

## INTRODUCTION

Sisters for Christian Community are contemporary women bonded together to manifest their commitment to Christ in a new form of consecrated life, as a prophetic, collegial, ecclesial community with a contemporary understanding of the tradition evangelical vows.

The Community was formed in 1970 in response to Vatican II. Today SFCC membership spans the globe with members on every continent. The sisters seek to be present with their time, talent and expertise wherever there is a need for Christian love and community witness.

The vision, mission and goals of the Sisters For Christian Community are clearly stated in the **SFCC Profile**. The apostolic goal of SFCC is to promote and witness Christian community, and the sisters strive through all means available to forward the realization of Christ's prayer, "that *all may be ONE*" in Community. To achieve this goal SFCC seek to bring together into a community Christ-committed women with the mission of building up the body of Christ through helping to build dynamic Christian Community wherever they live out their calling.

This View Book contains the most recent Vision-Mission-Profile, a brief history of SFCC beginnings, the process of membership (Becoming Process), the nine-step collegial decision making process that is implemented in all community business and the SFCC organizational network. An appendix includes a brief excerpt from Lillanna Kopp's *From Seed to Tender Seedling*, a listing of annual international assemblies, as well as a listing of persons who have filled community service roles since SFCC's origin.



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## **SISTERS FOR CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY**

### **MISSION ~ VISION ~ PROFILE**

#### **MISSION**

The mission of Sisters For Christian Community is to birth a new understanding of the reign of God

#### **VISION**

We envision building a global community in which all will be one and where openness to the Spirit empowers us to search new and challenging horizons. We seek to live passionately the Gospel values of love, justice, reverence, forgiveness, nonviolence, equality, diversity, integrity and care for creation.

#### **PROFILE**

##### **WHO WE ARE**

We are Christian women consecrated to God in a non-canonical, ecumenical community. We strive to realize the prayer of Jesus, "That all may be one." Committed through Baptism to this gospel mandate, we fulfill our mission to build community globally.

#### **OUR SPIRITUALITY**

Our spirituality, nourished through prayer and study, is a deeply personal and communal search for God reflected in lives that are both contemplative and mission driven, with a preference for the poor.

Our ministries are diverse, based on discernment of time, treasure and talent. We recognize and affirm the richness of cultures. We stand in solidarity with all of those who strive to realize their God-given rights as human beings, free from dominance, injustice and oppression.

#### **OUR COMMITMENT, OUR VALUES**

We commit our lives to live poverty as Serving, chastity as Loving, and obedience as Listening. We witness to poverty in simplicity and recognition of the equality of all before God. We witness to chastity through celibate love. We witness to obedience in listening to the guidance of the Spirit.

In our diverse ministries and freedom of lifestyle we are united by commitment to the Gospel values of love, justice, reverence, forgiveness, nonviolence, equality, diversity, integrity, and care for creation.

#### **OUR LIFESTYLE, OUR STRUCTURE**

Community emerges from a spiritual bond that transcends location. Whether living alone or with others we share our lives, concerns, risks and visions. We experience the love and support of the global community through local, regional, international and virtual gatherings.

As self-supporting women, we are financially responsible for our personal needs and in the spirit of stewardship share responsibility for the common goals of the community. Decisions affecting the global community are made through the collegial process. The official community newsletter, the All-To-All, connects the membership

*This statement of Community identity and purpose was affirmed in 2009 at the Atlantic City, New Jersey International Assembly*

## Beginnings: A Brief History of SFCC

Fran Campbell, sfcc  
Community Archivist



### What occasioned Sisters For Christian Community (SFCC)?

It was Vatican Council II's call to all the faithful within the Church to embrace and implement a participatory model of organization that sparked the emergence and eventual formation of the Sisters For Christian Community as a distinct community of women religious in 1970. SFCC immediately understood that it was called to give witness to collegial community in the form of the traditional evangelical vows of obedience, chastity, and poverty freshly expressed as listening, loving, and serving.

Members came from the East Coast and West, from the Great Lakes and the Deep South, from across the prairies of the United States. Soon members joined from the Canadian Provinces and it was not until membership spanned the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans to include Africa, Australia, Guam, New Zealand, the Philippines, Western Europe, Ireland and England, as well as Mexico and Central America. In 1972 there were 7 regions of SFCC. By 1979 there were 19 regions and in 1990 42 SFCC regions were located around the world, each with a Communication Coordinator because SFCC define community as communication, as well as support.

### How did such a widespread membership effectively organize itself?

From the start the initial members explored a wholly new structure of religious life -- one that embodied the Vatican II vision and challenge of solidarity and equality through self-determination and collegiality. Through a new non-canonical structure of self-determined regions, SFCC intended to give witness to Church as collegial community. They took for their shared spirituality Christ prayer from Matthew's Gospel, "that all may be one."

Over time SFCC lived into this prophetic self-understanding and strove by all means possible to forward the realization of the Christ prayer. All SFCC realized they were co-equal and co-responsible to be witnesses of hope and catalysts of change within the human condition. They thought of themselves as workers toward equality and solidarity not only within the institutional Church but outside it, as well.

### SFCC emerged from one visionary's understanding of Vatican II

Lillanna Kopp (Sister Audrey Kopp), a distinguished scholar of anthropology and sociology, in the years immediately following Vatican II traversed the US and Canada speaking at Chapters of Renewal and diocesan Sisters' Councils about the options of structural renewal as mandated by the Vatican Council II. Many religious congregations lamented to her they were losing

large numbers of members, many of whom were among their most educated and spiritually mature who claimed they wanted to remain vowed but free of the congregational organization and restrictions.

"How could that be?" Lillanna asked herself repeatedly as she pondered those many women who wanted freedom from their congregation but not from their vowed lifestyle. Eventually she was convinced they sought a form and structure religious life that supported both their personal growth and opportunity to serve humanity to their fullest capacity according to Gospel premise. It was then that Lillanna Kopp envisioned these women joining together in an umbrella community that transcended geographical distances and brought all members into a network of supportive spirituality, communication and unity. To that end, she charted a single page *profile* that delineated a new kind of religious community based on a common charism of unity in Christ with ad organizational structure that avoided stifling bureaucracies and repressive controls.

