

Diocese of MO

Deaconess Anne House Audit

INTRODUCTION	1
WHAT WE DID	2
SOCIAL LOCATION	5
WHAT WE FOUND	7
DOCUMENT REVIEW	18
COMPARATIVE REVIEW OF PROGRAMS	20
WHAT WE RECOMMEND	24
COMPOSITE RESULTS	26
APPENDICES	79

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Introduction

The Deaconess Anne House was founded in 2012 as a ministry of the Diocese of Missouri and as a branch of the national Episcopal Service Corps program.

The Deaconess Anne House (DAH) is located in the neighborhood of Old North St. Louis, an area in which the Diocese of Missouri (Dio of MO) has long had a presence. This residential ministry sought to house young adults who spent a year living in intentional community, working at partnering social service/nonprofit organizations, rooting all their work in Benedictine spiritual formation, and sharing in a communal rule of life.

In an ongoing effort to ensure the program was meeting the needs and priorities of the Diocese of Missouri, the Rt. Rev. Deon Johnson placed a pause on the program and engaged Vandersall Collective in August of 2022 to perform a review.

In September of 2022, the Rev. Jon Stratton was chosen by Bishop Deon Johnson to lead a taskforce in collaboration with Vandersall Collective's consultants, the Rev. Mieke Vandersall, Erin Weber-Johnson, the Rev. Aaron Michael Rogers and Rae Angelo Tintera. The following were recruited as members of the taskforce:

- Gabriel Oakes
- Jillian Smith
- Carter Whitson

What we did

Our charge was to conduct a financial and programmatic audit of Deaconess Anne House and provide recommendations to move forward.

To do this, we reviewed documentation to understand initial objectives of the program and from there, we reviewed further documentation to see how the program shifted over the years, and conducted interviews and a quantitative survey to understand people's perception of the program throughout its initial life-cycle.

DOCUMENT REVIEW

We received foundational, financial, and strategic planning documents ranging from the inception of the program in 2012 to present. Working with the diocesan staff, we also were provided all diocesan budget information. Well over 300 pages of documentation were provided and at every request we were met with support and a collaborative spirit.

INTERVIEWS

We interviewed those involved with Deaconess Anne House both at its founding and through the years. Interviews were identified by the task force and interviews were arranged by the Rev. Jon Stratton. In total, we interviewed:

1. Jillian Smith, 3rd Executive Director
2. Mike Fowlks, Former member of Advisory Committee
3. Jessica Payne, Old North St. Louis neighbor
4. Travis Hall, Initial envisioning and founding committee member
5. The Rev. Jon Stratton, 1st Executive Director
6. Bren O'Connor, Former Corps Member

What we did

7. LaChrisa Crenshaw, Placement site supervisor
8. Pam Penrose, Former member of Advisory Committee
9. The Rev. Rebecca Ragland, 2nd Executive Director
10. Madison Orozco, Former Corps Member
11. The Rt. Rev. George Smith, Retired Bishop, Diocese of Missouri
12. The Rev. Joseph Chambers, Canon to the Ordinary who oversaw the program
13. Madison Bishop, Former Corps Member
14. Lisa Carpenter, Volunteer and member of Partnering Congregation
15. Erin O'Rourke, Former Corps Member
16. The Rev. Mike Angell, Rector of Partnering Congregation
17. The Rev. Mark Sluss, Deacon for Deaconess Anne House
18. Mtipe Koggani, Former Corps Member
19. Chris Potter, Former Corps Member

Prior to these interviews, we developed a list of qualitative questions. These were created in partnership with the taskforce. These questions are located in the appendices of this report along with comprehensive anonymized responses.

All interviews were conducted in person by Mieke Vandersall or on Zoom by Mieke Vandersall or Erin Weber-Johnson from September 28 through October 6, 2022. Analysis was conducted to identify themes both within each individual question as well as utilizing cross-tabulation to look for primary and secondary themes across all questions.

To conduct interviews and to gain a sense of the flavor of the program and the neighborhood that Deaconess Anne House is rooted in, Mieke Vandersall visited St. Louis. As part of the site visit, she received a very insightful tour conducted by the Rev. Jon Stratton.

What we did

QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

To determine the perspective of the program's abilities to meet both its own objectives as well as the priorities of the wider diocese regarding youth and young adult ministry, we developed a quantitative questionnaire which was sent to all diocesan delegates for their participation. To ensure this study met the standard of verifiability, the sample was clearly defined as delegates for the survey was clearly defined, rather than sent out broadly to an unknown number of potential responders through the entire diocesan eblast list. The response rate to the survey was 36%, which meets the threshold of validity in order to identify themes within questions and provide a cross tabulation.

This survey was closed on October 21, 2022. All responses were verified against the list of delegates to ensure there was no duplication of responses and that the audience remained fixed to ensure the integrity of results. A few individuals responded more than once and if the responses were different from survey to survey we chose the most recent survey submitted.

COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

Finally, Vandersall Collective staff completed a review of similar programs to the Deaconess Anne House. In our review of other Episcopal Service Corps (ESC) programs and volunteer programs in parallel denominations, we both confirmed themes we found in this audit with other programs as well as clarified diversions from these themes.

In addition Mieke and Erin met with Wendy Karr Johnson, Executive Director of the Episcopal Service Corps, to explore national trends, shifts in cultural identity, and new resources. We also interviewed Emily Brewer of the Presbyterian Young Adult Volunteer Corps in New York City in addition to Christina Balderson of Johnson Service Corps of the ESC.

Utilizing the results of the document review, qualitative research, quantitative study, and an external field comparison, we drafted a report and delivered it to the taskforce for their consideration in November of 2022. This was then delivered to Bishop Johnson a week later.

Social location

It is important that we name who we are as we have engaged in conducting this research.

Mieke was raised in University City, St. Louis and went to high school just a few short miles south of Old North. Even with that geographic proximity, North St. Louis, let alone the small square blocks that Old North encompasses, were communicated to be off-limits; the racism and racial disparity embedded in this was something that she was aware of from a very young age. Coming to this project as a white, queer woman raised in segregated St. Louis was an interesting experience—the fear that she experienced others around her having of North St. Louis is still deeply held in St. Louis, as evidenced by the segregation found in Old North and the challenges articulated many times from others who couldn't imagine parents sending their children to do this work at Deaconess Anne House because of its geographic location. Mieke approaches her work from both a perspective of progressive theology and her training as a cultural anthropologist. Mieke served as project co-lead and as the member of our team who made the site visit for in-person interviews.

Erin was raised in Alton, Illinois. While she does not have a pre-existing understanding of North St. Louis due to lack of exposure, she does have previous exposure to the Episcopal Service Corps. Prior to her work as a fundraiser and strategic planner, she worked at Trinity Wall Street as a grants officer where, in her role, she distributed over \$1 million dollars both to the Episcopal Service Corps network and to particular Episcopal Service Corps sites around the country. She holds a Masters in Public Administration from New York University and is completing a second masters in Religion and Theology from United Seminary. As a practical theologian and practitioner, she roots all her work in culture, place, and embodiment. Recognizing that God's movements in the world are articulated by our human experience, she draws from her theological training in providing contextually based service. Erin served as project co-lead as the member of our team who made the online, Zoom interviews.

Social location

Aaron was raised in East Saint Louis, Illinois just a bridge away from Old North St. Louis. After receiving his Masters of Divinity from Eden Theological Seminary, Aaron served at a UCC church adjacent to the Old North neighborhood in north city St. Louis. Aaron served on the advisory committee for the initial launch of the Deaconess Anne House program. In this capacity, he helped select candidates and offered wisdom on strategy for the program, formation for the housemates and outreach to the Old North neighborhood. Aaron is coming to this project as an African American male who is familiar with the neighborhood, who has experienced both the challenges and the gifts of this geographic location, and who has served both residents and the Diocese of Missouri in Old North. Aaron approaches this work with a deep commitment to practicing transformative listening, celebrating the strengths and gifts of a community, understanding pastoral practice in context, and sharing wisdom from similar programs engaged in developing unique contextual communities. Aaron served on this project as an advisor.

What we found

Both sets of data, in the context of the founding documents and intentions, all point to the fact that the Deaconess Anne House program successfully met its own priorities.

While diocesan priorities were not identified, its priorities and foci were reflected in the programming and former participants reported its fulfillment.

In particular one may refer to the response to the question: “Of the priorities identified in the program’s inception, which do you feel the program successfully met?”*

83% Living in intentional community

61% Working at partnering social service/nonprofit organizations

32% Rooting all their work in Benedictine spiritual formation

61% Communal Rule of life

**Numbers greater than 100% because participants could choose more than 1 option*

What we found

GREATER CONTEXT

The Deaconess Anne House program is vastly different from when it started

At the beginning, the corps members at the House were working directly in the Old North neighborhood. The connection to the neighborhood was stronger at the beginning because the corps members were almost exclusively working and living in the same place. This made it easier to bump into people they knew and become more deeply involved with their neighbors.

Also, there were initially seven corps members in the program, and many congregations came together to make the project happen. Between congregations physically preparing and working on the house, coming for worship and dinner on Monday nights, helping with service projects, providing additional funding for particular projects, and “adopting” corps members, the house was a focal point for diocesan-wide participation.

Over time not only has the number of corps members decreased, but so has the engagement from local congregations. Through our interviews, we did not find the energy that was reportedly electric and palpable at the beginning.

For us it gave my parish an opportunity to do something outside of just our church. To get out of our bubble and do something. It helped get a lot of people involved throughout the diocese. Did that wane over time? A little bit in that the number of corp members went down. When there were more there was more involvement from the wider church.

What we found

We are in a vastly different time in the United States than when this program started

Consider all that has happened in the last nine years.

- The killing of Michael Brown, just miles from Deaconess Anne House
- Considerably greater visibility for trans folks and the life transitions that trans folks experience once they come out
- Multiple tumultuous presidential elections, with a baseline understanding of democracy in question
- A shortage of clergy to serve parishes—it is a clergy market, not a parish market now
- An economy that currently provides greater ease in finding employment, which is very different from when the program began
- COVID-19 and the isolation it required
- A great rethinking of the definition of what, when, where, and how we work and how we serve, the payment that is fair, and the reasons behind work
- The congregations who made it through COVID-19 are unsure of who they are now, and the closing of churches nation-wide is increasing at a faster rate due to COVID-19 than we were in several years ago.

The result of these changes (and we are sure more!), have led to changes in the Deaconess Anne House, and the challenges the ESC program is experiencing around recruitment, placements, and relationships with local parishes.

It is hard for directors to do it. Particularly hard for clergy. There are a lot of opportunities for clergy now. We are in a shortage and this isn't attractive for most clergy.

The thoughts of labor have drastically changed in the last 10 years. And I would fault no one in not wanting to do a volunteer year. That is also analogous to the priesthood.

What we found

You are not alone

In our competitive analysis we spoke with the national director, Wendy Karr Johnson, of the Episcopal Service Corps, as well as a regional ESC director, Christina Balderson, performing a similar audit in North Carolina. Finally, we also connected with the Rev. Emily Brewer, a member of a local planning team for a Presbyterian Young Adult Volunteer program (the equivalent in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)). Each individual we talked with said that application and recruitment numbers have significantly decreased from previous years and spoke about how the change in economy was a huge factor. When DAH was founded, service years were “hot.” Now, there is a distinctly different understanding of the value of service in the recent understanding of the “nonprofit industrial complex,” and in this an increasing understanding that a year of service comes with a distinct amount of privilege. Everyone we spoke to is seeing the same trends that DAH is and is trying to figure out what exactly is next.

The Presbyterian program made simple changes in their program by no longer using “simple living” as a concept but instead sustainable living or solidarity living. Their young adults used to be required to raise a significant amount of money to pay into the program, but now that requirement has become a goal of each cohort as whole, or the individual site coordinator. With the decrease in funding for site coordinators and the increase in the requirement for fundraising and recruitment (which is a killer for them as well), many of the problems continue to stand true.

The Episcopal Service Corps, as a national entity, underwent its own audit and determined restructuring around a set of values was needed to meet the changing demands of culture. You will find these core values in the appendix of this report. Additionally, within the audit were articulations of the financial barriers to entry. The Episcopal Service Corps Director noted that her approach was to shift the language of how the program was described. This provides DAH with not only an opportunity to change the language, but to be the first to change both the incentives and structure to meet the needs of young adults.

What we found

Old North is a challenging neighborhood to enter into

Anytime a community or program enters a neighborhood, they enter a pre-existing set of norms, cultures, needs, and strengths. All communities are complicated and have a set of histories that inform what they are at present. In Old North, we repeatedly heard that there are challenges that in particular affect the DAH program and the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri as well. Below is a synopsis:

- **Segregated relationships among community members along lines of race and class.** The result of this reality is that neighborhood members are not all in relationship with each other and different sub-communities within the larger community have different and at times competing needs. This was spoken to in interviews, but can especially be found in the Old North Needs Assessment and Action Plan created in 2021¹. Connected to this is the reality that many people, especially people of color, are unable to receive mortgages to buy homes. We repeatedly heard, and the Action Plan articulated that banks literally do not give mortgages for this area, so anyone moving in would have to use cash straight out to buy, and good rental properties are hard to come by.
- **A history of a colonizing mindset among the Grace and Peace Presbyterian Church that moved in early in the century, many who continue to live in Old North.** “Grace and Peacers,” as they are called, are almost exclusively white and according to the history found on their website: their ministry is “to the city and needy people who live there. This includes a substantial portion of the congregation who moved in the late seventies to another target neighborhood to plant a daughter church— in Murphy Blair north of downtown, now called Old North. But plant members in the early 90s realized their church wasn’t growing. They decided to return [sic] as a group to the mother church while still living as a large community group in Old North, enriching G&P’s outreach to blighted areas of St. Louis. This community continues today.”² DAH is another intentional

¹ https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d1d1f5eae1440000149853b/t/602195a6776a382435573060/1612813747559/ONSL+Needs+Assessment_FINAL_21-2-3.pdf. Accessed on October 1, 2022

² <https://graceandpeacefellowship.org/blog/musings-on-the-history-of-grace-and-peace/>. Accessed on October 1, 2022

What we found

community that has moved into this neighborhood but with a very different set of intentions. Intentions are however not known by neighborhood members who only see white folks moving in and who do not stay very long.

- **Fits and starts of community development plans.** This is seen both in the Needs and Action Plan footnoted above and also was spoken to by both the interviewees. This makes it hard for an organization like DAH to plug into existing plans for community progress.

There is some section 8 housing that is hard to connect with. Many people blame the downfall of the area on them. There are also a lot of black homeowners in new homes. Then the Habitat homes are owned by black families in the neighborhood but we don't have relationships with the Habitat owners. And then there are the Grace and Peacers...who brought in a lot of people, many of whom have stayed.

What we found

IMPACT OF DAH

The DAH program has changed the life trajectory of many, many young adults

To a person, each director and corps member expressed a distinct and significant change in their lives due to their time in the program. There is not a doubt in our minds that this program has achieved many of its goals through intentional living, the rule of life, and the nonprofit placements corps members experienced. Not always were the experiences easy, but easy was not the goal.

The DAH program strengthened relationships with the Diocese of Missouri and the church at large

Of course not all corps members have stayed connected to the church, but many have gone on to serve in leadership positions, much due to their experiences as corps members. In addition to the quotes below from the interviews, the quantitative data showed that 59% responded with either a 4 or 5 ranking (from 1 being lowest to 5 being highest) to the question: “how helpful was it in forming young adults for their vocation?”

I saw two patterns. I saw there's a lot going on with the Church beyond individual churches that I wasn't aware of before and I am excited about them. I never would have thought committee work would be exciting, but now I see how I can be a part of it. For another person, they realized that the Diocese of MO was really different and cool and wanted to know more.

I didn't have a relationship prior. I came in from another diocese. I knew I wanted deeper conversation and wanted formation. Through different interactions, it

What we found

broadened my perspective on what it means to be Christian and Episcopalian. Prior to this corps, I had very little contact with the Diocese of Missouri but, through this, I realized how much a diocese does and got to meet lots of people. I would gladly go back.

To my understanding, many alumni are now ordained priests. I being one of them! This number who are now serving as clergy in different diocese has helped the wider Church. It has been useful to the Corp members, helped them discern what they want to do next, and created ministers who are now serving the Church.

The impact that the Deaconess Anne House program has had in Old North is viewed through a mixed lens

The qualitative data poignantly speaks to this. The impact in Old North has been through a charity-based approach, a general presence, and many who weren't sure of the impact. Over time we found that the program was less rooted in the neighborhood as placements became further away geographically, and of course COVID-19 did not help this.

In addition the quantitative survey showed significant levels of “unknown” around the program and its impact in fostering relationships in Old North. From a scale of one to 5, one being lowest and 5 being highest, 25% of respondents responded between 1 and 3 and a whopping 50% did not respond at all to this question, indicating to us that they simply didn't know.

What we found

THE PROGRAM

There was little alignment with priorities of the Diocese of Missouri at its founding because diocesan priorities were not articulated or known

This came out most strongly in the response to the question: “What priorities of the diocese aligned with the program?”

As far as priorities of the Diocese of Missouri, there were none articulated.

There were no diocesan priorities.

While DAH program priorities were articulated, how they aligned to the greater Diocese of Missouri was unclear. As it was also funded by the Thomson fund managed by the bishop, there was not a sense of connection by the whole diocese. This is seen in the response to the question: “How were the program’s finances communicated throughout the Diocese of Missouri?” The answers were: they weren’t, or they were communicated only to leadership. In thinking about what is next for DAH, there is an opportunity now to align with priorities set in the most recent strategic planning process.³

³ https://www.diocesemo.org/uploads/images/strategic-visioning-plan-10252021revised_70.pdf. Accessed on October 6, 2022.

What we found

The Episcopal presence in Old North is historic, and the future is unclear

Episcopalians have been in Old North for many years. Deaconess Anne House was founded to deepen that presence in the spirit of Deaconess Anne who served for many years. Currently the Diocese of Missouri is discerning suggestions for Grace Hill, the rectory, and adjacent properties.⁴ We wonder how Deaconess Anne House intersects with this project, knowing that they are within short walking distance of each other.

The Director position is critical to the success of the program, but not sustainable as it stands

As things stand, the program director position requires a person to have expertise in multiple skill sets, in addition to taking full responsibility for recruitment. Each director we spoke to pointed to the impossibility of the position, (one person said clearly: “this job sucks”), and the primary responsibility placed on them for the success of the program. The challenge for the Director was echoed in the ESC national assessment recently completed. The assessment said this: “Clarity is needed about the type of work a program director actually does. Are they a social worker, pastor, therapist, trainer, developer, fundraiser, organizer, or admin? Is it reasonable to believe they can do all of it?”

