

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF ALABAMA



Deacon Handbook

July 2018



THE *Episcopal* CHURCH 

Vision Statement

A deacon is a baptized person called and empowered by God and the Church to be a model of Christ’s servant ministry for all people. As agents of God’s compassion and reconciling grace, deacons are missionaries to the world and messengers to the Church of the world’s needs, hopes and concerns. In the Church, deacons call forth, empower, and inspire the baptized to respond to these needs. The role of the deacon in liturgy mirrors this role of the deacon in Church and world. Deacons are living symbols of Christ’s presence as they embody Christ’s servant ministry and point to the presence of Christ in those they serve.

— Association for Episcopal Deacons www.episcopaldeacons.org

The Gospel Moment

When the Gospel is about to be read, the congregation stands up. Something is going on. And then more than that, as the Gospel moment is approaching, a deacon . . . a person who has been ordained to be at the intersection of the church and the world, is asked to read or chant the Gospel. And they come down sometimes with the Gospel book held high. And there’s music and the congregation is singing as the Gospel of Jesus, the teachings, the life and the spirit of Jesus enter, in a sense, the room, through the reading of the Gospel. And then, on top of that, everyone in the room turns and reorients from wherever they are, they turn, they reorient themselves, facing the place of the Gospel, and stand for the reading of the Gospel. For hearing the teachings of Jesus. That Gospel moment, the Church has become The Jesus Movement. With life reoriented around the teachings of Jesus and around his very spirit. Teachings and a spirit that embody the love of God in our lives and in this world.



—Excerpt from “Jesus Movement: Loving, liberating, and life-giving” by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry
(Video available at episcopalchurch.org/library/video/jesus-movement)

On the cover: The Venerable Marti Holmes, Archdeacon, proclaims the Gospel during Eucharist at the 187th Diocesan Convention, February 2018.

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Community of Deacons at the 187th Diocesan Convention, February 2018.

July 2018



Deacon Pearl Slay leads the Prayers of the People

PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK

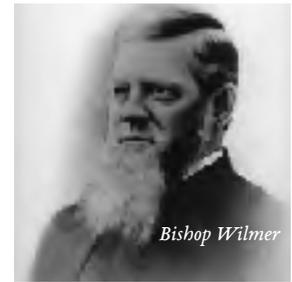
The contents of this document are guidelines set forth to articulate an understanding of diaconal ministry in the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama for ordained deacons. These norms pertain to those called to serve the Church as deacons, and not those serving as “transitional deacons” who are preparing for ordination to the priesthood. It is envisioned that this document will serve as a resource for deacons, priests, and those discerning a call to the diaconate. For information on the discernment process for Holy orders, please review the “Diocese of Alabama Vocational Discernment for Ministry Handbook.”

These guidelines are meant to assist the people and clergy of the diocese. They are intended to outline basic procedures for deacons and are not intended to address every situation.

In creating this handbook, we have built on the previous work of the Committee on the Diaconate of the Diocese of Alabama. We have also consulted and drawn on deacon handbooks and customs from several dioceses, including Chicago, Newark, Western Michigan, Western New York, Western North Carolina, and Rhode Island.

THE DIACONATE IN THE DIOCESE OF ALABAMA

Alabama's first bishop, the Rt. Rev. Nicholas Hamner Cobbs, envisioned a cathedral that would include a home for five deaconesses. Cobb's death in 1861 left this vision unrealized, but his successor, the Rt. Rev. Richard Hooker Wilmer, would make the order of deaconess a reality. On December 20, 1864, at Christ Church, Tuscaloosa, Bishop Wilmer, set apart Rebecca Hewitt, Harriet Irwin, and Jane Williams to serve as deaconesses. In his sermon, Bishop Wilmer told them that God had called them "to no less an office than to be co-workers with him in his work of love to our fallen race. In this work you are associated with the holy men and women of past ages and even with the blessed angels, whose employment and delight it is to minister unto the heirs of salvation."¹



Bishop Wilmer



Deaconess Kate Sinton Mayer
Montgomery, AL

In 1867 the deaconesses returned to Mobile where they established the Church Home for Orphans, which would become Wilmer Hall. The 1870s saw the peak number of deaconesses in the Diocese of Alabama, and while the ministry would continue into the twentieth century, numbers slowed and declined.

At the 167th Diocesan Convention, after years of study and work by clergy and lay ministry, together with the Commission on Ministry, the Rt. Rev. Henry Nutt Parsley, Jr., announced the formation of the first class of permanent deacons.

Bishop Parsley stated, "I have heard deacons described as the nerves of the Body of Christ, those who sense and communicate the needs and concerns of the world to the church and both stimulate and empower the church to respond." In 1999 the first class for the Deacon School for Ministry was formed, and the first class of deacons were ordained at the Cathedral Church of the Advent on November 2, 2002. There were three additional classes of the Deacon School for Ministry, and in total 50 deacons have been ordained. In 2016, deacon formation was transitioned to the Alabama Integrative Ministry School.

In the modern period, the diaconate has gone through overlapping waves of development. The first beginning in the 1840s focused on missionary or indigenous deacons. The second wave was that of the deaconesses, from 1885 to 1970. The third wave was male "perpetual deacons" from 1952 to 1970, ordained at a time of church growth "primarily to serve as pastoral and sacramental assistants." The fourth wave, starting in the 1970s, was a transitional time: deaconesses were made deacons; some women became deacons in anticipation of eventual ordination to the priesthood; many others, male and female, and indeed the church as a whole, were seeking what a renewed vocational diaconate should be. The fifth wave, beginning with the implementation of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, was a time of definition—focusing on total ministry of the church and servant ministry. The sixth wave, beginning in the late 1980s, emphasized the leadership role of the deacon and focused on the deacons' involvement in the world outside the church community. Since about 2005, a seventh wave began to develop defined by integration of the elements of the previous waves.²

¹ *Bishop, Bourbons, and Big Mules: A History of the Episcopal Church in Alabama*, J. Barry Vaughn (2013)

² For more information about waves of diaconate development see *Unexpected Consequences: The Diaconate Renewed*, by Susanne Watson Epting.



