

## **Interview with Leigh Howton Philips Continued**

### **5. What were the main challenges of your Diocesan job? What did you enjoy most?**

Having no church work experience made for quite a learning curve, but the Diocesan staff was very knowledgeable and helpful. Vickie Haskew and Sue Engemann know everything! Add Alina Martinez with HR matters to the mix and voila! Working with the Commission on Ministry (COM) was my favorite part of the job.

### **6. What did you take from your experience working with the COM? What is important, to your mind, about COM?**

In preparing for and attending COM meetings, I was given the benefit of really learning about people and hearing their life stories - the good, the bad and the ugly, and how they found Christ in the midst. Vulnerability is something that doesn't come easily for me though I claim to love it - and I do, just when it's not on me! Watching people sometimes uncomfortably go through process gives me courage to step out in faith and realize that vulnerability is a great strength and a beautiful thing even when things don't necessarily go my way. God has a plan, and my part is simply to trust the process.

### **7. What do you want/expect from retirement?**

I started a file on retirement a few years ago, never dreaming I'd be writing about it now. I want to learn to relax. I've spent my entire adulthood in a hurry and now it's time to slow the pace. I want to spend more time with family and friends. Travel is on the list, as well as reconnecting with some creative outlets involving music and art. In short, I have a lot of ideas but the first 'to do's' are all those things I've put off for years with the intent of doing them "when I have the time." Well guess what? The time is now and honestly, I'm a bit overwhelmed! I do believe the important stuff will get done in due time, just at a much slower pace with many pit stops along the way.

### **8. Anything else you might want to share with us would be great.**

I would like to thank Bishop Howard and the Diocese for the heartfelt send-off at convention. Thank you for making me feel so special. I am humbled and grateful for the time spent with you all.