



# Appointments of Deacons and Provisional Deacons

Board of Ordained Ministry | South Carolina Conference | The United Methodist Church

## APPOINTMENTS TO VARIOUS MINISTRIES

**¶ 331. *Appointment of Deacons and Provisional Deacons to Various Ministries***—1. Deacons and provisional deacons may be appointed to serve in the following settings:

- a) To a local congregation, charge, or cooperative parish, leading in the congregation's mission to the world and equipping all Christians to fulfill their own calls to Christian service.
- b) To an extension ministry under the provisions of ¶¶ 343-344.
- c) To churches of other Christian denominations or to ecumenical shared ministries under the provisions of ¶ 345. This subparagraph applies only to deacons in full connection.
- d) To attend school.

2. The appointment of deacons and provisional deacons shall be made by the bishop.

- a) It may be initiated by the bishop or the district superintendent, the individual deacon or provisional deacon, or the agency requesting the service of the deacon or provisional deacon.
- b) It shall be clarified by a written statement of intentionality of servant leadership in order to establish a clear distinction between the work to which all Christians are called and the work for which deacons and provisional deacons are appropriately prepared and authorized.
- c) If the bishop and cabinet consider an appointment not to be in the best interest of the Church, the bishop may choose not to make the appointment. In such event, the bishop shall consult with the deacon or provisional deacon and the Board of Ordained Ministry. The deacon or provisional deacon shall then seek another appointment, request a leave of absence or transitional leave, or relinquish his or her certificate of conference membership for deposit with the conference secretary, or be terminated by disciplinary procedures. The procedures for fair process in administrative hearings (¶ 362.2) shall be followed in any involuntary termination procedure.
- d) Deacons and provisional deacons at their own request or with their consent may be appointed to a nonsalaried position. Such missional appointments will serve to express the Church's concern for social holiness, for ministry among the poor, and for advancing emerging needs of the future. In such cases, the bishop will carefully review plans for expressing this appointed ministry and will consult with the deacon or provisional deacon about the well-being and financial security of his or her family. **(SEE GUIDELINES FOR DEACONS IN NON-SALARIED APPOINTMENTS BELOW)**

3. At the request of the deacon or provisional deacon and with the consent of the bishop and cabinet where conference membership is held, the deacon or provisional deacon may receive a less than full-time appointment under the following conditions:

- a) The deacon or provisional deacon shall present a written request to the bishop, district superintendent, and the conference Board of Ordained Ministry, giving a rationale for the request at least ninety days prior to the annual conference at which the appointment is to be made.
- b) Reappointment to less than full-time service shall be requested annually of the bishop by the deacon or provisional deacon.
- c) The bishop may make an interim appointment to less than full-time service upon request of a deacon or provisional deacon, with the recommendation of the executive committee of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry.

4. Deacons and provisional deacons, with the approval of their bishop and the judicatory authorities of the other denomination may receive an appointment to another denomination while retaining their home conference membership. The appointment may be made in response to exceptional missional needs.

5. *Charge Conference Membership of Deacons and Provisional Deacons.*

- a) Deacons and provisional deacons who are appointed to a local congregation, charge, or cooperative parish, shall be members of that charge conference.
- b) Deacons and provisional deacons who are appointed to extension ministries shall establish charge conference relationships as required by ¶ 343.

6. *Support for Deacons and Provisional Deacons Appointed by a Bishop.*

a) Deacons and provisional deacons shall receive their support under the policies and agreements of the setting to which they are appointed.

b) Deacons who are appointed to a local congregation, charge, or cooperative parish, shall receive a salary from the local church, charge, or cooperative parish (§ 624.2) not less than the minimum established by the equitable compensation policy of the annual conference for elders. Provisional deacons who are appointed to a local congregation, charge, or cooperative parish shall receive a salary from the local church, charge, or cooperative parish (§ 624.2, .4) not less than the minimum established for provisional elders. When deacons or provisional deacons are appointed to less than full-time ministry in a local congregation, charge, or cooperative parish, they shall receive a salary that is no less than the minimum salary for elders or provisional elders, prorated in one-quarter time increments (see § 331.2d).

