

Companion Diocese Committee
Report to Convention, 2022
The Rev. Dr. Deborah Goldfeder, Deacon and Chair

The Diocese of Missouri and the Diocese of Puerto Rico have joined in relationship and have begun working together toward our common purposes of friendships between the dioceses, learning from each other, providing opportunities for persons from each diocese to visit the other and to join in common mission in ways we identify according to the needs of each diocese. We from Missouri wish to learn more about the language, culture, and worship in Puerto Rico and are planning visits for both adults and youth in the future.

A small group of representatives from the Missouri committee is planning to go to Puerto Rico in December of this year for a brief visit in order to learn more about the mission opportunities there. Our trip was postponed several times because of their bishop's schedule as he desires to lead us while we are there. Now we have our concerns about Puerto Rico following their most recent hurricane, Fiona, which left most if not all of the island powerless and without water for prolonged periods of time. Roads were closed because of mudslides and homes were destroyed. The second largest city, Ponce, was especially hard-hit. Our itinerary included visiting Ponce and seeing the new, state of the art hospital but we do not know if we will be able to get there because of road damage.

We accomplished several of our goals for this year despite not having visited Puerto Rico: we have established relationships with representatives of the Episcopal Church there, we meet jointly with them (usually monthly) via Zoom. We also worship with folks from Puerto Rico monthly saying Compline/Completas in Spanish and English. We pray for the churches weekly and have brought to the attention of people in Missouri the state of the island and ways to contribute for hurricane relief through Episcopal Relief and Development.

Our most recent conversations have been limited to following posts from the bishop and the diocese on Facebook. They have posted about the damage to the island and how they are making progress toward bringing hot food and water to people whose villages had been particularly hard hit by the storm. Brief emails from them have assured us that our friends are safe and caring for others as always.

Our goals for the year ahead are simple: we want to develop regular mission visits to and from Puerto Rico for adults and young people and we wish to learn more about Puerto Rican culture and worship styles including their liturgies and music. We hope that visitors here will bring knowledge that we can incorporate as we begin outreach to our Hispanic neighbors in Missouri.

Active members of the Companion Diocese Committee are the Rev. Dr. Valori Mulvey Sherer, the Rev. Susan Naylor, Deacon, Cynthia Rapp, Br. Samuel Kincade, the Rev. Dr. Maria Evans, and the Rev. Christina Cobb. Inactive members are Michael Perez and Carlos Carrillo. The Rev. Dr. Deborah Goldfeder, Deacon is the chair. We would warmly welcome more people to the Companion Diocese Committee! If you are interested, contact the chair at deborahgoldfeder@gmail.com. Thank you for your prayers.

Deborah Goldfeder, Chair, CDC