



ST. JOHN'S NORWAY

ANGLICAN CHURCH IN THE BEACHES

The Role of the Deacon

This the last of three articles written on the Diaconia. Much of the material summarized in these articles have been taken from the Iona Report.

At their ordination, vocational deacons agree that they have been called to a special ministry of diakonia in the church and with the church for the world. They embody this ministry that all Christians are called to, as a sign and symbol of Christ's servant love and care for all. At the examination the ordination of a deacon, they are asked to confirm that as,

“Every Christian is called to follow Jesus Christ, serving God the Father, through the power of the Holy Spirit. God now calls (you) to a special ministry of servanthood, under the authority of your bishop.

In the name of Christ, you are to serve all people, particularly the poor, the weak, the sick, and the lonely.

... Do you believe that you are truly called by God and his Church to the life and work of a deacon?”

The Examination, Ordination of a Deacon, Book of Alternative Services (BAS)

In affirming this, deacons recognize that the call to this particular ministry is a call to embodiment. It is an incarnational ministry; living into the good news that we as Christians are entrusted with and encouraged to proclaim in our neighbourhoods, communities, and in the world. It is also a prophetic call, working with the community of faith to listen deeply to where the Spirit may be calling the church to care for all, paying special attention to the needs of the “poor, the weak, the sick, and the lonely.” Deacons encourage both the diakonia of the community that is gathered, the church where they serve, as well as encouraging and equipping individuals to realize and fulfill their own vocations of diakonia within the context of their own lives.



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Deacons are often called to special ministries of outreach, pastoral care, evangelism, and Christian education. They do so prayerfully, and with the prayerful and active support of the community that raises them up. To have a deacon in your church is a commitment made by both the deacon and the church that your community of faith places proclamation of the Good News, in service to the needs of the world, as a vital and life-giving expression of God's love.

The role of the deacon as servant is lived out symbolically within the liturgy of the church by assisting with the setting of the Eucharistic table as a servant, the proclamation of the Gospel, and the dismissal; imploring God's people to "*Go forth...in the name of Jesus, proclaiming the love of God in deeds and with words in the places where you find yourself in the world.*" The deacon may also from time to time, lead the intercessions, and at the invitation of the incumbent, preach. Deacons preach with a heart for calling all Christians to claim the ministries of servant love that all are called to; building up the Kingdom of God and yearning for God's reign of justice and peace; as in heaven, on earth.

The role of a deacon is to call forth the diakonia of the whole church and the people who form that church in the fullness of the love of God, seeking and serving Christ in all people, and caring for our beautiful world.