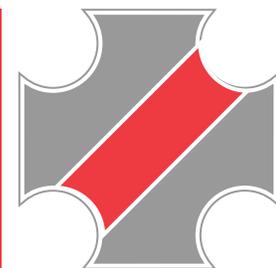


# diakoneo

SERVING DEACONS AND ALL SERVANT MINISTERS IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS  
**25**  
OF SERVICE

## ASSOCIATION FOR EPISCOPAL DEACONS

ENGAGING THE DIAKONIA OF ALL BELIEVERS

### Where would we be . . . Without AED?

We know the strength of the community of deacons.

We know the ways in which individual deacons seek to strengthen their gifts and skills for ministry, and their partnerships with others in ministry.

We know how to identify those who can help in building those skills, strengthen partnerships, and look to new models of ministry.

We know deacons and others who are making a difference in the church, both through engaging in diaconal

ministry and in helping others develop their own gifts for ministries of service.

But we need your help.

#### Did you know . . .

◆ There is no church-wide office that concerns itself with the diaconate – no place that provides resources for education, formation, vocational development, or even a usable directory of deacons.

◆ Our professional and vocational association fills that gap by maintaining

the best directory of deacons possible.

◆ Our Association sponsors an annual gathering for deacon formation directors and archdeacons for peer review, exchange of ideas, and visioning in order to strengthen the diaconate.

◆ AED has a long tradition of creating monographs, maintaining a bookstore with relevant resources, and sponsoring church-wide and regional conferences.

*(Continued on Page Three)*

# When Did We See You?

## AED's Domestic Poverty Initiative



The Way of the Prophet by Mike Van, concept by Victoria Cross  
Used with permission of the artist ©

For more information, see Page Nine.

### diakoneo

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(AADC)*

(Continued from Page One)

◆ In order to connect the deacon community at large, the Association provides a print newsletter several times a year, as well as frequent electronic *Deacon Updates*.

◆ AED is without question a professional and vocational association, but we recognize that the Order of Deacons does not exist for itself. That's why our mission statement and logo reflect our concern for the *diakonia* of all believers.

◆ In order to be proactive about our call to Christ-like service that comes at baptism, the Association Board has endorsed a statement, *Engaging the Diakonia of all Believers*, which encourages the church to engage our call to service in a theological context.

◆ AED has created an initiative called "When did we see you?" a follow up to General Convention 2009's Resolution A155 which is devoted to addressing domestic poverty. Deacons and others are invited to use the resources we are gathering, and contribute to the newsletter we've created entitled, "Seeking and Serving."

◆ The Association has recently introduced a program called "The Seven," an immersion experience in diaconal ministry for young adults. We know that young people today want to make a difference. With deacon mentors and resources for engaging the community and the world around us, we are excited to invite young people into mission with us.

◆ The AED web site contains information on deacon formation programs, best practices in formation, tools for the design of learning plans, news of the deacon community, and invitations to special events.

◆ The Association works with semi-

naries and other institutions to provide quality deacon-specific learning experiences at an affordable price.

◆ AED is connected with the larger worldwide, ecumenical movement that includes deacons, deaconesses and diaconal ministers of a variety of denominations.

◆ AED is working hard to invite deacons and others from the 16 nations included in The Episcopal Church to learn about our connectedness and the gifts we have to share from our respective cultures.

◆ All this is done only with membership dues, with a "staff" that is not salaried, with a volunteer board of directors, and with those of you who are willing to give of your time and your money.

As the Association celebrates 25 years of service, we know that we must strengthen our infrastructure. Our member dues have not been adequate to meet our budget in several years. We need your help to ensure that the work of the Association continues.

Deacons are accustomed to doing more with less. However, we know that we cannot sustain the excellent work of the past without additional resources for the future. We hope that you will help the deacon community by celebrating 25 years of service by its professional organization.

We're not only inviting you to provide a gift for our continued work, but we're asking you to invite your congregation and others who support the work of deacons to make a gift in appreciation for this ministry.

### And the best news?

*The Association has received, from a Board member, a pledge to match up to \$25,000 in gifts!* In addition,

**... we know that we cannot sustain the excellent work of the past without additional resources for the future.**

we are seeking additional gifts from lead donors that will help push us to \$100,000.

We've made it easy to provide a gift online. You can provide a one-time gift via bank draft or credit card. Or you can pledge on a monthly basis. As we celebrate our years of service, perhaps you can think in "25's."

