

The Ordination and Installation of Deacons

In the early Congregational churches, deacons were often ordained to the office for life. The Churches recognized that the gifts and abilities needed for ministry by a deacon were not developed quickly, and close spiritual relationships could be maintained over a period of years. However, aged deacons were sometimes strongly opposed to changes in the life of the church which younger people deemed desirable, so that by the early part of this century, widespread opposition arose to this custom.

In most churches today, as in our church, it is customary for deacons to be elected to a term of three years, with constitutional provisions prohibiting the deacon from immediately succeeding himself or herself.

There is much to be said in favor of a service of ordination. Such a service stresses the scriptural purposes of deacons, to remind the congregation of their special calling as spiritual leaders. The service may also inspire the deacons themselves to a deeper commitment in their service to Christ and the church.

A Service of Installation to the Office of Deacon

Congregational Hymn

“Ye Servants of God, Your Master Proclaim”

Minister: [Moderator], would you come before the congregation and share with us the purpose of this service.

Moderator: [Pastor], fellow members and friends of this congregation. It is my pleasure and privilege to present to you the persons who have been elected to the office of deacon. They were chosen after much prayerful consideration, by the vote of our congregation. We are told in the book of Acts that when the early Christian church selected deacons, they chose those who were “known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom.” So also we look to our deacons to lead us toward spiritual growth and in the service of Christ our Lord. As I read their names, I would like to invite them to come to the front of our meetinghouse and take their place in the front pews.
[Names of Deacons]

Charge to the Diaconate: This is an auspicious day in the life of our church. We are about to acknowledge these people in the biblical office of deacon. Let us listen carefully to the biblical account of the qualities esteemed in such appointments which were made to the office of deacon. It is found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Charge to the Congregation: *[This may be done by a second minister on the staff or a Minister Emeritus. On occasion, the moderator or some elder statesman from among the Church membership may be called upon to prepare these brief remarks.]*

Brother and sisters in Christ, the welfare and growth of our fellowship is a responsibility shared by all of us. These people before you are appointed to lead us. The Scripture has much to say about our responsibility to them as our spiritual leaders, as the deacons of our fellowship. {Hebrew 13:7-18}

The Vows of Installation

{Deacons are asked to stand}

Minister: As those appointed to the office of deacon, do you publicly reaffirm your own personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord?

Deacons: We do.

Minister: Will you by both word and deed strive to proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior both in the church and in the world?

Deacons: By God's grace, we will.

Minister: Will you share in the shepherding of this flock, giving of yourselves to care for all our members – the old as well as the young, the new as well as the familiar, the sick as well as the whole, the needy as well as the affluent?

Deacons: God being our helper, we will.

Minister: Do you dedicate yourselves to encouraging the faith, freedom and fellowship of this congregation with whom you worship and serve?

Deacons: We do.

Minister: Will you pray for this congregation, its leaders and members? And will you work in harmony with others to lead this church in providing the essential experiences of worship, education, discipleship and ministry so that our people will grow in Christ?

Deacons: God being our helper, we will.

Minister: Having heard your willingness to serve as deacons in the church of Jesus Christ, as pastor of your church, I joyously and with earnest prayer commend you to the Lord of the Church for His blessing and favor as you serve. I will call you forward for prayer to consecrate you in your office as Deacon.

Congregational Hymn

“The Church's One Foundation”

Benediction