocation. In turn, the work sites inevitably receive more than they could have imagined. Commenting on her experience in a joint Lutheran/United pastorate in rural Alberta, Jen Dresser makes the bold claim: "I think that diaconal ministry is crucial to the life and health of the church. We bring gifts of community building, prophetic voice, social analysis and pastoral care which the church desperately needs." Jen's learning partner Leigh Sinclair, puts it this way: "we must continue asking Diaconal folks to lead us in learning, changing and teaming!" At its best, a field placement is a mutually-beneficial spiritual enterprise.

Deb Kigar contributes to the life and work of Five Oaks Centre in Ontario as a major aspect of her field placement. She and her learning facilitator, Mardi Tindal have commented on the challenges of building community in the Five Oaks setting, where guests/learners come and go regularly. Deb is learning a great deal about spiritual hospitality in a non-permanent environment. Meanwhile we hear that her presence among them enables the centre's staff to learn more about the nature of diaconal ministry. Deb expresses gratitude to Mardi for challenging her to listen to her "inner teacher", to share the wisdom

that she brought into the learning site. No doubt this inner teacher is contributing to the ever-changing offerings of the Centre. Once again, while a CCS student is ushered into an established ministry, she is also making a significant contribution to its overall mission.... by embodying diaconal principles and methods.

Catherine Gutjahr is finishing her second of a three year commitment with her field placement at Trinity Pastoral Charge in Sudbury (Manitou Conference). She makes particular note of the congregation's openness towards her educational needs: "Trinity recognizes the needs of their student and is willing to take the time to nurture growth...and to be co-learners." Ted Harrison, Catherine's educational partner/facilitator, speaks enthusiastically about the amazing level of permission given to Catherine to insert innovative features into Sunday worship. Ted becomes even more excited as he describes the impact of Catherine's public appearance in a traditional "deaconess" outfit one Sunday. She was making the point that our Churches have enjoyed diaconal gifts for many generations. This presentation opened the eyes of the congregation, and certainly expanded their imagination about possibilities for dynamic ministry in the 21st Century. The people of Trinity would no doubt agree with Jen Dresser that "diaconal ministry is crucial to the life and health of the church."

While making these modest enquiries about what it is like to welcome a CCS student into an established work site it became clear that students do benefit from many expressions of hospitality, and for the most part, they contribute fabulous energy to the ministry in those sites. Yet, as we celebrate the power of the diaconal presence in many field placements across the land and as we note the unexpected benefit of sites experiencing "gifts of community building, prophetic voice, social analysis" as well as a commitment to real teamwork in ministry, we have to acknowledge that teachers are not always well-received. There are costs involved with delivering news about social transformation, institutional change, spiritual growth, active/reflective learning, and teaming. Many church constituencies are not ready to meet these challenges. It has been long recognized that pastoral and prophetic priorities do not often mix easily in our communities. CCS students may grow tired of responding to the question: "What's a diaconal?" And goodness knows that no matter how deeply diaconal folk are committed to the power of pastoral team-work, not all potential work mates are willing to participate in genuine teaming!

Nevertheless, the Spirit stubbornly insists that we follow the call: to strengthen the life of the church, to encourage the Gospel's transforming power, and to do our part in the healing of Creation. May the benefits of life in a field placement continue to be enjoyed by both learners and hosts.

Paul Campbell is a recently retired United Church Minister and former Registrar of the Faculty of Theology, University of Winnipeg. Paul lives in Winnipeg and has a good deal of experience in supporting faithful "supervision" of many students over the years.



Community Update

Jean Day U64 sent a note saying that except for some rebellious joints and fatigue, she is fine. She will be preaching at Knox Agincourt United Church for a few months while the minister is on sabbatical. This is her home congregation, where she also sings in the choir. . . .

Jessica (Beecham) Stockton U62 reports that although she has retired for the third time, she is back half-time in the Warsaw Pastoral Charge, where Verna Windrem CCS87 was in ministry for ten years. She writes, "There is evidence of their having had a diaconal minister because they are a self reliant group of people." . . .

