by Rev. Marie C. Jerge, Bishop

We are Resurrection People. We have been exploring how ministry can be reshaped in order to further the mission of proclaiming the name of Jesus. Historically the synod's pastoral staff persons have shepherded a variety of ministries across the Synod. Full-time Assistants each wore many hats and we were often blessed by their long-term work. The current model for the ministry of the bishop's office is much more flexible. Most pastoral staff are part-time and they are focused on particular specialties. The Conference Deans are a significant part of the mix as the "front-line" for all transitions and congregational questions. Our office staff are important partners in all we do. Here's an overview of the key roles and the names of those who currently fill them. Over the next months we will highlight each area of ministry.

Office Staff - We now have 3 "full-time" positions in the Syracuse Office - an Executive Assistant to the Bishop and Office Manager, a Bookkeeper and a Director of Communications. You know them as Kathy Neugent, Karen Brundige and Neal Fischer.

The Director of Evangelical Mission (DEM) and Assistant to the Bishop - This is a full-time position funded by the churchwide organization with specific focus on missional leadership, congregational development and redevelopment and mission support. Beth Yenchko has been serving half-time as an interim DEM since September. The full-time position has been posted and we hope to be interviewing after January 1. Pastor Justin Johnson represents the Executive Committee and Synod Council and Pastor Elaine Berg represents the Deans as part of the interviewing process.

Conference Deans - The seven Conference Deans have responsibility for mission in their geographical territories, particularly in regard to call process and support for collegial relationships among rostered leaders in the conferences.

Assistant to the Bishop for Candidacy - Currently this position is 1/3 of a Full-time Equivalent. The amount of work has increased as we continue to have contact from an increasing number

of potential candidates. Pastor Mary Johnson has been in this position since April 2011.

Assistant to the Bishop for Operations - Currently this position is 1/2 of a Full-time Equivalent. The primary foci of this position are around policy and administrative work with office staff, Finance Committee, Constitution Committee and the Synod Assembly Planning Committee. Patsy Glista, AIM, serves in this position that is contracted through LutheranCare Ministries, Clinton.

Assistant to the Bishop for Mobility, Pastoral Care, Conflict and Healing, et. al. - As of November 1, we have 3/4 of a Full-time Equivalent Position that is divided between two people. They are "generalists" who work with me on mobility, care for pastors and congregations. Currently Pastor Dave Preisinger (1/2 time) works with the Transforming Congregations and the Hunger Teams and Pastor Greg Tennermann (1/4 time) works with Intentional Interim Pastors and the Conflict and Healing Team. If it became possible in the future, it would be great if we could move this to one FTE.

LYO Coordinator - This is a very part-time position working with our elected LYO officers with primary responsibility for Synod Youth Convo. Pastor Laurie Carson-Nelson is filling that office at the moment.

Therapist - On a very part-time basis Jennifer Genovese monitors the staff, runs occasional team-building events for support staff, and is available for evaluation and consultation in situations beyond staff expertise.

This is the first in a series of articles about staffing; where we are and where we are going over the next few months.