

## REPORT OF THE 2009 GATHERING OF DIOCESAN JUBILEE OFFICERS

March 24-28, 2009

Christ Episcopal Church, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Prepared by Rebecca Jones, Diocese of Colorado

Diocesan Jubilee Officers from around the United States and the Caribbean spent four days meeting together to examine the original goals and scope of Jubilee Ministries as outlined in General Convention resolutions, and they wound up dusting away 27 years' worth of sometimes unwieldy accretions.

DJOs emerged from the March 24-28 meeting in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, with a clearer understanding of their own proper duties and authority, and ideas for making the process of designating and affirming Jubilee Ministry centers more efficient and more responsive to the needs of both congregationally-based and agency-based ministries.

Other highlights of the gathering included:

- A service day in which DJOs participated in flood recovery efforts in Cedar Rapids, a city left devastated by flood in the summer of 2008. Volunteers mucked out flood-damaged homes, hung drywall in a flood-damaged church and baked cookies and cakes to feed those engaged in the recovery work. DJOs also spent an additional morning touring flood-damaged areas and meeting with the director of Mercy Hospital to hear tales about that hospital's evacuation during the disaster.
- A presentation on "Faith in the Balance: A Call to Action," a report written by the Rev. Chris Johnson, Program Officer, Domestic Justice and Jubilee Ministries, which outlines a proposed model for how the Episcopal Church can respond to domestic poverty.
- A presentation from Jay Lehnertz, president of Episcopal Community Services of America, outlining the differences between that group and Jubilee Ministries.

### Those in attendance at the DJO gathering:

The Rev. Kesner Ajax  
*Diocese of Haiti*  
The Rev. Larry Allen  
*Diocese of West Missouri*  
Deacon Madeleine Beard  
*Diocese of Maryland*  
The Rev. Shirley Bowen  
*Diocese of Maine*  
Barbara Cambridge  
*Jubilee Advisory Committee, Dallas*  
The Rev. Maureen Doherty  
*St. Andrew's Church, Waverly, Iowa*  
The Rev. Eric Duff  
*Diocese of Northern California*  
Bill Farra  
*Diocese of Pittsburgh*  
Jack Hanstein  
*Diocese of Kentucky*  
Mary Ellen Honsaker  
*Diocese of Wyoming*  
The Rev. Judith Jenkins  
*Diocese of Rio Grande*  
The Rev. Christopher Johnson  
*Episcopal Church Center—New York*  
The Rev. Rebecca Jones  
*Diocese of Colorado*  
The Rev. Gill Keyworth  
*Diocese of Texas*  
Jay Lehnertz  
*Episcopal Community Services of America, Kansas City*  
Deacon Colleen Lewis  
*Diocese of Nebraska*  
The Rev. Alex Lodu-Kenyi  
*Diocese of North Dakota*  
The Ven. Eric Lynch  
*Diocese of Barbados*  
Phillip Mantle  
*Diocese of Chicago*

- Ministries, and agency-based Jubilee Ministries.
- A discussion of suggestions for revising the existing Jubilee Ministry application form and abandoning the current site visit requirement – and cumbersome site visit form – as a costly excess.

Here’s a wrap-up of the week’s topics and what those in attendance concluded:

### ON THE PROPER ROLE AND DUTIES OF A DJO

General Convention Resolution A106, in 1985, set four broad duties for DJOs:

1. Be informed on all facets of Jubilee Ministry.
2. Serve as a liaison to the Jubilee Ministry Commission.
3. Be available as a resource to their bishops and congregations
4. Bring support to further Jubilee Ministries in each diocese.

There exists a document, “DJO Guidelines for Responsibilities,”

<[http://www.episcopalchurch.org/1905\\_84349\\_ENG\\_H\\_TM.htm](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/1905_84349_ENG_H_TM.htm)> that sets out in further detail just what duties DJOs are expected to fulfill. “It’s an inherited treasure of our office,” Johnson said of the document. “But I don’t want us to spend too much time on that. I’m hoping we can develop language as a group that will reflect where we are now.”

The DJOs identified these criteria as being most important to fulfilling their duties:

- **A commitment to training.** A survey of DJOs showed that 82% agree or strongly agree that going to Jubilee gatherings is important, and 84% expressed a desire to be trained in doing site visits. Eighty percent agree they need to learn the history of Jubilee Ministry, and 70% agree they need to know the biblical foundation of Jubilee.