First Class ordained November 2, 2002



Second Class ordained October 30, 2004



Third Class (1) ordained October 1, 2011



Third Class (2) ordained November 3, 2012



Fourth Class ordained October 1, 2016



Deacons Mark LaGory & Carolyn Foster lead Stations of the Cross

THEOLOGY OF MINISTRY AND THE DIACONATE

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are to serve all people, particularly the poor, the weak, the sick, and the lonely. As a deacon in the Church, you are to study the Holy Scriptures... You are to make Christ and his redemptive love known... You are to interpret to the Church the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world. You are to assist the bishop and priests in public worship and in the ministration of God's Word and Sacraments... At all times, your life and teaching are to show Christ's people that in serving the helpless they are serving Christ himself.³

“The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ. The Church pursues its mission as it prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love. The Church carries out its mission through the ministry of all its members.”⁴ All baptized persons are called to minister in Christ's name, to identify their gifts with the help of the Church and to serve Christ's mission at all times and in all places.⁵ In order to fulfill its mission, the Church ordains “persons who are publicly and continually responsible for pointing to its fundamental dependence on Jesus Christ, and thereby provide, within a multiplicity of gifts, a focus of its unity. ... The authority of the ordained minister is rooted in Jesus Christ, who has received it from God the Father (Matt. 28:18), and who confers it by the Holy Spirit through the act of ordination.”⁶

Since the early days, the Church has had three distinct orders of ordained ministry — bishops, deacons, and priest. Diaconal ministry has its roots in the New Testament. The word *diakonos* (deacon) in the noun form occurs thirty times in the New Testament. Jesus refers to himself using *diakon-* words (e.g., Mark 9:35, 10:45, Lk. 12:37, Lk. 22:27). Paul uses *diakon-* language to refer to Jesus (Rom. 15:8, Gal. 2:17), to himself and his ministry (Eph. 3:7), to the Church (Col. 1:23, 25), and in the plural referring to himself and others (1 Cor. 3:5, 2 Cor. 3:6, 6:4, 11:23). Acts 6 — the traditional passage of the founding of the diaconate — *diakon-* words refer to both the ministry of the apostles and the Seven that were selected.

Traditionally, *diakonos* has been translated as ministry or servant. Through the work of John N. Collins, the understanding of *diakonos* has expanded to include its secular usage, which focused on bearing a

³ *Book of Common Prayer* (1979), p. 543.

⁴ *Book of Common Prayer* (1979), Catechism, p. 855.

⁵ *Constitution & Canons of The Episcopal Church*, Canon III.1.1 (2015).

⁶ *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, Faith and Order Paper No. 111, World Council of Churches, Geneva, II.A.8 & II.B.15 (1982)

message, agency, and attendance. This more expanded understanding of *diakonos* is supported by the Church's experience of the diverse ministries of deacons.

Diakonia as service is the ministry of the whole Church. Deacons make connections between the community of the Body of Christ and the needs and hopes of the world. The calling of the deacon is to focus, coordinate, and empower the *diakonia* of the whole Church within the mission of God in the world and to do so through liturgy, pastoral outreach, and teaching.⁷

In liturgy, deacons connect the traditions and worship of the Church to service in the world. Deacons not only assist bishops and priests in worship, but take on distinctive ministry in the liturgy. Within the Eucharist, deacons proclaim the Gospel, often gather or lead the Prayers of the People, set the table, administer Holy Communion, and send the people out with the liturgical dismissal. Deacons also carry Holy Eucharist to those that are absent from the celebration. Deacons have a role in all of the liturgy of the Church, as is outlined in the Liturgical Norms below.

The pastoral care of the deacon is not simply care of faithful members of the church, but extends outside of the church walls to those on the margins of the community of the faithful and those in the broader world. A deacon's pastoral ministry will vary according to his/her individual gifts. A deacon's pastoral ministry may include serving church members that are sick and homebound. The deacon's charge to have special care for the poor, the sick, and the lonely may be expressed through leading or coordinating outreach ministry of the parish, through work in the community directly with impacted persons. A deacon may have the gift of evangelism, and work to reach and connect those that have been hurt by the church or are seeking a faith. Deacons have a prophetic role both in the Church and in the world, and part of their pastoral ministry is to remind both of God's call for justice. Deacons, as "connectors," often work in interfaith and ecumenical ministries. The pastoral ministry of deacons is as varied as the individuals that are ordained as deacons.

Deacons teach. The role of the deacon in all settings is to encourage and empower the formation of all members to join in the *diakonia* of the Church. This may be formally, through preaching and teaching Christian formation. A deacon's teaching role may be one of assisting and coordinating with other ministers, lay and ordained, to maintain the connection between the Church and the world in all formation programs.

At the heart of the deacon's ministry is to be a living symbol of Christ's servant ministry, and a reminder that in serving the least among us in our churches and our communities, we serve Christ himself. The diaconate exists "for the sake of reaching out in the wholesome humility of Christ, making the church relevant, making the world whole."⁸

⁷ *For Such a Time as This: A Renewed Diaconate in the Church of England - A report to the General Synod of the Church of England of a Working Party of the House of Bishops*, p. 52 (2001)

⁸ *Unexpected Consequences* 172



Deacons Lou Thibodaux, John Stewart, and CJ Van Slyke at Birmingham March for Our Lives

DISCERNMENT AND FORMATION

God now calls you to a special ministry of servanthood directly under your bishop. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are to serve all people, particularly the poor the weak, the sick, and the lonely.

Book of Common Prayer, The Examination, p. 543

Discernment begins within an individual's parish and discussion with his/her priest. There is no established time period for discernment, and it progresses at the pace appropriate for the individual. Individuals are encouraged to review the current Commission on Ministry Discernment Manual for a detailed explanation of the discernment process.

For those desiring to learn more about the diaconate, a list of resources are provided in Appendix A. Ormonde Plater's book, *Many Servants*, provides an excellent introduction to the history and development of the diaconate. Studying the Book of Common Prayer is also recommended, particularly the portions related to ordination and the Ordination of a Deacon service (pp. 510, 536-555), as well as the Catechism (pp. 844-862). Individuals are also encouraged to discuss diaconal ministry with a deacon in their parish or community. If you would like to be connected with a deacon for such a discussion, and need assistance, please contact the archdeacon, the Ven. Marti Holmes (mholmes@holypostleshooover.org).

Formation for the diaconate is through the Alabama Integrative Ministry School (AIMS). This is a three year program of formation for deacons and priests. The canonical formation requirements for deacons are found in Canon III.6.5 of the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church. The Deacon Competencies listed in Appendix A provide more details of diaconal formation. To learn more about the AIMS program, please visit aims.dioala.org.