Directors we spoke with had particular ideas on how to make a position work:

If sustainability is a big factor, the Director position—there needs to be more than one person working. Or there needs to be an active Deacon with the director. There must be someone else to share the load. Otherwise you will continue to see the turnover.

I would really recommend a different structure for an intentional community. I think

⁴ <https://www.onsl.org/post/give-ideas-for-grace-hill-campus-restoration>. Accessed on October 6, 2022.

What we found

the optimal situation would be to have a Clergy person and Parish adjacent to the community. And a priest and Director working in partnership to support one another. That way the director doesn't feel so isolated.

The turnover of the director is really challenging for corps members. Since directors recruit members, if they go through the recruitment process and then leave before or as the new class begins, corps members are attached to the personality and approach of the director who is then no longer there. The program changes drastically in its focus and flavor from year to year with the director turnover, making the identity of the project in consistent flux.

The program attracts a certain kind of person

A year of service at DAH requires a great deal from its corps members.

- They are to commit to a significant structure focused through Benedictine spirituality, including morning prayer and a commitment to the Rule of Life
- They are asked to make significantly small amounts of money while possibly continuing to accrue interest on their student loans and other debt
- The student loan debt is well documented to be enormous and prohibitive in even the best of circumstances
- They do not know their placement till they arrive, raising anxiety among some.

Given these required commitments, the program mostly attracts people who identify as white and who have financial resources to support them throughout the duration of the year. Former corps members articulated that directors and leaders had acknowledged these limitations and barriers to entry within the program itself.

While it is critical to acknowledge this gap in equity while attempting to recruit people of color and other individuals who exist in or come from historically marginalized communities, structural changes and policy are also necessary if the program seeks to include a diverse set of participants. For instance, many queer and trans folks do not have financial support from their families. Based on the external survey of the other programs, there is no other program providing loan payback or scholarship assistance, outside of Americorps completion grants. This provides DAH with a distinctive opportunity witness to not only acknowledge barriers to entry but shift its own practices.

Document review

As with any organization, the history of an organization is held both through memory, oral narrative, and information kept through various files. Part of our work, in addition to gathering information through oral narrative through interviews, was collecting and reviewing all information that has been stored in various places both from the Diocese of Missouri as well as nationally with the Episcopal Service Corps.

It was clear that much planning and administrative support had been provided since its inception. To that end we were generously provided everything we requested including:⁵

- Annual budgets for the program (included in the diocesan budget)
- All planning documents
- Previous fundraising documentation
- Different curriculum resources utilized
- Each corps program's rules of life
- Communications to the Diocese of Missouri
- Letters from past corps members to Bishop Johnson
- The national Episcopal Service Corps documents from its own audit, core values, and best practices in caring and supporting trans corps members

In review of this documentation we found:

- 12 sponsoring parishes which diminished to 8 by 2020
- Rules of life well documented for each year's participants with excellent directions for subsequent year's formulation
- In 2015 there were seven corps members and in 2021 there were four
- Community annual outreach included: Little Food, Pantry, community garden, winter coat drive, chili giveaway
- Previous Cultural Competency Report from 2020⁶
- This report found:
 - Program Successes: Discernment and Neighborhood Presence
 - Concerns: Clarity of Purpose, Introduction to Racial Justice, Identity development and mental health, Unstable community engagement

⁵ <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ar0P-3QWXCvmym0XY9fyUw3EexCiZmUf?usp=sharing>

⁶ <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sppv9jsltN-D0erk8mGgfb3iFWxSkL2e/edit#heading=h.gjdgxs>

Document review

- Mental health support: al-anon, mental health assessments, spiritual direction, crucial conversations resources
- Documented orientation and onboarding in all areas of focus
- 2019-2022 giving records outside of the Thomson fund indicating a desire to move towards sustainability.

Comparative Review of Programs

We were curious about the experience of other service programs, in particular regarding recruitment, numbers of volunteers, financial considerations, and articulation of commitment to anti-racism and experiences of sexual orientation and gender identity diversity. What we were able to find online is in the spreadsheet below, which was complemented by conversations outlined in the “What we found” section, as well as in the documents provided in the appendix.

Program	Ages	Application Process	Evidence of their Sensitivity to Gender + Racial Diversity etc	Compensation	Housing	Duration of Program	Budget + Financial Reports	Size of Program	Placement	Primary Contact Info.
Presbyterian Young Adult Volunteer Program	19-30	-YAVs do commit to fundraising a minimum of \$4,000 (national placements) and \$5,000 (international placements) for the year. -the application checklist --> http://pma.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/yav/docs/checklist_for_yav_application.pdf	-the handbook: https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/YAV-Handbook-2022-23.pdf -“Commitment to serve in religiously and culturally diverse contexts with sensitivity and appreciation for all people regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, mental or physical ability, or culture.” -“Commitment to serve and engage in the anti-racism emphasis of the YAV Program, standing with historically marginalized groups.”	-“You will be provided with a basic stipend to help cover necessary personal expenses beyond food, housing, and transportation. Stipend amounts can vary from site to site (based on factors such as local cost of living). Stipends for both international and national YAVs are paid through their site.” -Volunteers may receive up to \$250/month of assistance during their YAV year(s) through the Season of Service Loan Assistance Program . -If YAVs do not have access to health care, the program is able to provide coverage. The program does encourage participants to remain under their current coverage during their year of service, if possible.	Most YAVs live with fellow volunteers in a community house. Some sites have a host-family model. All YAVs will be active members of an intentional Christian community. All housing is arranged and provided by the YAV program.	1 year		22 sites around the United States and throughout the world	Placed to sites where they apply. Through mutual discernment process, the candidate's preference, the site's preference and the needs of our partners are considered. Candidates should be open to applying to a variety of states.	800-728-7228 ext. 5300 destini.hodges@pcusa.org
Episcopal Service Corps	21-32	45-60 minute application to fill out, short answer questions, 3 references required,	https://episcopalservicecorps.org/equity/ For Episcopal Service Corps, diversity means having a range of people with various racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural backgrounds and various lifestyles, experience, and interests. We seek to be a diverse community and believe that the feeling of belonging and acceptance is a fundamental human need. Our staff, volunteers, and Corps members are trained in nonviolent communication, LGBTQIA+ and other identity good practices allyship, anti-racism, anti-oppression, suicide intervention, and resilience and are held to the highest standards of confronting bias while maintaining a posture of respectfulness, approaching every individual and interaction with the positive intent of seeking greater knowledge and understanding.	This program includes more explicit information: NEW YORK SERVICE & JUSTICE COLLABORATIVE NEW YORK, NEW YORK NYSJC forms spiritually grounded leaders through community and action for social justice. Located in NYC, the city is your campus. NYSJC Fellows serve 35 hours at their placement sites, a combination of church outreach programs and nonprofit organizations. NYSJC is a diverse Christian-based program offering housing, utilities, spiritual direction, access to individual counseling, a monthly \$430 stipend, a community meal allowance of \$125 monthly, transportation, medical insurance, and a relocation allowance of \$500 upon successful completion of program requirements.	Group housing	9 months	https://episcopalservicecorps.org/2020-2021-annual-report/	13 programs listed here: https://episcopalservicecorps.org/programs/ 85 young adults were deployed for community service through Episcopal Service Corps in 2020-2021. This Corps represented a diverse cross-section of young adults, representing 30 states and 82 different colleges and universities.		esc@episcopalchurch.org; phone 347-880-6512.

Program	Ages	Application Process	Evidence of their Sensitivity to Gender + Racial Diversity etc	Compensation	Housing	Duration of Program	Budget + Financial Reports	Size of Program	Placement	Primary Contact Info.
Lutheran Volunteer Corps	21+	First step is this interest form --> https://apricot.socialsolutions.com/document/edit/id/new/form_id/201	-Lutheran Volunteer Corps (LVC) is on a Journey to an Inclusive Community (JIC), an ongoing process of forming and strengthening alliances among people of many cultures and communities. Simply put, this means we seek the participation of a broad representation of perspectives and identities. -they have a whole page about this --> https://lutheranvolunteercorps.org/jic/ -in the FAQ, one of the questions is about whether they welcome LGBTQ applicants and the answer is " LVC does not discriminate due to ethnicity, race, creed, age, culture, disability, economic class, gender identity, or sexual orientation. As a Reconciling in Christ organization , LVC strives to be actively welcoming and supportive of fellows who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. Our culture of acceptance supports our "Journey to an Inclusive Community," and we ask that our placements join us in this effort." -another question in the FAQs is about whether they welcome people of color and the answer is "VC does not discriminate due to ethnicity, race, creed, age, culture, disability, economic class, gender identity, or sexual orientation. More importantly, our "Journey to an Inclusive Community" (JIC) means we seek to actively identify, recruit, welcome and include People of Color — and seek to increase representation within our program, staff, board, support networks, and placements."	Modest stipend Health insurance, work-related transportation reimbursement Exploration of simplicity, sustainability and faith perspectives while living in intentional community with other Volunteers Placement in a volunteer position with a social justice partner organization A year-long learning series on social justice topics facilitated by experts, practitioners, researchers, and Volunteers Vocational discernment	Group housing provided by LVC	1 year (there's a half-year option for virtual positions)	https://lutheranvolunteercorps.org/financial-reports/			202-387-3222 operations@lutheranvolunteercorps.org
The United Church of Christ's Partners in Service program	"adults of all ages"	https://app.smarterselect.com/programs/32573-United-Church-Of-Christ				1-12 months				blaufusm@ucc.org dickend@ucc.org 866.822.8224 ext. 3214 or ext. 3810
Jesuit Volunteer Corps	21-25	https://jvc.smapply.io/	They have a DIRECTOR OF JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION Full DEI page --> https://www.jesuitvolunteers.org/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-at-jvc	JVC provides for Jesuit Volunteers' housing, food, a modest monthly personal stipend, health insurance (if unavailable elsewhere), transportation, menstrual products, and a relocation stipend at the end of their term of service. Volunteers are responsible for transportation to orientation. Established through the generous support of Drs. John and Mary Ann Hurley in honor of their children's life-changing JVC experience, the RJV Hurley Fund provides each recipient with up to \$3,000 to mitigate barriers to joining or continuing as a Jesuit Volunteer.	Volunteers live in intentional communities with other volunteers, sharing the responsibilities of cooking, cleaning, and finances.	1 year or more	https://www.jesuitvolunteers.org/annual-report			Rob Roa, Director of Recruitment fjvs@jesuitvolunteers.org Shivany Trujillo, Director of Amissions admissions@jesuitvolunteers.org

Program	Ages	Application Process	Evidence of their Sensitivity to Gender + Racial Diversity etc	Compensation	Housing	Duration of Program	Budget + Financial Reports	Size of Program	Placement	Primary Contact Info.
United Methodist Volunteers in Mission	18+	https://gbgm.embark.com/login/apply?target=my		For reference, these are the missions in North America, and the descriptions include various forms of compensation: https://umcmmission.org/mission-volunteers/mission-volunteer-opportunities-north-america/		2 months to 2 years	https://umcmmission.org/umcor-accountability/	map of all their missions: https://umcmmission.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2020-Mission-Map-Final-version.pdf		Reach us by email For general inquiries, including missionary information and programmatic information (including UMCOR), please email info@umcmmission.org . For questions about donations to GBGM/UMCOR and Advance projects and to request updates to our mailing list, please email donationhelp@umcmmission.org . For employment verification or HR-related matters, please email hrgeneral@umcmmission.org . For media inquiries, please email media@umcmmission.org . Reach us by telephone 800-862-4246 888-252-6174
Americorps Vista	18+	Most surprising part of the application process: there's a drug test!	Are LGBTQIA Corps Members and Team Leaders explicitly protected in nondiscrimination policies? Yes. Page 7 of the AmeriCorps NCCC Member Handbook states "AmeriCorps prohibits all forms of discriminations based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity or expression, marital or parental status, military service, or political affiliation." To clarify, members are explicitly protected within the program from discrimination by staff, Team Leaders, and Corps Members based upon sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or gender expression.	Living allowance, and education award to pay for college or trade school expenses, or to repay qualified student loans, loan deferment and interest forbearance on qualified student loans, while in service, professional development, alumni network, and more. Some of our programs provide health care benefits or a stipend to purchase healthcare. You may also be eligible to receive a childcare benefit if you have children under the age of 13.		1 year	https://americorps.gov/about/agency-overview/budget-performance-plans	Join over 7,000 AmeriCorps members in the VISTA program who serve annually to alleviate poverty by helping local organizations expand capacity to make change. You can serve in any U.S. state or territory.		
Church of Latter-Day Saints Mission (this is a proselytizing mission)	Men 19-26, women 21-26					Men 2 years, women 18 months		More than 53,000 full-time missionaries are serving missions for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Most missionaries are young people under the age of 25, serving in 407 missions throughout the world.		

Program	Ages	Application Process	Evidence of their Sensitivity to Gender + Racial Diversity etc	Compensation	Housing	Duration of Program	Budget + Financial Reports	Size of Program	Placement	Primary Contact Info.
Church of Latter-Day Saints Service Mission	Worthy young men (ages 18 to 25) and young women (ages 19 to 25) who are unable to serve a proselyting mission for physical, mental, or emotional reasons may be called to a service mission. A worthy young man who is unable to serve a proselyting mission does not have a priesthood duty to serve a service mission. Proselyting missionaries who return home early due to accident, illness, or other health conditions and have a desire to continue their service may be reassigned to a service mission if recommended by General Authorities in the Missionary Department and the stake president and approved by the Quorum of the Twelve.									

What we recommend

1. We recommend that the Deaconess Anne House continue its ministry and its connection to the Episcopal Service Corps, but with structural changes addressed below.
2. Communicate the results of this audit broadly, across the Diocese of Missouri and to all former Deaconess Anne House alumnus.
3. Engage in a process to renew and articulate the clarity and purpose for the DAH program. Consider who it is primarily for: the neighborhood, the corps members, the congregations in the diocese? Utilize core values from the Episcopal Service Corps national program.
4. Based on the purpose, create strategies to focus on the specific purpose identified through programming and requirements.
5. Based on the purpose, consideration should be given as to the neighborhood in which this program resides.
6. Consider a multi year option which would allow corps members the opportunity to root further into the community, reduce the stress on the director during the recruitment period, retain talent, provide consistent, longer-term support to non-profits, and provide economic sustainability to the program
7. Be a leader! To address both the barriers to entry of the ESC program which impact both those economically at a disadvantage and/or people of color, consider providing loan repayment assistance to both corps members and ESC directors; consider scholarships for those entering or leaving the program who do not have existing financial resources. The Diocese of Misooouri has an opportunity to be a leader in living into its values regarding social and economic justice within the program structure.
8. Create a plan, with professional counsel, to fundraise from individual donors. Other ESC programs utilize a model which allows the program to be self-sustaining—with individual donations up to 80% of the program budget. With a robust individual and congregational donor base, the Thomson fund could be utilized for repayment of loans and building upkeep.
9. Shift the advisory board to a working taskforce. To ensure a diversification of

What we recommend

funding, as recommended above, the advisory committee could take on a more active, fundraising component. This model is used successfully by other programs to ensure both active participation across a diocese and a more sustainable model.

10. Consider an additional program located in rural Missouri. While different in ethos, the two would share core values and collaborate to share administrative resources. In addition to administrative resources, this could perhaps increase their pool for fundraising, and create programs that speak widely to the Diocese of Missouri.
11. Utilize the survey questions and results in planning for youth programming. that show diocesan priorities as articulated in this audit.
12. Hire professional support to guide in the clarification of purpose, process and implementation of restructured program.
13. Constitute a new steering team that includes young adults, stakeholders in the diocese, and those with social capital; these individuals should be able to dream big and implement details to arrive at goals. We do not recommend including previous Deaconess Anne House participants at this current stage.
14. Utilize the following timeline for next steps:

December/January: Create and implement communication strategy throughout the Diocese of Missouri of the results of the audit to various constituencies of the diocese. Finalize contract with Vandersall Collective for next stages and recruitment of taskforce for next stage of work.

February/March: Purpose of program moving forward clarified, as well as how it relates to ESC National core values and the diocesan strategic plan. From this, create a new plan with goals and benchmarks.

April/May: Audience and strategies identified: Utilizing the data from survey questions, align the goals/core values of the program with the needs of the landscape. Create a comprehensive plan for implementing the next phase of life of the Deaconess Anne House.

May: Presentation of plan to the Diocese of Missouri.

Composite results

SURVEY QUESTIONS/RESULTS

1. Were you aware that the Diocese of Missouri was conducting an audit of the Deaconess Anne House program?

72 Yes or 73%

26 No or 27%

2. Was anyone in your faith community a participant or impacted by the program?

41 Yes or 42%

56 No or 57%

1 No response or >1%

3. Did you or your parish form meaningful relationships with the Deaconess Anne House community?

54 Yes or 55%

25 No or 26%

18 NA or 18%

1 No response or >1%

4. Of the priorities identified in the program's inception, which do you feel the program successfully met?*

81 Living in intentional community or 83%

60 Working at partnering social service/nonprofit organizations or 61%

31 Rooting all their work in Benedictine spiritual formation or 32%

59 Communal Rule of life or 61%

*Numbers greater than 100% because participants could choose more than 1 option.

Composite results

5. Of the priorities identified in the program's inception, which do you feel the program should continue to focus on?*

81 Living in intentional community or 83%

84 Working at partnering social service/nonprofit organizations or 86%

43 Rooting all their work in Benedictine spiritual formation or 44%

54 Communal Rule of life or 55%

*Numbers greater than 100% because participants could choose more than 1 option

6. How helpful was the program in fostering relationships within the North St. Louis community? 1 being lowest, 5 being highest

1 said "1" or >1 %

5 said "2" or 5%

19 said "3" or 19%

18 said "4" or 18%

8 said "5" or 8%

47 No response or 50%

7. How helpful was the program in fostering relationships within the Diocese of Missouri, especially between parishes?

15 said "1" or 15%

8 said "2" or 8%

21 said "3" or 21%

16 said "4" or 16%

12 said "5" or 13%

26 No Response or 27%

Composite results

8. How likely are you to recommend this program to individuals aged 21-30?

8 said "1" or 8%
10 said "2" or 10%
12 said "3" or 13%
21 said "4" or 21%
35 said "5" or 36%
12 No Response or 13%

9. How helpful was it in forming young adults for their vocation?
1 being lowest, 5 being highest

4 said "1" or 4 %
2 said "2" or 2%
14 said "3" or 14%
28 said "4" or 29%
30 said "5" or 30%
20 No Response or 21%

10. How important was Deaconess Anne House to the overall life and ministry of the
Diocese of Missouri? 1 being lowest, 5 being highest

6 said "1" or 6%
5 said "2" or 5%
23 said "3" or 24%
27 said "4" or 28%
22 said "5" or 22%
15 No Response or 15%

Composite results

11. Currently, the DAH is one of the only “youth ministries” in the Diocese of Missouri. However, its participation ages begin at 21 and does not directly engage with younger youth. In thinking about other potential ministries for young people that could potentially be made available, which are priorities for you?*

80 A place where youth feel they belong or 82%
71 Access in both rural/urban environments or 72%
58 A place where youth have fun or 59%
35 Centered on specifically Episcopal faith or 26%
80 Developed by and for a diverse population or 82%
40 Ability to retain the diocese’s youth or 41%

*Numbers greater than 100% because participants could choose more than 1 option.