- ◆ \$25 for 25 months
- ◆ \$2500
- ◆ \$10 for 25 months
- ◆ \$250

Whatever you're able to give, you can be assured that we'll be grateful and that we will be good stewards of these resources.

Will you help?



**Pam Nesbit  
President**



**Susanne Watson Epting  
Executive Director**

# A Latin Experience 2011

*So then, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household. Ephesians 2:19*

Late in May of 2011, as you are receiving this issue of Diakoneo, 11 deacons and one bishop will be traveling to spend 12 days engaging in a cross-cultural field experience in the Episcopal Diocese of the Dominican Republic.

The deacons of the Dominican Republic have invited us to spend time with them in their homes and in their ministries. This will be a journey to share the story of ministry, to be open to an experience of ministry from a different perspective. The program

assignment; but rather, with classroom education at the beginning, the emphasis will be on field experience, immersion in the life and ministries of deacons in the Dominican Republic and on reflection. The travelers will be encouraged simply to be, and to experience life and ministry in different environments and reflect on these experiences. Each participant will bring his or her own unique gifts, which will be challenged, developed, and expanded. The focus is one of simply being in community and ministering in community, not focusing on details, but experiencing, feeling, and listening to God's call through

and their ministries firsthand by being assigned to a local deacon, by staying with a host family and by living in community.

In future editions of Diakoneo and in other AED communications, we will all have an opportunity to share in the learnings and experiences of those who are enjoying this experience. Our hope is that next year and in subsequent years other deacons and deacons-in-training can share in this opportunity to travel and to learn.



***Retreat Center at San Pedro de Marcoris. This will be the "home base" for the participants of the Latin Experience where they will sleep and take classes.***

is designed to allow participants to let go of expectations, then to serve, to experience, and to reflect on the relationship between church and community and our place in that context, encountering deacons and diakonia in an environment very different from our own

This journey is not a mission

the people and through prayer. Our hope is that both participants and community will be enriched in the sharing and reflecting on the deacon's role in ministry.

We will be given an opportunity to immerse ourselves in the life of the local community. We will experience the people of the Dominican Republic

# “The Seven” - an exciting new initiative from AED

## The Story of The Seven

The story of the first seven deacons as told in Acts 6 tells of a rapidly expanding, mixed community of Christians and of the complaints that widows were being overlooked and not being cared for. The twelve apostles were concerned that they couldn't take care of this work and still pray and serve the Word. The young Christian community was also responding so rapidly that it was important that individuals be appointed who could help maintain unity between different cultures in the community at that time. The widows that the story mentions are Greek, and the disciples are, by and large, from the Hebrew community. So they chose from among the community seven people who were wise and full of the spirit to that the church would be addressing the needs of those who were being overlooked, both physical and cultural needs.

This foundational story from Acts 6 conveys qualities and characteristics of the ministry of deacons and also points to a profound shared responsibility for identifying deacons in our own community.

## So what is The Seven?

**The Seven** is a part-time, 10-month hands-on spiritual and educational experience for young adults (18-30 years old) who want to engage in meaningful work and reflection in their communities while discerning their own vocational calls, in mentored relationships with Episcopal deacons.

- Participants serve where they live and engage in work and reflection that connects head, hands and heart to gain a deeper understanding of the needs, hopes and concerns of the world.

Participants gain experience and understanding in a variety of expressions of diaconal ministry and a certificate of completion from the Association for Episcopal Deacons.



- Deacon mentors serve as companions as participants select meaningful work. They then accompany them through an process of reflection, education and spiritual growth. Mentors will also gain continuing education experience and documented credit from the Association for Episcopal Deacons.

- Online education and other interactive communication tools connect participants and their deacon mentors for group learning and conversation.

## Background

Often we hear of programs in the church for individuals going to seminary, preparing primarily to be priests and pastors. We know in our changing world that missional leadership for a flattened world (one in which we see a

level playing field or equal opportunities) requires different skills. These are skills that move us away from the top-down exercise of authority to on-the-ground, grass-roots engagement in our neighborhoods to strengthen local leaders

and communities while building interconnected networks of people committed to human flourishing, to building the kingdom (kin-dom) of God.

Deacons are charged by the church not only to show Christ's people that in serving those who are helpless that they are serving Christ himself, but also "to interpret to the Church the needs, concerns and hopes of the world."