c) Deacons and provisional deacons shall participate in the denominational pension and benefit plans and programs. They shall participate in the health benefit and supplemental programs of the annual conference subject to the provisions and standards of those programs as established by the annual conference when health benefit coverage is not provided from another source.

d) The above (§ 10 [a-c]) does not apply to a deacon or provisional deacon appointed by a bishop to a non-salaried position (§ 6 [d]).

e) Since deacons and provisional deacons are not guaranteed a place of employment in the Church, special attention shall be given to termination procedures that allow time for seeking another service appointment. Notification of dismissal shall provide for a ninety-day period prior to final termination of the appointment except for causes as listed in § 2702. Deacons or provisional deacons shall not be dismissed from a local church appointment without prior consultation between the deacon or provisional deacon and the staff-parish relations committee, nor without the full knowledge of the overseeing district superintendent and the presiding bishop.

### **Guidelines for Deacons (Probationary and Full Connection) in Non-Salaried Appointments (Local Church and or Other Setting)**

¶ 331. 2.d- Deacons and provisional deacons at their own request or with their consent may be appointed to a non-salaried position. Such missional appointments will serve to express the Church's concern for social holiness, for ministry among the poor, and for advancing emerging needs of the future. In such cases, the bishop will carefully review plans for expressing this appointed ministry and will consult with the deacon or provisional deacon about the well-being and financial security of his or her family.

Deacons and provisional Deacons seeking Non-Salaried Appointments should provide written answers to the questions under Appropriateness of the Appointment, Accountability, and Relation to the Call of Deacon. Written answers should be sent to the Bishop along with your request for to be appointed. A copy should also be sent to Clergy Services and your District Superintendent.

#### **Appropriateness of the Appointment**

The person seeking appointment in non-salaried ministry should demonstrate in writing the following:

- a. How the proposed ministry is one in which the vows of ordination of word and service can be fulfilled.
- b. How the proposed setting of ministry provide opportunity to maintain a relationship and accountability with the order and the structure of the church.
- c. Show how the proposed ministry is congruent with the church's missional commitment in and to the world.
- d. How the person possesses the specific/special gifts, training, education, work experience, and experiences of grace, which are appropriate for this ministry.
- e. That the person is financially able to fill a non-salaried position.
- f. How the proposed ministry furthers the ministry of the diakonate in the United Methodist Church.

#### **Accountability**

The proposed ministry must set up lines of accountability. These questions they shall be answered:

- a. How much time the deacon will give?
- b. How will the deacon be used in the worship and study of a local congregation?
- c. Who will supervise the deacon as they fulfill their ministry? A specific structure should be established. (Examples: A Senior Pastor, or a Staff-Parish Relations Committee or an Advisory Board could be established with people of similar ministry vocation or interest)

- d. What are the guidelines with which they will be evaluated? They should be clearly delineated.
- e. How is the proposed ministry accountable to their certification and their certifying bodies?
  - A log should be kept of hours spent in ministry and contacts.
  - A specific job description should be written for the proposed ministry.
  - An evaluation time line should be established.

#### **Relationship to the call of Deacon**

A theological rationale shall be written that explains how the proposed ministry fulfills the ministry of the deacon found in The 2020/2024 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church ¶328.

- a. How does this proposed ministry connect the church and the world?
- b. How does the proposed ministry fulfill the vows to word and service?
- c. How does the proposed ministry express compassion and justice and how does it assist laypersons clarify their own ministry?
- d. How does the proposed ministry allow for the deacon to teach and form disciples and lead worship?
- e. How does the proposed ministry provide experiences for social holiness, ministry among the poor or advancing emerging needs for the future?