12. Is a diverse range of youth programming a priority to you in the Diocese of Missouri?

25 Yes or 26%
6 No or 6%
63 Maybe or 64%
4 No answer or 4%

13. If there was a youth program, apart from the Deaconess Anne House, developed by the Diocese of Missouri, would you or your youth participate?

61 said yes or 62%
6 No or 6%
25 said no or 26%
6 No answer or 6%

14. Age Range

4 said 19-29 or 4%
7 said 30-39 or 7%
5 said 40-49 or 5%
47 said 50-69=49%
35 said Over 70=35%

Composite results

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS/RESULTS

Why was the Deaconess Anne House founded?

The response to this question mostly revolves around a place for young adults to be in community, and engaged in discernment. Beyond this are several references to living in intentional community, creating a pipeline for priests, having a presence in Old North and living out the mission of the church.

Young adult support:

- I think they thought it would bring young people into the Diocese of Missouri and put life into it. Some other programs are more rooted with things like Americorp.
- Growth and formation for young people.
- That was right around the time when it was hard for college kids to get jobs and there were recent grads not sure what they were going to do and it was an opportunity for room and board and experience. Church had a history in that area and there was a real need for people and being involved.
- To be a place for young adults are discerning what they want to do next. It created a safe place to do this, live in community, and get together with people thinking about the same thing.
- To be a program to foster discernment for young adults in Old North St. Louis and to be a part of the good work already happening there through service, prayer, etc.
- As an Episcopal Service Corps. A way of bringing young people to St. Louis and putting them in nonprofit positions and giving them time to explore their discipleship and do some discernment in regards to their faith.
- A number of reasons that all work together. To bring youth and young people into the churches to create diversity: diversity of age, race, gender.
- I think it goes back to a combination of — there were Episcopal Service Corps programs being founded across the U.S. — so it was a form of outreach to young adults, an opportunity for them to be involved with the Church for a year.

Composite results

- Many layers of reasoning. It was the flavor of the month for all the bishops in the country. The market was flooded and it worked. The job market for college graduates was low so it was not a problem to attract young adults.
- It was founded because there was opportunity to give young adults a meaningful space at a time when it was hard to find jobs for young adults. It was also founded so the church would have a contemporary presence in a place where there was need.

Neighborhood:

- I know there was some sort of opportunity as well with the same in Old North and to have a relationship with the neighborhoods.
- Also to interact with that neighborhood. It was important to have a footprint in that neighborhood, important to connect church to community and vice versa. Important for STL area churches to have a stake in service-oriented opportunities and also the community that was gathered around neo-monasticism. Having people come, eat, celebrate on Monday nights.
- My understanding of why it was founded is because there was prior history in the area with Deaconess Anne Pugh. There is that old building that is in the area that I don't know what it was used for. This was an endeavor to continue Episcopal Ministry in North City. I think that some of the impetus to return is that the ESC seemed like a cool thing at the time and property in Old North was super cheap.

Community:

- My interest in a service corps community was really started by a presentation at the House of Bishops. The idea of intentional, Christian community in a place of poverty or need had a strong appeal for me as did the emphasis on young adults. I wanted to find something to signal to this cohort that the Episcopal Church cares for them. For those that never became of service corps house, the presence of them meant a lot. The reach of DAH was much larger than the footprint left by the residents.
- A priest here went to Bishop Smith and did not like her job and brought him to Old NSTL and said we need to plant something here. Bishop Smith still had the seed planted. He wanted some kind of YA community NSTL. Bishop Smith asked Jon.

Composite results

There was no direction other than to plant a YA intentional community in NSTL. He forged with ESC, bought house, relationship building, recruited people. First that was parishes adopting and rehabbing rooms.

- Community connection and intentionality in community.

Mission expression:

- So I know the legwork he did to get it started. I know the vision cast was between him and the bishop. They wanted to jump onto the intentional community model to incorporate young adults. The fact that the Bishop gave Jon the latitude he did was incredible. The work Jon did before starting was incredible. I was recruited in the middle of the uprisings.
- To go be the church out in the community as an expression of our values and mission.
- As an extension of the church's mission. It was a very place-based ministry. Very intentionally in North St. Louis. We looked at many properties and it came back again and again that we needed to be in a depressed and under-served community. We wanted the church to be in an under-served part of St. Louis. The Episcopal Service Corps is part and partial with the Diocese of Missouri in a missional sense. The Service Corps was a bigger org that this was becoming part of. There is therefore a larger connection and organization. It was about living the mission of the church in St. Louis and mechanism is ESC.

Pipeline for priests:

- To be a pipeline of talent.
- Brought people to STL in the Diocese of Missouri and people could go through the process there and to be priests and active lay members. It was also good energy for the Diocese of Missouri at the time and a good morale builder and was exciting.

Composite results

Other:

- Jon founded it because he is a social activist and they wanted to do social activist kind of work and be part of the community to put Episcopalians in and to discern to become a priest or deacon.
- Bringing people into the Episcopal church and the values.
- Jon saw a need and was a young priest so had energy to do it.
- Because at that time Bishop Smith was looking to bring a religious order within the Diocese of Missouri. We had parishes and rectories that were faltering. He had approached a women's order in KY to relocate in one of our rectories. When that fell through the concept of the ESC was made to him and at that point Mike Angell was working in the Diocese of Missouri and it really just gained steam from there. Was such an exciting thing to be proposed to the Diocese of Missouri at the time. Based on funds we had in the Thomson fund it was so easy to find a location and house and make it possible.

What were the priorities of the program at its founding?

Excluding the few respondents who did not know, the responses to this question garnered five themes:

- Christian Formation/Young Adult Formation x8
- Presence in the city/ disadvantaged neighborhood/ attention to needs of a segregated city x7
- Investment in the community in Old North x7
- Discerning/Intentional Community of DAH corps members x7
- Service x7
- Rule of Life and Benedictine Values x5

Composite results

What priorities of the Diocese of Missouri aligned with the program?

The dominant response to this question is simply that **there were no articulated priorities** in the Diocese of Missouri for the program to align with.

- What were the priorities of the Diocese of Missouri? I don't know. The bishop incarnated lack of connection.
- I have no idea.
- As far as priorities of the Diocese of Missouri, there were none articulated.
- There were no diocesan priorities
- Not sure they had any, at the time.

Several others simply **didn't know**, as they weren't involved in the Diocese of Missouri at that time:

- Don't know enough about the Diocese of Missouri to know.
- I don't know. I heard something
- That is hard to say because I wasn't from the Diocese of Missouri so I don't know the conversations leading up to it.

Other categories were as a way to **cultivate priests and support young adults**:

- At the time Bp. Smith was into the death of Christendom. The failure of Constantinianism was something he talked about all the time. People heard though "the death of the church." The Bishop was interested in new ways of being church that would help the church navigate a post-church context. He also had a preference for young clergy. He saw this as a way to get more young people into the ordination track.
- The priest machine. Bishop Smith was every year putting 40k in to keep it afloat. He got tired of doing fundraisers and they were measly. It was a misalignment of

Composite results

things. And it was expensive. And then once someone drops out it shatters the whole thing and falls apart and gets more expensive.

- I heard that towards the beginning this could be a potential way of pursuing ministry as a vocation. Maybe getting some people interested in serving in the Diocese of Missouri long term, but also forming young adults that you don't get at a local church level. I didn't ever sit down with Bp. Smith to ask though.
- To my understanding, was to support these young adults to respond to their call.
- Giving the kids a chance for a discernment period.

Connect congregations:

- There was a lot of education built into their programs, on Fridays this is what they did. For us it gave my parish an opportunity to do something outside of just our church. To get out of our bubble and do something. It helped get a lot of people involved throughout the Diocese of Missouri. Did that wane over time? A little bit in that the number of corps members went down. When there were more there was more involvement from the wider church. At the beginning parishes "adopted" a corpsmember. That didn't continue. At that point it really helped parishes become more involved. Before Covid we still had people who did meals, welcome baskets and events, trivia night, meals and there was still quite a bit of involvement.
- Broadly speaking there is mission and also that we have a number of parishes throughout the city and all of us in the house were committed to a particular church. So the idea about maintaining connectedness in parishes would be my guess. Also living opportunities for younger folks to be in the church.
- We invited through Jon Stratton the Diocese of Missouri key congregations to become sponsors. The congregations become like postulants of the community. They would come and visit as well and invite them out on Sundays to participate in worship. It became more that the diocesan congregations became part of Deaconess Anne House. At the beginning 2 people had a relationship with each DAH per congregation and that didn't open it up wider. Monday meals then had an invitation to the whole wide world, which really lessened the intimacy. The community forgot that they were there.

Composite results

- When I came in as a member that was my first introduction to the Diocese of Missouri. When it started the Diocese of Missouri was so deeply invested. People from across the diocese came and helped. Jon did a great job in getting people invested beyond the metro area. It reflected at least the desires of the Diocese of Missouri at the time. There was at least some desire to have a presence in Old North.

Engage in mission and ministry:

- Helping others—so the nonprofit aspect was important.
- I guess I can say that ministry within the city limits is and was then something that is lacking. We wanted to grow ministry in the city and urban ministry—there are only a few parishes and there aren't many thriving outside of the Cathedral. This would not have worked in the County. The Diocese of Missouri has been prioritizing city ministry. DAH felt like doubling down on the ministry in the city. The Diocese of Missouri was prioritizing urban ministry.
- Mission—keen advocate. I won't shut up about it even here in Ohio! We had a partner in Sudan, but we needed one close by. I dreamt of a house south on the river. We have some money could have funded that. A church was destroyed by a tornado—I set money aside \$300,000. I hope money has grown. The idea was to have a venue in a rural site as well as one in the urban site.

As well as a few other thoughts:

- My tenure started in the middle of the Ferguson uprising and there were several shit shows afoot [in regards to the dynamics in the house]. Ferguson. A couple was sexually involved. One person struggled with gender dysphoria. And yet we were lifted up [as virtue] signaling. We were the model people. All clergy were on the front line. We became the issue du jour and I never felt like that changed. Then we go to Trump and immigration. We were the literally 2 dimensional thing that should have been a wider Diocesan representation. The vision did not go deep.
- So far as we are all Christians, help people live into their baptismal covenant and to do the work that Jesus instructs us which is to be a source of love and inclusion and forgiveness and...presence.

Composite results

- Bishop Smith was not like Bishop Deon. More into teaching and quiet pastor as opposed to the extroversion of Deon. He started the Episcopal School for Ministry and Deon closed it. Making disciples, building congregations for the life of the world was the motto for the time. This was “building congregations” and “making disciples.”
- It was what they hoped to be. It is a vision of what this diocese could be but also what church could be in the future.
- At the beginning it was idealism that this could bring change.

How has the relationship with DAH affected your relationship with the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri?

For a few individuals, they responded that their relationship was **strengthened**.

- My relationship has grown very very strong. I have been on projects where I met a lot of people and gained a lot of influence in the Diocese of Missouri. I like working on the diocesan level. DAH was the beginning of diocesan work. We have a new Bishop and he is no longer ignoring things.
- Strengthened it. I would say that the one to one connection is well established. How that connects us to the broader Diocese of Missouri might be a little more unclear. It is a ministry of the Diocese of Missouri and so it does connect us to the larger church. Deaconess Anne members have participated in our softball league. They usually play with the Cathedral or Trinity. It enhances the connection to the Diocese of Missouri even though it isn't explicit. If there were a visitor at church and they are in the announcements it isn't obvious what it is about but for most members it is pretty well understood.

For the great majority, they spoke to feeling **connected to the Diocese of Missouri** in particular because of the program:

- It is everything. I felt so welcomed by the Diocese of Missouri when I was first here.

Composite results

I stayed for many years because of it. I felt so connected and very much like a child of the Diocese of Missouri. It was hard working for one parish because I was so well connected to the larger body. It jump started my entire career. So...everything.

- I didn't have a relationship prior. I came in from another diocese. I knew I wanted deeper conversation and wanted formation. Through different interactions, it broadened my perspective on what it means to be Christian and Episcopalian. Prior to this corps, I had very little contact with the Diocese of Missouri but, through this, I realized how much a diocese does and got to meet lots of people. I would gladly go back.
- It was a crux piece as I was the young adult person for the Episcopal Church so it gave me a place to be in contact with young adults, I helped to recruit. It was a place to exercise ministry.
- As a director and starting director, it helped me feel much closer and connected.
- I wouldn't have a relationship if it weren't for DAH. I would say positively. I was introduced through this diocese that took a lot of risks and adapted in a lot of ways. There was a willingness to change and try new things. The fact that this has lasted as long is a testament to the priorities of the Diocese of Missouri. We have 9 consecutive years in its original formation. That is pretty impressive. In my year there was a real sense that the Diocese of Missouri cared. So many people visited and there was a lot of intention and energy. The diocese contained people who did want to make changes and cared about new ministries.
- It allowed me to get to know people I would never have gotten to know. The Advisory Board people were friends and we would see each other regularly. So when it became Convention time you I felt like I was part of a wider community. Then at Convention the corps members would do a presentation or a booth and I was so proud of them!
- Very positively. We tried to leverage the relationship with the Diocese of Missouri. We stayed overnight to be at people's houses before worship. They preached if they were in discernment. Everything was about discernment. Where to do placement, where to go to church. I tried to leverage the relationship with the diocese.
- I still feel a connection especially with people I was involved with. The young people involved still contact me. What makes me proud about what we did are the number of priests and deacons that went on. That is because of the work they did at DAH.

Composite results

The following comments remain, which **don't neatly fit** into the above categories:

- Not so much! Early on, some of the Monday events was a chance to see clergy from other churches which was nice. The deacon was often present when I was there so that gave me a tiny connection but beyond that, I don't have much of the sense of the presence.
- I will always be in debt for creating this experience for me. It was life changing. I moved away and took a job closer to my home in New England. I am not a part of the Diocese of Missouri but had a positive experience.
- I made so many connections at my placement, I fell in love with St. Louis, met so many people from so many churches. I was able to survive more easily than others. I feel jaded in that DAH is seen by most everyone else as charity or mission to poor black people in Old North but there were several things that we did that I thought were poverty tourism for rich, white people in the Diocese of Missouri. I always felt icky about doing some of these events and we didn't have a say and when we pushed back it wasn't respected or considered. Otherwise there are so many great people in the Diocese of Missouri trying to make this a good thing but they don't know how to.

How has the DAH impacted the neighborhood?

The responses to this question were grouped in a few categories. The first is around **charity-based aspects** of support:

- Our corps member was in charge of our pantry. So they WERE the impact in handing out food for the community. They also managed the volunteers so people got to know them first. That was a major impact for rebuilding and reshaping the organization.
- Positive impact: little free pantry outside of the house. There are some positive things that have come out—winter clothing drives etc.
- They did a coat drive and a chili giveaway at a local park. There was a table at the Farmer's Market. There is also the free pantry but they hoped to plant fresh produce to share with the neighborhood. I hope that will still come to be.

Composite results

- The neighborhood is weird. Neighborhood meetings are very pro forma. But we went. Some of our placements — one of the placements got a park redone. With the white people we were cordial but didn't mix with the white people. I hired people of color to help with the yard and outreaches by the park by the gas station. We went down there and did pop up things. Coats and chili etc. We also invited people to come Monday nights to our meals. We invited anyone.
- Most directly the Little Free Pantry. I could literally watch people come all day. It gets used a lot. I have met people putting stuff in. It is small but really helpful. There is a tension: when there is no one in the house sometimes Pastor Battle will bring food. Sometimes if there is fresh food it will spill and people argue about who cleans it up. During the early pandemic I had ice chests because I had a lot of extra produce. People were concerned about rats.

The second is around the **presence** of the DAH in the neighborhood:

- I think just being there has made a difference. The neighborhood has gone the way Old North Development corporation had imagined. They had stronger fantasies about gentrification. With the military GEO Spatial, it is going into Hyde Park which is next. We will see what happens to that cluster. The one thing that made a difference was a formative event: Ferguson falling apart. Those who were there will bear witness to it. I won't speak for them. I will say it became a jumping off point (DAH) for other people who wanted to be engaged in the city. There was a lot of political action, people getting arrested (including the director). My job that day was to post bail!
- I want to say positively because we did connect with people in our neighborhood. We made new people and made our presence known. We were not a fortress. At the very least we were good neighbors to our community and that had a positive influence on the neighborhood.
- In the earlier days the neighborhood had a group that met together and a member of the DAH sat on their group. They met monthly. That was important because there was that liaison and representative.
- They were very visible in the neighborhood and took part in the neighborhood. There were some plans for the empty lot next door that they were hoping to make it a community garden.

Composite results

Several people were **unsure, neutral or did not believe it had an impact:**

- I can't speak to that. I haven't been there in 10 years since it was purposed.
- I don't know if it did. I know they were good neighbors but I don't know.
- I don't know. When I was there the corps members were very involved in the neighborhood but if anything the neighborhood has impacted the DAH. They come out with a very different perspective on race, class segregated nature of STL. If they are white they have come to understand their privilege. But probably it hasn't really impacted the neighborhood much. The neighborhood has had other intentional communities in it, so it is used to that.
- I'm not sure it really has. I am sure it has in some ways, in more insidious ways. We branded ourselves as a place of hospitality and where they could get their needs met but when I was there that was not true. Partially because of Covid but we were not equipped with how to respond to the needs of the neighborhood. Offering a free meal once a week is pretty useless. If we did give then it was out of our food budget which was poverty-wage food. We asked a lot for guidance and protocols and that was attempted but never really given. Which to be fair because the Director didn't know. Many times we were promised she would get us bus tickets so we could give those when people approached us for rides, but that never happened.
- People from the neighborhood come for dinner on Monday nights. I don't know how often they came. The Little Food Pantry was a little help. But beyond that I don't think they really got an understanding of that neighborhood. The economic discrepancy was really extreme. It would be hard to say how they impacted the neighborhood minus the pantry, meetings, and meals. You would think if there were a neighborhood association they would be involved, and I don't think they were.
- Probably neutral. The turnover is difficult and when there is a priority in investing in relationships that is hard. Some years it has been better than others. In terms of relationship building, corps members and neighbors moving, and a pandemic...we tried to encourage neighborhood connections but I have an outsider perspective and I don't know that the nature of the program did what we hoped. And the transience of the Director role is hard because it is hard to maintain and deepen relationships. The house is the only thing that stays the same.