In March 1970, the *profile* was published in TRANS-SISTER, a cross congregational, nun-to-nun newsletter on renewal. Among all who read it, the **Profile** (as it came to be called) sparked hope and enthusiasm! Only a few months later, in August 1971, 38 women, inspired by Kopp's Profile, gathered in Dunrovin, Minnesota to chart their future together. They refined and affirmed the **Profile** as their official document of identity and purpose. They affirmed simplicity, community, and solidarity as their hallmarks. Since then SFCC have gathered every summer in general assembly to refine their network of communication, to affirm their unity and commitment, and to explore the meaning of Church, spiritual life, celibacy, Eucharist, ecumenism, feminism and commitment to social justice. In the 42 years that have passed since that first assembly in Minnesota, over 1000 women have committed themselves to the vision and mission outlined in the **Profile** (*see p.1 of this booklet*).

### SFCC 25 Years Later

1995 was a jubilee year for SFCC. The collective members took the occasion to measure how they had lived the initial prophetic vision of Lillanna Kopp and the first SFCC. In 1995 SFCC still defined itself as a "prophetic-ecclesial community" driven to "speak the truth of love and grow in the maturity of Christ" (Eph. 4:15). SFCC still understood itself to be a community of consecrated women who are self-determining, self-regulating, and self-governing holding the common goal grounded in the Christ prayer of unity and collegiality, "that all may be one." By 1995 it was even more clear to all SFCC that only this Christ-prayer makes independence and collegiality possible and productive. Thus it is this prayer that continued to form the heart of the SFCC common spirituality, while it also challenges each SFCC to take the uncomfortable risk of being a prophet wherever she lives or works.

Founded originally to concern itself with the restructuring of a hierarchical institutional Church, SFCC moved progressively toward what it came to understand as a "ministry of presence" beyond the Church. Individually and as a full membership worldwide, SFCC earnestly

believed by 1995 that personal opinions can be turned to mutual understanding. Division can be turned to unity. Oppressive structures can be reformatted. These simple but weighty assumptions pointed to the very essence of SFCC's "ministry of presence" through listening, loving, and serving. By its very nature, then, SFCC's "ministry of presence" is a prophetic action that takes them wherever their vision and mission are needed.

### SFCC in the New Century

It comes as no surprise in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century to find SFCC worldwide living in free-form, contemporary units either alone or with others. Community is maintained through personal contacts, regional and international gatherings and newsletters. SFCC is collegial in all decisions that affect the community. They live and work wherever the witness of collegial community is needed, especially among society's marginal populations.

Therefore, SFCC are found in nearly every professional and non-professional field. Each member is self-supporting and dedicates her energies and talents to building Christian community. SFCC are education professionals: professors, teachers, librarians, administrators and support staff. SFCC are found in counseling offices and social service centers. SFCC minister in parishes and in the corporate world around the globe. They minister in developing nations and Third World countries. SFCC advocate for the homeless, indigent, battered women, the political refugee and victims of human trafficking. SFCC work with the elderly and are health care professionals in hospitals, health centers, and neighborhood clinics. SFCC are retail clerks and shelf stockers; they are accountants, bankers, researchers, receptionists, and authors. Wherever SFCC live or work they strive to facilitate mutual community according to the Christ prayer, "That all may be one."



## BECOMING PROCESS: NEW MEMBERSHIP

### PURPOSE

The purpose of the Becoming Process is to provide a spiritual pathway whereby both the individual and the community mutually discern a call to membership in Sisters For Christian Community.

### PROCESS

Each region will participate fully in the affirmed steps of the Becoming Process. These include the essential elements and follow-up procedures for welcoming new members. Whenever necessary, regions may make modifications according to circumstances, keeping the individual's spiritual growth and maturity as the heart of the process. The process consists of the following three stages:

**INQUIRY STAGE** *"Yahweh preceded them ... to show them the way, and ... to give them light."* (Ex. 15:20-22)

Within the Inquiry Stage the individual seeks an understanding of SFCC through relationships with members in the local community. Discussion will define, clarify and expand understanding of the affirmed SFCC documents with a particular emphasis on the ecumenical, non-canonical status.

- Who We Are
- Our Spirituality, Our Ministry
- Our Commitment, Our Values
- Our Lifestyle, Our Structure

The individual shares autobiographical data - family background, education, career, life in previous religious community or marriage, primary faith community, reason for interest in SFCC, and relationship with another SFCC region. A written autobiography will be required if the individual becomes an Affiliate.

If, after mutual sharing with the sisters in the region, the individual decides not to proceed with the process, she may choose to become a Friend of SFCC. The regional community may also decide to stop the process and recommend that the individual consider other lifestyle choices. If the individual expresses her desire to become an Affiliate, the regional community will decide, by consensus, to accept, delay or deny the request. The reason for the decision will be discussed with the individual.

**AFFILIATION STAGE** *"Jesus saw them following and said, 'What do you want?' They answered, 'Where do you live?' He replied, 'Come and see'."* (In. 1: 35-39)

When the regional community accepts the individual to the Affiliation Stage, this transition requires that she:

- Complete and sign the Affiliation form, witnessed and co-signed by one or more active affirmed SFCC member(s),
- Select a Mentor(s) from the regional community.

The Mentor(s) must meet the requirements and accept the responsibilities of the Mentor(s) as affirmed at the 2010 Assembly. The regional community affirms the Mentor(s).

The Mentor(s), an affirmed and active SFCC for at least two years:

- Spends quality time with the Affiliate,
- Reviews with the Affiliate writings pertinent to SFCC charism and history, such as: the Mission~Vision Statement, the Profile, Sudden Spring, the 25<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Presentations, and the ViewBook (available on the SFCC web site),
- Communicates with other SFCC members regarding pertinent authors and other materials helpful to the Becoming Process,
- Utilizes the entire affirmed Becoming Process. Each step of the process may be interpreted according to the needs of the Affiliate, as well as the needs of the sponsoring region and global community,
- Recommends that the affiliate have a spiritual guide.

Both Mentor(s) and Affiliate communicate with the sponsoring region the progress of the Affiliate.

It is the responsibility of the Regional Communication Coordinator (RCC) to:

- Obtain the official Affiliation and Vital Information Forms from the International Communication Coordinators (ICCs),
- Send the signed original Affiliation Form to the ICCs,
- Inform the international community of the new Affiliate via the All-To-All (ATA) and invite prayer and letters of support. The ATA article includes a brief introduction to the Affiliate, her contact information, a photo, and the name of her Mentor(s).

The Affiliate continues her discernment. She:

- Writes her Autobiography,
- Continues her spiritual formation through reading, meditation, retreats, reflecting with her Mentor(s) and the local community,
- Makes it a priority to budget time and finances to attend an International Assembly as an experience of global community.

The length of the Affiliation Stage will differ according to the Affiliate's background and needs. This will be a minimum of one year. At any time the Affiliate or the regional community may decide to stop the process.