Deacon Jeannie Randall assists during a Confirmation service

GENERAL NORMS

1. ANNUAL DIOCESAN CONVENTION

Deacons will have seat, voice, and vote at the Annual Diocesan Convention and are expected to attend.

2. DEACON AS SUPPLY CLERGY

From time to time, a parish that has been unable to secure a supply priest may request a deacon to supply. A deacon may preach and officiate a service of the Daily Office or Liturgy of the Word without needing permission from the bishop. If a parish wishes to have a deacon officiate a service of the Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion from Reserved Sacrament, this request must be made to the bishop and must follow the guidelines in Appendix C. If deacons supply outside of their regularly assigned parish, then the deacon should be compensated according to the diocesan rate for supply clergy.

3. EMPLOYMENT AND CHURCH PENSION FUND ELIGIBILITY

The norm for this order will be that of non-stipendiary ministry. Therefore, deacons are exempt from assessments for and ineligible for the benefits of the Church Pension Fund, unless (with the approval of the bishop) employed directly by a parish or other church institution.

4. EXAMPLES OF DIACONAL MINISTRIES

An important part of the deacon's ministry is the calling and empowering of the laity to service in the world. Pursuant to Canons III.4.6-7, it is appropriate for deacons to direct and assist with Eucharistic Ministers and Visitors. Deacons appropriately work with the outreach committee, and/or social justice ministries within the parish. They do not necessarily chair these committees, but support the laity in their call as baptized Christians in the world both locally and globally. It is appropriate for deacons to have a discretionary fund in order to render assistance to those in need.

The following is a representative list, although not exhaustive, of ministries of deacons: prison ministry; hospice ministry; ministry with the elderly, including nursing homes; ministry with the sick; ministry with the homeless and hungry; ministry with both urban and rural poor; some areas of campus ministry; community organizing and advocacy for social justice; ministry concerning the environment and with the agricultural community; advocacy on behalf of children at risk.

5. EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

When a deacon is serving on behalf of the diocese (for example, on a Diocesan Task Force), the diocese should reimburse from the budget of such group all reasonable expenses incurred. Similarly, when a deacon serves on behalf of a parish, the parish should reimburse reasonable expenses incurred in the course of ministry. Such expenses may include travel, continuing education, registration for Diocesan Convention, etc. Approval of such expenses at the parish level must be consistent with the parish operating budget for any given year. All requests for reimbursement, diocesan and parish, should be requested prior to the expenditure.

6. PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY OF DEACONS

The deacon shall participate actively in the Community of Deacons of the Diocese of Alabama and shall annually attend no less than two gatherings of the Community. The gatherings normally held are the Bishop's Retreat (Winter), Clergy Conference (April), and the Annual Meeting of the Deacon Community (September/October). In addition, the deacon's presence at the annual Diocesan Convention is expected.

7. PARTICIPATION IN GATHERINGS FOR THE CLERGY

As clergy of the diocese, deacons should be invited to and encouraged to attend all local and diocesan level gatherings to which all clergy are invited.

8. PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Deacons are expected to participate in continuing education annually as required by the canons of the Episcopal Church (Canon III.7.5). Participation in the gatherings of diocesan clergy may offer opportunities for meeting continuing education obligations. Deacons wishing to participate in the Diocesan Continuing Education Fund should consult the current policies in the Policy Manual for the Diocese of Alabama.

9. REFERENCES TO THE ORDER OF DEACON

The deacon is to be referred to as "deacon" rather than "vocational" or "permanent deacon." A deacon in the process to ordination to the priesthood should be referred to as a "transitional deacon." This should be the normal usage in all diocesan and parish documents.

10. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BISHOP AND DEACONS (ANNUAL REPORT)

The deacon serves directly under the bishop. All deacons are expected to bring to the bishop's attention conflicts, concerns, disappointments or changes in life circumstances that interfere significantly with his or her ministry as a deacon. At the bishop's annual retreat with the Community of Deacons all deacons are encouraged to seek the bishop out for personal guidance, if needed. When a problem arises, and it cannot be addressed in community or requires immediate individual attention, the deacon should schedule a meeting with the bishop. Each deacon will submit a written report and evaluation of his or her ministry annually in November to the diocesan bishop (Canon III.7.4(b)). The report will be received by the Archdeacon of the diocese.

II. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEACONS AND RECTORS/PRIESTS IN CHARGE

The relationship between a priest and deacon is envisioned that of colleague. In a parish setting, the relationship is such that the priest is in charge of liturgical, pastoral, and organizational responsibilities. The priest and deacon should meet as needed and take steps to develop effective and timely communication. The priest and deacon should be aware of rubrics that pertain to a deacon's responsibilities and also the particular responsibilities of the deacon as they interpret the Good News of the church to the world and the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world to the church. In all instances the relationship and responsibilities of priest and deacon should be visible to others.

12. RESIGNATION AT AGE 72

In compliance with the canons of the Episcopal Church, (Canon III.7.7) a deacon who reaches the age of 72 while the letter of agreement is in force must submit his or her resignation to the diocesan bishop. The bishop may request the deacon to execute a new letter of agreement, but the term for that agreement may be no more than one year at a time.

13. REVIEW OF MINISTRY

The deacon shall hold a mutual review of ministry annually with the supervising rector or priest in charge. The purpose of the meeting is to bring clarity to the deacon's vision of his or her ministry; to clarify expectations on all sides; to put future conflicts into manageable form; to establish written goals for the deacon's work for the coming year, and to revise as appropriate the letter of agreement. Problems that cannot be addressed through this review process should be brought to the attention of the bishop.

14. ROLE IN PARISH INTERIM PERIODS

A deacon's Letter of Agreement automatically expires when the rector or priest in charge of the assigned parish resigns or leaves the parish. If a deacon wishes to continue functioning liturgically, an interim agreement must be executed between the deacon, senior warden, bishop, and archdeacon. Deacons do not normally serve as interim clergy in charge in parishes involved in a search process, unless so directed by the bishop for some pastoral reason. A deacon may also be assigned by the Bishop to serve in a parish during an interim period in some capacity other than clergy person in charge.

15. ROLE IN PARISH WHEN A NEW RECTOR IS CALLED

When the parish calls a new Rector, it is the responsibility of the deacon to be a part of the smooth transition from interim rector to rector. For deacons who have been in ministry at the parish for three years or more, once the new rector is in place, the deacon will take a sabbatical from active ministry in the parish for a period of no less than three months. During that sabbatical time, the deacon, the new rector, the bishop and the archdeacon, will take the opportunity to discern where and how best the deacon will be able to fully live out his/her call to ministry. The required sabbatical does not apply for deacons who have been serving at the parish for less than three years.