The Episcopal Church has a tradition of calling, from her midst, living reminders of our shared call to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God. These living reminders are called deacons.

We know that young adults want to make a difference. This immersion experience is designed to do just that. It is not a simple mission experience or service project, but a way to act and reflect. **The Seven** is a way to engage with one's sleeves rolled up, while considering the place of systems and barriers in places where life's challenges seem insurmountable.

We know that young adults are at a point in their lives in which they are exploring and experimenting with a variety of commitments (relationships, education, work, faith) while learning and acquiring new skills, abilities and insights. During this period of exploration, they may observe more fluid or permeable boundaries between different groups, different social and political expressions, and different religious or cultural practices. They may be filled with a spirit that gives them a unique agility when it comes to engaging the intermediary and interpretive space between the world and the church.

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**The Seven** proposes that some young adults may be deacons in our midst that we may gain new perspectives from them about the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world. The program does not assume that all participants will become deacons, as this experience could certainly lead to equipping young people for service throughout their lives in very unique ways.

## Core Areas & Approach

**The Seven** uses Action/Reflection, Service Learning, Peer Learning Circles and a Rule of Life to address the following Core Areas:

### Identity

- ◆ Who am I?
- ◆ How did I get here?
- ◆ What gifts and experiences have brought me to this place in my life?
- ◆ Why am I here?
- ◆ What joys and challenges have I faced in my faith journey?
- ◆ What is my community?
- ◆ Where in my community do I see those who are poor, sick, weak or lonely?
- ◆ What are the hopes, needs and concerns of my community? The resources and assets?
- ◆ What is a deacon, who is a servant?
- ◆ Deacons as servants, bridge-builders, interpreters, door-keepers
- ◆ Deacons in worship
- ◆ Diakonia of all believers.
- ◆ History of Diaconate
- ◆ Deacons as Icons

### Core Stories

- ◆ What is the story (or Dream) of God? (Verna Dozier)
- ◆ What is my story? (Public Narrative – method of storytelling and leadership developed by Marshall Ganz)
- ◆ What is the story of us? (Public Narrative)
- ◆ What is the story of now? (Public Narrative)

### Making Connections

- ◆ Community Organizing
- ◆ Community Building/Community Development/Community Assets
- ◆ Cultivating Deep Roots of Love in a Place
- ◆ Did someone say evangelism?
- ◆ Ecumenical and Interfaith Relationships
- ◆ Developing an authentic, grounded and humble presence among those who are disenfranchised or marginalized: street cred

### Attitude

- ◆ What kind of servant? (Servant leader?)
- ◆ How do we seek justice, love kindness and walk humbly with our God?
- ◆ The relationship of Justice and Mercy.
- ◆ How do we move beyond charity?

### Who can be involved?

**Participants:** Young adults ages 18-30 years old who want to get more involved in their communities and can demonstrate a commitment to working with people who are poor, sick, weak, lonely, socially marginalized, vulnerable or at-risk, or discriminated against. Participants may come from all different racial, ethnic, educational and socio-economic backgrounds and may have differing sexual orientation. They should be interested in and able to complete reading and writing assignments. They may work or go to school; have a spouse, partner or family; and live with family, at school, by themselves or with friends.

**Mentors:** Deacons who demonstrate a commitment to accompanying and mentoring a young adult through a process of immersion and ministry experiences and subsequent reflection on their experiences. Like participants, they may come from all different racial, ethnic, educational and socio-economic backgrounds and may have differing

sexual orientation. They may have a spouse, partner or family; live with family, by themselves, with friends or in a mixed household. While deacon mentors will take a leadership role, it is also expected that they will learn and grow as they accompany participants in their experiences. We will identify mentors who:

- ◆ Have the time and will honor their commitment.
- ◆ Have a love/hate relationship with the church. That is, mentors aren't intending to make deacons in their own image or ones that serve the church as we know it. Mentors are willing to be transformed and are willing for the church to be transformed as we engage more fully in mission and reflection.
- ◆ Are skilled interpreters and unafraid to exercise prophetic voices.
- ◆ Are lifelong learners.
- ◆ Are flexible and creative.
- ◆ Are committed to young adults.
- ◆ Are able to communicate across generational lines and facilitate inter-generational learning.
- ◆ Are good at balance (of the demands of life).

**Sponsoring Community:** Parishes, dioceses, campus ministries, seminaries and other ministries and communities that support young adults and that are committed to deacons and/or to a variety of expressions of diaconal ministry or service in the community.

