

THE ORDAINED DEACON



*Stories
Connecting
Word & Service*

Stories Connecting Word & Service

THE ORDAINED DEACON

You may be wondering who or what is a deacon in full connection?

Chances are you already know someone who is a deacon.

Deacons are nurses, music ministers, Christian educators, social workers, youth ministers, pastoral counselors, and many other people you come into contact with daily. Deacons are in your churches and in your workplaces.

Deacons are people who have responded to God's call to connect the church to the most needy, neglected, and marginalized among the children of God.

At the 1996 General Conference, the face of ministry in The United Methodist Church was dramatically changed. The General Conference affirmed that all ministry is grounded in baptism, and therefore, all Christians are in ministry. Two orders of ordained ministry were established — deacon and elder.

The new deacon in full connection:

- is ordained to Word and Service,
- finds his or her own employment and does not itinerate,
- is appointed by the bishop to the place of employment and also to a local church (if not employed in a local church), and
- serves in specialized ministries — connecting Word and Service, proclamation and witness — other than sacramental ministry and pastor in charge.

Listen to the following voices of deacons serving in the church and the world.



JOHN

Ordained deacon and staff member in an annual conference

“. . . Deacons fulfill servant ministry in the world and lead the Church in relating the gathered life of Christians to their ministries in the world. . . . the church is either faithful as a witnessing and serving community, or it loses its vitality and its impact on an unbelieving world.”

I hear my call in these words. The first points the way, the second supplies the passion. In my work on a conference staff, I confront God’s call in everything from praying with a new candidate for ordained ministry to laboring over a stubborn copier with a colleague to working with a Christian educator or a youth worker. I have experienced God’s presence with others in the simplest moments, and God’s presence has made our work liturgy, holy work. Finding and proclaiming God’s presence in ordinary moments is how I understand my calling. My passion comes from doing this faithfully in a potentially unbelieving world.



KATHY

Ordained deacon and Christian communicator

As a Christian communicator and ordained deacon, I am a storyteller. I tell stories of how modern-day disciples of Jesus Christ live out their faith in ministry through their churches and in ministry in the world. I tell stories about where ministries are needed and how ministries are making a difference in the lives of people. I tell stories about people who have discovered what it is to put the faith they nurture in worship into service in the world through diverse avenues as communications, music ministry, or crisis intervention.

What a blessing and a privilege to be able to tell the stories of Jesus Christ in ways in which seeing and hearing lead to understanding, caring, and acting.

DANIEL

Ordained deacon and teacher

My calling for social ministry began in 1966 when I decided to pursue my professional training in social work. I work primarily in family therapy. I saw in many neglected children their yearning for emotional stability, and in many troubled couples their need for relational reconciliation. When I became an ordained deacon, my desire to bring together my spiritual and professional gifts of advocacy, empowerment, and healing was realized.

I am excited by this renewed call to bridge the gap between the spiritual resources our church creates and the demands of the world for the realization of God's just and caring kingdom. This is a way in which I fulfill my call to Word and Service.





DEE ANN

Ordained deacon and social worker

“But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end. . . .”

Lamentations 3:21-22

As a Christian and a United Methodist, I believe the church is uniquely able to offer hope in the face of societal problems such as family violence. As an ordained deacon, I am called to bridge the hope of God’s unfailing love with the hurts of the world. My secular employment is as a program coordinator for CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) of Johnson County, Kansas, supporting volunteers who are paired one-to-one as advocates for children involved in the court system. We work to see that hope returns to the lives of these abused and neglected children. It is a blessing and an honor to be called to this ministry of hope.

ULA

Ordained deacon and health care provider

As an ordained deacon, I have the opportunity to share in helping persons find wholeness in body, mind, and spirit. I have an opportunity to preach the healing stories and go out and put them into action in the world. The nurse-deacon is the perfect combination.

I sense my call is to embody the Word by sharing my gifts and being willing to be used as a channel for healing. Through God, I am a way station on the road to wholeness. The scriptures tell us in James 5:13 we should be available to pray with those who are ill. My commitment to serve has been deepened by ordination as a deacon in full connection.





MARIA

Ordained deacon and Christian educator

My ministry is one of hope, caring, and compassion. As a Christian educator and youth ministry worker, my responsibilities vary from counseling youth and their parents about faith issues to education about drug and substance abuse prevention. I work with counselors and teachers and help the church provide ways for youth to develop a mature faith. I meet with youth in the schools and at organized events to talk with them about issues such as teenage pregnancy, suicide, depression, and vocations.

Through these community events, both youth and adults experience the church's ministry of service as a part of their daily lives and not just a Sunday morning thing. They help youth and adults become involved in ministries of service through community projects connecting the worshipping community with the needs in the community.



These are a few examples of ways in which persons are living out God's call as ordained deacons. For more information, contact:

**Section of Deacons
and Diaconal Ministries**
Division of Ordained Ministry
General Board of
Higher Education and Ministry
The United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 340007
Nashville, TN 37203

E-MAIL: sddm@gbhem.org
Web site: www.gbhem.org