

Deacon / Supervisor / Parish Covenant

Diocese of Fredericton

DRAFT COVENANT

Covenant between **name of deacon** and **name of parish** for **year**.

The diaconate is one of the historic threefold orders of ministry for which a person is called to a lifelong, specialized ministry in the Church. The Deacon functions within a covenant relationship with the Incumbent and the Parish. All covenants are subject to the approval of the Bishop.

The exercise of diaconal ministry by **name of deacon** is subject to the terms of this covenant.

1. As a way of bringing the Church to the world, the Deacon shall provide a specialized servant ministry in the community as follows:

(insert description of deacon's outreach ministry)

2. As a way of bringing the needs of the world to the Church, the Deacon's teaching, preaching, pastoral care, and liturgical activities provide an opportunity to remind the parish of each baptized person's call to serve those in need. In proclaiming the Gospel, in contributing to and overseeing the Prayers of the People, in assisting at the Altar and with the administration of Communion, and in dismissing the congregation to go out into the world to love and serve the Lord, the Deacon encourages the People of God to live out their baptismal promises. In the liturgy, the Deacon will function according to the Bishop's directives on the diaconate.

Other ways the Deacon will serve the Parish will include:

(insert description of parish responsibilities)

3. The Deacon accepts the following principles of parish ministry:
 - a. The fundamental ministry of the Deacon is to hold before the Church the character of the whole ministry of the Church as servant and of its members as servants.
 - b. The ministry of the Deacon will include working in harmony with others in the parish, especially the Incumbent and other leaders, lending support and seeking always to build up the body of Christ.
 - c. All ministries of the deacon are exercised under the oversight of the Bishop of the Diocese who issues the license and under the immediate leadership and authority of the Incumbent and the Parish Corporation.
4. The Deacon is normally a part-time and non-stipendiary. The number of hours of service per week in outreach ministry and parish responsibilities is (***number of hours***).

(outline the form that remuneration will take, if applicable.)

5. The Deacon is expected to participate in diocesan programs and meetings concerning the diaconate, and other clergy gatherings appropriate to his/her order. This includes diocesan and other opportunities for continuing education.
6. The Deacon shall participate in meetings of the Parish Corporation without vote.
7. The Deacon shall report at stated intervals to the incumbent (or to others as the clergy in charge may direct) on the deacon's ministry.

8. When problems arise which affect the welfare and unity of the Parish, the Deacon shall bring it to the Incumbent (or in the absence of clergy-in-charge, the Bishop) and shall follow their counsel and advice.
9. There shall be an annual discussion and evaluation of the Deacon's ministry with the Supervisor. There may be an annual review of the Deacon's ministry with the Parish Corporation. These annual events give the Deacon an opportunity to express opinions, establish goals for the diaconal work, explore areas of concern, resolve conflict, and clarify expectations.

This covenant will be renewed annually and a copy forwarded to the office of the Bishop of Fredericton on or before December 31. No deacon will function in ministry without a current covenant approved by, and on file with, the Bishop.

Signature of Deacon

Date

Signature of Supervisor

Date

Signature of Warden

Date

Agreement between Deacon and Supervisor

1. Supervision for the Deacon shall be provided by **name of supervisor**.
2. In the absence of the supervisor, the Deacon will be under the supervision of the Bishop or **name of priest**, as designated by the Bishop.
3. The Deacon will regularly report to the supervisor **number of times per month** for direction, dealing with problems, diaconal formation and review of the Deacon's work.
4. The Deacon will serve **outline frequency of participation in parish liturgies**.
5. The Deacon will assist at weddings and funerals as requested.
6. The Deacon and supervisor shall **outline form of annual review and evaluation**.
7. The Deacon will preach **outline days or number of times the Deacon will preach**.
8. Vacation and leave time will be **outline proposed arrangements**.

Signature of Deacon

Date

Signature of Supervisor

Date

Notes to the Covenant

- Item 1: The Deacon sets forth his/her servant ministry in the community or the world.
- Item 2: The Deacon's liturgical and servant ministry in the parish is outlined.
- Item 3: This item outlines the principles for being under authority.
- Item 4: The Deacon, if in secular employment, gives a limited amount of time to the church. This item notes that the deacon is a non-stipendiary person. The deacon may, however, receive remuneration or an honorarium for expenses incurred in his/her ministry within and outside the parish, as well as financial support for ongoing formation and education.
- Item 5: A deacon's training is never complete. The ministry will always need to be enhanced with programs for ongoing formation for deacons and other educational opportunities. A parish continuing education fund may be available to help with continuing education expenses.
- Item 6: Some form of participation with the parish corporation/vestry is important. This is one way of bringing the needs of the world to the Church.
- Item 7: The Supervisor (and other parish leaders) should be kept fully informed of the servant ministry of the Deacon in the Church and to society at large.
- Item 8: Deacons must guard against being sources or sustainers of any form of division in the Parish. Always, the Deacon must follow the counsel and advice of the Supervisor (or the Bishop in the absence of clergy-in-charge).
- Item 9: Evaluation is an important element in the on-going formation of the deacon and the relationships of the covenant. This must be done at least annually. Covenants are to cover the calendar year. Each December the supervisor and deacon must file a renewed covenant with the Bishop's office. Deacons without annual approved covenants may not function in their diaconal ministry until such a covenant is on record. If the incumbency becomes or is vacant, a new covenant incorporating such a circumstance which protects the integrity of the diaconate (i.e. the Deacon is not expected to assume any priestly functions) should be written immediately with the supervising priest and parish.

A covenant or letter of agreement must be written or renewed at the end of each calendar year and copies must be filed with the bishop's office by the last day of December prior to the year it is to be in effect. Deacons who do not have covenants on file at the beginning of each new year, may not function as a deacon until the covenant is approved and filed with the Bishop.

Issued April 2006

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