A sponsoring community would be expected to write a statement about the ways in which they understand diaconal ministry, the ways in which they would expect to support the participant and mentor, and how they would expect this learning experience to make a difference to their own community.

*(Continued on Page Nine)*

“You may be the only Gospel your neighbor ever reads” *St. Francis of Assisi*

I have chosen this phrase from the beloved deacon Francis for my column as the new president of AED because it reminds me that diaconal vocation is expressed in what we do far more than what we say and that my actions, like those of Francis, can have effects and consequences in the lives of my neighbors far beyond my wildest dreams.

This is a special issue of Diakoneo devoted to letting you know about the many changes taking place in our organization in this 25<sup>th</sup> year of its existence. Deacon Ormonde Plater, in his column “Through the Dust”, has told you how NAAD came into existence to define and support the fledgling order of the modern vocational diaconate. Now, 25 years later, there are over 3,000 deacons in the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada. The debate about whether or not Christians are legitimately called to live out their ministries in this order is done. We are here. We are ministering in the name of Christ the Servant. And NAAD was an indispensable part of our success.

### **Broadening our mission**

As we go forward as the Association for Episcopal Deacons, we are intentionally broadening the mission of our association. We will continue to work on behalf of deacons and the order of deacons in the Episcopal Church. However, we will also be working, as our new logo says, to engage the diakonia of all believers. The initiatives that are described in this issue demonstrate this dual commitment. In every case the board of AED is asking you to learn about these initiatives and to respond.

The 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fundraising Campaign will serve to put AED on a sound financial basis; to shore up our infrastructure as an organization. Please read the letter that Susanne has

written which is printed on the front of this issue and which lays out the ways in which AED serves deacons and the diakonia of all believers. The slogan of this campaign is “Where would be we without AED?” The members of the board have all pledged to contribute to this campaign. One board member has pledged to match all contributions up to \$25,000, an extraordinarily generous offer, which will double the value of your pledge. We ask you to please give generously to this campaign.

### **Talk to your fellow deacons**

The 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Membership campaign is meant to increase the number of deacons and supporters of the diaconate who are part of our association. As an added incentive, we are offering an iPad2 to the first person who recruits 25 new members to AED. We ask you to please talk to your fellow deacons and to others in your dioceses and parishes who value the diakonia of the Church and urge them to become members of AED.

Both of the initiatives described above are for the building up of the association. In addition we have begun other initiatives for the building up of the diakonia of all believers.

“The Seven” is a program designed to identify young people who wish to give a year of their lives to serving in the world in Christ’s name. They will work under the direction of a deacon mentor and will learn about deacons and diakonia as they learn what it means to serve vulnerable people in their community. We ask you to please read about this initiative in this issue and to think about who in your community might wish to participate. More information is available on the AED website.

“On Engaging the Diakonia of all Believers” is a theological reflection on diakonia inspired by a similar document put forth by the Lutheran World Federation. In March the board officially endorsed this document for study and reflection by deacons and others on the role of diakonia in the

church. We ask you to read this document, which is included in this issue, and to bring it to your communities to inform and inspire conversation about this important topic.

The Domestic Poverty Initiative is our response to the Episcopal Church’s resolution 155 inviting the church to establish a program for the eradication of domestic poverty. We ask you to read the article in this issue about this initiative and then to go to the AED website and sign up to receive “Seeking and Serving” in order to share your stories and resources for revealing and responding to poverty in your community.

The Latin Experience is an invitation from the deacons of the Episcopal Church in the Dominican Republic to deacons from the United States to join them in their lives and ministries and to learn about diakonia from a different perspective. Eleven deacons and one bishop are in the DR right now and will be reporting back to AED through Diakoneo, our Facebook page and through Deacon Update.

So... there’s a lot going on! Please become informed. Please become involved. Please do *your* part in being the Gospel that our neighbors so desperately need.



**Pam Nesbit  
President**

## In the beginning there was nothing

This is a slightly different version of the historical remarks I made at the recent conference of archdeacons and formation directors.

The present Association for Episcopal Deacons (AED, 2011-) was formerly the North American Association for the Diaconate (NAAD, 1986-2011) and before that it was the National Center for the Diaconate (NCD, 1974-1986), and before that the Central House for Deaconesses (1953-1974). I came on the scene in the fall of 1973, when I attended a conference of self-supporting (unpaid) ministers at Roanridge, a bucolic conference center outside Kansas City.