16. SUPPORT AND ACCOUNTABILITY AMONG DEACONS

All deacons will meet as a group in caucus annually for discussion of mutual issues and concerns and to support one another. This meeting will take place in a timely fashion so that the deacons may consider and discuss resolutions they might desire to support at Diocesan Convention.

17. TITLES AND FORMS OF ADDRESS

The title of address for a deacon closely mirrors the convention for addressing other members of the clergy. In narrative cases, the word “Deacon” parallels “Father/Mother” or Mr./Mrs. or Bishop.

Example: Father Johnson opened the vestry meeting with a prayer.
 Deacon Grimes opened the Bible study with a prayer.
 Bishop Dean confirmed my grandson.

In formal written cases (for example, invitations), “The Rev.” is used for both orders of clergy:

Example: The Rev. James Johnson or The Rev. Dr. Johnson
 The Rev. Josiah Grimes or The Rev. Dr. Grimes

However, when a deacon’s name appears on a written list such as a church bulletin, the modifying word deacon should be placed after the name to highlight their specific function as deacon on the staff:

Examples: The Rt. Rev. Mary Dean, Assistant Bishop
 The Rev. or The Rev. Dr. James Johnson, Associate Rector
 The Rev. or The Rev. Dr. Josiah Grimes, Deacon

18. VESTRY ATTENDANCE

As agreed upon between the rector or priest in charge and the deacon, the deacon may be expected to attend vestry meetings of the parish to which they are associated to carry out their ministry of bringing the concerns of the world to the Church. They will not have a vote in vestry business, but may be given voice.

19. VESTURE AND CLERICAL DRESS

The normal liturgical vesture is cassock, surplice with stole; alb with stole; or alb, dalmatic and stole. It is understood that the stole will be worn in a manner appropriate to deacons for sacramental ministry. When “choir dress” is called for, deacons may wear cassock and surplice with tippet and appropriate academic hood. Deacons may wear the clerical collar at their discretion when they engage in the public ministry of the church. Although a gray clergy shirt or blouse is preferred, selection of an appropriate color is also left to the deacon's discretion.

20. VOCATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD

The diaconate is a complete clerical order. Any deacon who comes to the belief that his or her proper vocation is to the priesthood, should consider entering the discernment process for that order in consultation with the bishop. All requirements of the process for discernment for the priesthood would need to be met, including formation for the priesthood approved by the bishop.



Deacon Carolyn Foster serves the chalice during Communion

LITURGICAL NORMS

In the Book of Common Prayer (BCP), liturgical functions are explicitly designated as appropriate to various orders of ministry. The premise for these guidelines is articulated in a section of the Book of Common Prayer titled, “Concerning the Service of the Church.”

In all services, the entire Christian assembly participates in such a way that the members of each order within the Church, lay persons, bishops, priests, and deacons, fulfill the functions proper to their respective orders, as set forth in the rubrical directions for each service.

The leader of worship in a Christian assembly is normally a bishop or priest. Deacons by virtue of their order do not exercise a presiding function: but, like lay person, may officiate at the Liturgy of the Word, whether in the form provided in the Daily Offices, or (when a bishop or priest is not present) in the form appointed at the Eucharist. Under exceptional circumstances, when the services of a priest cannot be obtained, the bishop may, at discretion, authorize a deacon to preside at other rites also, subject to the limitations described in the directions for each service. (BCP 13)

I. BURIAL OF THE DEAD

A deacon may preside at the Burial of the Dead when the services of a priest cannot be obtained. The Eucharist should be omitted as well as the blessing of the people. Deacons do not bless or consecrate graves.

2. DAILY OFFICE

Deacons may publicly officiate in church or at any other Christian assembly, the Daily Offices of Morning and Evening Prayer, the Order of Service for Noonday, the Order of Worship for the Evening, and the Order for Compline.

3. DAYS OF SPECIAL OBSERVANCE AND CELEBRATION

Deacons shall perform the full and proper liturgy of a deacon in the parish liturgies on Sunday, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil. At the Easter Vigil, it is appropriate for the deacon to carry the Paschal Candle in procession and sing, if musically trained, the Exsultet. Deacons may also carry the Paschal Candle in procession for baptisms and funerals.

4. HOLY BAPTISM

Deacons are permitted to administer Baptism in a genuine emergency or as requested by their rector. Such emergencies include those instances when a person is in extreme circumstances in a hospital or at the scene of an accident when no priest is readily available. (See BCP 313-314) A deacon may also, when the services of a priest cannot be obtained, and with the authorization of the Bishop, officiate at public baptism as part of the Easter Vigil, on the Day of Pentecost, on All Saints' Day or the Sunday after All Saints' Day, and on the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord (the First Sunday after the Epiphany) (See, BCP 312).

5. HOLY EUCHARIST

Deacons function in important and symbolic ways at the Holy Eucharist. The rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer are explicit about the functions of a deacon when present at a celebration of the Holy Eucharist. The rector or priest in charge and the deacon should consult to establish the deacon's role in the liturgy considering the rubrics, these norms, and the custom and practice of the parish.

- A. *Gospel* - The deacon is to read the Gospel. (BCP 322, 354) The deacon may carry the Gospel Book in procession, place it in a prominent place on the altar, and incense the Gospel Book where it is the custom of the parish.
- B. *Prayers of the People* - The deacon may lead the Prayers of the People. If it is the parish's custom to have a lay person lead the prayers, the deacon may participate in this ministry by saying an invitatory sentence for the prayers, by writing the prayers according to the requirements found on page 383 of the BCP, and by assisting in gathering the special prayers and thanksgivings of the community.
- C. *Confession* - The deacon is to invite the Confession. (BCP 330, 358)
- D. *Lord's Table* - The deacon is to serve at the Lord's Table (BCP 354):
 1. The deacon is to receive the people's offerings of bread, wine, money, and other gifts (BCP 333, 359)
 2. The deacon is to prepare the Table for the celebration, preparing and placing upon it the bread and cup of wine. It is customary to add a little water to the wine. The deacon may be assisted by other ministers. (BCP 354, 407) The deacon may perform the ablutions following Communion.
 3. The deacon is to assist in the administration of the sacrament to the people. (BCP 322, 354). When the celebrant is assisted by a deacon, another priest or lay Eucharistic Minister, it is the customary for the celebrant to administer the consecrated Bread and the other administer the Chalice. When several deacons or priests are present, some may administer the Bread and others the Wine. (BCP 408) Deacons should be sensitive to the customs of the parish concerning Eucharistic Ministers regularly assisting in the distribution of the Sacrament.
- E. *Dismissal* - The deacon is to dismiss the people at the conclusion of the service. (BCP 339, 366). The inclusion of "Alleluia, Alleluia" in the dismissal is meant to be used only during the season of Easter through the day of Pentecost.