Composite results

- That neighborhood was always on the precipice of waiting for good things to happen. It is so block to block. On our street there was a house falling down, a church caving in. We were on the edge. As we started there were more and more rehabs starting. We were better when we were on the edge. Once the gentrification started, it wasn't so good. When we worked with the Neighborhood Association there was edgy stuff going on. With gentrification — we could have set up in Town and Country.

Finally, there were several responses that **did not as neatly fit** into a theme:

- Physically they saved a building. That does not happen all the time.
- It's a neighborhood in transition. It is gentrifying. I fear that this program has been part of gentrifying. Maybe it's also happening to the community through the transition because its predominantly white corps members. Predominantly white people in a black neighborhood with affluent white people moving in. The members I worked with are genuinely interested in the people in the neighborhood and supporting them. We aren't looking to push them.
- It acted as a bridge between the Diocese of Missouri and the Church which is pretty geographically close to Old North. It acted as a "hey! We are here and we exist" so we become an option if they are looking for a church, and it also gave the Diocese of Missouri some awareness of what is happening in Old North. The problems that occurred in Old North and giving an awareness of how they could help—but on a person to person level, not a large, systems level. We as a cohort were able to meet and build relationships. We were able to tell the Diocese of Missouri what was happening and learn from that.
- It had been a place of hospitality, at times, to the neighborhood in fits and starts. It wasn't perceived as anything but a good attempt. Particular Corps member worked as community organizer to plan for a playground through organizing parents and kids.

Composite results

How do you feel about the Episcopal Church's presence in the neighborhood?

The great majority of respondents connect the Episcopal Church's presence in the neighborhood connected with the **ministry of presence** of the Deaconess Anne House. That presence waxes or wanes depending upon the number of people living in the house and the personalities of those individuals.

- It has historically been there since Deaconess Anne and Holy Cross. That presence has waned over the years. I feel that it is important for the Episcopal Church North of Delmar. It is the **ONLY** presence north of Delmar in the City of St. Louis. It is important for the Episcopal Church to have a presence there as long as it is contextual and looks like the neighborhood, i.e. not all white people.
- I don't have a sense of it now. In the beginning, there was a lively, community presence early on. Neighbors were often present for those Monday evening events but I didn't see them as time went on. I also think the neighborhood has changed. I have a sense of gentrification. Pre-pandemic, I think corps members were going to the coffee shop and making themselves known. Once the pandemic hit, I have had the sense that it would take more than 4 members for there to be the kind of energy to build something.
- I think that it is better not as a stand alone church. The fact that we have set up a place for pilgrims to come and stay for a time is less of a colonial approach. It is saying "we are called to be with."
- Our presence is through Deaconess Anne House. This presence would be a little different than a more formal church because we weren't a traditional church. It adapted to the environment.
- When I talk with friends outside of the program they don't know about the Episcopal Church. People don't know about it unless they grew up in it or flock to it because they like parts of it not being Catholicism. They like that it is not flashy, who have been disillusioned. The Episcopal Church presence in the neighborhood is as wide as the house goes. I don't know if the association goes to the next level in who is doing it and running it.
- There really isn't anything beyond DAH. There is no connection to Grace Hill—they

Composite results

had no idea that it was an Episcopal ministry. That is why we kept trying to tell the story about who Deaconess Anne was—there was a presence of Episcopalians there and we were carrying on a future there. They need to look and see needs in the neighborhood. If we are going to keep the house, what are we going to do. Without a local parish, I don't know...

- Old North Restoration was preaching the gospel of restoring without gentrification. I don't know if that has ever been done in the life of our country. This was an opportunity that made a lot of sense. Also where else would they have put it? We already had a footprint on S. Grand. We had Grace Hill in NSTL but that is empty.
- It is located in this kind of neighborhood. By it being located here, it adds to the neighborhood as well. It doesn't feel left behind the church. We are part of the bigger church if not part of a local church. Corps members are invited to events in the neighborhood. I came when Covid hit, but when things started to open up, there was an opportunity to be involved in things like the community garden and Walls of St. Louis. It helps build relationships.
- I'm interested right now around the property. It is not being occupied. Grace Hill, rectory etc...what is going to happen to that? How will this fit in with the neighborhood planning? How can there not be 2 different planning efforts? Beyond that without any house members there isn't much of a presence. Could neighborhood members give more support around placements? I really liked the house. If the neighborhood was willing or invited, we could step in and help them feel more of the community. We used to host volunteers in fall for 2 weeks and the neighbors took turns hosting for dinner. They could do that for 4 house members. Before they were at community meetings and garden but there was a gap time.

A few others mentioned the **charity-based aspects** of the Episcopal Church's presence:

- We also had a food pantry in Old North which was a resource for people. But that was more of a like one way to address needs that we noticed.
- The program itself has a food pantry program here. It is my understanding though it is right outside—its for the whole neighborhood. So anyone can use it. It has been possible because the house is rooted here.
- I don't know much about it other than the building where Grace Hill used to be.

Composite results

You loaned out a building to an organization for a nominal fee to utilize and serve the community—that was huge. And then having an intern to serve the community. There are no other ways other than maybe participating in programming with agencies? That kind of thing. Those two things that I know of alone.

Several others were **skeptical** of the presence of the Episcopal Church's presence in Old North, for a variety of reasons:

- To be Episcopal you have to go to church and we have a long way to go with the Black community — there are not many Black Episcopalians. It is a different way of worshiping culturally. If they wanted to involve the neighborhood they needed to have programs. They weren't doing any of that. They were going to work and living there. If you want to impact the neighborhood you have to do some footwork and talk to people. You have to build programs that talk to those people. It was a good choice but it wasn't used well—they didn't put it to the use that it needed to be. They should have had people in the neighborhood on the board. We are all outsiders. We want to impact the neighborhood and not one of them is on the board.
- The neighborhood is completely non coherent. I don't think this was a good choice to have this in the neighborhood. It is better in a place that has more vitality. The problem with that location is that no one lives in Old North because of how the banks work there. I can see why Jon picked it—because it there are lots of nonprofits. If you can bring your nonprofit and help the poor back people then come on down, so corps members could walk to the nonprofit. The issue with NIMBY is gone. On the other hand you have to weigh: is it a deep investment in the neighborhood or is it just community site and the house? Mtiye is up there and there is something going down with his mission. The fact that there is housing that students could live there and have a mission for international students is cool.
- Disorganized and unintentional...more of a property holder
- I felt pretty skeptical. I feel skeptical of the program as a whole. It brings a bunch of young, white, middle class people to the neighborhood and asking them to serve it without cultural awareness is kind of icky. There is no cultural awareness of poverty and class dynamics. I don't know how the presence in that neighborhood could be successful, there are other ways, but not with a bunch of young white kids. First and foremost it should not be led by a white person. I feel skeptical

Composite results

of white people from the suburbs flocking in to form a church. I am not sure I am ready that there should be no Episcopal presence here but it must start very differently than a traditional church model. One success: I have seen Mtippe and what he is doing and I am not sure how that is going; most people who live in that neighborhood are very different but they are just using the space.

- I don't think it matters to be known as an Episcopal thing. What matters are relationships and impressions. The actions matter more than people knowing it is an Episcopal Church and not having a negative impact. We want to be more helpful than harmful. If they know we are Episcopalian, then cool.

What were the intended demographics of participants for this ministry?

The responses to this question varied considerably, when it came to ages, albeit all encompassing **young adults in their 20s and early 30s**. The specified age ranges named were:

- 17-30
- 21-30
- 21-32
- 21-35
- 21-29
- 21-24
- 22-30

Other repetitive intended demographics are:

- College graduates x10
- Young Adults/ Young People/ People in their 20s/ x9
- Folks doing discernment/ exploring faith and spirituality x5

Composite results

- Interested in living in intentional community x3
- Religiously diverse/ didn't have to be an Episcopalian x2

And finally others believed that the structure of the program brought the following demographics:

- White, middle class folks
- As much diversity as possible.
- Willing to participate in Christian practices
- Intended to be for BIPOC folks but assumptions made this impossible
- We wanted gender balance. There was no age criteria. We wished we had more from St. Louis.
- Wanted people from MO but that did not happen more than once. No intentionality around race or class demographics.
- No one with vocational training.

Composite results

Were there barriers that would prevent participants from applying? If so, what were they?

The barriers to making an application were almost exclusively around **finances**. In short: people with very specific (privileged) financial realities could afford to do a year of service at DAH. There are a few additional factors which are found at the end of this section.

- Big time. Cost in general. I had to get my parents to help me with phone bill and car insurance, etc. We have had to talk about how this is a privilege. There are a lot of great things covered but you get shit. And yet this is a lot better than a lot of programs. Some programs have people apply for food stamps. Of the programs, we are well funded.
- People want it because it looks good but they don't want to pay the money for it.
- I don't know how easy it was to live on the stipend. I don't know how they managed that. Particularly if you are someone with a lot of loans.
- Getting to and from were expensive and logistically complicated. There was also an unspoken barrier to be able to afford this. The biggest costs are to get there. Once you are there, depending on your level of school loans/forbearance, or if you are responsible for things beyond your own self, these things can add up quickly if you are only getting \$300/month. Significant financial responsibilities would be a huge barrier.
- One thing that I thought was great was that everyone was very open about the fact that this aspect of the program was flawed and tried to be supportive and named the level of privilege in being able to be there. It was healthy that it was acknowledged. It would be ignoring a substantial aspect of our lives if it weren't.
- There were lots. People wanted to get on with their life and make money. Student debt was an impediment for many who otherwise might come. It is a factor in every young adult's life.
- Economic and cultural. They end up giving up a year of income is a pretty heavy assumption. Year long commitment.

Composite results

- Financial. If you don't have a safety net, you can't.
- Finances. Money. There just isn't any way around it.
- It is difficult to do this program if you don't have financial support from outside of you. I chose St. Louis and decided against Houston because I didn't own a car. Chicago is just kind of expensive on a small stipend. St. Louis felt like a place where it would be easier to get integrated into the community. It is smaller.
- When I started the program I wasn't thinking about health care. I was much younger. They had health insurance but...what were the deductibles? I did have a medical situation when I was here and the insurance wasn't great for the situation I was in. I personally was wanting to throw myself at something and take a big risk but this is a huge ask with a lot of unanswered questions. In this way the program self selects.
- Money; I didn't have a car when I started the program and the \$200/month stipend was ok and it was a 9 minute drive and an hour bus ride. I got a car and that was great but \$81/month was car insurance. Food was tight, especially because of Monday nights. The Director knew and would purchase essentials on her own. I had the ability to sit and not make money for a year and a half but when I tried to leave I was trapped. I was fortunate that my grandparents passed away and I got help to find an apartment. If that didn't happen...a lot of people who didn't go to a liberal arts college—the idea of doing a service program is like: interesting...so you make how much money? Huh?
- You have to have money. I drained my savings account going through DAH. That is the biggest one. I truly don't know how someone who is on the hook for paying insurance, phone, medical, a car. There is literally no way. \$250 that is taxed is not livable.
- When the economy was good that was harder. We had some screening...We had diversity but there is an element of diversity but there was an element of privilege. Are you gonna really be that broke for a year? I would say all corp members having a side income from parents or something. They mostly live in poverty.
- Yes, the stipend is very small. I think the financial barrier; you need financial privilege to participate.
- I think there is a direct correlation between how many corps members you get and the economy. A barrier is that the year is like a gap year so if there is a reason to

Composite results

take a gap year because things need to get better you get more and if things are going well then they want to catch the wave.

- They tried really hard to get participants. Directors traveled to colleges and universities to fairs and they used social media to try and get the word out. I don't remember the barriers. The barriers were that it is now easier to get a job coming out of college. It was not an opportunity that was going to make you money.
- If you are saddled with debt that you can't get deferred.
- If you had other expenses that the very small stipend wouldn't cover.

The remaining reasons are connected to life circumstances, how hard it can be to live with others based on those realities, and the theological particularities of the program:

- It is a very nichey thing—the EPISCOPAL Service Corps. Most people looking for service corps are looking at the Jesuits, Peace Corps, Americorps. There are many competitors. We had to get someone's attention before they went to others.
- You had to live in the house—covid and monkey pox and people aren't going to be too enthusiastic about living in a house. We had someone with a mental illness and people fled. We go to job fairs and offer internships. Recruitment was really hard work and they were depending on pet congregants to recommend children, grandchildren, and that didn't work.
- You come here without knowing what your job was. That is a big commitment with a lot of insecurity.
- I could imagine if someone was thinking about this there are challenges with living with so many strangers especially if they are part of a marginalized group. Fear of being the only one.
- There have been barriers to St. Louisans participating as there are a lot of YA adults and parents that wouldn't want to live in that neighborhood due to safety. A real hard sale. This is true of parishes as well.
- DAH, to be honest, to my knowledge has been wide enough to accommodate most situations for anyone to apply even if they aren't Christian or Episcopalian. Maybe those who are conservative, they might feel like its the place for them. If someone is willing to live with anyone and open minded, I don't think of that as a hindrance.
- It is about church and church is tanking in that demographic.

Composite results

- The commitment of one year of life together. We didn't have a "come and see." We didn't have a 3 week trial period. We ask a lot of people upfront.
- If you have a kid.
- If you find it hard living with other people due to personality type, mental illness or substance abuse issues.
- Not being a Christian.
- Although a large percentage were not Episcopalian, not being acquainted with Episcopal thought, theology and liturgy would make it hard.

What impact did the location of the Deaconess Anne House (North St. Louis) have on how the program was designed? How did this location root the program in particular?

The dominant theme in the response to this question is around **education** and awareness for corps members:

- I think it is so important that it is where it is. I realized once I lived in west county that it was so valuable to see what is happening. By living there you have a new awareness to socioeconomic divides. The point is to be in relationship with people that you wouldn't normally be in relationship with. The realities of living there and learning has never left me. It is so valuable. It isn't just a learning experience but the impact is that you realize that we DO need to stand in solidarity with these people. They are our neighbors! Not in a savior-y way but you are a fellow person. We need to be standing and working together and I need to follow your lead.
- There were a lot of things. Being in Old North makes it very hard to ignore the injustice, racism, and all the things that go into inequality in a way that other places did not. You cross Delmar and you start seeing crumbling houses. There was a significant lack of investment in half the city. We read and watched things to understand why things were the way they were. And we wrestled with the

Composite results

questions as to how we answer our calling. Things we were encouraged to do would have been different if we were located in another part of town. We got to have conversations with long term residents of the neighborhood. We had an event where we gave chili and handed out coats. There was a lot to learn from this. Some of my housemates served in places that were closer to the house than mine. I think they had even more in-depth experience than me. We were able to draw connections between experience, history, and current events and what we are asked to do about it.

- As far as actual place to have a house it is a good block because of the mix of homeowners and renters. Stable block with eyes all around. It would make members feel safe. It depends on the goals of the program. If you want people to have a perspective on what it is like to live in this neighborhood because of terrible federal policy, it has to come back in a grassroots way—it is great. How to bring people together around common challenges? Great. There are a number of social service agencies for housing insecure people. If that is a goal—there are many but most are disconnected. A challenge is that nonprofit work is really hard and turnover is high. Deaconess Anne House has done well in introducing people to the orgs and the Restoration Group.
- When there were actually interns there at the beginning Michael Brown was killed. There was a lot of publicity from our area that this might be the place to come if you want to work on racial justice issues. The needs of the area. A lot of the first kids shared cars or used public transportation. If I were a parent I would have been a bit nervous at first. If you are looking at it from the outside...The needs of the area were very important in forming the corps members. Jon talked a lot about how they didn't come to fix the community but be apart of the community. That was really emphasized in the first couple of years.

Then others spoke of the neighborhood having **minimal impact**, as an important place to **develop relationships**, and also perhaps having **good intentions but poor execution**. As years passed there were fewer placement sites in Old North, minimizing the impact of the location on the program:

- Well, I can't say that, I really know. I do think it was an interesting choice that there was all this empty housing stock. And it's a neighborhood that's worth preserving. It's not like there is nothing there...Grace Hill has been there.

Composite results

- I think it was just a good intention but executed poorly.
- Meant to root in particular. Meant to be intentionally desegregating. In some ways, it caused us to confront issues around segregation. St. Louis is a particularly difficult city—it seems like it might have an upswing for a decade now. A number of historic places have closed.
- It was pretty tricky—finding an adequate house in that neighborhood. North St. Louis was a planned community—a place with so much character and mixed incomes. Some gentrification. there were people who were legacy residents, squatters, etc. Having that sort of mixed environment, things can grow here! Like a hot house!
- You have to have a car. My site was not in the neighborhood and it was impossible. Particularly because my job involved driving people. I don't know that it was designed that much. I know Jon very well and I know that he is very thoughtful. The internships are somewhat limited without a car are limited to the neighborhood. Our jobs weren't in the neighborhood for the most part. For the person who was in the neighborhood for his job had experiences he was not prepared for. Interestingly most of the people [in the neighborhood] I know are white. I met non-white people because I hung out at la Mancha and my partner at the time was living there. I met some people outside of that. This was of course troubled by the fact that this was covid and we weren't allowed to do much.
- Most of the placement sites were within the neighborhood or within a mile. So the fact that corpsmembers lived and worked there rooted it. They were required to participate in community events. Farmers market, town hall meetings, etc. They were encouraged to get to know their neighbors.
- Very significantly. I was a faith based, community organizer. I worked with kids to develop playground equipment. Also, I would regularly go and play basketball with the kids. As the only white player, it was an important experience for me to be in the minority. Also, to see the spectrum of diversity within people of color. It was important in my own personal development. A lot of our events and placements were neighborhood based.

Composite results

How has a rule of life impacted the formation of participants?