#### Those in attendance at the DJO gathering (cont’d):

John Miers  
*Diocese of Washington*  
Judith Moeckel  
*Diocese of Connecticut*  
The Rev. Dimas David Munoz  
*Diocese of Puerto Rico*  
The Rev. Cindy Nawrocki  
*Diocese of Western Michigan*  
Deacon Allen Ohlstein  
*Diocese of Kansas*  
The Rev. Dennis J. Parker  
*Diocese of Oregon*  
The Rev. Joy Prater  
*Diocese of Arkansas*  
Demi Prentiss  
*Episcopal Church Center—Omaha*  
Leslee Sandberg  
*Diocese of Iowa*  
Deacon Stephen Shanks  
*Diocese of Alabama*  
The Rev. Canon Debbie Shew  
*Diocese of Atlanta*  
Evie Smith  
*Diocese of Arizona*  
The Rev. Noreen Suriner  
*Diocese of Western Massachusetts*  
Scott van Pletzen-Rands  
*Episcopal Church Center—New York*  
Pat Washburn  
*Diocese of Colorado*  
Gary Williams  
*Episcopal Church Center—New York*

- **Regularly communicating with the national Jubilee Ministry office and with diocesan bishops.** This includes turning in an annual report – though only seven out of 80 DJOs did so last year; keeping contact information current; and verifying the information posted on the Jubilee Ministries Website regarding ministry sites is current and accurate.

Other possibilities include copying Johnson as well as the diocesan bishop on all communications a DJO sends out to the ministries within his or her diocese. The annual report could also be sent to the bishop.

All agreed that regular meetings with the bishop are a good idea – but many DJOs lament their lack of access. Johnson encourages those without easy access to their bishops not to give up. Keep submitting reports to the bishop, and try to position Jubilee Ministries in such a way that it supports the bishop’s own vision for the diocese.

“For example, in Colorado, the bishop’s goals are ‘proclamation, discipleship and servanthood,’” Johnson said. ‘I was able to position Jubilee Ministries as being part of the bishop’s goal of servanthood.’”

## **ON IMPROVING THE APPLICATION AND SITE VISIT PROCESS**

A myth has grown up around the process by which ministry sites are as designated Jubilee Centers, and it goes like this: It’s an arduous, multi-stage process that begins when the potential center submits an application. That application must be signed by the DJO and the bishop, then forwarded to the national church. The national church assigns a site visitor from outside the diocese to come and make sure all is in order. That outside visitor submits a recommendation to the church’s Executive Council. The site officially becomes a Jubilee Ministry only after the Executive Council votes to make

### **Comments from DJOs in attendance:**

“It (doing renovation work on a flood-damaged church) was invigorating. You really felt you were doing something. It was dirty...and worthwhile.”  
– *John Miers, DJO, Diocese of Washington D.C.*

“It’s the responsibility of all of us, not the government’s. This is where Jubilee can step in and take action.” -- *Phillip Mantle, DJO, Diocese of Chicago*

“People in our diocese don’t know what Jubilee is. When I get back, I have to let the clergy and people know what it is. My bishop IS accessible.” – *The Rev. Dimas David Munoz, DJO, Diocese of Puerto Rico.*

“I think Chris (Johnson) has a powerful vision and he’ll need a lot of support from us. There’s a lot of wisdom in this room!” – *Pat Washburn, Jubilee Advisory Committee chair, Diocese of Colorado*

“*Encuentro* sticks with me — it means getting your hands dirty! We need to be in solidarity with those we work with and with each other.” – *The Rev. Eric Duff, DJO, Diocese of Northern California*

it so, based on the site visitor's recommendation. The entire process can take many months.

In fact, however, the site becomes a Jubilee Ministry *whenever the diocesan bishop says it is*. The Executive Council merely affirms the bishop's designation. Certificates designating a site as a Jubilee Ministry may be issued immediately upon the bishop's signing of the application, or whenever the DJO deems it best. There's no need to wait for the Executive Council to act.

There was a time, in the past, when the national Jubilee Ministries office was able to fund substantial grants to Jubilee Ministry centers. Site visits were more important then, when potentially large sums of money were involved. Today, with only limited grant money available – and grants rarely exceeding a few hundred dollars – the site visit serves a different purpose.

DJOs say they still like getting site visits from someone representing the national church. "A fresh set of eyes," is how Wyoming DJO Mary Ellen Honsacker described it. "It made us feel important," said the Rev. Shirley Bowen, of the Diocese of Maine. It's a chance to network and to feel like a part of something larger.

