

Brief History

In 1979 the General Convention created The Standing Commission on the Church in Metropolitan Areas. Its long-range goal was to “develop recommendations and strategies which will be of concrete assistance to the Church in metropolitan areas, in shaping new patterns of mission and ministry.”

However the immediate goal with which the General Convention charged the Commission was to “devise an action strategy for consideration by the 1982 General Convention in regard to the role of the General Convention and the Executive Council in the implementation of a program of urban mission and evangelism in urban and other deprived areas, with primary focus on the local congregations.”

The Standing Commission on The Church in Metropolitan Areas made its report to the 1982 General Convention of the Episcopal Church, and key to the report was their statement that “This Commission believes that each Christian is called to a life of faith in which our relationship with God shapes, and is shaped by, our life in the world. The tension between spirituality and social action, which so occupied the last two decades of our Church’s life, need not and should not exist. Piety divorced from the implications of the Incarnation lends itself to an otherworldly and ultimately non-Christian detachment from the arena in which God was pleased to dwell. Action that claims to be based on God’s will, but which does not seek the deepening of reflection, communion, and discernment by which our bond with God is nurtured, can become erratic and shallow. What is needed is a Christian community in which the drama of the streets and the inner silence in which God speaks are bound together. The urban parish can be such a community of faith and action, providing the resources by which Christian people are empowered and emboldened to struggle with the world for the world.”

Today we are on the brink of the beginning not only of a new century but also of a new millenium - the YEAR 2000. There is much mention of the Leviticus 25 passage of Jubilee, and celebration, and liberty being declared that is very reminiscent of the original intent of Jubilee presented to the Church in 1982.

The Standing Commission of the Church in Metropolitan Areas stated in its 1982 report that “The Jubilee Ministry will be a celebrative ministry, based on our belief that by affirming the biblical priorities of God – in partnership with the poor, the powerless, the vulnerable – we discover our own humanity in Christ, our own freedom. It will be a celebration of the Way of Jesus; a celebration that we live, not by the old order, which is passing away, but by the New Creation, lighted by the vision of the City of God. The Jubilee Ministry will be a continuing celebration of the Christ who reigns by taking his place among the lowliest, who rules by emptying himself of all power but the power of love, whose majesty was revealed in sharing our humanity in order to set human beings free, whose strength is weakness in the world’s eyes.

The Jubilee Ministry draws no distinctions between ‘domestic’ and ‘overseas’ or ‘world’ mission, or between rural, suburban, or urban mission. Those distinctions no longer matter on a small planet, which has become one neighborhood. The new ministry will engage the needs and issues of poverty and oppression wherever parishes are willing to become involved in those needs and issues.”

Criteria for Becoming a Designated Jubilee Ministry Center of the Episcopal Center

1. Must be an Episcopal Congregation, an ecumenical cluster with Episcopal presence, and/or an agency with connections to the Episcopal Church.
2. Must be involved in ministry programs among and with poor and oppressed people wherever they are located.
3. Must include at least one or more of the following:
 - a. human rights advocacy program
 - b. human service program (outreach)
 - c. lay leadership/empowerment program
 - d. evangelism in action
4. Must be willing to actively participate in the following:
 - a. reflect theologically upon learnings in ministry
 - b. demonstrate the operation of programs to others as models
 - c. act as a resource center for other Jubilee Ministry Centers

Resolution A-106

68th General Convention – 1985

Resolved, The House of Bishops concurring, that in each diocese there be appointed a Jubilee Officer who will become informed on all facets of the Jubilee Ministry, serve as a liaison to Jubilee Ministries, and be available as a resource to their bishops and congregations and otherwise bring support to further Jubilee Ministries.

Jubilee Ministry

The mission of Jubilee Ministry is

To make a direct and dynamic link between our theology and our ethics – said another way – the *talk* of our faith and the *walk* of our faith

As Christians we do this by

- calling the church to live out its prophetic role of empowering local people to “do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God” (Micah 6:8)
- responding to the Gospel’s call to “feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and visit the imprisoned”
(Matthew 25:35)

Diocesam Jubilee Officer Guidelines for Responsibilities

1. Be informed on all facets of the Jubilee Ministry
 - a. Attend DJO training for Diocesan Jubilee Officers offered by the National Jubilee Office
 - b. Attend Jubilee Training Events on a regular basis to stay current
 - c. Know the Biblical foundation for Jubilee Ministry
 - d. Learn the history of Jubilee (in case someone asks you)
 - e. Receive training for doing Jubilee Center site visits
2. Serve as liaison to Jubilee Ministries
 - a. Stay in communication with the National Jubilee Ministry Office
 - b. Identify existent “Jubilee type Ministry” in the diocese and present for designation/ certification as Jubilee Ministry Center
 - c. Be available to serve as a consultant to do site visits for other Dioceses
 - d. Advocate for Jubilee Ministry as a program in your Diocese
 - ◆ Regular meetings with the Bishop
 - ◆ Be available to speak in parishes, at Diocesan Convention, etc.
 - ◆ Regular contributions to diocesan publications for communication
3. Be a resource to the Bishop and Congregations in the Diocese
 - a. Provide congregations with Jubilee resources; i.e Brochures, Booklets, Videos, Training Events information
 - b. Schedule regular (perhaps once a year) meetings with the Bishop and all current (or potential) Jubilee Centers in your Diocese
 - c. Schedule visits from the National Jubilee Officer to your

Diocese — i.e. Diocesan Convention, Centers, Meeting with Bishop, etc.

- d. Ask Bishop to be the presenter of the Designation Certificate for new sites whenever possible
 - e. Build a spiritual biblical, and sacramental foundation within the Diocese for Jubilee Ministry through “Jubilee Conferences” on a regular basis
 - f. Catalogue outreach programs in the Diocese and establish a Jubilee contact in the congregations
 - g. Establish a Jubilee Committee appointed by the Bishop
 - h. Be affiliated with other Peace and Justice ministries in the Diocese
 - i. Have a Jubilee table or booth at the Diocesan Convention in your Diocese
4. Provide support to further Jubilee Ministry
- a. Encourage all Centers to become members of the EPPN
 - b. Be willing to serve
 - ◆ as site visitor for other Dioceses for new Centers
 - ◆ as site visitor for your Diocese for reaffirmations
 - ◆ Jubilee Advisory Committee member if asked
 - ◆ be a workshop provider at Training events or Gatherings
 - c. Become involved in promoting Jubilee Ministry in the Province
 - d. Support local Jubilee Ministry by
 - ◆ periodic visits
 - ◆ regularly scheduled gatherings of all local
 - ◆ Centers for sharing purposes
 - ◆ providing training for Directors of local Centers