Should the Affiliate express a desire to move into full membership, the community members who have been active in the Affiliate Stage, make a decision by consensus on the Affiliate's request.

Following a collegial decision by the regional community to become a full member, the Affiliate:

- Completes and submits to the RCC her Vital Information Form,
- Decides the time and place, either with the local region or at the International Assembly, for the commitment ceremony,
- Writes her Covenant expression consistent with the SFCC Profile.

It is the responsibility of the RCC to:

- Obtain the official Affirmation Form from the ICCs,
- Announce the ceremony in the A TA and invite all to participate personally or with prayer and letters of support,
- Send the Autobiography, Vital Information and Affirmation Forms to the ICCs.

It is the responsibility of the ICCs to:

- Validate and send the Autobiography, Vital Information and Affirmation Forms to the Archives,
- Send a letter of welcome and membership ID to the new member.

**AFFIRMATION STAGE** *"Yahweh's heart was set on you and chose you ... because of love for you ... the faithful God is true to the covenant." (Deut. 7: 7-9 paraphrased)*

The Affirmation Stage is a period of full membership. The new member joins the international community in striving to live the SFCC Mission, Vision, and Profile through commitment to spiritual growth, deepening prayer, spirituality and building Christian Community within the context of her ministry. As a member, she fosters relationships through various means of communication. She is actively involved in community events and shares her gifts, talents, and, when appropriate, undertakes community service roles.

The SFCC maintains contact and correspondence with her RCC, the ICCs, ATA and Archivist, updating personal records as needed. If relocating to another region, she notifies her present RCC and the RCC of the new region, as well as the ATA. She is a welcoming presence to the Inquirer and knowledgeable of the Becoming Process.

*Becoming Process affirmed at SFCC International Assembly, July 2010, Tucson, Arizona*



**BECOMING PROCESS  
FOR  
SFCC COMPANION / PERMANENT AFFILIATE**

**2001** Affirmed at International Assembly in Egmond aan Zee, The Netherlands:

Persons who wish to live out the SFCC Vision and Mission in their own lives but either do not or cannot commit to the evangelical vows of Giving (Poverty), Loving (Chastity) and Listening (Obedience) are encouraged to become SFCC Companions or Affiliates. Members in this category participate in meetings and gatherings of the SFCC Region geographically nearest to them.

**2017** Affirmed at International Assembly in Baltimore, Maryland USA

SFCC Companion members will be participating members of the SFCC region geographically nearest to them. A person wishing to be a SFCC Companion/Permanent Affiliate will follow the already established SFCC Becoming Process and stop the Process at the Affiliate Stage (see pages 5-7)

(1) will make contact with a local SFCC

(2) will select a mentor from among local SFCCs

(3) with the mentor will learn the history, the Profile, Vision and Mission of SFCC, as well as how SFCC conducts community business (collegial consensus).

(4) attends region meetings and other local SFCC events

(5) when ready, the mentor along with all members of the local SFCC region discern by consensus of SFCC is a good fit for the candidate and if the candidate fully understands what SFCC is and what is expected in the daily witnessing of the community vision and mission.

(6) If the consensus is positive, then the Region members and candidate gather for the Covenant of Affiliation ceremony at which time the Covenant Form is signed, dated and witnessed. (Form is found on page 8)

(7) New SFCC Companion is announced in the community newsletter, All- To-All

Covenant Form is sent to the community archives where a Companion member file is created and the Companion is entered into the global SFCC member data base.

**SISTERS FOR CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY  
BECOMING PROCESS  
COVENANT OF AFFILIATION**

Responding to the call of the Spirit, I \_\_\_\_\_, enter into a covenant relationship with the Sisters For Christian Community to journey with them as prophetic, ecclesial women.

I understand Sisters For Christian Community to be a non-canonical, collegial, contemporary and ecumenical community united by mutual concern, communication and commitment to promoting the growth of Christian community through diverse ministries.

Grateful to the God who leads me to share the vision and charism of Sisters For Christian Community, I seek to walk the journey, to explore the gift through prayer, contemplation, study and participation.

Trusting in the prayerful support, the authentic life-giving spirituality and the hospitality of the Sisters For Christian Community who journey with me, I enter into this covenant as a sacred adventure into a future full of hope.

Date:

Signed:

SFCC Mentor(s)signature(s)

Signatures of other SFCC in the Region

## NINE-STEP COLLEGIAL DECISION MAKING PROCESS



### **Step 1 INITIATING** (at personal, local, regional or area level)

- individual or group names the issue
- proposes a solution for Assembly discernment and decision: Proposal or Recommendation
- states the rationale for proposed solution

### **Step 2 INFORMING** (internationally)

- presents Proposal through the community newsletter, All-To-All (ATA)
- submits Proposal to ATA no later than the April/May issue
- invites SFCC response through the ATA

### **Step 3 STUDYING** (at all levels: personal, local, regional and area)

- SFCC research and discuss the Proposal at local and regional meetings
- submit to the ATA suggestions, opinions, alternatives, etc.

### **Step 4 CLARIFYING** (at International Assembly 2 days prior to Consensus Session)

- The Consensus Facilitator
- reads the Proposal and Recommendation
  - invites Clarifier to present any further information
  - opens floor to questions for clarification
  - uses small groups if needed
  - encourages Assembly members to further discuss during the next 2 days

### **Step 5 PREPARING THE SETTING**

- The Business Team and Assembly Team provide
- a comfortable circular seating arrangement for small group discussion
  - chalk board or news print for small group reports/sharing
  - overhead projector or other technology for group reports/summaries
  - microphones made available for full range of audibility

### **Step 6 DECIDING COLLEGIALLY**

- The Consensus Facilitator
- opens session with music, centering silence and invocation for Holy Spirit's direction
  - introduces Consensus Team members and their specific duties
  - Consensus Team members: Recorder I (note taker), Recorder II (media recorder), Time Keeper, Evaluator who appraises the consensus process at the end of the general session
  - States each Proposal and Recommendation in updated form
  - forms discussion groups of 5-6 persons. A recorder is chosen for each group
  - provides for interregional sharing by each person present
  - encourages face to face dialogue from the floor to provide all members the opportunity to know the thinking of all present