### A strange meeting

I found myself sitting at a long table discussing deacons. I was the only male deacon, surrounded by former deaconesses, many of whom wanted to become priests and were furious that bishops wouldn't ordain them. It was a strange meeting, swinging between discontent and hope. The women decided to appoint me to the board of the Central House for Deaconesses. This was an actual house in Evanston, Illinois, where deaconesses were trained until 1971, when the order went out of existence.

Instead of meeting at the house, the board met in downtown Chicago, in the diocesan office building. The first thing we did, since deaconesses were defunct and both men and women could become deacons, was to call the organization the National Center for the Diaconate. The House, now Center, was run by a former deaconess. As far as I could tell, its main purpose was to stay in existence while spending money on the director, the Evanston property, board meetings, and costly

projects. For funds it depended on contributions and occasional legacies, but the money was swiftly running out. Eventually, the director resigned. We sold the house in Evanston. There still wasn't enough.

Meanwhile, two new board members were appointed, Jay Lowery, a priest in Boston, and Wes Frensdorff, bishop of Nevada. They both brought skills and vision. Jay had a ministry consulting business called Enablement, Inc. He offered to run NCD out of his office, for a fee. We accepted, and the Center moved to Boston. Jay brought us energy, taking over and expanding the newsletter *Diakoneo* (which the previous director had started) and organizing three major conferences on deacons, at Notre Dame University in 1979, 1981, and 1984.

### The meaning of it all

Wes was the bishop of Nevada, and during meetings he loved to work at cross stitch. At his second board meeting, he stitched while we discussed our anemic finances, then looked up and said, "But what's the meaning of it all?" We were astounded. I had never considered that being a deacon had any theological significance. You just did your deacon thing in liturgy and out in the world, and that was that. For the next two hours we discussed the meaning of deacons in the church. This proved to be a shock to all of us and a turning point in the work of the board.

By custom the president of the board was the bishop of Chicago, James Montgomery. After a few years he turned the board over to his suffragan, Quintin Primo. When his term was up, in 1981, we elected Wes Frensdorff. Since we were almost broke, Wes used his connections to get us a declining grant from the Lilly Founda-

tion of Indianapolis. The funds would get us to 1985 but not much further unless we could figure out another way to raise money or quit spending it so extravagantly.

At the end of his term, in 1984, Wes turned to me and said, "It's time for a deacon to run an organization of deacons." So they elected me for three years.

### The name change

We were almost broke. At General Convention in 1985 at Anaheim, I sat down in a hotel room with Carol Ann Kerbel, a deacon from New Jersey who was vice president, and Mona Hull of Boston, an elderly lady (always in a yellow dress) who wanted to be a deacon. What to do? We figured out a triple plan: (1) Fire Jay Lowery and have Mona run the office as a volunteer, with me as editor of the newsletter, (2) change to a dues-paying organization, and (3) have a big conference in Kansas City in 1987, with the Presiding Bishop attending, designed to whip up enthusiasm and make a lot of money.

And oh yes, change the name to North American Association for the Diaconate. We weren't really a center, and we needed to include the Canadians.

And thus NAAD was born out of necessity.

# AED's Domestic Poverty Initiative

## "When Did We See You?"

Responding to Resolution 155 which was passed at the 2009 General Convention and to deacons in leadership from around the church, the Board of the Association for Episcopal formed a Domestic Poverty initiative in 2010.

Poverty occurs in every community. The problem is that poverty is not always visible. As the Rt. Rev. Kenneth Untner, a bishop in the Roman Catholic Church wrote: "To find the poor, you must go out of your way. You must look with different eyes, for the poor feel that we do not want them in the normal parts of our lives. So they disguise themselves or absent themselves."

The desire of the Deacon Community to make poverty visible has taken form in an initiative called "When Did We See You?" based on Jesus' call to us in Matthew 25 to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, care for the sick and visit the prisoner.

Beginning at the Archdeacon & Formation Directors' gathering (New Orleans) and at the Association Assembly (Chicago) in 2010, deacons talked about how to put this initiative into action. It was determined that the initiative would be most effective if it grew from the knowledge and skills of deacons who are already involved in these ministries.