6. MINISTRATION TO THE SICK

Taking Holy Communion to those in the parish who cannot be reasonably present at the Eucharist is a traditional role for deacons and deacons may do so at the request of the supervising priest. A deacon may lead the service of the Word in the service of Ministration to the Sick (Ref. BCP 453-455), and may anoint the sick in cases of necessity and only when oil has previously been blessed by a bishop or priest (Ref., BCP 456). Under the direction of the rector or priest in charge, a deacon may assist in anointing at healing services.

7. OFFICIATING AT A MARRIAGE

Deacons do not preside at either a Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage or at the Blessing of a Civil Marriage. However, a deacon may deliver the charge (BCP 423), ask for the Declaration of Consent (BCP 424), read the Gospel and perform other diaconal functions at the Eucharist when celebrated within the context of a marriage. By virtue of their ordination, deacons in Alabama are legally qualified to perform weddings. In cases where the deacon may have a special relationship to the couple being married, the deacon may request permission from the bishop to preside at a wedding where there is no Eucharist. If the wedding is to occur in a parish, the deacon must also have the consent of the rector or priest in charge of said parish.

8. PREACHING

A deacon, unless specifically prohibited by the bishop, is licensed to preach in a parish when invited to do so by the rector or priest in charge. The frequency of such preaching should be consistent with the expectation that the priest is the normal preacher. Some deacons may not feel called to preach on a regular basis, but as an interpreter of the needs, hopes, and concerns of the world to the church, deacons are expected to preach periodically throughout the liturgical year.

9. PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION OF RESERVED SACRAMENT IN A CHURCH

Deacons are not permitted to perform the administration of the reserved sacrament in Church in the absence of a priest unless there is an urgent need and the bishop has given approval in each instance. See guidelines in Appendix D.

10. RECONCILIATION OF A PENITENT

The Reconciliation of a penitent is normally reserved to a bishop or priest who alone can pronounce absolution. If a priest is not available and a deacon hears the confession of a penitent, he or she should follow the rubrics on page 446 of the BCP and must use the form of Declaration of Forgiveness found on page 452 of the BCP. Deacons should be mindful that the secrecy of a confession is morally absolute for the person hearing the confession, and must under no circumstances be broken. (BCP 446)



Deacon John Stewart assists at rally for the Poor People's Campaign

APPENDIX A - RESOURCES

BOOKS & ARTICLES

Unexpected Consequences: The Diaconate Renewed, Susanne Watson Epting (2015)

Diakonia Studies: Critical Issues in Ministry, John N. Collins (2014)

"Exodus from Privilege: Reflections on the Diaconate in Acts," *Anglican Theological Review*, The Rt. Rev. Thomas E. Breidenthal - <https://bit.ly/2sOKxat>

Many Servants: An Introduction to Deacons, Ormonde Plater (2012)

Deacons in the Liturgy: 2nd Edition, Ormonde Plater (2009)

Deacons and the Church: Making Connection Between Old and New, John N. Collins (2002)

For Such a Time as This: A Renewed Diaconate in the Church of England - A report to the General Synod of the Church of England of a Working Party of the House of Bishops (2001)

The Diaconate: A Full and Equal Order, James Monroe Barnett (1995)

WEB

Diocese of Alabama Deacon Page - dioala.org/deacons

Association for Episcopal Deacons - episcopaldeacons.org

Especially helpful are the Competencies for Deacons 2017 - <https://bit.ly/2sLfjY0>

The Iona Report: the Diaconate in the Anglican Church of Canada 2016 - <https://bit.ly/2sQYTqM>

Anglican Communion Ministry Grid - Vocational Deacons Competencies - <https://bit.ly/2HxDLeM>



LETTER OF AGREEMENT FOR A DEACON
IN THE DIOCESE OF ALABAMA

June 2017

Deacon _____ and _____, Bishop of Alabama and _____, the rector of _____ parish agree that the exercise of _____'s diaconal ministry within the Diocese of Alabama shall be subject to terms set forth in this Letter of Agreement. The term of this agreement is intended to be _____ years. The agreement will be valid from _____/_____/_____(month/year) to _____/_____/_____(month/year).

All diaconal ministries will conform to the functions outlined in *Deacons' Handbook, 2017* (as may be amended), and will give expression to the diocesan vision statement for diaconal ministry.

VISION STATEMENT

A deacon is a baptized person called and empowered by God and the Church to be a model of Christ's servant ministry for all people. As agents of God's compassion and reconciling grace, deacons are missionaries to the world and messengers to the Church of the world's needs, hopes and concerns. In the Church, deacons call forth, empower, and inspire the baptized to respond to these needs. The role of the deacon in liturgy mirrors this role of the deacon in Church and world. Deacons are living symbols of Christ's presence as they embody Christ's servant ministry and point to the presence of Christ in those they serve.

The deacon accepts the following principles of diocesan ministry:

1. All ministries of the diocese are exercised under the oversight and care of the bishop with the assistance of presbyters and others. The deacon serves directly under the bishop. (Book of Common Prayer, p. 543)
2. All ministries within the parish are exercised under the leadership and authority of the rector or priest in charge.
3. The fundamental ministry of the deacon is to hold before the Church the character of the whole ministry of the Church as service and of its ministers, lay and ordained, as servants.
4. The ministry of the deacon includes working in harmony with others in the diocese and in the local parish church, especially with the bishop and local rector, lending support and seeking always to build up the whole body of Christ.

MINISTRY OF THE DEACON OUTSIDE THE PARISH

The deacon shall bring the needs, hopes, concerns of the world to the Church, serving all people, particularly the poor, the weak and the lonely. This work may include more global assignments made by the bishop.

Name	Location	Supervisor	Hrs Per Month
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PARISH ASSIGNMENT

Participation in Liturgy

The deacon shall serve at-large in the Diocese of Alabama and will also function under the supervision of the rector of _____ parish located in _____. The deacon agrees to participate on a regular basis in the roles and functions appropriate to a deacon and to assist in the liturgies identified below. It is expected that the deacon will serve in all principle Sunday services, major feasts or observances, and other services as the deacon may be able.