- invites Recorder I summaries from small group discussions
- allows ample time for modifications, sets arbitrary cut-off limits, knowing that the SFCC Collegial Process is based on the Pauline theology of community: "The Spirit speaks where it will, to the least as well as the greatest, to persons of every rank for the upbuilding of community." (COR 12:11). Unless all have an opportunity to be heard, the Holy Spirit will be limited, as well.
- deflects prolonged arguments which suggest a genuine lack of readiness for consensual decision-making by taking a "consensus check" on the need to table the Proposal or Recommendation until the following year after more research and discussion is applied.
- watches for shifts toward or away from consensus and takes periodic checks to advance the process
- asks: "Is there now consensus that we accept/reject the Proposal? Recommendation?"  
If there is not perfect consensus, checks to see if there is anyone present who cannot live with the affirmation and implementation of the Proposal/Recommendation. If not, consensus is affirmed. If someone steps forward, then the Proposal/Recommendation is returned to the originating region for further study
- if consensus exists, recorder I takes down the exact wording of the Proposal/Recommendation

### **Step 7 PLANNING THE IMPLEMENTATION**

The Consensus Facilitator

- asks the Assembly how the Proposal/Recommendation is to be implemented if it involves any follow-up work
- asks Recorder I to take note of any committee that is created for the follow-up. The committee will be included in the Consensus Session report to the ATA
- delivers to the next Assembly Team a report on any unfinished business their Assembly will need to address

### **Step 8 EVALUATING THE PROCESS**

The Consensus Facilitator calls forward the Evaluator who assesses on the general session that has just ended according to the nine steps delineated on these pages.

### **Step 9 REPORTING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY**

- Each member carries full notes back to her region for sharing at a Fall meeting or newsletter
- ATA Editor Team dedicates the September/October issue of the community newsletter to a comprehensive report of the Consensus Session and its results.

The Consensus Facilitator closes the Session with a prayer of gratitude



## NINE-STEP COLLEGIAL PROCESS

### DEFINITIONS

#### **PROPOSALS**

Requests that change the structure or the process of the community (as articulated in the PROFILE) and must be dealt with through the SFCC collegial discernment process at both the region and international levels ending in consensus.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Areas of strong value, even if not intrinsic to SFCC. These are serious concerns to the community which do not affect the PROFILE. They do not effect a change in structure or process. The sense of the International Assembly regarding the recommendations is required.

#### **SERVICE AFFIRMATIONS**

Offers of service to the community. These services, if accepted, do not alter the structure of the community. However, a Community Assembly decision to affirm or not is appropriate because the community requested the offer of service.

#### **ISSUES**

An Issue is an area or topic of interest to the community-at-large. This interest is determined by the largeness of the response in the ATA. No decision or affirmed consensus is requested and no commonality is expected. These are simply issues that provide the assembled SFCC community an opportunity to discuss and determine if the issue should be introduced as either a formal Recommendation or Proposal.

#### **SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL, RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE**

The Form for submitting any of the above to the international membership is found on the next page. The form is completed and sent to the International Assembly Planning Team for the current year. The Team places the Proposal, Recommendation and/or Issue on the Assembly Business Agenda for the Nine Step Collegial Consensus Process (see pages 9-10). It also appears in the community newsletter, All-To-All, in order to facilitate discussion and discernment at both the region and individual levels. Regions and individuals are encouraged to submit comments and concerns to the All-To-All.

**FORM FOR SUBMITTING  
PROPOSALS or RECOMMENDATIONS TO ASSEMBLY**

*This form is sent to the ATA for publication by or before the April/May issue*

**PROPOSALS:** Requests that would radically alter the essence of the community (as articulated in the PROFILE) and should most appropriately be dealt with through the SFCC collegial discernment process ending in consensus.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Areas of strong value, even if not intrinsic to SFCC. These are serious concerns to the community which do not affect the PROFILE. The sense of the Assembly regarding the recommendation is important.

**FORMAL PROPOSAL / RECOMMENDATION FOR CONSENSUS**

Submitted by \_\_\_\_\_ Region \_\_\_\_\_

I/We propose, with modifications from the Assembly floor, if any, that

SFCC clarifier: \_\_\_\_\_

Rationale: (If needed, please use back of paper. Please be clear and concise)

## **COMMUNICATION NETWORK – SERVICE ROLES**



Communication leadership positions are rotating, voluntary service roles. Volunteers need to discern their qualifications, abilities and available time before offering their service.

### **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF SFCC**

1. Each affirmed member of SFCC is a vital link in the community's communication network that follows a concentric circle organizational plan. Communication flows within a region via phone conversation, newsletters and meetings. The Region communicates with larger Area and the Area communicates to the full community membership via the All-To-All newsletter. Where an Area does not exist, the Region itself communicates directly to the All-To-All.
2. Each affirmed member of SFCC is a welcoming presence to those inquiring about SFCC by introducing her to other members of the Region and encouraging her to come to meetings
3. Reaches out to SFCC within the region who are homebound or isolated
4. Maintains contact with Regional Communication Coordinator (RCC) and International Communication Coordinators (ICC)

### **REGIONAL COMMUNICATION COORDINATOR (RCC)**

1. Schedules and organizes a minimum of one meeting a year for all SFCC within the region. Secures a location, sets an agenda and ensures ample time for personal, as well as community sharing. Sends a report of the meeting to the ATA.
2. Generates the flow of communication between members of the Region about the needs and concerns of each member.
3. Sends out news from the ICCs and other SFCC outside the Region to those who are not active in the SFCC Online email group
4. Generates discussion about Proposals and Recommendations that appear in the ATA. Sends to that ATA a report of these discussions.
5. Knows the names and current contact information for each member of the Region. Knows the contact information for each member's emergency contact.

6. Remains in communication with the International Communication Coordinators (ICCs) the ATA Editor Team and the Archivist
7. Welcomes individuals who inquire about SFCC. Initiates the Becoming Process and sends a brief biography of the individual to the ATA.

### **ALL-TO-ALL EDITOR TEAM**

1. Publishes five issues between each Assembly: October-November, December-January, February-March, April-May and June-July
2. Publishes an updated SFCC Directory in January of even years. The Directory lists all affirmed members of SFCC. Also lists Members by Region. Lists members by state and/or country. Lists individuals currently in the Becoming Process. Lists Friends of SFCC. Includes a Necrology.
3. Each issue of the ATA includes Regional reports. Report content is edited only with permission from the RCC.
4. Publishes all Proposals and Recommendations that are submitted
5. Publishes information about the coming International Assembly as it is sent from the Assembly Planning Team and as page space limitations permit.
6. Publishes prayer requests and news about individual members
7. Publishes welcoming biography of persons in the Becoming Process.
8. Announces the Affirmation of new members into SFCC
9. Publishes obituaries of deceased members
10. Determines the cost of publication and mailing of the five issues and the SFCC Directory and sets the service fee accordingly.
11. Distributes the five ATA issues and SFCC Directory either as hard copies or in e-format. All SFCC listed in the Directory receive the September-October issue. The remaining four issues are sent to those who have paid the Service Fee. The Directory and ATA are sent in either hard copy format or e-format as indicated by each member.
12. Distributes budget monies from the Service Fee to the ICCs, Archivist and TCC

### **ARCHIVIST**

1. Maintains a file for each affirmed member that includes: Affirmation Form, Vital Information Form, publications, news articles and any other personal information about ministry. Recommended is a copy of Living Will and Power of Attorney for safekeeping.
2. Protects confidentiality of each member's file. Access is given only to the ICCs and/or persons specifically designated by the member herself.