Many respondents found the Rule of Life particularly helpful as a **guide for communication and group living** in the house. This was the dominating theme:

- I would like to say that it anchored all that we did but the way it came up the most was commitment to the group meetings. It forced us to raise issues we were having. People also just broke some of them and let things happen. (Romantic relationship in house, drinking, mental illness, etc)
- It is one thing to live with a group that are family members. It is another thing to live with a group of people who are not family members. I think that was part of the formation. To be able to compromise. To be able to understand different people's habits. To be responsible for chores. Show up on time for morning prayer and programs. Those were all things that helped the group grow together.
- It was one of the most precious gifts for one of them and us as part of the program. Guided us around health in relationships, communicated more clearly, functioning as a household together. It was beautiful. There are things that suck but that is part of life. There are opportunities to say it is hard and grow through it. The whole goal is to figure out how to live with people in the mix of complexity. This is what we have to do. There have to be agreements that are inconvenient for everyone. You have to embrace it rather than sublimate it. No one is doing this because it is easy. It is a hard year. But you grow. You only grow when it is hard. It is also so fun.
- They all came up with it together. It defined how they would live together and serve God. With those two bookends it really encouraged them and gave them a foundation with how to live together and how to take that out in the world where they are at. Sharing in that and living it daily and having Friday chapter meetings to air grievances. It kept everything from bubbling up and someone gnawing on it forever and ever.
- For most of the people, it was the first encounter with it. First encounter of intentional Christian community which is not as romantic as we imagine. I think living under the authority of community, it is good for anybody.

Composite results

- I would say the Rule of Life shaped the way we interacted with each other as house mates. I had spent 4 years in college living with the same people. But the Rule of Life changes things because there is no prior relationship and wouldn't normally have spent a year living with. It lays out some shared intentions and practices that you can return to when things get tough. Our house was conflict avoidant. It gave us stuff to go back to and serves as a way of holding people accountable. Some aspects included engaging with the neighborhood, going to public events and how things in the house would run like chores, meals, car pooling. It put explicit structure around communication that didn't make assumptions about what people knew or could do—we all come from different daily backgrounds and what was explicitly named may be different from what we grew up. Example: chore chart. My response from my family would be to ignore it until it became a problem. But the rule of life told me I had to take responsibility to address it up front.
- In so many ways. First of all, taking myself as an example, when I was living there with other members, the Rule of Life helped me and my colleagues to have a structure in the program and in our lives in the things that we believe in and the things we would like to do in the day to day. In so many way, it has been a good chance for Corps members to have a structured life and even after the program they have their own Rule of Life for what comes next.
- I heard them talk about it over a few years. I think their reports on it—generally they seem to have found it meaningful. They took turns for being responsible for leading prayer portions, they had some study time together. It can be a useful thing to have, but what they did after....for some folks it seemed very significant as they pursued a call to minister.

That said, some talked about the Rule of Life having **mixed results in its effect:**

- For some it has and for some its been an irritant. For some it was meaningful and some chaffed at what felt top down—like morning prayer every day. Many relied on the structure. Some alums share co-housing now.
- I loved the rule of life the first year. I love rules, they help me understand life. I didn't feel it was a box I was being put into but a list of intentional things but it felt harder the second year because since day 1 I felt uncomfortable and it was hard not to compare to the year before. When things weren't adding up...the rule of life felt like a shackle at that point. It didn't feel as communal. It was a lot of trying to step out of the year before. I loved that it was a real community process.

Composite results

- I think it is a great idea in theory and there are some aspects I want to bring with me and find really meaningful in how I live. But it is hard for it to mean something when it means something different to everyone. When everyone is at DAH for a reason it makes the priorities for the Rule of Life troubled. I didn't find it of much meaning other than desperate attempts for some people to be accountable to what they said they would do. The rule of life could be really good if there was trust. In my years there was no way to build trust before signing on to these things. It becomes a rule book, not a rule of life. Chapter meetings were hell. We all mostly didn't like each other and didn't address that till the end of the year and needed a facilitator outside of our Director. Our needs and interests were very different from those that were her year. We were low-key gaslit into persevering through the year.
- The director was one of the first participants. She probably had a good experience. I do have a few connections with members throughout the years. They are acquaintances. They have spoken very positively about spiritual formation and had a lot of growth from that. Then another friend was a participant and she doesn't go to church. In one anecdote there were people who are deeply still involved and then there are others. This is all anecdotal.

Several folks spoke of its **long-lasting effects**:

- I still do morning prayer because of the discipline that was started. It was so great worshiping with peers. I am the only person under 35 in my current church but to be able to worship in our living room together, I still miss that.
- The impact actually becomes more useful after the program because it is something they take with them after the program.
- For myself: we live with another couple and have our own little intentional community we have a rule of life based on what we did in that program. As a director: that intentionality helps the corps members long after they leave. corps members later have called and said that this was how they wanted to live. It attracts people. It is intentionality behind the life we are living. It is so much more than roommates.

Composite results

And finally, a few people simply **did not know**:

- I don't know anything about that. I think those were the rules to make sure everyone works together. They were ground rules.
- The whole program is based on Benedictine spirituality. That was supposed to be rooted in these values. By living this they enter into those values to shape their relationship with each other, themselves and community. Also they had spiritual practices daily to do. Linked them to the Episcopal liturgy and Diocese of Missouri. These were open to other churches and the neighbors.
- I don't know long term but the Friday formation time was really important, as was ownership. The worst years, they still happened. How they lived into the rule of life, I don't know. It changed a LOT. The people I am thinking of, it did them a lot of good but I know that is not true for everyone.

How has this program impacted the Diocese of Missouri at-large? Were there gains/losses?

The dominant theme woven throughout the answer to this question is around **connections between parishes** through supporting the Deaconess Anne House. Several mentioned that this connection was stronger at the beginning than in the current configuration; those who were connected with Trinity in the Central West End (which is now the “home parish” for corps members) saw great impact by their participation in that community.

- Different parishes worked together to build something and donated money to set it all up. It was really good community effort and intentions. As we moved forward to get parish sponsors. There have been some big sponsors. I don't feel it really did anything. It became not a driving thing, the link with the parishes. But we were doing everything we could to make this work.
- For a long time it was always something people could point to and say that we are doing something interesting. Whether that was good or not is another question—it can be an excuse not to do other things. People were proud and excited. At the

Composite results

beginning it was a project that brought parishes together—renovations, Monday eucharist and meals. It was one of the only shared ministry projects of the Diocese of Missouri. Towards the end Trinity was the home parish for the DAH so we were able to have corps members in worship and the community and that was transformational for Trinity. It helped to grow the under 30s group. One member became very connected. During the course of their year they started using they/ them pronouns and could do that at Trinity.

- “People connecting that wouldn’t otherwise connect, rallying around a common point, gave people another way of donating to a cause that wasn’t close to them
- DAH as a group would visit parishes and do adult formation classes. When the kids came and did the presentation there were people who didn’t even know about this!
- Eucharist on Mondays and a meal. It gave people another opportunity to see a ministry not right in the backyard.
- I don’t know that there were losses. I can’t imagine it diverted resources from things that would have been already done. I know that Trinity Episcopal Church benefited a great deal from their work. I think it varied with the personality of the corps member. I do think having to provide family support for these folks was good for Trinity.
- I think it has given churches a vision of another way of doing things. It has given them an opportunity to participate in something they wouldn’t normally see and be in relationship with people they wouldn’t normally be in relationship with — not even in the neighborhood. There were always churches that wanted to have us come and visit and talk and preach. I don’t know how much it impacts day to day life but I do believe it has impact on how they think about stuff. If we can get people to be less afraid, that is something big. It wasn’t everyone and all the time but you make impacts where you can and with you can.

The rest of the responses varied from **“I don’t know” to questioning the impact to having a presence in Old North.**

- It just feels so separate that it does not feel connected to the Diocese of Missouri. It is as far as name, theory and finances go but that is it.
- Gains: they have a house.

Composite results

- Historically, the Dio of MO really focused on mission and ministry in St. Louis City. That presence has diminished over time. There used to be a dozen parishes in the city but not now. It was a way to intentionally claim our presence in the city. It helped people to talk about mission without being embarrassed about. At the same time there was a sense of mission for the city, there was also a sense of mission for the SE (the Boot Hill) corner of the Diocese of Missouri where there is wretched poverty. There is much in common. I have seen rural and urban poverty and they look alike. There used to be deaconess that were employed throughout the city—they were strong women back in the day when there wasn't much cultural support. They left a wonderful legacy. The last living Deaconess of the Episcopal Church lived in Cincinnati and died a few weeks ago. So when Jon uncovered the story of Deaconess Anne, what a gift that was. To help us reclaim that important piece of history that has been forgotten. What a treasure. Glad for the name and legacy and that she lived and worked in Old North.
- Bishop paid for this largely out of the Thomson Fund for the Bishop to do whatever he wanted to do. Half would go into the Diocesan budget and then pay for Deaconess Anne from the Thomson Fund that he did not need to make public. It was a sizable chunk. The question we always had was: is this worth it? There were some years that it was very difficult to justify what we were spending on it. People would not publicly raise that but there were questions about it. But my question is: what else are you going to spend the money on? If I were his canon I would tell him it is his money and he should do what he wants but don't waste it. But with all churches struggling for money about to close and...we were terrified of what it would be like if a bad Bishop came in.
- Definite gains—a few folks went to seminary.
- Because it was a niche ministry it did have impacts but it was not as effectively impactful as it could have been. If it had been more impactful we would have seen more local young people having a wider constellation with the universities and a network between campus ministries and DAH, finding ways to connect with young people in our churches. The other directors did a good job moving that forward but we were just sort of getting there. If they were down here they would be further from those campuses.
- Not that I can speak to.
- I am not sure.

Composite results

How were the program's finances communicated throughout the Diocese of Missouri?

The response to this question was met with three main themes: it is the Bishop's to handle, they don't know, or to leadership. Below you will find the responses based on these themes:

It's the bishop's business:

- When I was there the financial status was directly related to the Bishop. I was not given pressure to fundraise. I was told to start a board and I did. There was some talk about a longitudinal plan but during my tenure there it was all the bishop's offices that paid for it. There were some generous donors that did repairs on the building.
- It was known that he paid for it. There wasn't a public budget because there doesn't have to be.
- Mostly the financing came by way of Thomson Fund. The proceeds of the fund to be used at the discretion of the Bishop of MO. I had a good ton of money to do something interesting. That's where all capital investment as well as ongoing expenses came from.
- I was clear that I was the trustee of this fund to those in the Diocese of Missouri, that I was doing something bold that others could buy into.
- They weren't—all paid for by Bp. Thomson's fund.
- One of the directors was once approached with a gift of 40k. The director let that person know it wasn't needed because it was all covered.
- None. Didn't show up on any of the budgets because it wasn't in the budget. It was funded by the Bishop's discretionary fund. The Thompson fund generates hundreds of thousands of dollars in interest. This was seeded with 300k from the fund with the intent that it would be sustainable after the money was gone. What is sustainable? I don't know. The money used to purchase the house did not come out of that 300k. The house was 160k, so at the beginning it was 500k and kept funding it through the discretionary fund.

Composite results

I don't know:

- Not a clue
- No idea. I think people probably knew loosely but not much more. There was no mechanism of communication.
- I don't know
- I don't know
- I am not sure

To the leadership:

- It was communicated to the leadership that church sponsorships and individual donations were what kept the program, or helped it run. I don't think the Thomson Fund was mentioned or Bishop Smith's fund.
- Basically on the diocesan budget, at least that was what my understanding was. We were always begging for money for improvements and how we used that was always open.
- Really only to the advisory board to tell us what to do. I don't think the 40k that the Bishop put in every year was communicated. I don't think people knew the house was down to 2 people one year. We didn't have Janis at that time. She communicates, and celebrates, etc. Without her no one (the bishop included) didn't know what was going on. We have communication now.
- Yes, in that if you are a convention delegate and you vote on the budget then that was part of the budget.
- I knew a bit more because I was on the advisory board. If you were on Diocesan Council they knew. Every day people throughout the Diocese of Missouri did not know.

Composite results

How has the program impacted relationships with local nonprofits that partnered with the program?

The great majority of respondents who were not corps members or directors either **did not know** about how the program impacted relationships with nonprofits or believed it was a **positive** impact:

- I am not clear on that. I was never in touch.
- I don't know—beyond my pay grade
- I don't honestly know. I think for awhile it was more connected than it has been. I did practicum at Grace Hill and there was a corpsmember there too and the two of us brought some stuff back to the neighborhood. I know there have been efforts but I don't know how well they have succeeded. And I don't know if that is the program or the nature of lots of leadership transitions. There is so much turnover with nonprofits. The level of trauma I see in St. Louis is really intense, and more than I have seen. I have PTSD symptoms living in the neighborhood. There are conversations around group therapy sessions for the neighborhood members. There is a lot of faith-based healing kinds of things. Spaces that feel more open and inviting, even if it is faith-centered, would be helpful to deal with all the stuff that happens in the neighborhood. Maybe the space could be used for that.
- I just am not sure. I want to say it has been impactful but I don't have anecdotes or evidence because I have not even been connected to what the nonprofits are.
- I don't know. I hope that it has made nonprofits more aware of the Episcopal Church and has created a relationship with the Episcopal Church in the nonprofits. I don't know how it has impacted their work. They got an almost full time person for pretty expensive but an intern is not an employee.
- I imagine it's created strong connections between the church and nonprofits. I was doing the organizing that churches are a part of MPU—I was apart of the program right when Michael Brown was murdered. It creates a connection.
- From what I heard the local nonprofits were very happy with the people we

Composite results

had and they were doing a really good job. That is a wonderful thing. We were impacting. It was so generic though. It wasn't a strategy. It wasn't a goal to reduce hunger or some focus. A focus would have tied things together.

- I only know that from hearing the kids talk. I would think that it was positive. I don't think they ever had trouble finding nonprofits to participate. There were at the beginning more nonprofits than corps members. There were some willing to take them who couldn't get them. I never heard anything negative.
- We gave them a deal. Overall it was very positive. The positivity was very temporary. Whomever they had at the time they benefited from. If there was a longitudinal impact that didn't really happen, things were deepening and widening. The relationships really benefited the corps more members more than anything.

Those who were closer to the program believed that it **depended** on the nonprofit and then corps members:

- All the partner sites had already been partner sites so they had been connected beyond me. Several of them used to be walkable. Those two have strong ties to the house. Mine had somewhat of a tie but they hadn't had a volunteer in a few years. I was more of a liaison/representation. Jillian had a good connection with the organization.
- The ones that worked well always requested a new intern every year. They knew they wanted to sign up again. We had people disappointed when there weren't enough people to fill them. The farm up north loved it. Circle of Care and those wanted a new person every year. It exposed those nonprofits into what is available out there. Americorp always operates in St. Louis. Their program years was different than ours. And they had 2 year interns where we could only commit to a year. “
- We had at different times numbers of connections in the neighborhood and it was mostly good but at times we would have a stinker corpsmember and that didn't look favorably upon us. It is good for the church. If you could guarantee 8-10 members a year it is a no brainer. But that is the heart of the problem.
- Depends on the nonprofit. Some places had a really positive experience over time. Some did it once and never again. It was one way we brought money in, that they

Composite results

paid a nominal amount. But sometimes placement sites were better fits than others.

- Initially very positive.

In addition, several corps members, not only in this question but in others, expressed concern about the “**corps culture**” that **perpetuates financial inequity** by the structure:

- For them it is cheap labor.
- DAH stops nonprofits from actually paying people to do the job. They get a nearly full time worker for very little money. It is super shitty to a young person trying to get footing in the world. Especially when DAH makes them sign agreements that they won't hire the interns as employees. That is why they were mad at a corpsmember and why I couldn't quit even though I was having such a terrible experience. That is so fucked up. I get that they want to continue having the site but then it beckons the question: is the program more interested in continuing for the sake of the program director or forming young adults and giving them jobs.
- Those in leadership were first upset with me when I left and accused me of damaging the relationship between the program and organization. They have since apologized. But at the beginning I was the bad guy. Everything at home felt terrible so why is it bad that I had to focus on getting a job and getting out of here and a place to live? If you are free labor you are an integral part of the employment place...others had similar problems.

Composite results

How do you believe the program is perceived throughout the Diocese of Missouri?

The majority of interviewees believed that the DAH was perceived **positively**.

- I think it has been perceived really positively. There will be a lot of surprise and disappointment about this process because it has been a staple for the last 10 years. I don't know people who think: I don't know about this program. It is a sign of life for this church.
- I think it is perceived very highly. I would never say anything publicly against it. People were doing and are doing what they know. It isn't their fault that the model didn't quite work, it is the economy that did that.
- Well, people mostly said positive things to me. I am sure there were those that said this was one more thing in STL city that is never beyond the 270 corridor. I would hear "Yes, buts..." the most frequent one came from those who weren't young adults...over 57. They would say things like "I wish there was a place like that for people like me..." I don't think it's a misplaced yearning. People in my cohort to ask "what does God want from me now..."
- I have several friends throughout the program and I have heard from them. I don't think any one of my friends would say something negative. It is positive. This has been a good, safe place. That's why dinner on Mondays which involved people in the Diocese of Missouri, people kept coming to show their support."
- Pre covid people thought about it as a good thing to do for a year.
- I don't know outside of my parish. But SOFTBALL! That brings 6 or 7 parishes over a weekend and DAH members show up and play and they have played for different churches. There is an awareness perhaps and it is positive from that event.
- Overwhelmingly positive. Particularly in the country it is perceived as something that is doing gritty, important work. "Those corps members are so brave living in the city." There are just so many layers in that. But it is seen as important for young people and positive and remains as something that people are proud of.

Composite results

- I think it is cherished. I think now they have a Norman Rockwell vision of Deaconess Anne and they don't want to lose it, even though they actually have no clue.
- At the time I left there was a really positive perception and they were used to seeing these young people coming to be with us, stay with us, spend time with us. It had a really positive impact for people to realize that we are someplace where people wanted to come.
- Positively. Rich people love when young people serve poor people.

For several respondents, they believed that perception is connected to intensity of **relationship**:

- The parishes we were connected to adored us. The previous Bishop had a very special place in his heart for DAH and we felt really supported by churches connected to us. They were really optimistic. We felt really appreciated by parishes we visited.
- I imagine there are some churches that don't know a thing about it. It is likely very much a metro St. Louis phenomenon. It would be dependent on whether a church had personal involvement or not. If Trinity hadn't had a connection, I wouldn't know a thing about it.
- I would say that we would have a visit from the Diocese of Missouri every month or so. We would explain about who we are, why it exists and thank for the support. We tried to make people aware of it. Average person may not be aware of the program. There were conscious efforts made from the director to help build awareness and support for programs.
- From parishes where we had sponsoring relationships, folks would help us move in, do work on the building, bring us meals. So there are a good couple dozen who are very engaged. In distant corners of the Diocese of Missouri, there is likely less awareness as we aren't coming to the Church for coffee hour."
- When news got out that they were taking a break people at my church thought it was a shame. We have a connection with Mtipe who went to Eden and my church and so when the pandemic hit and they shut Eden down he moved there because he had nowhere to go. He couldn't go back to Africa and there was no place here for him to stay. We don't want it just sitting there and not being used.

