

The Episcopal School for Ministry

The academic year 2020-2021 was challenging and also rewarding for the Episcopal School for Ministry. Students, staff, and faculty continued to meet online for prayer and study during last year's fall term, and this year's spring and summer terms. During the current fall term, we have been able to meet safely in-person, at Episcopal Church of the Advent, in Crestwood. Being together again for student-planned and led Eucharists and lunches outside on Advent's back porch, has been especially meaningful.

This semester concludes the mission of the Episcopal School for Ministry of providing theological education to persons in the Diocese of Missouri in its present form. The school opened twenty-two years ago under the leadership of Bp. Hayes Rockwell with The Rev. Dr. Warren Crews as the dean with the goal to prepare persons in the diocese for ordained and lay ministries. Graduates of this school have gone on to be priests and deacons in the church while others have become lay leaders involved in ministries of teaching, lay preaching, eucharistic visiting and many other leadership roles within their own congregations and the diocese.

As the current Fall term draws to a close, ESM is completing the *Teach Out Plan* announced at convention last year. Three students—Angela Ferree, Loretta Go, and David Luckes—are completing the Diaconal Formation Program, and graduating this term. ESM faculty—Marshall Crossnoe, Ron Crown, Deb Goldfeder, Donna Ruth Hawk-Reinhard, Barbara Willock—and registrar Debbie Wheeler are especially proud of these graduates. Please continue to pray with us for them as they look toward ordination and diaconal ministry.

As it closes its present mission, the Episcopal School for Ministry looks forward to whatever is ahead in the redesign process. We wish to thank all the faculty and staff who have gone before to carry out this mission and especially, the longest tenured member of the faculty, the Rev. Dr. Barbara Willock, a scholar of biblical studies and leader in the education of preachers. We gratefully acknowledge her contributions to the education of students throughout the Diocese of Missouri through her long and faithful work with the Episcopal School for Ministry.

Following the lead of Bishop Deon and Canons Whitney and Doris, and in collaboration with stakeholders within and outside of the Diocese of Missouri, ESM faculty and staff remain committed to the school's *Redesign* (also announced last year at convention). Discussions about significantly expanding and deepening the ministry of formation in diocese, and about specific forms and roles of systems of academic formation within that broader ministry are ongoing.

ESM is grateful for the prayers and support of members of the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri during *Teach Out* and *Redesign*. We bid your continued prayers and support during the coming year, as our diocese works to realize Spirit-led, broad-based, multi-modality ministry of formation for lay and ordained ministry in the diocese and beyond.

Respectfully,
Rev. Dr. Deb Goldfeder
Rev. Dr. Marshall Crossnoe