3. Maintains a history of each International Assembly that includes the location, date, Planning Team, group photo, agenda or program, Proposals and recommendations discussed and the results of the Consensus Session. A final report is also included in each Assembly's file.
4. Maintains records of past International Communication Coordinators (ICCs) and community issues that were pertinent during their tenure of service.
5. Maintains copies of every issue of the All-To-All and Directories
6. Maintains copies of past View Books and Brochures
7. Supplies member information in time of emergency as requested by the ICCs or RCCs
8. Maintains copies of SFCC publications
9. Maintains copies of Region and Area newsletters
10. Maintains community materials of historical value
11. Maintains a file of deceased members
12. Maintains a file of SFCC who have withdrawn their membership
13. Publishes and distributes upon request current SFCC materials that include: Brochure, View Book and the 1995 Jubilee Presentations Booklet
14. Supplies historical materials to SFCC who are doing community research, as well as to the Assembly Planning Team.
15. Works closely with the Avila University archivist to maintain and update the SFCC Special Collection housed at the university.
15. Prepares an annual report that includes budgetary expenses and archive activity. The report is presented at Assembly and published in the September-October issue of the ATA.

## **ASSEMBLY PLANNING TEAM**

1. Secures a location, housing, meals, meeting facility for the International Assembly two years in advance
2. Sets the theme and corresponding Program for each day of the Assembly, which includes shared prayer, speakers, small sessions, Free Day, Commitment Liturgy and Remembrance Service.
3. Ensures the right environment for the Consensus Session that includes table and seating for small groups, microphones, newsprint or chalkboard for group reports.
4. Ensures that the Assembly Program provides ample time for each step of the Collegial Process that will accommodate the Proposals and recommendations that have been submitted during the year.
5. Sends information to the ATA during the year: information about the theme, speakers, program and the facility itself.

6. Sets to the Assembly fee and publishes a registration form in the ATA.
7. Provides a summary report on the program to the September-October issue of the ATA
8. Sends completed evaluation forms to the next Assembly Planning Team.
9. Sends excess monies to the Planning Team whose Assembly is two years away.

### **COLLEGIAL PROCESS BUSINESS TEAM**

1. Three members who will act as a team are called forth one year in advance
2. Determine who among them will be Facilitator, Recorder I and Time Keeper
3. Watch each issue of the ATA for Proposals and recommendations
4. Contact the Clarifier for each Proposal and Recommendation to ensure she will be at the Assembly and ready to receive questions from the Assembly floor.
5. Leads the Assembly members through the Nine-Step Process
6. Sends a comprehensive report of the Consensus Session to the ATA for the September-October issue

### **INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION COORDINATORS (ICC)**

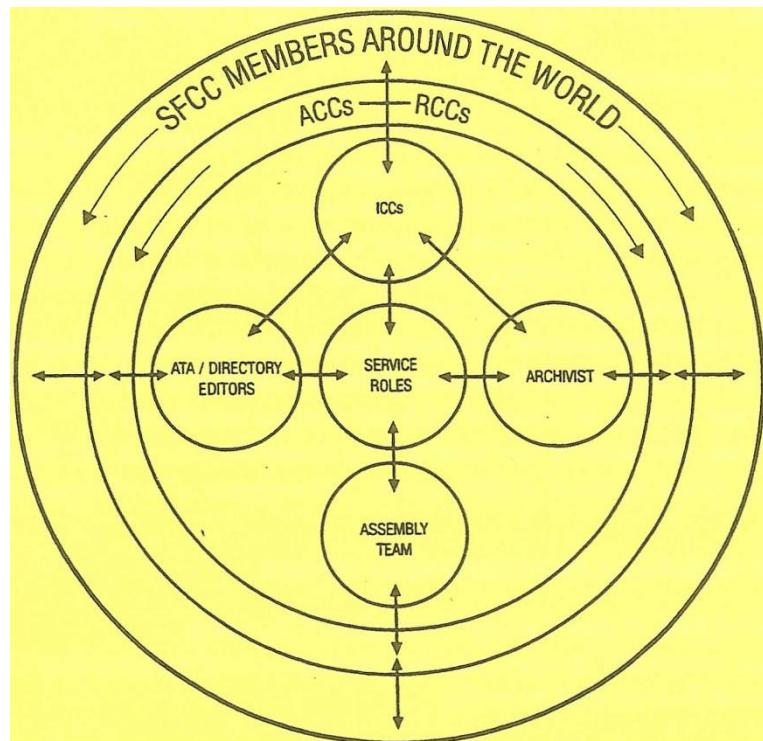
1. Serve as the primary hub of communication between all members of SFCC worldwide
2. Participates in the SFCC Online email group
3. Sends community news and information to the ATA for publication
4. Send to the Archives all information for existing members, individuals in the Becoming Process, newly affirmed members
5. Informs the ATA and Archivist when a member has died
6. Informs the Archivist when a member has withdrawn her membership
7. Reaches out to members who are homebound and/or geographically isolated
8. Serve as the primary point of contact with ecclesial officials
9. Write letters of confirmation for members needing them for their ministry
10. Connects individuals who inquire about SFCC with the SFCC who lives nearest

11. Works closely with the ATA Team and Archivist to ensure communication to the full membership is current
12. Works closely with Regional Communication Coordinators (RCC)
13. Prepares an annual report that includes current information about the membership, their various activities on behalf of all SFCC and a financial accounting of their budget expenses.