But to scrutinize the due diligence that a DJO has already performed? "I don't need someone telling me what should and should not be a Jubilee Ministry," said the Rev. Gill Keyworth, DJO for the Diocese of Texas.

## **ON CONFUSION OVER THE CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION AS A JUBILEE CENTER**

In 1983, the church spelled out the criteria for designation of an "Episcopal congregation" "Episcopal cluster," or "ecumenical cluster." The four criteria are:

1. It must be engaged in mission and ministry among and with poor people wherever they are found.
2. The mission and ministry must be rooted in worship.

### **Comments from DJOs in attendance:**

"The link with the Deacons is very important — they can be one of the best voices of Jubilee. We should be intentional in reaching out to diaconal formation programs to get the Jubilee word out. Also, we should get people of faith together to talk about what it's like to be a person of faith...in a secular world." – *The Rev. Shirley Bowen, Diocese of Maine*

"Agencies RELY on church volunteers — it's an important way for smaller congregations to be involved in Jubilee." – *The Rev. Madeleine Beard, DJO, Diocese of Maryland*

"It's an incredible gift to be able to be in service to others, as a representative of my diocese." – *The Rev. Dennis Parker, DJO, Diocese of Oregon*

"I like the direction we are going in. I'm new (as a Jubilee Officer) — it's been good to get to know others and to network." – *The Rev. Gill Keyworth, DJO, Diocese of Texas*

"I want to find a way to identify a successor for DJO. Everyone here is busy 24/7. How can my bishop and I identify that person?" – *Leslee Sandberg, DJO, Diocese of Iowa*

3. The mission and ministry must include several programs, including at least one human rights advocacy program *and* one human services program.
4. Once designated, it must be willing to serve as a model to others, maintain “how to” files, act as a resource center, and be subject to annual review.

But this original intent differs in several ways from current practice:

- Many agency-based Jubilee ministries have a distinctly secular feel and may not be “rooted in worship.”
- No longer are Jubilee ministries required to do both human services AND advocacy. They may do one or the other, or may include a lay leadership and empowerment program or an evangelism program.
- Annual reviews have been replaced by reaffirmation visits once every seven years.

“What does it mean to say Jubilee Ministries are rooted in worship?” Johnson asked. “We have agencies in the Jubilee Ministry network now. Jubilee Ministries morphed away from something targeting congregations. It was easy to do that, to take the burden of providing direct human services off the shoulders of the congregations and give it to the agencies to do. Something has happened that was a significant deviation away from the original intent of Jubilee Ministries.”

The Rev. Eric Duff, DJO for the Diocese of Northern California, helped write the initial resolution creating Jubilee Ministries, and he agreed that today’s models of Jubilee are different from 27 years ago. “Then, it was all about ways to affirm the work of local congregations, not agencies,” he said. “Do we want to go back to what we foresaw at the beginning? Or do we want to include new things?”

Participants concluded that “being rooted in worship” or providing human service or engaging in advocacy may look different from one ministry to another. They decided that rather than spell out what these terms mean, it’s best to let each ministry describe in their own words

**DJOs had some suggestions when given the opportunity to complete this sentence: “Jubilee Ministry needs to...” Among the anonymous responses:**

“Jubilee Ministry needs to not be shy about letting its ‘brand’ be seen and heard. Jubilee Ministry needs to be seen as underpinning all our mission and outreach activities. It is what we are called to do, whether we call it ‘Jubilee’ or not.”

“Jubilee Ministry needs to recognize and applaud its past, affirm its mission in the present and strategize its growth into the future.”

“Jubilee Ministry needs to perhaps become more ‘user-friendly,’ with handouts to potential centers and the application itself. More essay questions (on the application) to get a feel for how they view themselves, and more explanation of what is meant by terms such as ‘advocacy.’”

“Jubilee Ministry needs to include ‘Episcopal’ in its logo, and keep updating the Website for more effective networking.”

“Jubilee Ministry needs to clean up the application process ASAP so we can invite new applicants, develop a structure that will support the work of the national office, the DJOs and the Jubilee Ministry sites, and quickly develop procedures for that structure so sites don’t become discouraged with the slow bureaucracy.”

in their application form how what they're doing meets these criteria.