(Please specify the weekly liturgical expectations throughout the year)

Other Parish Duties

The deacon expects to devote _____ hours a week working within the parish including his or her work with the following groups or committees:

Problems arising that affect the welfare of the parish and known to the deacon are to be brought to the attention of the rector or priest in charge, and the counsel /advice of the priest are to be followed. If a deacon is unable to follow such advice, the problem is to be taken to the bishop whose advice the deacon is to follow.

PARTICIPATION IN PEACE, JUSTICE, AND RECONCILIATION

The deacon shall live out his or her baptismal covenant and shall model this to the parish through the following:

REVIEW OF MINISTRY

The deacon shall hold a mutual review of ministry annually with the supervising rector or priest in charge. The purpose of this meeting is to bring clarity to the deacon's vision of her or his ministry; to clarify expectations on all sides; to put future conflicts in manageable form; to establish written goals for the deacon's work for the coming year, and to revise as appropriate this letter of agreement. Problems that cannot be addressed through this review process should be brought to the attention of the bishop.

PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY OF DEACONS

The deacon shall participate actively in the Community of Deacons of the Diocese of Alabama and shall annually attend no less than two of the gatherings of the Community. The gatherings normally held are the Bishop's retreat (Winter), Clergy Conference (April) and the Annual Meeting of the Deacon Community (September/October). In addition, the deacon's presence at the Diocesan Convention is expected.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

The deacon agrees to participate in continuing education annually as required by the canons of The Episcopal Church. (Canon III.7.5). Participation in the Bishop's Retreat, meetings of College for Clergy, the Annual Clergy Conference, and the Annual Meeting of the Deacon Community offer opportunities for meeting continuing education obligations. Deacons are encouraged to participate in the Diocesan Clergy Continuing Education Fund. *

*Conditions of participation are found in the Policy Manual for the Diocese of Alabama

ANNUAL REPORT

The deacon shall submit a written report and evaluation of his or her ministry annually in November to the diocesan bishop (Canon III.7.4(b)). The report will be received by the Archdeacon of the Diocese and a copy will be provided by the deacon to the rector or priest in charge of the parish to which the deacon is assigned.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE BISHOP

The deacon agrees to bring to the bishop's attention conflicts, concerns, disappointments or changes in life circumstances that interfere significantly with his or her ministry as a deacon. At the bishop's annual retreat with the Community of Deacons all deacons are encouraged to seek the bishop out for personal guidance, if needed. When a problem arises and it cannot be addressed in community or requires immediate individual attention, the deacon should schedule a meeting with the bishop.

SUPPORT OF THE WORK OF THE DEACON BY THE PARISH

Although the work ministry of the deacon is non-stipendiary, the parish entering into this letter of agreement with the deacon agrees to provide the following support or reimbursement for his or her ministry:

1. Continuing education support at a level agreed upon by the deacon and vestry.
2. Support for attending annual Diocesan Convention.
3. Travel reimbursement at a rate agreed upon by the vestry for work associated with parish ministry.
4. Establishment of a Deacon's Discretionary Fund.

RESIGNATION AT AGE 72

In compliance with the canons of The Episcopal Church (Canon III.7.7) a deacon who reaches the age of 72 while this agreement is in force must submit his or her resignation to the bishop. The bishop may request the deacon to execute a letter of agreement, but the term of that agreement may be no more than one year at a time.

TERMS FOR THE EXPIRATION AND RENEWAL OF THIS AGREEMENT

This agreement will remain in force for _____ years from the date it is signed. When this agreement expires, the deacon is expected to enter into a new agreement after consultation with bishop and the rector. The agreement automatically expires when the rector or priest in charge of the assigned parish resigns or leaves the parish. A deacon who wishes to continue functioning liturgically must execute an interim agreement. The agreement may be amended at any time by the mutual consent of the bishop and deacon after consultation with the rector or priest in charge or such other persons whose work is affected. Also, a change of assignment can be initiated by the bishop or requested by the deacon, rector or other supervisor at any time.

SIGNATURES:

_____ Bishop of Alabama
_____ Deacon
_____ Rector/Priest in Charge
_____ Archdeacon
_____ Other Supervisor

Date: _____

Note: Copies of this agreement are distributed to:
Diocesan Bishop (permanent file)
Rector of the parish
Deacon
Archdeacon
Senior Warden and Clerk of the Parish Vestry

APPENDIX C - GUIDELINES FOR BISHOP'S VISITATION

Guidelines for Deacons on Bishop's Visitation & Rota Assignments (2016)

So that the diocese may see the four orders of ministry represented at the altar, the bishop has requested that a deacon travel with him on visitations to parishes where there is no deacon regularly assigned. Accompanying the bishop on a visitation allows an opportunity for the deacon to share with all the people of the diocese the distinct vocational call to the diaconate. Deacons should be mindful that the focus of the visitation is on the time the parish has with the bishop to share their unique ministry, for fellowship, and for worship.

Having the bishop preside at the liturgy requires an adjustment for all parishes, and to have the added presence of a deacon, in parishes unaccustomed to it, causes more change. Deacons should be sensitive to the stress and uncertainty that this adds to the clergy and lay ministers of the parish, and should be responsive and flexible to the needs of the parish.

It is expected that the deacon will serve at the altar when the visitation is at the deacon's assigned parish.

For any questions or to secure a substitute for a visitation, the deacon should contact the archdeacon, and not the bishop's office.