## SFCC REGIONS / AREAS

Australia  
 BENELUX (Belgium, Netherlands, Luxemburg)  
 Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras)  
 Desert and Mountain (California, Arizona)  
 East Central  
 Florida  
 Great Lakes  
 Great Plains  
 Guam  
 Gulf South  
 Ireland  
 India  
 Jubilee Network  
 Koinonia  
 MA-RI-NY-CT  
 Mexico  
 Mid Atlantic  
 Mid-West  
 New Zealand  
 North Atlantic  
 Northern California  
 Northern Lights  
 Ontario, Canada  
 Pacific Northwest  
 Philippines  
 Portugal  
 Rocky Mountain  
 Sophia Group (New York, New Jersey)  
 South Central  
 Southern California  
 Sunbelt  
 Uganda  
 WEB (Washington DC-Baltimore)  
 United Kingdom  
 Wisconsin: (3 regions) Eagle, Maranatha, Namaste

## SFCC ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



## **Excerpt: *From Seed to Tender Seedling: The SFCC Emergence in 1970***

Lillanna Kopp, SFCC

### **A WHOLLY NEW STYLE SISTERHOOD**

Responding to Vatican II's call to the Church to return on every level to a participatory and mutual service model of organization, the Sisters For Christian Community sprouted upward into Church history in the spring of 1970. Like tumbleweeds blown by myriad winds, the members gathered from the East Coast and West, from the Great lakes region to the Deep South, across the prairie states and finally from the Canadian Provinces. Their spiritual unity soon spanned the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans where scattered catalysts in Europe, Africa, Mexico, Central America, Australia, the Philippines and Guam joined the spiritual safari. Together they are determined to explore a wholly new pattern of spiritual journeying – one embodying the visions of Vatican II and their ultimate realization of the CHURCH RADIANT, a Church of community, simplicity and love.

Many ask: What are the distinguishing characteristics of this new and unique expression of the consecrated life? How do the Sisters For Christian Community see themselves as differing from sisters of traditional apostolic monastic or contemplative congregations and orders? In what form of ministry do these women serve Christian community and persons beyond its boundaries? How is Christ-commitment in this biblically based unity expressing scriptural understandings quite different from the medieval interpretations still prominent in most contemporary sisterhoods? What collective or community-held convictions, dreams and determinations drew these women together from every continent in the world? What rationale prompts them to eschew customary forms of security in canonically approved structures: motherhouses, novitiates, retirement centers, constitutions, incorporated works, formation programs and a presumably stable bureaucratic organization? The answers to these questions are developed elsewhere in this study. The focus of this specific section, however, is limited to an encapsulating overview of the SFCC rational for emergence. This mini-history of the Sisters For Christian Community was prepared to better acquaint interested persons with this particular movement of the Holy Spirit over the troubled waters of these times. The sharing here will answer questions about WHO these sisters are, WHY they are emerging, HOW they see themselves as differing from traditional groups, and WHERE they believe they and other Christian women will be serving the Church in the future. Spotlighted in these few comments will be the forces which propel them in this pioneering of a wholly new type sisterhood whose membership explosion, over half a thousand in its first decade, already attests to a certain inner vitality.

### **THE PAST THAT URGED THEIR PRESENCE**

Most of us lived through the spiritual cataclysm of the Sixties and Seventies and know that the vocation-rich but somewhat somnolent sisterhoods awakened suddenly. – as did the universal Church – to the realization strongly stated by the Vatican Council that an era of Church history was ending: the era of concentration, centralization and bureaucratization. All Christianity was being challenged by the Holy Spirit speaking through that massive assembly, to cross an epochal threshold into a new Pentecostal period, into a new phase of Church history, into the transforming Church of penetration, communication, co-responsibility and community. The, the Holy Spirit initiated nothing less than a genuine revolution in the Church's self-understanding, and set in motion spiritual and structural changes of such momentous implication that they have yet to be fully explored and completely grasped.

## THE VISION THAT CALLED FORTH THE SFCC EMERGENCE

Christians are well aware that responses to the call of the Holy Spirit to put the new wine of AGGIORNAMENTO into wholly new skins for new times, range along a continuum whose extreme poles are open-minded readiness and closed-minded resistance. On this continuum the Sisters For Christian Community can be identified as women willing to live consistently on the cutting edge of readiness – women who recognized early that the new constitutions of the Church: LUMEN GENTIUM and GAUDIUM ET SPES, summarizing the collegially affirms charisms and wisdom of the bishops of the world were probably the most significant advances in the evolution of the Church's self-understanding throughout its first two thousand years. This new Vatican II vision of the Church, reflecting fresh scriptural, theological and ecclesiological research and the world's most profound religious scholarship, called for comparably fresh structures consonant with the new skins for new wine that called the Sisters For Christian Community into being – that planted the seed.

## THE CATACLYSM THAT THREATENED THE SEED FOR BECOMING

Knowledge of this crisis-packed history of the post-Vatican II decade precludes one from holding an illusion that SFCC might have been conceived in tranquility. Rather it germinated for years in the ambiotic sea of ambivalences and anomie. Sisterhoods at the time of its emergence seemed strangely disjointed by the conflicting internal forces of renewal, coupled with resistance and retrenchment. World sisterhoods, torn with tension and travail, bureaucratized, polarized and sometimes terminally afflicted, watch membership diminished by almost one third of its membership in one decade. According to one Vatican release, world sisters diminished from roughly one million in 1965 to 609,369 by 1975. This attrition was due to natural deaths, a dearth of new vocations, but most pronouncedly, from sisters seeking affiliation dispensations. The enormity of the tragedy seemed to lie in this: thousands of those sisters-in-exodus undoubtedly had – and continue to have – a deep sense of vocation and a determination to remain vowed and Christ-committed women with or without the stabilizing and encouraging companionship of like-minded women. They stepped out alone into a world as yet unready to offer a challenging alternative to the specific religious life-styles, TOTAL INSTITUTION or democratized bureaucracy, which they could no longer embrace with conviction.

The life cycle of any seed is wrapped in a degree of mystery. Some seeds require the violence of winter freeze, the drench of spring storms, or the scorch of summer sun to crack open the outer shell and free the inner germ for a new burst of life. So it was with the SFCC beginnings.

