



South Carolina Conference
The United Methodist Church

GUIDE FOR ORDAINED DEACON IN FULL CONNECTION



DISCIPLINARY PARAGRAPHS & BOARD POLICIES TO KEEP IN MIND

¶ 328. *The Ministry of a Deacon*—From among the baptized, deacons are called by God to a lifetime of servant leadership, authorized by the Church, and ordained by a bishop. From the earliest days of the church, deacons were called and set apart for the ministry of Love, Justice, and Service and for connecting the church with the most needy, neglected, and marginalized among the children of God. This ministry grows out of the Wesleyan passion for social holiness and ministry among the poor. It is the deacons, in both person and function, whose distinctive ministry is to embody, articulate, and lead the whole people of God in its servant ministry. Deacons fulfill servant ministry in the world and lead the Church in relating the gathered life of Christians to their ministries in the world, interrelating worship in the gathered community with service to God in the world. Deacons give leadership in the Church's life: in teaching and proclaiming the Word; in contributing to worship, in assisting the elders in administering the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion, or in presiding at the celebration of the sacraments when contextually appropriate; in forming and nurturing disciples; in conducting marriages and burying the dead; in embodying the church's mission to the world; and in leading congregations in interpreting the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world. For the sake of extending the mission and ministry of the church and offering the means of grace to the world, the deacon is authorized to preside at the celebration of the sacraments. Presiding at the celebration of the sacraments involves taking responsibility to lead the gathered community in celebrating baptism and Holy Communion. As members of the Order of Deacons, all deacons are in covenant with all other deacons in the annual conference and shall participate in the life of their order.

Deacons lead the congregation in its servant ministry and equip and support all baptized Christians in their ministry. The distinct ministry of the deacon has evolved in United Methodism over many years—the continuing work of the deaconess, the home missionary, and the diaconal minister. The Church, recognizing the gifts and impact of all predecessor embodiments of the diaconate and providing for the continuation of the office of deaconess, affirms that this distinctiveness is made visible and central to the Church's life and ministry through ordination and that the ministry of the deacon is a faithful response of the mission of the Church meeting the emerging needs of the future. Deacons are accountable to the annual conference and the bishop for the fulfillment of their call to servant leadership.

¶ 329. *Ministry, Authority, and Responsibilities of Deacons in Full Connection*—1. Deacons are persons called by God, authorized by the Church, and ordained by a bishop to a lifetime ministry of Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice, to both the community and the congregation in a ministry that connects the two. Deacons exemplify Christian discipleship and create opportunities for others to enter into discipleship. The work of deacons is a work of justice, serving with compassion as they seek to serve those on the margins of society. In the congregation, the ministry of the deacon is to teach and to form disciples, and to lead worship together with other ordained and laypersons.

2. The deacon in full connection shall have the rights of voice and vote in the annual conference where membership is held; shall be eligible to serve as clergy on boards, commissions, or committees of the annual conference and hold office on the same; and shall be eligible for election as a clergy delegate to the General, central, or jurisdictional conference. The deacon in full connection shall attend all the sessions of the annual conference and share with elders in full connection responsibility for all matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy (¶ 334.1).

3. As members of the Order of Deacons, all deacons in full connection are in covenant with all other such deacons in the annual conference and shall participate in the life of their order.

¶ 330. *Requirements for Ordination as Deacon and Admission to Full Connection*—Provisional members who are applying for admission into full connection and who have been provisional members for at least two years following the completion of the educational requirements for ordination as a deacon specified in below may be admitted into membership in full connection in an annual conference by three-fourths majority vote of the clergy members in full connection of the annual conference, upon recommendation by three-fourths majority vote of the Board of Ordained Ministry, after they have qualified as follows:

1. They shall have served under episcopal appointment in a ministry of service for at least two full annual conference years. Upon recommendation of the Board of Ordained Ministry, the annual conference may equate less than full-time or non-salaried service as meeting this qualification. Such equivalence is to be determined in light of the years of service involved, the quality of that service,

the maturity of the applicant, and other relevant factors determined by the board. Supervision is to be: (a) by the district superintendent, and (b) by the Board of Ordained Ministry. The applicant's service must be evaluated by the Board of Ordained Ministry as effective according to written guidelines developed by the board and adopted by the clergy members in full connection. Laypersons directly involved in the applicant's servant ministry shall be involved by the board in the annual evaluation.

2. They shall have been previously elected as a provisional member.

3. They shall have met the following educational requirements: (a) graduation with a Bachelor of Arts or equivalent degree from a college or university listed by the University Senate or its equivalent as determined by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry; (b) graduation with a Master of Divinity degree or a master's degree from a graduate theological school recognized by the University Senate, or a master's degree in an area of specialized ministry; (c) or are candidates who have completed four years of full-time (or the equivalent) employment in the area of specialized ministry and who have received professional certification or license in their area of ministry including a minimum of eight semester hours of graduate academic credit. Educational requirements in every case shall include the completion of the basic graduate theological studies, as listed in ¶ 324.4a.