Composite results

A few mentioned that they think DAH is **not currently visible** in the Diocese:

- Post-covid, people don't really miss it. There is not a perceived gap at the moment, but energy is still focused on "what the hell are we doing."
- If I could hazard a guess, I think it might have lost a bit of steam. 3 years of 7 people. There was more opportunity for movement. Then to shrink to 4 at the most and then they would go around and do things. It was just necessarily smaller. People cared but in the first three years there was so much energy. So much money, people coming by, etc. Maybe that was true for other years and I just didn't see it.

And finally, while woven through some of the responses above, a few mentioned that this answer is dependent on **racial and geographic** realities.

- A redefining of DAH was the Ferguson riots. We saw more people who wanted to come and be apart of protesting with BLM and all racial discrimination. It became a recruiting point. But that can't be our only reason for existing because the Good News has to be in there somewhere. It was important to witness and be involved because where else would young Episcopalians or non-Episcopalians experience this? It was safe but gritty. That was a real turning point. Some congregations wanted BLM to go away and when they started to perceive that all DAH is, some of the support dried up. Some of those western suburbs and the rural did not want to see that go forward.
- Inside/outside STL. Churches outside STL didn't like it as much because it is an opportunity benefiting St. Louisans only. The people interested in social justice, racial reconciliation, more visible and progressive church supported it. Others didn't or were ambivalent.

Composite results

How has this program impacted alum's vocational calls?

With an understanding that some vocational calls might have been more impacted than others, the greatest theme is the belief that alum's were **transformed** in their vocation at DAH, and used that year to dig deeper in interests and inklings they already had. Many people mentioned that there were several deacons and priests that ordained a call at DAH, and it appears that they drew a line from vocational discernment to answering a call to the diaconate of priesthood.

- Immensely. I can think of 5 who answered calls to ordained ministry. Others that answered calls to work to nonprofits. It is good to see young people wanting to work for the better of their community.
- There are some who have discerned a deeper relationship with the Church. If people want a life in the church that don't want to be priests, could do a better job in discerning that. It helps people ask the questions that they want to be asking. It is something that people carry with them over time.
- I don't know. I think that we had a corps member who was assigned to Trinity who went on seminary and ordination. I think that giving these folks a community in which to explore these things and then giving them a church to nurture them and send them off has to enrich their understanding about what Church can mean in a community sense. You can find your home here or somewhere. People will care about you and pray for you. Interacting with these kids—we have been invited to welcome them in and in return they bring themselves to us and it's good all the way around for the whole community. And they really were a good presence at Trinity the last two years.
- To my understanding, many alumni are now ordained priests. I being one of them! This number who are now serving as clergy in different Diocese of Missouri has helped the wider Church. It has been useful to the corps members, helped them discern what they want to do next, and created ministers who are now serving the Church.
- I don't know if there is any program in the national label where alums get together, but our ordained ministers are sharing the news in other congregations.

Composite results

- Some are deeply involved with the Church—we even have one deacon for another diocese.
- Everyone who was connected with the church to begin with is still connected. But there are others who are not. Episcopalians did not become Episcopalians or feel a need to. But those who were still are and are also active.
- The vast majority of people who went through the program, 80% in my experience, stayed connected to the church. A lot of people realized they had different sexual orientation or gender identity and still maintain a relationship to the church. There are some though who just disappeared. I tend to think they came out of it with more of a breadth of understanding of the characteristics of church, the reasons to go and the problems. They had an opportunity to see the diversity and they got to be leaders. They had a lot of exposure.
- I still love the church and have been very disillusioned by the church. So steeped in power dynamics. During the pandemic I didn't want to go to a virtual church every week. When I left I was going to a Methodist Church and then the pandemic I couldn't do it anymore. I still do love it and am passionate about it and also really sad that I don't have a church community here. I am just floating now which I hate because it is important to me. Episcopal Churches in general do give me a lot of hope. Eventually maybe I will really grow to love the routine and liturgy. It feels more genuine.
- Many left to go home to their home diocese but they carried a little bit of us with them, and to talk about the importance of these programs and how it formed them as a person of faith. The one person who answered the call to the Diaconate traveled the country talking about the benefits of this. He is back east now.
- A friend in the program—it negatively impacted their relationship to the church. Mostly because of a Director who really wants everyone to be Episcopalians. Especially when it is billed as an “everyone is welcome here,” and that is not safe. Programs could have been shifted and still retained the Christian essence. People came from so many different places spiritually and vocationally—how does that work?
- We had a lot of priests come out of this proportionately and that is a good thing. Rock solid people. And really good discernment that led them to that point. Besides the priests we had people who got clarity about their avenue: social work, patient care etc. People really found their gifts and claimed them.

Composite results

- It was the first time I had organizing experience. After I left the placement the organization hired me full time. It got me into a dream job. That helped me understand that I needed something purpose driven and is meaningful that is not for myself. I teach now and I get to integrate what is important to me. It solidified for me that I don't have to climb a ladder to be successful. I met a lot of people I would not have met before, even within the church. It opened my eyes to other possibilities. I was in "be the best, do the best" since I was young. I had to think through "what is best," for me, for others, for the community.
- I feel like anyone in an ordained capacity was interested in that before they came and this was more like a stepping stone before seminary. Many bishops love for seminarians to do this for experience and to grow up a bit. Several people did their discernment out of DAH but it was a prior thing for them.
- Some members are priests. Many are in seminary.
- I would not be a deacon if not for the program. Mark Sluss sat us all down and suggested that we all become deacons because a lot of what we were doing was diaconal. Our service work, getting involved. So, I did when I moved back to New Hampshire and was ordained in 2021. In my deacon formation program, I met another young person who—we went on a road trip to other ESC sites to have the same conversation with others that Mark had with us. We drove 8,000 miles and 8 sites in order to invite them.

Composite results

How has this program impacted alum's relationship with the Church?

The responses to this question revolved around **how connected alum are or are not with the Church, and the Episcopal Church in particular.**

- There are some who have discerned a deeper relationship with the Church. If people want a life in the church that don't want to be priests, could do a better job in discerning that. It helps people ask the questions that they want to be asking. It is something that people carry with them over time.
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- I saw two patterns. I saw there's a lot going on with the Church beyond individual churches that I wasn't aware of before and I am excited about them. I never would have thought committee work would be exciting, but now I see how I can be a part of it. For another person, they realized that the Diocese was really different and cool and wanted to know more.
- To my understanding, many alumni are now ordained priests. I being one of them! This number who are now serving as clergy in different Diocese of Missouri has helped the wider Church. It has been useful to the corps members, helped them discern what they want to do next, and created ministers who are now serving the Church.
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Composite results

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Composite results

What do you hope for the program in the years to come?

The greatest number of interviewees hoped for the program to **continue with changes**. Below are recommendations to consider. Many referenced a need to change the Director position in particular; this was a theme raised throughout almost all of the interviews:

- I want it to continue to be a discerning community. Young adults don't really take it seriously. We are an old church when it comes down to it. The Diaconate is something retired people do. We are asking people to carry a lot of debt into the priesthood. This is a way that makes it easier to ask questions. The thing we need to ask is: how do we need to make this easier for young people? How do we make the costs not insurmountable? The School for Ministry is closed now too. The life of the church and Diocese of Missouri will have to depend on how to call young people into ordained ministry and bivocational is going to be what is needed. How do we make the cost of education more reasonable? Is it distance learning? Yes, I think so. After Jon we went through a period of many EDs who were there as a placeholder and I don't think it worked as well. Jillian did amazing work pulling it together because she was so intently a great first year corps member. The Director position needs more vetting and more support and stability.
- I am honestly so glad to meet with you and hear about what's happening. When I saw Michaelene is leaving and that they are doing a discernment year I thought: they aren't going to do anything substantial. I hope they do something good. I want it to be good and to be able to recommend it to people. Thank you for taking this seriously. If it didn't continue I would be sad because that house holds so many memories but I would also be like, in its present iteration: that is probably good. I want them to hire a director over the age of 35. Hiring young people themselves to lead slightly younger people is not a good idea. Also, stop hiring in house. Hire someone who can mediate tough stuff. Don't hire new clergy.
- There needs to be significant support for the director. They pray with us in the mornings, like every day. Then going to the Diocese of Missouri to work and coming to us anytime with anything. Any extra thing we did, she was there. Once she got promoted as hard as it was to leave, it was easy. It would be better if there was

Composite results

more support as well as clear understanding and guidelines in what the Director should be well versed on and able to do. When issues of race come up, which it will, you need places that the director can go to. Also need more money for corps members. Monday night needs to be something separate—and more flexibility. That might not be the best thing for the community. A lot of people don't have a 9-5 job. We talked about more cookouts or the school and parks around, more things outside of the house to get people to connect with us and then come into the house. As it stands, people come into a shrine of faith to have an awkward dinner. Community cars: I think they have those now. It sucked if we didn't have a car. The question of neighborhood: Depends on what it wants. To be south it is more comfortable. Up there it is close to being in North City. If it is intentional living in North St. Louis, then not south. In some ways it is kind of perfect. It is a lot to ask a program to do. To focus on formation of young people and community connection. But I also learned a ton about St. Louis history and where we lived. In that way I did appreciate it and feel like I abandoned the area I cared about. It is a lot more comfortable and easier in the south. That said, There needs to be more freedom to feel less Episcopalian when we aren't all Episcopalian. Especially when we are black. There needs to be more of a place where non-Episcopalians can come into it. It is a lot if you aren't and if you also aren't Catholic and come from a liturgical background.

- There were some things toward the end of my year—about predominantly white people applying and people from other dioceses. I think it would be great if participants were also from local area and would hope race disparity would be addressed.
- I am going to resist the temptation to say “how it was in the beginning”. There was a very strong intern economy at the time. We were blessed to have a very attractive year to offer people.; In terms of an age cohort, I think it's worth changing or broadening it or looking for a more mixed ecology among the residents.; I hope the Church can retain a missional presence in old St. Louis as well as the churches.
- If the program comes back, I hope it will come with some changes—new activities, ideas, programs. I do believe if I would come back and continue as it was, it would be very difficult for the program to be successful.
- I hope it continues to exist. It was a beneficial and transformational experience for myself and my housemates. I hope that it can be changed in ways that lead toward more equitable opportunities for participants—especially around financial obstacles.

Composite results

- I hope that it comes back and that it comes back with more breadth of avenues in. We need to figure out how to get young people in through gap years after high school. They are a big deal—so why not cultivate that? Jesuit Volunteer corps has a young adult component and a retiree component. The retirees commit to 4 hours a week of volunteer work, there is a lot of discernment about who they are. The sky is the limit but we didn't have the energy to make it into what it could be. The ESC nationally are kick ass. Just solid, awesome directors. The resources are out there. The people, experience, commitment.

The second most consistent theme is that the program **continues, with commentary** which you can read below:

- I hope it continues. I would like to see it attract more Episcopalians because it cements people into the Episcopal Church and builds leadership. I am interested in the model and would like us to explore what it would look like to have a more diffused leadership system. What about a team that runs it without a full time ED. I would like to see it continue to be connected to Trinity. It has made Trinity a much better place. The parishioners have another opportunity to be involved in a ministry. I would like the Deacon idea to get thrown back in there. The current bishop is much more willing to get people ordained quicker. The most important piece is the young people. Forming young people was the most successful and important. I would love the ESC to be similar to the Mormon missionary year. I would love it to be an expectation. I think that is difficult but if there is nothing there it really won't happen.
- I have a fairly limited imagination. I would hope for more of the same with beefed up placements, more corps members, and intentional connections to congregations around the Diocese of Missouri. Maybe more events at the diocesan level that would pull us all together. Get us down to the cathedral for something.
- If the church feels there is still value I would love for it to continue. I think having opportunities for people to learn and grow is really important. I hope we can integrate the house members into the community and the neighbors buy in more. I wonder if an open house, presentation, community presentation about the goals would be helpful. I am not sure if that happened per se. People honestly just don't know what it is. Even just a sign out front would help. If we could even help flier to tell people what we do. That is the best way in this neighborhood

Composite results

to get information out. They aren't on email or facebook. We used to have a neighborhood newsletter and put it on every person's door. We did that for events. That is when we had the best results. Being willing to do grassroots organizing is important. The Monday night things were really cool but I never go due to work. I don't know how many people participated in the wider community.

- I would like to see it continue even if it evolves into something a little different. I know there are ESC in other places but it is unique. A few years ago the DAH hosted a director's workshop and they came from all over the United States. It was cool to see them from all different places. I would hate to see it just dissolve. As I saw numbers go down, I am hoping it goes back up again. I love the fact that it is an opportunity. Also I don't want the house to sit there, it is a cool house. And there are memories there.
- I want this program to churn out little revolutionaries. I want to bring in people that need to be changed or can be changed. And that they go out into the world who are Christians or just people that they need to be. I want this program to create compassionate revolutionaries. And I think it has.
- I hope it thrives, has many members, and strengthens its roots. One of the things that was really great for me was the sponsoring parish. I had lunch once a month with the priest of Ascension and regularly attended worship there and worked with the youth. It was another predominantly black space that I was a part of. That program of sponsoring parishes that puts a young person in a handful of parishes—it helps the whole church. It isn't just DAH out on an island. For me as a young person, if I go into a church without young people, but even seeing one person..... you can get others. But once they go extinct, it's hard to get them back.

Composite results

Several interviewees hoped for a **complete revisioning** of DAH, seeing this time as an opportunity.

- We could work with universities all around the Diocese of Missouri and put together an incubator and put together a focus where we build ministries that have a focus. That focus would be the strategic visioning plan. Let's build subject matter experts. We would have students who are paired with local parishes to be a center of connection to look at successful ministry programs. This is an entrepreneurial connection center to make repeatable models that the Diocese of Missouri can use so that people can learn how to do ministry and do it right. We need to have best practices identified. It shouldn't be coming from me but the Diocese of Missouri. Deaconess Anne can provide this. This model expects people to leave. We are planning for people to leave and that makes the program last. Do it by semester and give student credits. Then they are not going to want to leave. We could get social workers, grad students, people working on their masters—if they have an idea it can be implemented. It can be turned into something powerful.
- I hope they close it and open it as something else. I would love to see them do something like this. There are too many volunteer programs without many interns. I don't think they would radically change the program so that people would be paid enough to support Bipoc. I want to say thank you and do something else.
- There are opportunities for DAH corps members to get plugged into areas of the Diocese of Missouri. PeaceMeal. Winter Outreach. These require volunteers. What I think is lacking is networking in the Diocese of Missouri. What there has been now is more formal, like the guest preaching that is initiated by the priest or ED or the Diocese of Missouri somehow. There are ministry opportunities at least on this side of the city they can be plugged in with. With the decline of rural churches—right now the Diocese of Missouri is in a discernment process in combining or closing doors there and I wonder if rural ministry isn't something that DAH could take ownership of or if there is another iteration of DAH that is a rural ministry. Hopes are for it to stay alive. Perhaps we need to look inward at the need of the church and there could be some new life given to that ministry to help parishes fulfill their own mission by way of DAH volunteers. DAH people are like deputies of the church and my hope is that they can be that, that they can be deputized in ways that are service oriented. It was originally looking outside of the church to do ministry but because of the transformation of the Diocese of Missouri I wonder if that could be used within the parishes themselves so we can continue to serve Communion

Composite results

in rural areas. Keeping the church alive is a necessary part of any outreach and I wonder how the DAH can be an engine for that. That might mean changing the purpose from the ground up.

And finally, in respondent encourages the **Bishop to do what he is most passionate about**, as he is the sole trustee on the fund that this program comes from:

- I hope [Bp.] Johnson does what he is passionate about and where he wants to guide the diocese. That is his pot to play with. Do what you are passionate about because you can never guarantee success. If I were the bishop, if this is about money and impact on the church I want to know what he is doing with the resource. I wouldn't want to waste money on anything.

Appendix A: Interview Questions

Name of Interviewee

Name of Interviewer

Mode of Interview

☐ Phone ☐ Zoom ☐ In person

Why was the Deaconess Anne House founded?

What were the priorities of the program at its founding?

What priorities of the diocese aligned with the program?

How has the relationship with DAH affected your relationship with the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri?

What were some of the benefits and/or drawbacks of having a faith-based corps member working at your organization?

Why did you decide to host a DAH corps member?

How has the DAH impacted the neighborhood?

How do you feel about the Episcopal Church's presence in the neighborhood

What were the intended demographics of participants for this ministry?

Were there barriers that would prevent participants from applying? If so, what were they?

What impact did the location of the Deaconess Anne House (North St. Louis) have on how the program was designed? How did this location root the program in particular?

How has a rule of life impacted the formation of participants?

How has this program impacted the Diocese of Missouri at-large? Were there gains/losses?

How were the program's finances communicated throughout the diocese?

How has the program impacted relationships with local nonprofits that partnered with the program (i.e. hired interns)?

How do you believe the program is perceived throughout the diocese?

How has this program impacted alum's vocational calls?

How has this program impacted alum's relationship with the Church?

What do you hope for the program in the years to come?

Is there anything else we need to know?

Submit Form

Appendix B: Survey questions

Involvement in Deaconess Anne House

Were you aware that the Diocese of MO was conducting an audit of the Deaconess Anne House program?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Was anyone in your faith community a participant or impacted by the program?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Did you or your parish form meaningful relationships with the Deaconess Anne House community?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Impression of the Program

Of the priorities identified in the program's inception, which do you feel the program successfully met?

☐ Living in intentional community ☐ Working at partnering social service/nonprofit organizations
☐ Rooting all their work in Benedictine spiritual formation ☐ Communal rule of life ☐ None

Of the priorities identified in the program's inception, which do you feel the program should continue to focus on?

☐ Living in intentional community ☐ Working at partnering social service/nonprofit organizations
☐ Rooting all their work in Benedictine spiritual formation ☐ Communal rule of life ☐ None

How helpful was the program in fostering relationships within the North St. Louis community?

☆☆☆☆☆ ☒ NA

On a scale of 1-5, 1 being lowest and 5 being highest, please answer this question.

How helpful was the program in fostering relationships within the Diocese of Missouri, especially between parishes?

☆☆☆☆☆ ☒ NA

On a scale of 1-5, 1 being lowest and 5 being highest, please answer this question.

How likely are you to recommend this program to individuals aged 21-30?

☆☆☆☆☆

On a scale of 1-5, 1 being lowest and 5 being highest, please answer this question.

How helpful was it in forming young adults for their vocation?

☆☆☆☆☆

On a scale of 1-5, 1 being lowest and 5 being highest, please answer this question.

How important was Deaconess Anne House to the overall life and ministry of the diocese?