Realization of the terrible waste being caused by the spirit-abrasive exodus from world sisterhoods served as needed catalyst or cataclysmic force, the freeze, the drench, the scorch that would wrench into sprout-stage the first Sister For Christian Community, so named. She was Sister Audrey Kopp, who among American Sisters was a well-known sociologist-anthropologist inextricably caught up in writing and lecturing on the Vatican II-inspired structural renewal of sisterhoods, -on their needed radical transformation from top-heavy, work-oriented, person-

manipulating, bureaucratic organizations, into person-oriented, Spirit-directed, collegial communities of co-equal, co-responsible women penetrating the total culture with Christian values rather than concentrating in corporate apostolates or ministries. It was possible for Audrey Kopp to present this message to thousands of sisters in the United States and Canada at their Chapters of Renewal or at diocesan sisters' councils. Another communication opportunity she relished was being co-editor of *TRANS-SISTER*, the first grassroots, cross congregational, nuns-to-nuns-only newsletter on renewal, -a forerunner of NAWR's (the National Association of Women Religious) *PROBE*. Her authorship of the mini-book: *The New Nuns: Collegial Christians*, 1968, plus a number of articles in the *NCR*, *Catholic Mind*, *Sister Formation Bulletin*, etc., facilitated ever-widening contacts and communication with sisters of all ages and stages of Vatican II-directedness. Some congregations which she visited as a consultant knew they were "too big bureaucratically," or too small, too old or entrenched in tradition to weather out the turmoil of renewal. She was particularly disconcerted, however, when administrators spoke honestly about the loss of some of their "finest women," --sisters spiritually mature, professionally competent, and vocation-gifted, who felt "called to leave." But called to WHAT beyond the leaving, she often wondered.

#### A DREAM WITHOUT RENTS AND PATCHES



After several years on the Chapters of Renewal-circuit, the collective impact of problems within sisterhoods pressed heavily. The enormity of the internal erosion caused by pouring the new wine of Vatican II into old skins, or the affixing of a new patch on an old garment and calling the process renewal, drew Sister Audrey Kopp to dream continuously about the possibility of a wholly new pattern of the consecrated life, --a fresh start without rents and patches.

A glow of joy began to overlay her apprehension about renewal. It rose from an increasing awareness that in every congregation she visited, in every audience she addressed, there were other sisters likewise envisioning a wholly new-style sisterhood, --a world-wide unity that would embody advances in the theology of the consecrated life, based not on centuries of cultural accretions, but on the Gospels alone. She kept wondering: Could these sisters and those already in exodus be brought somehow, into communication and unity? Could their mutual dreams become a shared reality? Was the Holy Spirit gathering all of them, even at the moment, into a spiritual unity that transcended distances? It seemed so.

Feeling closely identified with these yet nameless, like-minded, twin-spirited women soon to be co-foundresses of a new world sisterhood, she took up a pen on behalf of all of them and sketched out in broad strokes their common charisms for unity-in-Christ. Thus the PROFILE took shape. In March 1970 it was published in *TRANS-SISTER*, and the news began pulsing out to waiting sisters everywhere. The seed had broken free.

## **THE RISKS THAT SUMMONED ALL THEIR COURAGE**

And thus, the gathering and re-gathering of hundreds of Christian women into a warm, loving, caring, and simple spiritual unity was under way. Strangely, because never so-planned nor anticipated, the second member of SFCC, like a small number scattered throughout the membership thereafter, was what they now designate as DUAL member. That is descriptive of persons who have retained membership in their traditional congregations but are so convinced of the need of SFCC that they have been whole-heartedly involved as co-pioneers, sharing the risks involved in cutting new paths, blazing new trails, creating new patterns, and helping to demonstrate the authenticity of this fresh expression of the consecrated life by being bridges between the old patterns and the new.

This spiritual journeying has demanded of most members, however, that they leave still-loved sisterhoods, that they initially experience the isolation and solitude of a celibacy without a close-by celibate community, that they embrace a new expression of poverty and obedience requiring self-support, taxes, and insurance payments, personal responsibility for home, meals, education, spiritual enrichment, travel, medical needs, retirement, and even burial. So the archives of this young community already swell with personal adventures of saga proportions about the women sharing in the collective determination to help transform the Church into its Vatican II-and-beyond vision.

## **THE SFCC ROLE IN THE TRANSFORMING CHURCH**

The whole glorious transformation of the Church into the Pilgrim People of God living in Vatican II-inspired collegial community is still in its earliest stages of becoming. The process has always been necessarily slow as the universal Church moves gradually from one phase of its evolving expression to another. In retrospect, historians tend to name and roughly date certain facets of the Church's ever-changing image overlaying it's never-changing essence.

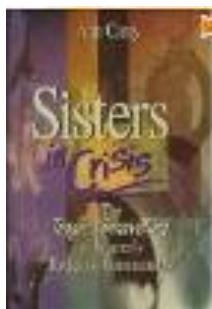
One very recent enumeration of these areas, or major phases, by Marcel LeGaut, renowned French theologian and philosopher, prophetically concludes with a suggestion for the currently dawning era. (See his "Glimpses of Tomorrow's Church," *Cross Currents*, Vol. 23, No.1) LeGaul's listing is brief

- the PRIMITIVE CHURCH, the beginning of community
- the CHURCH OF THE CATACOMBS, the suffering community
- the TRIUMPHANT CHURCH identified with temporal power and monarchical organization
- the CHURCH OF THE REFORMATION, a Church bureaucratizing
- the CHURCH OF THE COUNTER-REFORMATION, a Church declining
- the CHURCH RADIANT, a Church returning to simplicity, community, and love

It is with this CHURCH RADIANT that SFCC readily identifies and feels "missioned" to promote. Its qualities of simplicity, community, and love have constituted their shared ideals from

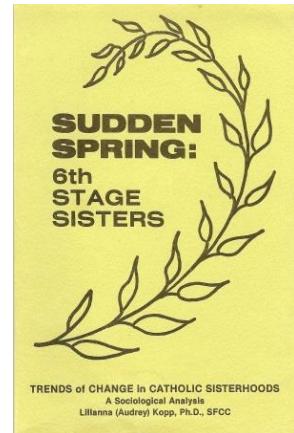
inception. The Sisters For Christian Community have described themselves as a tiny seed in 1970, and but a tender seedling today. Yet they know that they are more than that. Theirs is an eschatological presence: a transcendent community. Their fresh greenness is one fragile witness to this SUDDEN SPRING in the Church. The Sisters For Christian Community represent one tiny growth heralding the era of the CHURCH RADIANT. They are a sprig of hope that has broken through a rock of tradition, a seedling whose penetrating roots crumble the stones that hold back the future.

#### PUBLICATIONS WITH INFORMATION ON SFCC



Carey, Ann, *Sisters in Crisis: The Tragic Unraveling of Women's religious Communities*, Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 1975

Kopp, Lillanna, SFCC, *Sudden Spring: Sixth Stage Sister*. 1984.



McGoldrick, Ruth, S.P. and Cassian J. Yuhaus, C.P. (eds.), *Faces of the Future: Religious Life USA*. (Dr. Ann Heilman, SFCC, 97-105.)

