

Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada (DUCC)

Statement of vision

God calls us to diaconal ministry. The gospel of Jesus invites all to this ministry: to offer compassion and accompaniment, to work for liberation and justice, to act as advocates of creative transformation.

This vocation is a journey involving Spirit-filled enrichment and learning, requiring humble offering of self, demanding prayerful discernment and courageous risking, exercising visionary and communal leadership, promising joy and meaning, and daring to imagine God's abundance in a world of love and respect.



Excerpt from Statement of Vision
adopted in April 2009
by Diakonía of the United Church of
Canada

"Evolving, transforming, empowering"
... the symbol on the cover of this brochure attempts to express something of the essence of diaconal ministry. Signifying a style and vision of ministry which at its core is grounded in community, the spiral moves out expressing openness to join with others, to risk and to be responsive. There is a dynamism, a synergistic energy coming from deep within ... the Spirit rushing forth, seeking to meet immediate needs and to work with others towards creating a more just and loving world.



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<http://www.ducc.ca>



Evolving...

Transforming...

Empowering...

Diaconal ministry finds its roots in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, enabling the ministry of the whole people of God through:

Educational ministry: the growth and transformation of people of all ages in faith formation, spirituality and faithful action.

Social justice: the transformation of our world into a more just and loving community for all.

Accompaniment: to journey with others in times of difficulty and blessing, to stand with those on the periphery and work against oppression, to empower one and another in relationships that are life-giving.

Diaconal Ministers in the United Church of Canada are a particular body of ministers who uphold this style and vision of ministry as central. In order to expand the diaconal ministry lived out by all believers, diaconal ministers seek to encourage, equip and model leadership in word and action for this vital ministry in the world.

Diaconal ministry is rooted in the Greek word diakonia, used in scripture to describe the work of Jesus, and others in the early church. Diakonia is the work of ministry, service and support.

Diaconal Ministers are commissioned to a ministry of education, service and pastoral care. They are one of the two streams (diaconal ministry and ordained ministry) in the Order of Ministry in the United Church of Canada.

Diaconal Ministers serve in various capacities: in community development, chaplaincy, at lay education centres, theological schools, as overseas personnel or in Presbytery, Conference or General Council staff positions. In congregational ministry, Diaconal Ministers serve in positions that often include the ministries of word and sacrament as well as education, service and pastoral care; some serve in multiple staff ministries with an emphasis on Christian development, outreach and pastoral care; others serve in interim ministry. While Diaconal Ministers serve in various capacities their commitment to diakonia is the basis of their work.

Diaconal Ministry is a part of a global expression of this call to a ministry. Diaconal Ministers in the United Church of Canada are members of world wide Diaconal associations through Diakonia of the United Church of Canada.
<http://www.ducc.ca>



Preparation for Diaconal Ministry

Those who experience themselves as called by God to diaconal ministry, begin a series of conversations with their local congregation and the wider church. This Discernment Process is more fully outlined on the United Church website - "Preparing for Ministry"

<http://www.united-church.ca/adultlearning/preparing>

Educational requirements for diaconal ministry can be fulfilled at The Centre for Christian Studies in Winnipeg in its four year regionally based national program:

<http://www.ccsonline.ca/>.

The Francis Sandy Theological Centre near Paris, Ontario: <http://www.fstc.ca/> and the Dr. Jessie

Saulteaux Resource Centre near Beausejour, Manitoba: <http://www.mts.net/~drjessie/> both offer a five year community-based educational program in the Aboriginal context.

All of these educational programs include studies in Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, theology, ethics, church history, education, social analysis, worship and preaching, pastoral care, doctrine and church polity. All programs include practical experience in congregational and community ministry settings and reflection on this experience. Diaconal identity formation is also a significant component of each of these programs