☆☆☆☆☆

On a scale of 1-5, 1 being lowest and 5 being highest, please answer this question.

Ministry for and with young people moving forward

Currently, the DAH is one of the only "youth ministries" in the diocese. However, its participation ages begin at 21 and doesn't directly engage with younger youth. In thinking about other potential ministries for young people that could potentially be made available, which are priorities for you?

☐ Access in both rural/urban environments
☐ Centered on specifically Episcopalian formation
☐ Developed by and for a diverse population
☐ A place where youth feel they belong
☐ Ability to retain the diocese's youth for ministries within the region
☐ A place where youth have fun together

Is a diverse range of youth programming a priority to you in the diocese?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe

If there was a youth program, apart from the Deaconess Anne House, developed by the Diocese, would you or your youth participate?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe

Name*

First Name

Last Name

Age Range*

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 19-29
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ 50-69
- ☐ Over 70

Submit Form

Appendix C: Email on 10/11/2022

(Email received during the survey process.)

Dear Fr. Jon,

It is certainly appropriate that you as the successful initiator of this program be engaged in evaluating it and looking at its future.

I had many fine opportunities to engage with the DAH Interns over the years, work days, sharing in and leading worship, engagement with some fine interns in the Cathedral Paris; unfortunately COVID put constraints in that over the past two years. I believe it is a splendid program and absolutely should be continued. One of the great results is a number of fine clergy vocations which have developed among the DAH Alumni!

As you may know, I have been the convenor of regular gatherings of members of Religious Orders and Communities in the Diocese for the past few years. I had a number of communications with Mthr. Michaelene during her time with DAH about including the Interns, as members of an intentional community living under a rule of life, in our group. We explored arrangements some of our quarterly gathering at DAH, unfortunately we all decided that continuing virtual gatherings was preferable at the time.

I would suggest that as the DAH Corps is revived, it would be great for the director to be in touch with the Religious of the Diocese and for more of us to be actively engaged with the Interns during their service – teaching, leading worship, workdays, ministries and sharing the charisms of our respective communities and orders.

I appreciate the opportunity to share some thoughts with you.

In Christ and St. Dominic,

Br. Franklin Kline

Applications by Month

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
November	0	11	6	5	
December	25	10	10	9	
January	44	22	23	23	
February	16	12	14	4	
March	9	7	13	9	
April	9	10	16	9	
May	5	20	9	7	
June	9	9	9	6	
July	5	9	9	0	
August	6	3	0	0	
September	2	1	2	6	
October	1	0	1	0	
November	1	0	0	0	
Late/Midyear	0	7	0	0	
Total # Applications	132	125	112	78	
<i>Change from previous year</i>		-7	-13	-34	
Total # Accepted		85	77*	58	
<i>Declined/withdrew</i>		40	35	20	
<i>Pending</i>		0	0	0	

Good Practices in creating a Welcoming ESC Program for people who are Trans

Program Recommendations

- Create an anti-oppressive process for hiring, training, and maintaining trans-identified and trans-knowledgeable staff members, consultants, spiritual directors, etc.
- Make sure staff are trained on gender identity/expression and LGBTQIA+ allyship at least every two years. See list of possible trainings below.
- Develop and publicize Trans-supportive policies, including a nondiscrimination policy that includes “gender identity and gender expression.” Your policies should explicitly state that your program will always recognize, respect, and embrace every individual’s stated gender identity and/or expression. Policies should be reviewed annually by a committee that includes members of the transgender community. If you need help identifying individuals to support you in this, please contact the ESC network manager, esc@episcopalchurch.org.
 - Sample model policies <https://www.glsen.org/model-laws-and-policies>
 - ESC policy: *Episcopal Service Corps values and celebrates diversity in all of God’s creation, strives to build programs reflective of Beloved Community, and commits to creating affirming space for all, particularly BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ persons. We do not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, or ability.*
- Create and adhere to policies and norms around expansive language
 - Sample: <https://policies.umd.edu/general-administration/university-of-maryland-policy-on-inclusive-communication>
- Have policies on use of pronouns and develop accessible ways and norms around Corps members, staff, and visitors indicating their pronouns
 - Sample: <https://lgbtq.umd.edu/good-practices-names-and-pronouns#syllabus>
- Create and adhere to policies that specifically address anti-trans harassment and discrimination, including specific details on how to report, to whom, and steps that will be taken in response to a report.
- On your property, prominently display “Safe Space” indicators like a flag, sticker, window cling, or poster
- In your communications materials, especially your online presence, specifically identify your program as LGBTQIA+ welcoming. Ideas:
 - <https://www.dreamhost.com/blog/how-to-design-lgbtq-inclusive-website/>
 - <https://www.blog.google/outreach-initiatives/small-business/adding-lgbtq-friendly-and-transgender-safe-space-attributes-google-my-business/>

Recommendations Related to Recruitment & Placement

- Create an anti-oppressive process for recruiting, training, and maintaining trans-identified and trans-knowledgeable Corps members.
 - See list of possible trainings below.
- Ensure that your forms and waivers enable Corps members to use a name other than their legal first name on official documents and to indicate pronouns.

- On forms, etc. don't ask superfluous questions. Be sure to ask only questions you REQUIRE answers to.
 - Resource on what data to collect:
<https://lgbtq.umd.edu/good-practices-demographic-data-collection>
- On forms, allow Corps members to self-identify their gender.
 - Preferred - use an open-ended identification method:
 Gender Identity: _____
 - Or, when an open-ended question is not possible:
 Gender Identity (choose all that apply)
 ___ woman
 ___ man
 ___ trans or transgender (please specify): _____
 ___ another identity (please specify): _____
- Be familiar with employment practices and law when it comes to recruitment and placement:
 - <https://www.lambdalegal.org/know-your-rights/article/trans-workplace>
 - <https://www.lambdalegal.org/know-your-rights/article/trans-workplace-faq>
 - <https://www.thehrcfoundation.org/professional-resources/transgender-inclusion-in-the-workplace-recommended-policies-and-practices>

Recommendations Related to Placement Sites

- Work with your placement sites from the outset so that they understand the welcoming expectations of ESC programs.
- Ask your placement site to create an anti-oppressive process for recruiting, training, and maintaining trans-identified and trans-knowledgeable staff members.
- Ask placement site supervisors to attend a trans-focused allyship training. See list of possible trainings below.
- Ask the site to provide at least one all gender restroom (e.g., a single-user, lockable restroom that is labeled "all gender restroom" or simply "restroom") and to have a written bathroom policy that states that "individuals should use bathrooms that correspond to their sex or gender identity, depending on which option they feel is safer, or utilize bathrooms that are designated all-gender."
- Ask your site to maintain policies and develop norms around expansive language.
 - Sample:
<https://policies.umd.edu/general-administration/university-of-maryland-policy-on-inclusive-communication>
- Display a [list of LGBTQIA+ pronouns](#) as a gentle reminder for Corps members.
 - Sample:
<https://forge-forward.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/gender-neutral-pronouns1.pdf>
- Ask your site to maintain policies on use of pronouns and to develop accessible ways and norms allowing for Corps members, staff, and visitors to indicate their pronouns
 - Sample: <https://lgbtq.umd.edu/good-practices-names-and-pronouns#syllabus>
- Make sure site placements have policies that specifically address anti-trans harassment and discrimination, including specific details on how to report, who to report to, and steps that will be taken in response to a report.

- Ask your site to prominently display “Safe Space” indicators like a flag, sticker, window cling, or poster.
- On your site placement’s communications materials, especially their online presence specifically identify the program as welcoming of all people. Ideas:
 - <https://www.dreamhost.com/blog/how-to-design-lgbtq-inclusive-website/>
 - <https://www.blog.google/outreach-initiatives/small-business/adding-lgbtq-friendly-and-transgender-safe-space-attributes-google-my-business/>

Recommendations for Insurance Coverage

- Ensure that your insurance policies cover gender-affirming care, including hormones, and has a reasonable deductible. If you are in a state that allows insurance companies and healthcare providers to refuse coverage for trans-related health matters, be sure to reinforce that our insurance does provide this coverage. Also, have a ready list of providers who will treat people with trans-related health concerns.
- Ask your insurance carrier to appoint a patient advocate as a first point of contact for your Corps members.
- Ask your insurance carrier for procedures for Trans individuals (as well as others) to report concerns and instances of poor treatment.
- Develop and distribute a list of area therapists who are covered by your insurance and can provide trans-supportive gender therapy for Corps members who are transitioning or who are struggling with their gender identity.
- NY-specific insurance coverage navigation resources:
<https://gaycenter.org/recovery-health/health/#insurance>

Recommendations Related to Housing

- Have all staff, spiritual directors, chaplains, board members and other program leaders attend a trans-focused allyship training.
- Develop and publicize a trans-supportive housing policy. This policy should state that the program will always recognize, respect, and embrace the gender identity of every Corps member, and that Corps members who inform the program director that they are Trans at any point in the year will be housed in keeping with their gender identity/expression.
- If you have shared bedrooms, allow all Corps members to identify rooming preferences in this way:
 - We are committed to providing living spaces that are comfortable and enable residents to feel that they can exist as their true, full selves. With this in mind, on a scale of 1-5 (1-Not comfortable at all, 2- Somewhat uncomfortable, 3- Neither uncomfortable nor comfortable, 4- Somewhat comfortable, 5-Comfortable), please indicate how comfortable you are sharing a room with someone who is: ([click here](#) and [here](#) for glossary of terms):
 - _____ Cisgender woman
 - _____ Cisgender man
 - _____ Trans/Two-spirit
 - _____ Non-binary
 - _____ Genderqueer
 - _____ Same-gender loving
 - _____ Pansexual/omnisexual/bisexual
 - _____ I do not feel comfortable sharing a room

_____ Other, let's talk!

- Include an open ended option for additional information so that the individual can express additional needs not covered in the provided options:
 - Please use the space below to provide any additional information you would like us to know when completing your room assignment:

- Train Corps members on suicide intervention and have phone numbers posted in a central location for the TransLifeline and The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
 - TransLifeline: <https://translifeline.org/>, 877-565-8860
 - [The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](https://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/): 988 (call or text to connect with trained Lifeline network counselors)

Recommendations on Formation

- Prior to leading conversations about gender, leaders should actively engage in reflective consideration on their ministry and how identity formation fits into it.
- Recognize that formation should be developed specifically for the context of your ministry, including the identities of the individuals in the room. So, if you have Corps members who are Trans and others who are Cisgender, your conversations need to be embracing of these identities, not centered around talking about someone's identity while they are already in the room.
- Incorporate topics of
 - Resources:
 - <https://straightforequality.org/faithmaterials>
 - <https://pflag.org/faithresources>

Online Resources

<https://www.hrc.org/resources/transgender>
<https://www.glaad.org/transgender/allies>
<https://www.glaad.org/transgender/resources>
<https://transequality.org/>
<https://straightforequality.org/transmaterials>
<https://pflag.org/resource/transgender-reading-list-adults>

Possible Trainings

<https://www.eventbrite.com/o/the-transgender-training-institute-tti-17460896640>
<https://speakingoftransgender.com/transgender-training-and-course>
<https://lgbtq.umd.edu/trans-training-learning> (free online videos)
<https://www.transequalitynetwork.org/transgender-awareness-training/>
<https://prevention.ucsf.edu/transhealth/education/trans101#> (free online videos)
https://straightforequality.org/sites/default/files/2022_PFLAG%20Workplace%20Catalog.pdf
<https://pflag.org/onlineacademy>

Episcopal Service Corps empowers adults 21-32 to transform unjust structures through community building, local collaboration, prayer, and action.	We are guided in every aspect of our work by a commitment to these core values:	Transformation	How we live into these values:	We believe that a just and peaceful world is possible and join individuals and communities across our network in seeking freedom from oppressive structures and systems by intentionally committing ourselves to the work of liberation.
				We commit to the work of healing our woundedness, honoring that which is life-giving, and challenging ourselves to create and embody patterns of life that will sustain us for the work of reconciliation.
				We acknowledge our deep need to learn and grow, remaining humble, curious, and open to change.
				We offer our time and talent to the work of justice, serving through local nonprofits to create a better society for all.
		Empowerment		We value the unique contribution of every individual and commit to walking alongside each other and using our resources to lift up and grow each others' leadership and voice.
				We bless our unique giftedness and accept responsibility for building greater capacity within ourselves for leadership, compassion, and hope.
				We trust collaboration, committing to support each other and to hold ourselves and each other to the highest standards of integrity, safety, and accountability.
				We recognize that failure teaches us how to succeed and accept our mistakes as opportunities to practice vulnerability, resilience, and leadership.
		Faithfulness		We explore spiritual connectedness and embodiment as a regular aspect of our common life, honoring our Christian identity and Episcopal tradition while exploring and embracing all expressions of a spiritual and holistic life.
				We embrace the opportunity to explore our spiritual journey, trusting that through practices centered on learning, personal and community discernment, and practice we will find new ways of connecting with that which is greater than ourselves.
				We celebrate the diversity inherent in all of creation and commit to reflecting this diversity by building equitable, welcoming, and affirming spaces in which trust, authenticity, and honesty are valued and uplifted.
				We value Sabbath as an important part of a healthy rhythm of life and embrace regular periods of rest and reflection.
		Community		We trust that residential programs centered on community covenants offer a unique opportunity to practice building authentic relationships grounded in shared values and purpose and commit to practices that foster our own growth in empathy, persistence, resiliency, and accountability.
				We challenge ourselves to expand our understanding of community, advancing outward with compassion and risking our comfort to find oneness with others, recognizing with gratitude the inherent reciprocity in all relationships.
				We create and curate generative spaces where ESC programs, staff, and volunteers have a sense of belonging in which to gather, share, and create resources, friendship, support, and learning.
				We nurture fun and joy as integral components of a well-rounded life and as a powerful means for creating connection with others.



Mission Institute’s Assessment of Racial Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion within Episcopal Service Corps

Contents

Background	2
Methodology & Process.....	2
Challenges & Limitations (Tensions).....	3
Patterns	4
Heart of the Matter	13
Recommendations	14



The reason that I do what I do is because I see it as opening doors and empowering people. We are creating opportunities for making change in the world but perhaps more importantly making changes in ourselves so that there can be change in the world.

ESC Program Director

Background

In 2019 Episcopal Service Corps (ESC) came under the umbrella of The Episcopal Church. Prior to this, ESC was a collective of local program sites operating together as a non-profit. Through this transition ESC has been asking core questions as they relate to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), especially as it pertains to recruitment, core values, and program sites.

In the wake of The Episcopal Church conducting its Racial Justice Audit with Mission Institute (MI), ESC leadership reached out to MI to walk alongside them in the process of assessing DEI within their network. This assessment builds upon ESC's most recent diversity statement: Episcopal Service Corps values and celebrates diversity in all of God's creation, strives to build programs reflective of Beloved Community, and commits to creating affirming space for all, particularly BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ persons. The assessment intends to provide a snapshot of the current landscape of ESC, provide space to reflect on why that might be, and to engage in actionable responses that influence and facilitate a transformation of the culture.

Methodology & Process

The goal of this research has not been to determine whether or not systemic racism and concerns around Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) exists within Episcopal Service Corps, but rather to examine its effects and the dynamics by which it functions in the structure of ESC. Approaching this objective with openness, rather than starting from a place of pre-existing assumptions and conclusions, was critical to the integrity of this project.

The DEI Assessment of ESC was conducted in three sections: initial meeting with the Advisory Council in order to elicit concerns and dreams for ESC. This was followed by an open invitation to all program directors from the seventeen current sites. A biracial team conducted interviews with fifteen program directors from thirteen of seventeen sites. Next, an invitation was sent to all the ESC programs to recruit two alumni to participate in a focus group. Eight ESC program sites sent alumni to the focus group in order to hear about their experience, concerns, and dreams for ESC. Finally, a focus group was conducted with key stakeholders (site supervisors, former directors, board members, spiritual companions, etc....) in order to give feedback on initial patterns that arose from the previous data collected through interviews and alumni, ten program sites participated in the stakeholder focus groups.



In addition to interviews and focus groups, documents such as Program Criteria, PD Covenant, and annual report were provided by the ESC coordinator. Seven program sites provide exit interview data from 2019-2021. Through these various forms of data collection patterns arose around where ESC could strengthen or address DEI and racial justice. MI approaches data through a Complex Adaptive Systems framework, where patterns are spotted, then substantial time is spent trying to make sense of those patterns, and finally followed by ways of influencing those patterns. MI engages this model in order to mirror to ESC's leadership a way to process how culture, power, and equity show up in complex systems. In the end, MI's engagement is only one part of a constellation of engagement in the life and culture of ESC. This assessment ought to invite those who read it into their own process of engaging with the patterns, trying to make sense of them, and identifying additional points of influence.

Challenges & Limitations (Tensions)

As with any project of research and reporting, this assessment presents challenges and necessitates an acknowledgement of some limitations. Overall, there are two main tensions that arose in the research and influenced assessment.

There is a tension between individual programs and the network- some individual programs can make more just decisions than others based on their circumstance, support, funding, etc.