By mid-summer of 2010 a Domestic Poverty Taskforce was formed. A small group of advisors was named including: Deacons Catherine Cooke (Vermont), Thalia Johnson (Michigan), Allen Olhstein (Kansas City), Carole Maddux (Atlanta) and Dutton Morehouse (Wisconsin). A newsletter has been developed entitled, "Seeking and Serving." It is available to anyone -- deacons, members of congregations,

and others. The newsletter is designed to:

- ◆ Show the extent that poverty exists in every city and suburb even when you don't see it (and resources to do that)
- ◆ Show the good things that deacons and others are doing to make a difference (and resources to do that)
- ◆ Share life stories of people this affects so that we erase the "we/they" dichotomy (and resources to do that)

For more information, go to our web site: <http://diakonoi.org> and look for information on how to receive this newsletter, and access additional resources, including a Power Point presentation that introduces poverty in discussion groups.

### *"The Seven"*

*(Continued from Page Six)*

#### **How to get involved?**

◆ Each participant, deacon mentor, and sponsoring agency or group should submit an application together. There is a section for each, but the application should be submitted as an integrated piece. An application form is included at the end of this program description.

◆ In this first year of the program, we will be able to accommodate 15 young adults along with their mentor-companions. We realize that we may have more applications than spaces available. However, for dioceses or regions that may be able to pay more than the suggested cost below, we may be able to develop a parallel process. In any case, we anticipate that the program will be repeated as soon as possible.

#### **Costs**

◆ Suggested: \$300 per application. As mentioned above there is one application for each participant and mentor and the \$300 is inclusive of both. This cost might be shared among participant, sponsoring community, and dioceses. For example, perhaps a diocesan budget line item for young adult ministry along with a line item for clergy continuing education could be used to help fund the experience.

◆ This \$300 will cover administrative, teleconference and other electronic communication and some materials. It will not cover the cost of any suggested materials or resources and will not cover costs needed to execute and complete the ministry project. However, we are able to keep the cost to a minimum in this first year, as we have a \$3000 seed grant for the cost of the online course.

◆ As mentioned above, there may be a minimum of out-of pocket costs needed to complete the program: books (we'll keep this to a minimum); transportation to meet with mentors ( we expect this will be minimal since participants and mentors will be living near each other); and miscellaneous expenses. We'll do all we can to work with individual participants and deacon mentors to help identify financial resources, if they're needed, for these expenses.

# On Engaging the *Diakonia* of all Believers

*Diakonia* is central to fulfilling the church's mission as servant leaders. *Diakonia* is not optional in the Gospel of Jesus Christ; rather it is an essential part of discipleship. *Diakonia* reaches out to all persons created in God's image, and all of God's creation. While *diakonia* begins in unconditional service to neighbor in need, it leads inevitably through advocacy and prophetic proclamation to bear witness in word and deed to God's presence in the midst of our lives.

We are shaped to serve others through worship, where we celebrate God's gift of grace in the Word, water, bread and wine, through which we glimpse the fulfillment of God's promise. In this broken world where sin and injustice abound, God in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit shapes us as a gathered community. Thus, we become the voice, hands and feet of Christ and agents of grace for the healing of the world.

## Deacons model and lead

All Christians are called through the baptismal covenant to live out *diakonia* through what they do and how they live their daily life in the world. This is the first and most fundamental expression of *diakonia*. Organized expressions of *diakonia* occur at the congregational level, as well as through those who are set apart as ordained deacons. Deacons are to model and lead, by inspiring, empowering, and engaging every baptized person in living out the *diakonia* of all believers in everyday life. Deacons do not – cannot – “do” *diakonia* on behalf of the baptized, but they help to lead all people, including the ordained, into the servant ministry of all believers which is the essence of our baptismal covenant.

Because of the holistic mission of God, *diakonia* is deeply interrelated with *kerygma* (proclamation of the

Word) and *koinonia* (sharing at the Table). *Diakonia* is witnessing through deeds. It is rooted in the sharing of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist. The mutual sharing inherent in the communion of the Church bears witness in word and deed to the unjust power relations that often are present in some diaconal work, such as between “wealthy givers” and “poor recipients.” In *diakonia* those serving and those served are both transformed; the purpose of *diakonia* is to make Christ's redemptive love known by word and example not to proselytize.

## The calling of all churches

*Diakonia* is not the strong serving the weak, which can lead to paternalism by assuming that some churches are unable to engage in *diakonia* because of their lack of resources or expertise. As Episcopalians, we envision that *diakonia* is part of the calling of all churches, regardless of size and all Christians, regardless of wealth, because we believe that all of God's people, individually, and as communities, are blessed with gifts to share.

