

# Executive Director's Report -- March 15, 2009

*by Dn. Susanne Watson Epting*

I hope that in 2009 the Board will develop a strategy about how to handle some of the things, good things we plan; things that just don't seem to get done. Things that are hanging: Communications Committee; History and Archives; Review of the Constitution and By-Laws; Budget Deficit and Development; just to name a few. Moving forward on these and other matters will be a priority for 2009.

Now here are some highlights of the year and some musings in no particular order.

- When the Board last met we were thrilled with the 2008 director and archdeacon conference. One of our most productive ever. I hope we're in the same place this year. Much of my time and effort has gone to pulling off grant proposals, dealing with logistics for meetings of those involved and monitoring where we are on the grant. To wind up our Constable work we may be offering an opportunity for online case studies for archdeacons and directors of deacon formation programs.

- Both our relationship with the Church Center and access to any further funds has changed dramatically this year. It will be some time before we know who is interested in working with concerns about the diaconate at 815.

- The office is still in Iowa. We're glad to be there and it's working well.

- I was to have spoken at the NNECA conference last year, but our sewer backed up and most of the highways between here and there were flooded, so I had to cancel. However, I'm going to suggest that we exchange liaisons with them. For those of you who don't know about the National Clergy Assn., Bud Holland has suggested that being involved with them might be a way to build partnerships between presbyters and deacons on a national level.

- I tried to follow up this year in discussions with Migration Ministries, but they're reorganized in ways they're still understanding and, of course, they don't have money or time for immigration issues – just resettlement ones. But it remains an

area identified where people want education and resources. I hope perhaps this is an area where we can offer some continuing education opportunities through CDSP.

- A great deal of time went into the surveys. The major survey: “Deacons and Their Ministries in The Episcopal Church as Reported by Deacons in 2008 and 1978” is in this issue of Diakoneo, and all surveys are on the NAAD website – [www.diakonoi.org](http://www.diakonoi.org).

- I met with deacon co-chairs for the 2010 conference in Chicago in August and had multiple conversations. Pam Nesbit is on top of all this and is doing a great job! Pam, and the Executive Committee toured Loyola in September and Pam met with the local co-chairs.

- Steven Charleston has committed to be our keynote speaker for the conference.

- Late summer and fall, as mentioned above, required a lot of organizing for the October Constable group meeting in Chicago. I sincerely hope that our web site and our board priorities will reflect the amazing work we’ve done in identifying deacon formation that works.

- I’ve been in regular dialogue with the academic dean at Seabury. I honestly believe they may be a good partner in the future, but things are still getting sorted out there. It’s exciting to know that they’re open to engaging in theological education in whole new ways!

- I attended Epiphany West on baptismal water as thicker than blood, and the Ministry Developers’ Collaborative on education for Ministry Developers. I shared some of what we’ve been learning there, at their invitation.

- So \$100,000 later, we’ve almost completed our grant work. I think it was worth it and will provide a new base of credibility for us with bishops and others in leadership.

- We have new Board leadership, good defined directions, and I look forward to good things happening this year.



Susanne