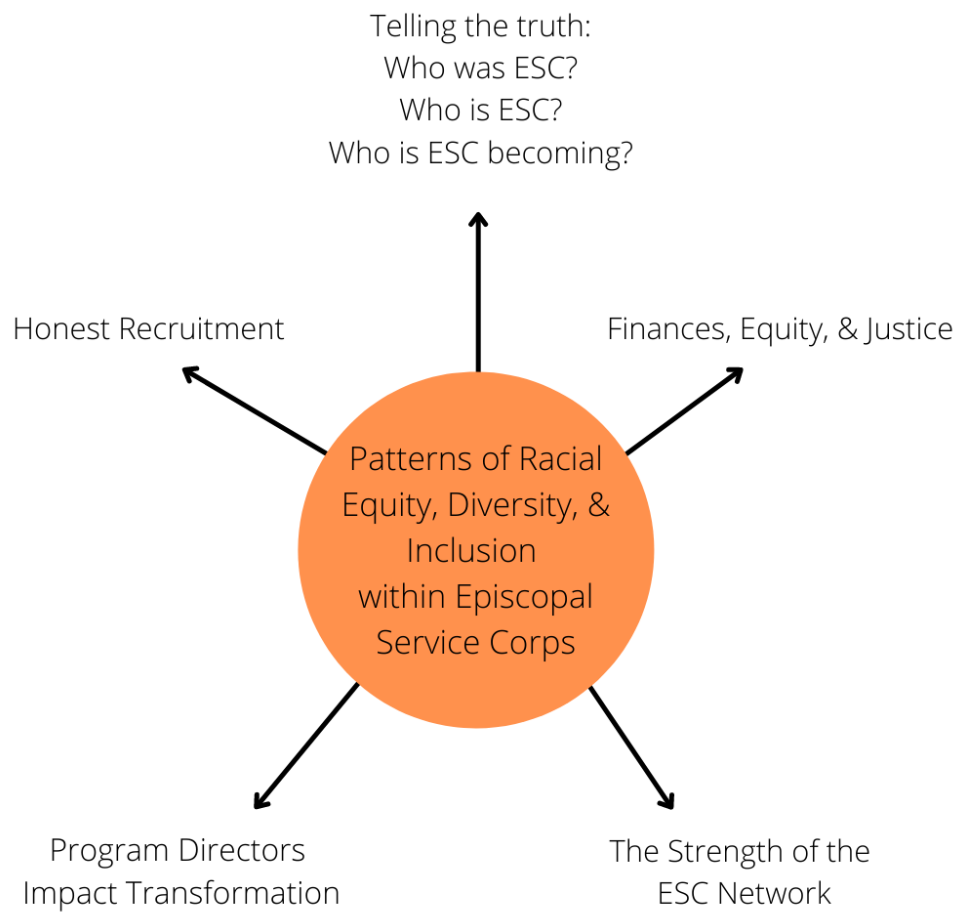
ESC Program Director

First, is the reality that ESC is a network of program sites not a governing body or place of authority over local program sites as it pertains to budget, HR, and program decisions. On the other hand, there are specific criteria that each site commits to which is determined by the Advisory Council who is made up of various program directors with one-year terms. Inherently

there is a tension between how much agency each local site has and what authority, if any, the network has. This has become more complicated in the subsumption of ESC as part of The Episcopal Church. This tension ought to be at the forefront of the conversation of this assessment and as people read through the patterns, reflection, and recommendation. What is possible at the local level, at the ESC network level, and The Episcopal Church level? In addition, who is responsible for what--particularly as issues of finance, health benefits, and programming are raised. Furthermore, each individual program site has its own unique relationship with their local congregations and diocese. Some are supported outright by their diocese, while others are not.

Second, this research was concurrent with two significant sociopolitical and cultural moments of our time: the COVID-19 pandemic, and the ongoing aftermath of George Floyd's murder and subsequent social uprising. The moments and effects on the research cannot be understated.

Patterns





Telling the Truth

One central pattern lifted up throughout conversations was a focus on the question “who is ESC for?” There is a desire for honest conversations about who ESC was originally created for and with what desired outcomes.

There was an overall sense that ESC's DNA consists of creating and curating an experience for white, middle to upper class, suburban/rural, Episcopalians. Therefore, unwritten and subconscious norms began to be at play in how ESC operates. ESC is known, like other similar programs, as a “service year” which usually consists of being paid minimally, being mainly located or centered in urban areas, and can be exploitive in workload. Each of these are possible or assumed based on who the program originally was intended for and therefore doesn't necessarily work for those outside of the norm.

We have continued to promote ESC as who we will be, for decades, and we have failed to ever become that entity. Are we promoting ourselves as a lie, or is there a way we can actually become who we are striving to be?

-ESC Stakeholder

This DNA then leads to direct tension with the current desire to be diverse racially, economically, spiritually, and educationally. People lifted up fundamental changes to stipends and that they be adjusted for fair wage, student loan debt assistance, completion payment, and the difference between corps members needing wildly new experiences (experiencing the “other”) or rest, rejuvenation, and spiritual care.

Finally, this begs the question of who is ESC ultimately for? Does ESC move with the corps members at its core, outwards to the community or the community at its core and moves inwards to the corps members? There is a tension and differences between what program directors and alumni express.

There needs to be honesty about who this program is for because it can't be for everyone (spiritually, financial, life experiences, etc.). Seems to be made for white, wealth holding, and Episcopal college grads.

ESC Alumni

Reflection

- These tensions presented in this pattern are not unique to ESC and are tensions that most organizations need to wrestle with as they grow. The key is ESC needs to wrestle with these tensions out in the open, with transparency, and accountability. Often systems don't expose these tensions out of fear of being



misunderstood or feeling guilt. This hinders the ability to build the trust needed to create cultural shifts within the organization.

- If ESC wants to be diverse and equitable across differences, then adaptivity and agility will need to be at the center of how it functions from the ESC network and advisory council to individual sites and program directors. A one size fits all approach will not accomplish the desired outcomes of diversity and equity. Focus on process, relationships, and accountability will be key to creating equity and diversity.
- Careful attention needs to be given to this tension between who does ESC serves at its core. By core we mean a few different things: Who is prioritized? From whose perspective are decisions being made? What/who motivates the narrative of ESC? Whose interest is cared for the most?
- When talking with alumni and other stakeholders, it seems that the corps members are at the core and from there they move into the community. When talking with program directors and board members the opposite was true with the community at the center moving towards corps members. Of course, these are only different approaches, and this does not mean that community or corps members are more valued than the other.
- This pattern ties deeply into honest recruitment. If a site is recruiting for who they hope to be while not owning who they currently are now, then there is a high chance of causing harm to folks recruited who don't fit the current reality.

*Are we willing to take
a shot on folks who
fall outside our idea
of who this is for?*

ESC Alumni



Finances, Equity, & Justice

A key challenge that was brought up in conversations centered on funding. This includes program director salaries, corps member stipends, health insurance, etc. Program directors expressed concern with being able to meet the needs of the corps members and create impact due to part time employment and low funding pools from local and wider church partnerships. It was also noted that the stipend amount does not allow corps members to be prepared for life and expenses during or after the program, nor does it allow for potential members from lower socio-economic backgrounds to participate in the program.

Some programs receive additional financial support from their local diocese, while others rely on other means. This creates inequality within the local programs and creates challenges in recruitment to some of the programs with lower stipends.

In addition we heard from some program directors that their budgets are set based on the number of corps members they recruit (relative to placement site fees, etc.) which puts PDs in the position of accepting candidates who may not actually be good fits for the program (or keeping them in the house throughout the whole program year) in order to keep the budget balanced. On the other hand, it might cause a program to keep site placements that aren't good fits for the corps members but offer significant financial security which can also be a challenging position.

Having a budget predicated upon the number of corps members recruited makes me make choices that I wouldn't otherwise make just to meet the bottom line...and didn't work well for the fellow. It made us do bad ministry.

ESC Program Director

Reflection

- There is a greater possibility of program directors and board members making difficult and sometimes problematic decisions when their livelihood and salary are contingent upon how many corps members they need to recruit or which sites to keep on board. This can be true when quotas around diversity are attached as well. This can result in PDs making decisions on meeting the bottom line rather than making decisions for what is best for the corps members.
- One key institution is missing from the dialogue around finances and that is local dioceses. This is a similar conversation about the larger Episcopal Church. In what ways should the dioceses be accountable to local ESC programs? Whether resources extended are financial, as a fiduciary, or in kind, how might local dioceses aid in supporting ESC programs? This is especially important as ESC has been subsumed by the Episcopal Church.



- If the goal is to create a more diverse and equitable ESC membership, the financial aspect must shift to better meet the needs of many of these potential members. Simple living, which is often code for modest stipend, may not be suitable for every person, especially if they come from lower economic backgrounds or lack a network of support due to citizenship, gender/sexuality, etc....

As Corps members, we were also asking ourselves who else in our age group could really afford to go through such a program. Most really don't have the financial means to do something like this.

ESC Alumni

In addition to inadequate stipend amount, the program, as well as the national network chronically assume that we can call upon family for financial support and housing without hesitation. Please let me be very clear: this is a dangerous assumption. It is absolutely critical that the program and the national network take steps to educate themselves on what young adults feel is financially required to participate in and leave the program securely. Financial security and the program's living simply model do not need to be at odds with one another.

ESC Alumni



Program Directors Impact Transformation

Across all conversations, it was shared that program directors are key to creating a transformative and supportive experience for corps members. Program directors and alumni lifted up a need for program directors to receive training and support in trauma informed facilitation, conflict mediation, and equity & inclusion training to better serve their corps members and influence which sites are part of the program. This desire is at tension with the understanding that this type of leadership development may not be possible for part-time program directors. Furthermore, can part-time PD offer the type of support corps members need during a high intensity year? How does having a part time PD limit the growth and financial development that's possible within local programs?

Reflection

- The ESC network is strong in giving support and resources to PDs (i.e., this is what we do, etc....) and it seems that certain support and training falls through the cracks. This is especially true around conflict resolution and trauma informed care. This is, of course, in tension with how much oversight and influence the ESC as whole has over individual sites or hiring practices. Clarity is needed about the type of work a program director actually does. Are they a social worker, pastor, therapist, trainer, developer, fundraiser, organizer, or admin? Is it reasonable to believe they can do all of it? Again, this comes back to who is core to ESC--the corps members or community partners. Figuring this out will aid in determining the skill set and what resources needed for program directors.
- Running an ESC program with a solo part-time program director doesn't seem ethical or doable. This is in tension with the financial realities of each individual program--some have a budget to support full time PDs, and some do not. There are multiple ways to address this beyond mandating full-time PDs. Whether this is a deacon, volunteer, local pastor, etc.
- Growing PD's capacity through ongoing training/support would allow them to make decisions that increase (rather than inhibit) growth in DEI practices

I really resonate with the need for more outside support for programs around mental health issues, as well as understanding racial justice issues. My program felt like it was flying by the seat of their pants on these issues.

ESC Alumni

Program directors are so important but burnout for them is very real. Plus, how does ESC ensure support/training/professional development without it becoming yet another thing on their plates?

ESC Stakeholder



The Strength of the ESC Network

One pattern that was shared centered on increasing the skill and capacity of program directors, corps members and stakeholders through the continued offering of trauma informed training, group therapy, & cross-network pilgrimages. Alumni spoke highly of these offerings and desired even more of these formation opportunities.

Because the broader network does not participate in local hiring processes in autonomous programs, the network lacks influence in qualifications of candidates and training made available to new hires. Many PDs hit the ground running in programs that are struggling (or have yet to begin) and don't know what they don't know.

ESC Stakeholder

Even though the ESC network is strong and highly appreciated, a handful of new program directors spoke of a need to have more intentional onboarding with focus on capacity and relationship building within the network. Additionally, it seemed that PD's engagement with the network was in direct proportion with their level of employment (i.e., full time PDs were more involved and got more out of it than part time PDs).

Reflection

- Lodged deep within the DNA of ESC is the larger network of local ESC programs, primarily facilitated between the directors. Intentional time and resources have been invested in the network and it shows. People speak highly of the support offered, especially the program directors. One tangible result of this investment is the Advisory Council and line of communication between PDs. Given the reality of the high turnover nature of ESC, especially PDs, could the network serve as one location that doesn't turnover yearly? For example, making the Advisory Council term be two years instead of one?
- There is quite a bit of opportunity to leverage the strength of the ESC network by offering more support around training, collaborative engagements, and strategic visioning.
- Questions arise about the function of the network, particularly as it relates to how much more time can PDs put into it--if there is a need for it to do more work like training, fundraising, and/or advocating. It will be important to be realistic about what is doable.
- One thing that was noticeable was how absent the advisory council has been from the feedback/conversations, especially in conversation about the network. Either it can mean that the advisory council is doing its job well or it's not functioning well. Therefore, is the advisory council running at its best or is there some strategic planning that needs to happen? Doing a power map of ESC's internal operation will help uncover what is the function of the advisory council. Is the advisory council truly advising or are they a decision-making body? When power structures are unclear, it can lead to distrust, confusion, and unhealthy power dynamics that inhibit DEI efforts.
- There is a lack of financial and programmatic support for many directors and the network has been pivotable in providing support to PDs whether through idea sharing and/or program offerings. Can the network lean into its strength and envision itself as also providing financial strategic support as well?



- The network has provided key resources (trauma informed training and retreats for the corps members), attention needs to be given to internal support to both PDs and board directors. This will ensure that on every level ESC is equipping folks to respond to current needs. Supporting PDs is harm reduction across the board because when PDs are stretched thin or under resourced it has direct and often harmful impact on corps members.



Honest Recruitment

Across the board, people shared their appreciation for having a common application and a central person to support the recruitment process. The structure in place allows for spaciousness for program directors to focus on other areas. In addition, the recruitment process was lifted up as a location to begin the work of addressing equity, diversity, and inclusion. For example, how does the corps application reflect the value of being an inclusive program?

I feel like I was here to give credibility to program, to give diversity, but wasn't given resources to flourish.

ESC Alumni

Finally, in a number of conversations, it was shared that it seemed that historical recruitment processes were based on who ESC hopes to be and not who/where ESC culture is currently.

Reflection

- This pattern lifts up the tension between ESC's position within the Episcopal context (predominantly white, wealthy, Christian culture) and its desire to welcome corps members from different communities. ESC can lead the church in what it can look like to divest from white dominant culture and invest in beloved community.
- When corps members of difference are recruited under the hope of what ESC is becoming, not what it is--they are often met with lack of support, resources, and guidance of how to navigate the culture that isn't set up to support them.
- Historical structures and traditions within the ESC community must be named and brought to the light. Working to become something new without recognizing the historical background nor the ways that history (and all its accompanying practices and procedures) is baked into current structures inhibits transformation.
- It is important to note that the pandemic has exacerbated the socioeconomic inequality of low income and BIPOC communities. Therefore, a service year without adequate stipend may not be appealing or useful to these individuals.
- ESC can simultaneously name that recruitment for many service corps programs is down and not absolve itself of its structures and practices that lead to low numbers and diversity.

Equal focus needs to be put on recruitment AND retention.

ESC Stakeholder



Heart of the Matter

Key Questions		
Dominant Patterns	Telling the Truth	<p>What is foundational to ESC? Who was ESC? Who is ESC now? Who does ESC want to become?</p> <p>Does ESC move with the corps members at its core, outwards to the community or the community at its core and moves inwards to the corps members?</p>
	Finances, Equity, & Justice	<p>How will the financial aspect shift equitably in order to better meet the needs of the diverse corps members?</p> <p>Should the dioceses be accountable to local ESC programs? If so, in what ways? If not, why?</p>
	Program Directors Impact Transformation	<p>What is the job description of a Program Director? Does it align with the actual work and needs of the corps members? What are program directors actually capable of doing at .5 fte or 1.0 fte? What support can ESC give them?</p>
	Strength of ESC Network	<p>What is the role of the advisory council within the network? Is it clear who is accountable for decisions that impact the whole of ESC?</p> <p>How does ESC lean into the strength of the network and strategically engage it to obtain resources that are needed for all of ESC?</p>
	Honest Recruitment	<p>How does the corps application reflect the value of being an inclusive program?</p> <p>What frameworks, practices and partnerships do local programs have that would support corps members from various backgrounds?</p>



Recommendations

Quick adjustments
<i>We don't envision these recommendations to take an immense amount of time to process and complete. They do, however, influence some of the patterns and aid in being more transparent and intentional.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the ESC Programs Page (website), add a short paragraph or bullet points summarizing the charisms of each program. This will give people an at a glance look at the various programs that are being offered. Or even a quick guide with a number of hours at work, formation, house commitment, stipend, and other benefits. This allows for transparency for potential corps members and between sites. On the common application include a few simple questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why do you want to do a year with ESC? What does a year of service mean to you? Additionally on the common app, the word "service" is used in a somewhat coded way. Can you more clearly define what service means? Continue to offer support for Program Directors that leans into trauma informed care and conflict resolution.

Some program budgets are set based on the number of corps members they recruit (relative to placement site fees, etc.) which puts PDs in the position of accepting candidates who may not actually be good fits for the program (or keeping them in the house throughout the whole program year) in order to keep the budget balanced.

ESC Stakeholder

Longer investment
<i>We envision these recommendations taking more substantial and intentional time to implement. Understanding that these are trying to influence some core values, behaviors, and beliefs that will enable a more equitable, inclusive, anti-racist program. Entering into honest and intentional work around these recommendations will influence the patterns and enable transformation.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take some time to create a power map of ESC. Who ultimately makes the decisions about criteria, common application, retreats, training...? Do a power map within ESC's internal system and with the larger Episcopal structure as well.



- If this happens to be the advisory council, consideration should be given in extending the length of the term for people on the advisory council as to have more consistent leadership.
 - Additionally, changing the name might be useful to better articulate what the Advisory Council does. If it is responsible for decisions, then “advisory council” isn’t entirely accurate.
 - If the ultimate decision rests on the Manager of ESC, then make that clear when decisions are being made.
- Get as clear as possible about the core identity and purpose of ESC. Currently, there is a tension between who ESC is for (refer back to the pattern, “Who was ESC?”). Fleshing this out and sharing a clear narrative of what is most true will guide future decisions.
- Shift from the current model of criteria to a values-based model and make sure there is an accountability mechanism in place to make sure programs are following through on meeting ESC core values.
 - For example, we would identify these value buckets:
 - Spiritual Formation of Corp Members
 - Equitable Financial Support (i.e., stipend, health insurance, completion stipend, etc.)
 - Community Impact
 - Leadership Formation
 - Trauma Informed Practices
 - Racial Justice & Healing
 - Adequate People Support for Program (i.e., equivalent of full time PD, chaplains, therapist, host families, volunteers, etc.)
 - And more
 - Using this value-based approach would allow for each site to maintain its unique identity and meet their particular needs--leading to a more collaborative approach.
 - This value-based approach would need a strong accountability model to ensure that people are meeting these values and not just checking boxes. This would require more of the sites to complete a tailored response and require more time of the ESC manager to be in relationship with each site.
 - ESC would need to expand on each value, why, and how a site might live into it. The programs would need to define how they are incorporating those values and who will be doing it.
- Map and strategize ESC’s relationship with TEC (DFMS staff), local dioceses, and congregations. If ESC is part of the TEC, then there should be clear connections to each of those bodies. How does ESC tell their story in a way that leads to excitement, involvement, and ultimately investment? If ESC is part of TEC, what difference has it made, other than bringing on ESC manager and swag? Has the change been mutual? How have programs changed? If not, then honest conversations about the relationship between ESC and TEC need to be had.
- Use the strength of the ESC network and manager to leverage fundraising for the whole of ESC. Creating a pool of funding for distribution to offset the cost of equitable stipends, health insurance



premiums, completion stipends, emergency funds, etc. In order to alleviate the pressure on individual programs to deliver.

- Real consideration needs to be given in terms of what is possible given the reality of ESC and its transitional nature and high turnover rate of PD. How can ESC make some of these major foundational shifts while trying to maintain the program? ESC needs to be honest and communicate transparency around what has happened and what is even possible.
- Even though honesty and transparency about how and why ESC functions may seem scary or exposing, it will ultimately deepen trust and relationships with those who ESC longs to be in deep relationship with, especially historically marginalized communities.