"We should let them translate what 'poor and oppressed' look like," said Phillip Mantle, DJO for the Diocese of Chicago. "Let them translate what 'rooted in worship' looks like."

"For a lot of Jubilee Ministries, there's no mention at all of worship in their applications," said Scott van Pletzen-Rands, Technical Support Specialist for the Advocacy Center in the church's New York office. "But their mission statement is Matthew 25!"

"For a lot of places, the work they do IS worship," noted the Rev. Cindy Nawrocki, DJO for the Diocese of Western Michigan.

**DJOs had some suggestions when given the opportunity to complete this sentence: "Jubilee Ministry needs to..." Among the anonymous responses:**

"Jubilee Ministry needs to become more woven into the daily life of the church (in its worship, etc.) and of Episcopalians in their daily lives. It needs to stay open, collaborative, non-territorial, supportive of all others doing similar work – because if it does, it can create the space, links, etc., between those individuals or groups who might be less inclined or less able to do so."

## **ON THE PROPER FUNCTIONS OF JUBILEE MINISTRY**

When delegates to the 1982 General Convention approved Resolution 1982-A080, [http://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts\\_resolution.pl?resolution=1982-A080](http://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts_resolution.pl?resolution=1982-A080) creating Jubilee Ministries, they identified nine functions that this new ministry would be charged with carrying out:

1. Consciousness raising, to help people understand the facts of poverty and injustice
2. Locating congregations and ecumenical clusters that are engaged in mission and ministry among the poor and designating them as Jubilee Centers.
3. Training clergy, seminarians and lay volunteers in the work of Jubilee Ministry.
4. Identifying people with gifts and skills and matching these human resources with Jubilee Centers that could use them.
5. Researching and evaluating Jubilee Centers, selecting some as models and communicating their work and methods to others

6. Publishing a quarterly journal and occasional papers and books touching on Jubilee Ministry-related topics.
7. Networking with other organizations to promote justice-oriented public policies.
8. Evangelism and congregational development, particularly formation of congregations of color.
9. Making Jubilee Ministry grants.

Participants examined these nine functions to determine which are still important and which may have grown dated.

The consensus: While the details of some of the nine functions have changed over the years – grants are much smaller now, and there’s little in the way of formal Jubilee training – all the functions still guide Jubilee Ministry activities.

Examining each of the nine functions and what they might look like today, participants came up with a variety of ideas for concrete actions DJOs might take:

#### **Consciousness raising**

- Make the “Jubilee Ministries” brand more conspicuous, getting it on centers’ letterhead and Websites.
- Making sure Jubilee Ministries is a line item in the diocesan budget.
- Getting articles about Jubilee centers in the diocesan newsletter, and making sure Jubilee Ministries has a presence at diocesan conventions.
- Holding forums or leading Christian education classes around the diocese on topics related to the work of Jubilee Ministries.
- Getting information about Jubilee included in diaconal formation programs.
- Promoting the national church’s anti-racism training.
- Tapping into resources that other organizations, such as Bread for the World <<http://www.bread.org/>> or Interfaith Worker Justice <<http://www.iwj.org/template/index.cfm>>, might offer.

#### **Designating Jubilee centers**

- Raising awareness of the work of Jubilee around the diocese may entice ministries already doing Jubilee-type work to seek recognition.
- Identifying “Provincial Jubilee Officers” to assist the DJOs.

#### **Training**

- Investigating “Advocacy 101” programs, such as Results.com <[www.results.com](http://www.results.com)>.
- Developing a “starter packet” or orientation materials for new DJOs.

### **Human Resources**

- Tapping into “talent banks” and “gifts and skills inventories” that many congregations have developed.
- Partnering with nearby seminaries or universities to get interns who can use working with Jubilee Ministries as a means to fulfill field education requirements.

### **Publications**

- Identifying several DJOs to form a “publications group” to prepare stories, profiles, “how-tos” and other pieces of interest to be distributed electronically to all DJOs each quarter.
- Ensuring that quarterly electronic publications such as those described above get circulated to the bishop and elsewhere around the diocese.