We must challenge all theological interpretations that do not take seriously the suffering in the world, a world afflicted with poverty, violence and injustice, and environmental degradation. We must also challenge all theological interpretations that do not take seriously the systems, structures, and powers that foster, or even benefit from, poverty, violence, and injustice, and environmental degradation. As Episcopalians, we are shaped by both an incarnational theology and a theology of the cross. In the incarnation, God's identification with all of humanity, indeed with all of creation, compels us to identify with all of our sisters and brothers, and the environment in which we live.

Christ's suffering on the cross compels us to identify especially with those of our sisters and brothers who suffer today, moving beyond politeness and pretense, breaking the silence and risking speaking truth to power, even when this threatens the established order and results in hardship or persecution. This is the heart of the prophetic diaconal calling.

**Note:** The board of the Association of Episcopal Deacons and the directors of diaconal formation church-wide are profoundly grateful to the Lutheran World Federation for their statement, *Prophetic Diakonia: For the Healing of the World*. This prayerful and profound work has both inspired us and served as the foundation for our statement on behalf of deacons and all who engage in the *diakonia* of all believers, both in The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada. We are especially grateful for the permission of the Lutheran World Federation to adapt their words.

NOTE: The AED statement above was drafted by a committee comprised of:

Dn. Lauren Welch, Convener  
Dn. Bill Joyner  
Dn. Tina Campbell  
Rod Dugliss  
Dn. Jim Visger  
Dn. Pam Nesbit  
Dn. Susanne Watson Epting

# Association for Episcopal Deacons

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**ASSOCIATION FOR  
EPISCOPAL DEACONS**  
ENGAGING THE DIAKONIA OF ALL BELIEVERS

## PLEDGE

**Yes!** In celebration of the first 25 years in the life of the Association for Episcopal Deacons and in support of the future of AED and its goal to raise \$100,000 in 2011, I/we pledge and promise to pay the following sum:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$10 per month for 25 months [Paid via credit card authorization at  
[https://secure.qgiv.com/cps\\_donors/?key=naadiaconate](https://secure.qgiv.com/cps_donors/?key=naadiaconate)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 per month for 25 months [Paid via credit card authorization at  
[https://secure.qgiv.com/cps\\_donors/?key=naadiaconate](https://secure.qgiv.com/cps_donors/?key=naadiaconate)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 \_\_\_\_\_ \$1,000 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$1,000 paid in four annual installments of \$250 per year  
[You will be billed annually]

\_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## METHOD OF PAYMENT

Check enclosed. (Please make checks payable to the Association for Episcopal Deacons)

Please bill my credit card. Card type:  Visa  MasterCard

Account number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_

I have made my pledge online at [https://secure.qgiv.com/cps\\_donors/?key=naadiaconate](https://secure.qgiv.com/cps_donors/?key=naadiaconate)

## CONTRIBUTOR INFORMATION

Deacon  Mr./Mrs./Ms.  The Reverend  The Rt. Reverend  Dr.  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ This is my  Mobile  Home  Business  Church

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

I would prefer that this contribution be kept confidential.

I would prefer that my name be kept confidential.

This contribution is made in celebration of \_\_\_\_\_

This contribution is made in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In celebration of diaconal ministry, my congregation pledges \_\_\_\_\_

Please forward your completed pledge form and check, if applicable, to: **Treasurer, Association for Episcopal Deacons, 11123 Bainbridge Dr., Little Rock, AR 72212.** Pledges should be received by **October 31, 2011** to be counted as part of the \$25,000 matching gift program. There is no minimum contribution amount.

For more information please visit [www.diakono.org](http://www.diakono.org) or call 563-359-0541



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## Where would we be . . . Without AED?

Welcome to this special issue of Diakoneo created to bring you up to date with the many changes taking place in our association and introducing to you our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fundraising Campaign. As you look through this issue you will read about who we are, who we have been, who we are becoming and our many new initiatives. Please make yourself familiar with this information. Our association is at a crossroads. We are gratefully saying goodbye to our former identity

as the North American Association for the Diaconate and moving forward to become the Association for Episcopal Deacons, with a broader mission: *Engaging the Diakonia of All Believers.*

Please take this opportunity to find out all that is going on...

...and here is some very exciting news. A board member has offered to match all donations up to \$25,000!! This means that the value of whatever you give will be doubled. Join us!