National Sisters Vocation Conference, *Guide to Religious Communities of Women*. 1983.

Ware, Ann Patrick, S.L. (ed), *Midwives of the Future: American Sisters Tell Their Stories*. Leaven Press, 1985. (Ch. 5, Ritamary Bradley, Member of Founding Group, Sister Formation Conference; Chapter 8, Caridad Inda, CHM/SFCC, Director of Spanish Education Development Center; Chapter 10, Margaret Ellen Traxler, SSND/SFCC, Co-founder of NCAN; Chapter 17, Lillanna Kopp, Co-founder of NCAN and SFCC

## **INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY LISTING**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>PLACE</b>	<b>THEME</b>
1971	Dunrovin, MN	Never Done Rovin' Pilgrim People, Pioneer Community
1972	St Louis, MO	Koinonea: Unity in Diversity
1973	Narragansett, RI	The Sea: Diversity Moves in Unity
1974	Chicago, IL	SFCC as Gift
1975	Portland, OR	A Time to Root
1976	Colorado Springs, CO	International Women's Year
1977	Baltimore, MD	A Journey into a New World
1978	New Orleans, LA	Women of Vision
1979	Moraga, CA	A Celebration of Hospitality: Love Reaching Out
1980	Dayton, OH	Good News" SFCC Building the Global Family
1981	Calgary, Alberta	According to Our Gifts May We Serve
1982	San Antonio TX	Vocations to Confrontations
1983	Tulsa, OK	Prophetic Church s the Surviving Church
1984	Junaluska, NC	Woman: Shaper of Culture
1985	Lakewood, NJ	Journey to the Edge of Tomorrow
1986	St Charles, MO	Prophets and Visionaries
1987	San Diego, CA	Creating Wholeness
1988	Orlando, FL	Sharing Our Place in the Sun
1989	Pittsburgh, PA	Women of the Earth: Bridges to a New World Order

1990	Chicago, IL	Into the Future
1991	Biddeford, ME	Radiating the Woman Within
1992	Issaquah, OR	Expanding Our Global Consciousness
1993	Milwaukee, WI	Gospel Living with Global Vision
1994	Jacksonville, FL	Our Passion for Integrity
1995	Lancaster, PA	Celebrating the Journey
1996	Detroit, MI	The Future Challenge and Risk
1997	Pittsburgh, PA	Celebrating the Promise: Sharing Our Ministries
1998	Albuquerque, NM	Woman Clothed with the Sun
1999	Minneapolis, MN	Mighty Rivers of Justice
2000	San Diego, CA	Women of Prayer
2001	Egmond aan Zee, NL	Celtic Embrace, Celtic Fire
2002	Philadelphia, PA	With Liberty and Justice for All
2003	Portland, OR	Women's Spirituality in a Global Age
2004	Arlington, IL	Women's Ministry in a Global Age
2005	Honolulu, HI	Summoned by God: Rich in Diversity
2006	San Antonio, TX	Women of Prayer: A Call to Resurrection
2007	Las Vegas, NV	Prophetic Voices, Prophetic Presence
2008	Switzerland, FL	That All May be One: Living . . . Giving . . . Radiating the Light
2009	Atlantic City, NJ	Why Not Become Fire?
2010	Tucson, AZ	What Did You Come Into The Desert To See?
2011	Gatlinburg, TN	Calling to Circle
2012	Calgary, Alberta	All Will Be Well
2013	Louisville, KY	Searching For God, Doing The Gospel
2014	Milwaukee, WI	Energizing the Sister Within
2015	St Louis, MO	The Gift of Years
2016	Savannah, GA	Re-Envisioning Our Years Ahead
2017	Baltimore, MD	Navigating the Waters
2018	Chicago-Midway	That All May Be One
2019	Manila, Philippines	Sudden Spring in Asia
2020	Kansas City, MO	Golden Jubilee Year

## **INTERNATIONAL SERVICE ROLE LISTINGS**

### **International Communication Coordinators (ICC)**

1970-1976 Lillianna Kopp

1976-1979 Nancy Brossette  
Mary Ann Gaudin

1979-1982 Evelyn Hill  
Marilyn Sieg

1982-1985 Mary Elizabeth Carroll  
Justina Cox

1985-1988 Catherine Dever  
Mary Connors

1988-1991 Ursula Dowling  
Loretta Morgan

1991-1994 Nancy Gannon  
Monica Sesko

1994-1995 Melanie Jumonville  
Elizabeth O'Neill

1995-1998 Mary Sferre  
Mary Steves

1998-2001 Ann Patrick Conrad  
Vincentia Joseph

2001-2004 Fran Campbell  
Suzanne Dunn

2004-2007 Kass Collins  
Alma O'Brien

2007-2010 Lucy Comer  
Marion Hicks

2010-2013 Lucy Comer  
Marion Hicks

2013-2018 Roberta Kardell  
Rita Yeasted



## All-To-All Newsletter Editorial Team

1970-1975	Lillanna Kopp
1975-1976	Rita Marie Hall, Evelyn Hunt
1976-1978	Claudia Adamson, Virginia Barber Ann Cunningham, Suzanne Doolin, Florence Kaminskas, Corrine Lennstrum
1978-1981	Ann Brotherton, Diana Dale, Clare Magary, Helenjoy Pfaffenberger
1981-1982	Kathleen Brady, Pat Mullen, Solana Schmiedler
1982-1984	Rita Boudreau, Marylou Kitching, Lillanna Kopp, Jan Meyer, Sara Mintoyne, Diane Tourigny
1984-1986	Fern Bentz, Violet Kroetsch, Elaine Patsula, Barbara Rice
1986-1989	Mary Ellen Blackwell, Eleanor Mascola, Denise Ware
1989-1991	Carol Bearss, Dorothy Akey
1991-1994	Peggy Funk, Sharon McLaughlin
1994-1997	Shirley Crisler, Barbara Marshall
1997-1999	Barbara Donahue, Mary Therese Martin
1999-2002	Ann Jarocki, Mae Rose Jarocki
2002-2005	Shirley Crisler, Barbara Marshall
2005-2011	Roberta Kardell, Rose Ann Michel, Liguori Rossner, Rita Yeasted
2011-2017	Fran Campbell, Rose Miles, Pat Mitchell
2017-	Debra Murphy, Alma O'Brien, Peggy Ramsden

**ARCHIVIST**      1970-1995      Lillanna Kopp

1995-2017      Fran Campbell  
2017-          Fran Campbell and Patricia Douglass



## **NOTES**