### **Networking for public policy**

- Making explicit the link between Jubilee Ministries and EPPN <<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/eppn>> and to the statewide public policy networks that exist in some dioceses.
- Tapping into other Episcopal Church and affiliated organizations, such as Episcopal Network for Economic Justice <<http://www.enej.org/>>, Church in Metropolitan Areas <<http://www.metrochurchblog.org/>>, Episcopal Urban Caucus <<http://www.episcopalurbancaucus.org/>>, Episcopal Relief and Development <<http://www.er-d.org/>> and Episcopal Community Services in America <<http://www.ecsamerica.org/>>.
- Investigate partnering with other already-established public policy and community organizing groups, such as those affiliated with the Industrial Areas Foundation <<http://www.industrialareasfoundation.org/>> or the Gamaliel Foundation <<http://www.gamaliel.org/default.htm>>.

### **Evangelism and congregational development**

- Develop liturgies to celebrate Jubilee ministry.
- Designate a “Jubilee Sunday,” similar to UTO Sunday.
- Plan a yearly celebration that highlights the work of Jubilee ministries in the diocese.

### **Grants**

- Consider setting up a program whereby the national church would match diocesan funding to Jubilee programs.
- Simplify the audit forms that centers who receive very small grants must submit.

## **ON DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AGENCY-BASED MINISTRIES AND CONGREGATIONALLY-BASED MINISTRIES:**

The difference is admittedly sometimes fuzzy, said Johnson. “As a rule, if the ministry’s budget is approved by the congregation, then it is most likely a congregationally-based ministry. If it’s approved by a separate board of directors, then it’s most likely an agency-based Jubilee Ministry,” he said.

Jay Lehnertz, president of Episcopal Community Services of America, explained that that organization, formed in 2000, is comprised of agencies affiliated with the Episcopal Church, all of which have paid staff, unlike many congregationally-based ministries.

The catalyst for the formation of the group was a 1998 Jubilee Ministry training event. Some of the agency directors at that event felt that the concerns of professionally-run organizations weren’t really being addressed at the Jubilee event.

Today, many ECSA members continue to also be Jubilee Ministries, but the ECSA network helps provide a forum for their unique needs.

Characteristics of ECSA members:

- All are 501(c)(3) organizations.
- All have independent governing boards, which are not responsible to the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, as Jubilee Ministries ultimately are.
- All have strong diocesan connections.
- All focus on domestic ministry, as opposed to international organizations.
- Many are United Way organizations, which means there’s an emphasis on outcomes-based management, with measurable goals and a high level of accountability.
- All have paid professional staff.
- All engage in advocacy efforts that are broader than merely tying their advocacy work to General Convention resolutions, as EPPN must do.

In contrast, many congregationally-based ministries are “mom-and-pop”-type affairs, with less emphasis on outcome-based management.

Johnson noted the theological implications for DJOs attempting to work with both types of Jubilee centers, based on their differing needs.

“Congregations tend to focus on personal piety – loving God with heart, mind, soul and strength,” he said. “Agencies tend to focus on faith in action – loving neighbor as self. To the extent that this observation is true, congregations need help with resources that focus on putting their faith in action, while members of agencies need help with resources that focus on cultivating their relationship with God as the source of their faith.”

## **ON “FAITH IN THE BALANCE: A CALL TO ACTION” AND DOMESTIC POVERTY ALLEVIATION**

Johnson provided participants with copies of the newly-released report that comes out of the Presiding Bishop’s Summit on Domestic Poverty, held last May in Scottsdale, Ariz.

The 40-page report contains a strategy through which the Episcopal Church can work to alleviate domestic poverty. The strategy is based on the general format of a congregational development model involving vision, formation, networking and advocacy.

The document, released on Ash Wednesday, was initially sent to every bishop as well as everyone who attended the summit last year. It is also available on the Jubilee Ministry Website

<[http://www.episcopalchurch.org/1905\\_99948\\_ENG\\_HTM.htm?menupage=105144](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/1905_99948_ENG_HTM.htm?menupage=105144)>.

## **ON EXCELLENCE IN MINISTRY RECOGNITION**

Johnson also announced the creation of an “Excellence in Ministry” recognition program, to recognize outstanding DJOs, congregationally-based ministries and agency-based ministries. Nomination forms will be available on the Jubilee website. The stories of those nominated will appear on the Website.

The criteria for selection are purposely vague, he said. “I have a problem using the language of ‘best practices,’ because working in the non-profit community, I know best practices have to be replicable, and has to be based on research and evaluation, and there are measurements and accountability. But that’s not the point. The point is, when we catch DJOs or Jubilee Ministry centers doing the right things, I want to encourage our bishops to present them with some recognition. I invite you as DJOs to hold up to the church some of those ministries that deserve recognition. We want to hold them up before the church.”