4. The candidate shall have (1) satisfied the board regarding physical, mental, and emotional health; (2) prepared and preached at least one written sermon on a biblical passage specified by the Board of Ordained Ministry or another act of proclamation of the Word appropriate to the candidate's ministry setting; (3) presented a detailed plan and outline for teaching a Bible study; (4) presented a project that demonstrates fruitfulness in carrying out the church's mission of "Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World"; (5) responded to a written or oral doctrinal examination administered by the Board of Ordained Ministry. The candidate shall demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly in both oral and written form. The candidate's reflections and the board's response shall be informed by the insights and guidelines of Part III of the *Book of Discipline*. The examination shall also focus upon the covenantal relationship of the applicant to God, to the Church, and to the Order of Deacons, as well as the understanding of *diakonia*, servant leadership, and the interrelatedness of the Church and the world. The applicant shall be able to articulate the call of God to the Order of Deacons and to relate that call to leadership within the ministry of all Christians, through the setting of their service, the local church, and the annual conference.

5. The questions in ¶329.5 are guidelines for the preparation of the examination.

6. A provisional member of the annual conference who has completed the requirements for deacon's orders and admission into full membership shall be eligible for election to full membership and ordination as deacon by a bishop. Following election, the bishop and secretary of the conference shall provide a certificate of full membership in the annual conference, and following ordination, a certificate of ordination.

7. A deacon shall be ordained by a bishop by the laying on of hands, employing the Order of Service for the Ordination of Deacons (see ¶ 415.6). The bishops shall be assisted by other deacons and may include laity designated by the bishop representing the Church community. Judicatory leaders from full communion partners and other communions may participate in the ordination service and may join the ordaining bishop in laying hands on the head of the candidate, while participating deacons and laity may lay hands on the back or shoulders of the candidate.

SCBOMP-VII.b. Additional requirements in the S.C. Conference- i. The two year provisional period required for full Deacon may be served in a conference other than South Carolina, provided that supervision is performed and documentation of such is supplied to the South Carolina Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.

ii. The two year "Formation in Ministry", including Residency, is a program of the S.C. Conference. It is a requirement for admission to Full Membership for all applicants. The Formation in Ministry program begins in the first year of full-time appointment within the geographical bounds of the S.C. Conference after academic requirements for the Masters in a Specialized Ministry Degree have been completed, including thirty hours in Basic Theological Studies. Exceptions to this requirement may be approved by the BOM Executive Committee.

iii. The following shall be required for all persons seeking admission into Full Membership as Deacon: **1.** A statement from the District Committee on Ordained Ministry indicating the candidate's strengths and areas where a need for continued growth is indicated. (Note: This will necessitate an interview with the candidate for Full Membership just as with candidates for Provisional Membership and other relationships.) **2.** A checklist from the candidate's District Superintendent, which would relate the results of supervisory observation with regard to both behavior and function. **3.** A statement summarizing the candidate's participation in the "Formation in Ministry" Program by the Director of the program. This is to be a mutual statement by the director and the candidate and is to be signed by both. **4.** All persons seeking full membership and Deacon's orders shall have successfully completed at least three quarter hours or two semester hours in EACH of the following: Black studies; Women's Studies; and One unit/quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education. The requirements for Women's Studies and Black Studies may be online, taken at the undergraduate or graduate level, but not directed study. **5.** Candidates must complete all academic courses listed in the Basic Graduate Theological Studies and South Carolina Conference requirements with a "C" grade or higher to be credited with completion of those courses.

Full Member

Who does this? Those who are called to ordained ministry as a deacon or elder.
Completed seminary or the BCOS & ACOS and the SC Educational requirements.

Who to talk to:	Steps:
	<p>Prerequisites</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Been a Provisional Member for at least two years, no more than eight. 2. Served under Episcopal appointment full time for at least two years. 3. Met all the Provisional Member Academic Requirements 4. Completed the additional SC Academic Requirements <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Clinical Pastoral Education b. Black History or Black Studies, c. Homiletics or preaching d. Women's studies
DS or the Coordinator of Clergy Services	<p>Becoming a Full Member</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete and Submit an Application for Clergy Relationship Form (105) 2. Attend the Change of Status Meeting (in June of each year) 3. Complete the forms in the Provisional Membership Packet and return to Clergy Services <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Medical Report (Form F-103) b. Sign the Psychological Consent Forms and submit the original to the Office of Clergy Services. c. Credit Statement (Form 06SCBOM) d. Criminal Background Statement e. Updated Pastor Profile with current photograph (.jpeg) f. Sermon or Contextual Project on assigned passage. g. Bible Study on assigned book of the Bible h. Theology & Doctrine Disciplinary Questions i. Call & Discipline Life Disciplinary Questions j. Academic Integrity Statement (13SCBOM) k. Statement of Fulfillment of Theological Studies l. DS Observation Report (05SCBOM) (submitted on your behalf by the DS) m. dCOM Observation Report (submitted on your behalf by the dCOM) n. Official transcripts with completion of SC academic requirements <p><i>Notes: 1) Submit a copy of all Completed Forms and Requested documents to the Office of Clergy Services and a copy to your district office. 2) All completed forms and requested documents should be submitted by October 1 to attend the Candidacy</i></p> 4. Complete Phase II of the Psychological with the vendor listed on the Consent Form. 5. Complete the Criminal & Credit Background Screening. <i>(After you submit your Criminal Background Statement, an email invitation will be sent with a link for you to complete a Criminal & Background Screening. The cost will be \$20.00 and will be paid by you online.)</i> 6. Meet with the interview team of the BOM and be approved in all four areas of evaluation. 7. Receive the recommendation of the BOM for Full membership and ordination 8. Receive the approval of the Clergy Session at Annual Conference.

Congratulations! You're An Ordained Full Member!