To facilitate a positive experience during the visitation, deacons should follow these guidelines:

1. **DEACONS WILL BE ASSIGNED TO VISITATIONS BY THE ARCHDEACON WHEN THE BISHOP'S SCHEDULE IS FINALIZED IN THE LATE SPRING.** Every effort is made to assign you to parishes within easy driving distance. However, a few assignments may be made for longer distances when no deacon lives in the near geographic area, or when it is necessary to avoid overloading any one deacon's schedule. For a variety of reasons, primarily the limited number and availability of deacons, not all parish visitations will include an accompanying deacon.
2. **THE VISITATION ROTA IS POSTED ON THE DIOCESAN WEBSITE, <http://dioala.org/Diocese/calendars.html>.** Each deacon is responsible for checking this rota schedule, and keeping up with their assignments.
3. **IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND ON THE DATE AS ASSIGNED,** it is *your* responsibility, at least 4 weeks in advance, to secure a replacement and to then *contact the Archdeacon, and the parish rector* to provide the information for this change. The change will then be posted on the website. *In an emergency, call the rector and Archdeacon immediately.* In the case of the schedule conflict for the deacon's home parish, the deacon should consult with the rector or priest in charge.
4. **THE VISITING DEACON WILL CONTACT THE RECTOR AT LEAST 3 WEEKS IN ADVANCE OF THE VISIT** to discuss her/his expectation and plan for the liturgy that day. In this conversation, it is helpful to discuss the specific duties for the deacon, and to be flexible and open to taking a smaller role than is the deacon's usual level of participation. To help the rector plan for the day, and to assist

in adapting to the parishes customs, the deacon should ask whether it has been envisioned that you will:

- Serve as the Bishop's chaplain, or will another fulfill that role?
- Ask where you will be in the procession/recession, and where you will sit
- Proclaim the Gospel (get the details of their custom)
- Participate in any confirmation or baptism rites? (If so, get detailed information)
- Set the table (get the details of this. Inquire where you will be expected to physically stand during the Eucharist, and the plan for your role during this portion of the worship.)
- Will you participate in the administration of the sacrament? (If so, ask specifically about this. I suggest that you graciously decline if your participation will result in the lay eucharistic minister of the parish being omitted from serving.)
- Will you clear the table? (If so, how do they normally complete this?)
- Say the dismissal (before or after the last hymn; from the altar or from the back of the church?)
- Attend any social event or special program before or after the worship? (If so, may your spouse or friend also attend?)
- Speak for a few minutes (5-10 minutes) in adult formation or as part of the Bishop's time

5. **PLAN FOR THE UNEXPECTED, AND TAKE A BACK SEAT.** Take more than you expect to use (stoles, etc.). Arrive early – at least 45 minutes in advance – to become acquainted with the physical space, and to be available to assist with last minute preparations if needed. *Remember* that this is the time for the parish to “shine,” so leave for another time any issues you may wish to discuss with the bishop, or any other concerns that would direct the bishop's, rector's or parish's attention away from the reason for the visitation.
6. **YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE A MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT STIPEND FOR YOUR TRAVEL.** If you travel out of your county of residence to make a visitation with the bishop, you may submit a travel reimbursement request. Per diocesan policy for this year's budgeted line item, the reimbursement is a flat amount of \$25.00 per visitation. This request should be *submitted directly to the archdeacon* via email (mholmes@holyapostleshooover.org) or by mail to “The Ven. Marti Holmes, 1109 26th Street South, #4, Birmingham, AL 35205.”
7. **FINALLY, ENJOY YOUR TIME REPRESENTING THE DIOCESE AND DEACON COMMUNITY.** Bear in mind that the deacon's role at the altar, rather than the primary focus of our ministry, is the symbolic representation of our vocational call to serve the poor, the needy, the forgotten, and the helpless in the world. This is a wonderful opportunity, in conversation with the members of the parish, to share your work and the distinct vocational call of the deacon. It may be that your interaction will allow the Holy Spirit to lead others to the awareness of this call in their lives.

Guidelines for Service of the Liturgy of the Word with
Holy Communion from Reserved Sacrament
with Deacon as Officiant

I. INTRODUCTION

The Holy Eucharist is the normal service Sundays and other major Feast Days. Through the outward and visible signs of bread and wine, we receive the inward and spiritual grace of Christ's Body and Blood. We believe that through the sacrament of Eucharist we receive forgiveness of our sins, the strengthening of our union with Christ and one another, and the foretaste of the heavenly banquet.

Anglican theology does not give a precise explanation of how the Eucharist works, but we believe that Christ is really present in Holy Communion. The real presence of Christ in the Eucharist is not limited to the community present at the service. In many communities, Holy Communion is shared with the larger community by priests, deacons, and Eucharistic Visitors taking consecrated bread and wine to those unable to be present at the service. The Book of Common Prayer allows communities to reserve Sacrament on Maundy Thursday to be distributed at the Good Friday service.

The normal presider at the Eucharist is a bishop or priest, and deacons and lay persons have appropriate roles in the service so that the entire Christian assembly participates in the worship. A deacon assists in the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of sacraments. The normal custom is that if a parish's priest is not able to preside, a supply priest is scheduled for the service. When this cannot be arranged, the Book of Common Prayer allows the bishop the discretion to authorize a deacon to preside and distribute Holy Communion from Reserved Sacrament. This service is for exceptional circumstances, and is expected to only be used for Sunday services or major feasts/observances when a supply priest is not available or in case of an emergency.

A worshipping community is not required to use the guidelines. In the absence of a priest, a community may have a service of Morning/Evening Prayer or the Liturgy of the Word, and a deacon or lay person may officiate. These guidelines are intended to allow flexibility in responding to the needs of communities that would find this service beneficial.

2. USE WITHIN DEACON'S ASSIGNED PARISH

(a) In the event that the parish in which the deacon regularly serves is not able to obtain a supply priest for a Sunday Eucharist service—or other major feasts or observances—and it is desired to distribute communion from reserved sacrament, the rector or priest in charge may request permission from the bishop for the deacon to officiate a service of the Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion from Reserved Sacrament. In the event of an extreme emergency that prevents the rector or priest in charge from contacting the bishop prior to the service, the deacon may officiate the service, but must contact the bishop's office as soon as possible following the service.

(b) If permission is given, the deacon should use the services provided in these guidelines. The deacon should also be prepared to offer the sermon at this service. Except for the required modifications, the deacon should follow the usual customs of the parish for the service. The service should be titled in the

bulletin as “Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion from Reserved Sacrament.” The deacon should record the service in the Register of Services as “Communion from Reserved Sacrament,” and sign as the officiant and preacher.

(c) In no event should a deacon officiate this rite without the permission of the rector or priest in charge and the prior permission of the bishop (except in an emergency).

3. USE OUTSIDE OF DEACON’S ASSIGNED PARISH

At the bishop’s discretion, a deacon may be assigned by the bishop to officiate this service at a parish that is not the deacon’s assigned parish. Any request for a non-parochial deacon to officiate this service should be made to the bishop by the rector, priest in charge, or senior warden (if no priest assigned). The assigned deacon should follow the requirements listed in 2(b). The deacon should be compensated according to the diocesan policy for supply clergy.

4. FAMILIARITY WITH THE SERVICE

Prior to officiating this service, deacons should contact the archdeacon for training materials in order to be familiar with the service and the required modifications. The archdeacon will maintain a list of deacons that have completed the training.

The Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion from Reserved Sacrament (Rite I)

Form to be used by a Deacon

The Liturgy of the Word follows the BCP pp. 323-332; or begins with the Penitential Order, pp. 319-321.

After the Confession of Sin, the Deacon remains kneeling and says:

The Almighty and merciful Lord grant us absolution and remission of all our sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of His Holy Spirit. Amen.

After the Liturgy of the Word, the Deacon, standing in the center of the chancel, away from the altar, says one of the Offertory Sentences found on pp. 343-344.

The Deacon receives the people's offering. (The Reserved Sacrament is not brought forward, but instead is kept in a tabernacle, aumbry, or credence table).

The people may kneel.

The Deacon spreads a corporal and then reverently takes the Reserved Sacrament from the tabernacle, aumbry, or credence table (veiled) and places it on the Altar.

If the Reserved Sacrament is from a previous Eucharist service of the same parish, the deacon says:

We believe that in the Holy Eucharist, the elements of bread and wine are not mere signs, but that Christ himself is really present. In fellowship with the whole Church of God, with all who have been brought together by the Holy Spirit to worship on this day, and who have celebrated the Eucharist, let us rejoice that we are called to be part of the body of Christ.

If the Reserved Sacrament has been brought from another community, the deacon says:

We believe that in the Holy Eucharist, the elements of bread and wine are not mere signs, but that Christ himself is really present. We remember in prayer those who celebrated the Eucharist at _____ (name the community) with whom we now share in communion through this consecrated bread and wine.

Deacon The Lord be with you.

People And with thy spirit.

Deacon Let us pray.

Almighty Father, whose dear Son,
on the night before He suffered,
did institute the Sacrament of His Body and Blood:
Mercifully grant that we may thankfully receive the same
in remembrance of Him who in these holy mysteries
giveth us a pledge of life eternal,
the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord;
Who now liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Spirit,
ever one God, world without end. Amen.

And now, let us pray in the words our Savior Christ hath taught us,

People and Deacon sing or say the Lord's Prayer

The following may also be said:

We do not presume to come to this Thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in Thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under Thy Table. But Thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink His blood, that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us. Amen.

The Deacon stands facing the people and says one of the following Invitations:

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

and may add Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on Him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

The fraction (breaking of the Bread) and fraction anthem are omitted.

The Deacon receives the Sacrament in both kinds, and then distributes it to the people.

During the administration of Communion, hymns, psalms, or anthems may be sung.

The Bread and the Cup are given to the communicants with the words on p. 338

The ablutions are done in the usual manner.

The remaining Reserved Sacrament is reverently placed back in the tabernacle, aumbry, or credence table (veiled) by the Deacon.

After Communion, the Deacon leads the post Communion prayer found on p. 339

In place of the Blessing, the Deacon may say the following:

The Lord bless us and keep us.

The Lord make His face to shine upon us and be gracious unto us.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace:

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Deacon dismisses the people with one of the sentences from the BCP p.339-340.

The Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion from Reserved Sacrament (Rite II) Form to be used by a Deacon

The Liturgy of the Word follows the BCP pp. 366-360; or begins with the Penitential Order, pp. 351-353.

After the Confession of Sin, the Deacon says:

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. Amen

After the Liturgy of the Word, the Deacon, standing in the center of the chancel, away from the altar, says one of the Offertory Sentences on pp. 376-377

The Deacon receives the people's offering. (The Reserved Sacrament is not brought forward, but instead are kept in a tabernacle, aumbry, or credence table).

The people stand or kneel.

The Deacon spreads a corporal and then reverently takes the Reserved Sacrament from the tabernacle, aumbry, or credence table (veiled) and places it on the Altar.

If the Reserved Sacrament is from a previous Eucharist service of the same parish, the deacon says:

We believe that in the Holy Eucharist, the elements of bread and wine are not mere signs, but that Christ himself is really present. In fellowship with the whole Church of God, with all who have been brought together by the Holy Spirit to worship on this day, and who have celebrated the Eucharist, let us rejoice that we are called to be part of the body of Christ.

If the reserved sacrament has been brought from another community, the deacon says:

We believe that in the Holy Eucharist, the elements of bread and wine are not mere signs, but that Christ himself is really present. We remember in prayer those who celebrated the Eucharist at _____ (name the community) with whom we now share in communion through this consecrated bread and wine.

Deacon	The Lord be with you.
People	And also with you.
Deacon	Let us pray.

The deacon prays one of the following:

Almighty Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, did institute the Sacrament of His Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may may receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

or

We give you thanks, O God, for all things good and beneficial to our bodies and souls. We give you thanks that you have brought us together in this place to worship you. We give you thanks for the Body and Blood of Christ, set here before us. We give you thanks that your eternal word was made flesh for us, and for Christ's life and ministry, death, and resurrection. We give you thanks that you fill our lives with grace and grant us the gift of the Holy Spirit. We give you thanks, O God, that through this Sacrament you grant us a pledge of our eternal inheritance. Amen.

Deacon And now, let us pray in the words our Savior Christ has taught us,

People and Deacon sing or say the Lord's Prayer

The Deacon stands facing the people and says one of the following Invitations:

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

and may add Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on Him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

The fraction (breaking of the Bread) and fraction anthem are omitted.

The Deacon receives the Sacrament in both kinds, and then distributes it to the people.

During the administration of Communion, hymns, psalms, or anthems may be sung.

The Bread and the Cup are given to the communicants with the words on p. 365.

The ablutions are done in the usual manner.

The remaining Reserved Sacrament is reverently placed back in the tabernacle, aumbry, or credence table (veiled) by the Deacon.

After Communion, the Deacon leads the post Communion prayer found on pp. 365-366

In place of the Blessing, the Deacon may say the following:

The Lord bless us and keep us.

The Lord make His face to shine upon us and be gracious unto us.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace:

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Deacon dismisses the people with one of the sentences from the BCP p.366.

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF ALABAMA



○ God of unchangeable power and eternal light:
Look favorably on your whole Church,
that wonderful and sacred mystery;
by the effectual working of your providence,
carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation;
let the whole world see and know that things
which were cast down are being raised up,
and things which had grown old are being made new,
and that all things are being brought to their perfection
by him through whom all things were made,
your Son Jesus Christ our Lord;
who lives and reigns with you,
in the Unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

—*Book of Common Prayer, p. 540*