

from the school calendars will further assist candidates in choosing the program most aptly suited to preparing them for diaconal ministry.

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Candidates for The Order of Ministry who are under the age of fifty are obliged to serve their first placement in ministry, after commissioning or ordination, where the church directs. This is known as the process of Transfer and Settlement.

Diaconal ministers affiliate with colleagues through the Diakonia of The United Church of Canada (DUCC), the Diakonia of the Americas (DOTA) and the International Diakonia.

For More Information

For additional information about diaconal ministry, please contact:

Committee on Diaconal Ministry
The Division of
Ministry Personnel
and
Education
The United Church of Canada
85 St. Clair Avenue East
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COMMITTEE ON DIACONAL MINISTRY
The United Church of Canada / L'Église Unie du Canada

You may also contact:



THE MIX OF MINISTRY



DIACONAL MINISTRY

Then and Now

Diaconal ministry is as old as the New Testament. Then, women and men evangelized, served communal meals, visited and taught new converts. Now, diaconal ministers offer their personal and professional skills to serve the church and the world in remarkably diverse ways.

Some are pastors, chaplains, health care workers. Some are Christian educators, community organizers, preachers and resource people. Others work in administration and the peace movement, while still others work for social change in various institutions such as the prison system.

The adjective *diaconal* comes from the Greek *diakonia*, suggesting servant and service. Diaconal is pronounced as dy-ack-oh-nal, with equal emphasis on each syllable.

Diaconal ministers are part of the mix of ministry recognized by The United Church of Canada. There is the ministry entrusted to the whole church and to each member. There is also what the United Church calls The Order of



Carol Stevenson Seller

Ministry which includes diaconal and ordained ministers. In the church's formal language, diaconal ministers are described as commissioned to the Ministry of Education, Service and Pastoral Care. They are part of The Order of Ministry in the United Church, sharing fully in the order with those who are ordained to the Ministry of Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care.

In downtown Saskatoon, the congregation of Knox United Church share their ministry with team ministers, one of whom is Carol Stevenson Seller. "My role is educative and pastoral," says Carol. "I'm a resource person for the teachers and leaders in the congregation and, as one of the ministers, I offer some of the pastoral care." Carol was commissioned as a diaconal minister by Saskatchewan Conference in 1965.

The Elms is a home for seniors in Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley at Windsor. Its administrator is Don Reid who coordinates the staff, programs, services and budget to provide this home for some 120 elderly residents. "Our program at the Windsor Elms is based on a holistic approach," says Don. "We try to meet the emotional, mental, social, and physical needs of each resident." Don was commissioned as a diaconal minister by Maritime Conference in 1965.

Preparation for Diaconal Ministry

Candidates for diaconal ministry experience themselves as called by God to this particular ministry. However, fitness-for-ministry is an ongoing interchange between the candidate and the courts of the church. The formal process begins with interviews with the candidate's Congregation, with the Presbytery's Education & Students' Committee and with the Conference's Ministry Personnel and Education and/or equivalent Committee. Through this interchange, candidates come to understand the



Don Reid

two-way relationship of the people of God to the institutional church, and to test their sense of vocation in the milieu of the denomination which eventually will direct their work.

Candidates for ordained ministry, like diaconal ministry, are required to meet these candidacy requirements.

The educational requirements for diaconal ministry usually assume a Bachelor's degree. Equivalent professional training or work experience may be accepted in some instances. In addition, a candidate completes either the 3-year Diploma in Educational, Pastoral & Social Ministry offered by the Centre for Christian Studies or the 2-year Master of Religious Education (MRE) program at Emmanuel College. Both programs offer biblical, theological and doctrinal studies as well as study and practice in education, worship and preaching. The Diploma at the Centre for Christian Studies is specially designed for diaconal ministers and the Centre is known for its innovative educational styles. The MRE Degree program is characterized by the fine tradition that Emmanuel College holds as a centre for training ordained ministers. The details of the programs