Cathy (Dayfoot) Muller CCS71 writes that they recently held a birthday party for her mother, Bessie (Julien) Dayfoot (90 years) and father, Art (93 years). A note from **Sandra Flint CCS92** indicates that she is well. She continues to go for her checkups and yearly tests, and looks forward to many healthy years ahead. She says that she is blessed with more energy than she has had for a long time and is busy

volunteering with the Cancer Society as a facilitator of small groups and Peer Support Convenor. She has also been deeply involved in ministry in her local parish since the clergy position became vacant at the end of December. . . .

Rev. Isaac Kawuki-Mukasa, a former CCS staff member who currently serves as the Diocese of Toronto's consultant in congregational development, has been named Co-ordinator for Dialogue: Ethics, Congregational Development and Inter-Faith Relations for the Anglican Church of Canada's Faith, Worship and Ministry Department. . . . **Charlotte Caron CCS72** has an article about shame and chronic illness in a new book, *Dissonant Disabilities: Women with Chronic Illnesses Explore Their Lives*. . . . At its annual meeting, Maritime Conference recognized the retirement of three Diaconal Ministers: **Kathryn Anderson, Kay Dean CCS97** and **Marlene Myles**.

Contributors to this issue:

Paul Campbell
Caryn Douglas
Gail Golding
Beth Kerr
Edith Shore

We want to hear from you.

Publications Mail Agreement No. 40039871

Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:
Woodsworth House
60 Maryland Street
Winnipeg, MB
R3G 1K7
Email: info@ccsonline.ca

Phone: 204.783.4490
Fax: 204.786.3012
www.ccsonline.ca

Editor:

Gail Golding

Editorial Committee:

Michelle Owens
and Marguerite Watson

Staff:

Juanita Mackinnon-Smith

Production:

BW Imaging

Celebrate the Ministry

Enclosed is my cheque for: \$500 \$250
 \$150 \$100 \$75 Other

- I wish to sign up for monthly withdrawals.
- I would like more information on Planned Giving.
- Please keep my donation anonymous.

This donation is in memory celebration of:

in support of the CCS Endowment Campaign

Please make cheques payable to:
Centre for Christian Studies

Thank You for Your Support!



Centre for Christian Studies
Woodsworth House
60 Maryland Street
Winnipeg, MB R3G 1K7

Date: _____ 20 ____

From: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Please return this form with your donation.

Charitable Registration No. 10689 7812 RP0001



Our readers write...

I have just finished reading the last edition of Tapestry. The breadth of topics and the layout are great. Thanks.
Eric Tusz-King U78

Just received Tapestry. WOW does it look great! Informative, easy to read (for my aging eyes) and creative. Great job! Kay Dean CCS97

I really like the changes that have been made - it looks really great and very professional, while still having an friendly feel.

Kirsten Earl McCorrister, CCS Development Administrator soon to be returning to work from her maternity leave.

I had a chance to look at the publication Tapestry and I LOVE IT! There is a wonderful blend of local, national and global stories as people share their experiences with the broader community. I was struck by the breadth of the ministry and the depth of the network that CCS continues to nurture and develop. The visuals (pictures) are a great asset as they capture the essence of the ministry in a way that words cannot express.

I really appreciate the quality of the presentation and the content, it was so wonderful to read the stories of CCS students, grads, educators and the wider community.

Nancy Wilson, Presbytery Minister of Winnipeg Presbytery.

The new edition of Tapestry is fabulous! I love receiving it as a PDF that opens in such an attractive format. When it comes as an e-mail, I read it right away rather than add a paper copy to an ever-growing "To Read" pile.

The colour and professional look of Tapestry feels so important for CCS's profile -- and the contents are diverse from local and global interests to development and her/history including Grad recognition.

Every good wish to you all as you continue to explore different ways to communicate to the CCS constituency...

Catherine Barnsley, former contract Staff (IY) and friend of CCS.



Centre for Christian Studies
Woodsworth House
60 Maryland Street
Winnipeg, MB R3G 1K7