



The Community of Deacons

A deacon is an ordained minister of the Episcopal Church called to lead church members in service to the poor, needy and oppressed. The deacon is called to bring the needs of the world to the church and bring the church to the world. They serve at the pleasure of the Diocesan Bishop.

The deacon has specific responsibilities in the liturgy but this is minor when compared to serving in the world. Setting and clearing the table, proclaiming the Gospel, bidding the confession and dismissing the congregation are the liturgical roles. Deacons often preach, depending on the priest at the parish.

This year, our Community of Deacons helped celebrate the ordination of Rev. Jackie Mayo and welcomed two deacons transferring in from other dioceses. This brings the number of ordained deacons serving across Western MA to 17. Individual ministries in the world vary greatly and all to the glory of God. A major initiative this year saw a policy written for deacons to engage in renewal leave, offering time for spiritual renewal, study, theological reflection and strengthening of skills and ministries. Deacons may apply after 3 years of ministry in one congregation or other organization. Rev. Jason Burns spent a time in Canterbury, UK, this summer

The Archdeacon went on the road to look for people who may wish to become a deacon. She has found the need for educating parishes and individuals of the diaconate. She visited 8 parishes within our diocese, preaching when invited and modeling what a deacon does within the liturgy. Two individuals are now entering the process. If approved, the two will enter the Province 1 School for Deacons. There are three others in discernment.

Deacons are involved in diocesan initiatives, serving especially on the Search and Transition Committees for our 10th bishop. There are deacons serving on almost every diocesan committee or commission.

Once every three years the Association of Episcopal Deacons sponsors a Triennial. This brings together deacons from across the U.S. for learning, networking and fellowship. This year our diocese had three participants attending in San Antonio, Texas. Margot Page and her daughter, Liz, offered a presentation on what asylum, refugee and immigration status looks like today.

Our annual retreat took place at the Society of St. Margaret's in Duxbury. As is our custom, two deacons led the program. Our leaders were Rev. Jac Essing and Rev. Margot Page. We bid Jac a sad adieu as she entered Yale for a combined Masters Degree in social work and religion. We will welcome her back for special occasions.