

## Romans 16:1-2

“I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae, so that you may welcome her in the Lord as is fitting for the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor of many and of myself as well.” (NRSV)

## Acts 6:1-8

“During those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the [Greeks] complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, ‘It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word.’ What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with [six others]. They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. The word of God continued to spread; the number of disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem . . . Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people.” (NRSV)

*Heed!*

*Listen!*

## It's Your Call

**Congregations:** It's your call to recognize the many gifts that God has given to God's people: gifts that are to be used for service with God's people in the church and outside the church. It's your call to look at how the gifts from God are being used in your congregation and community, and how they could be used to further spread the realm of God where you are. It's your call to point out women and men who have special gifts to be leaders in the church, and to urge them toward the preparation for ministry. It's your call to look at how your parish might become more viable through the use of the whole ministry, both diaconal and pastoral.

*Go!*

**People of God:** It's your call as individuals to examine your own gifts and discern whether God is calling you to God's service as a diaconal minister or an ordained pastor.

*Serve!*

## For more information:

Contact your ELCIC Synod Office  
or visit [www.elcic.ca](http://www.elcic.ca)



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# Jesus Christ *Lives*

## For Us, With Us, In Us!



## Diaconal Ministry

## Diaconal Ministers

In New Testament times diaconal ministers, deacons and deaconesses were set apart to assist the poor and the powerless. Their ministries guided the church to care for people who would have been forgotten: widows, orphans, and those with disabilities. Just as Jesus reached out to hurting people, their inclusion was understood by the early church as an important part of its mission.

Through the ages the diaconate has evolved to meet changing needs in the church and the world. Its two-fold focus has remained the same: to reach out to people in need, and to lift up the needs of the world to the church.

Today, there are diaconal ministers in many denominations and in many countries. They are united in an organization called **Diakonia**, which meets in convention every four years to listen, support and renew diaconal ministry around the world.

The Diaconal Ministers of the ELCIC are part of that organization which in 2002 played host to the regional gathering of **Diakonia of the Americas and the Caribbean (DOTAC)** in Winnipeg.

### One Ministry, Two Calls

<i><b>Diaconal</b></i>	<i><b>Pastoral</b></i>
Word Service Called	Word Sacrament Called
Educated	Educated
Consecrated	Ordained
Rostered	Rostered

spread the  
It's  
Your  
Call!  
Word!

**Diaconal ministers** are servants for The Servant who washed his disciples feet, who welcomed the children and had compassion on the sick and the hungry and the marginalized. As Jesus served his disciples the Bread of Life, diaconal ministers do the same in their teaching and in their assisting with worship. Jesus told

stories, and diaconal ministers tell the story of Jesus in their work with children, youth and adults. They are the doorkeepers, the hospitality people who welcome in the world and help the church move into the world to show Christ's love.

## The Call to Service

We live in a world where suffering is all around us. The pain of violence, broken families, the stress of rural or city life, and issues of race or aging touch each of us in some way.

Diaconal ministers are prepared to serve people in the church and in the world. They may be found in congregations, inner city or rural parishes, hospitals, schools, nursing homes, day care centres, prisons, social service agencies and college campuses.

Diaconal ministers are educated in Lutheran theology and doctrine. Programs are offered at our Lutheran Seminary, or may be acquired in a directed learning program, utilizing your local resources. It is vital to register with your Synodical education committee (CTEL) at the earliest possible time, even as you are discerning if you are interested. Educational preparation may also include professional areas such as nursing, teaching, advocacy, social work, music or administration.

## Diaconal Ministers are:

- pastoral assistants
- worship assistants
- nurses: parish/other institutions
- youth directors
- directors of Christian education
- educators in child care/schools /community
- recruiters, trainers, organizers of volunteers
- administrators
- legal advisers/advocates for: youth at risk, older adults, people with addictions, and others
- musicians
- chaplains of hospital, prison, nursing home
- bridge-builders between cultures
- infinite possibilities and interesting combinations of the above