Minutes for Province V Recovery Ministries Meeting number 5 on 6.14.22

Present for meeting:

Sister Debbi Rhodes
Rev Heather Barta
Pastor Sally Weaver

We began by talking about Heather's email with all its fabulous suggestions to help the networks be more successful. This included clearly identifying the purpose and goals of the network, each meeting having a specific focus, and possibly bringing in guest speakers.

Although my larger goal is still to "force" the Church to look at its unwillingness to confront the problem of impaired clergy, we realized we need a more manageable goal for the province. This goal is to try to get each diocese to have, at the very least, a specific policy around the use of alcohol. It would be even better if they also spelled out how they were going to deal with impaired clergy, as the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan does in their Personnel Policy Manual.

We will write to each diocese, encouraging them to implement such policies, and offering samples they might use. Heather is going to try to find out for us who the correct person to talk to in each diocese would be. If she can't, we will start making phone calls.

Part of our pitch will be that as God's people we need to provide a safe space in which to carry out the Church's ministry. And just like Safeguarding God's People and Safeguarding God's Children, this is not only a moral and spiritual issue, it's a legal one too. Liability changes when policies are in place.

Sally shared that in her diocese the alcohol policy specifically said it was in perpetuity unless a different policy was created. That is a good idea.

We also talked about Title IV within a diocese to address impaired clergy if the need arises, and some of the issues related to that. We might want to read that carefully and see what makes sense.

Finally, we agreed to have a solid draft of a letter and a list of people to send it to by the August 9 meeting. I will share a first draft before our next meeting on July 12, and we will discuss where we are so far.