



Florida-Bahamas Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

TELL ME MORE ABOUT SYNOD PARISH DEACONS

A Synod Parish Deacon...

- is an active and committed layperson who can receive training for an intentional ministry of serving, through the pastor, while remaining in their home congregation.
- participates in a ministry of service, in their home congregation, complementing both the pastoral and lay ministries.
- is inwardly compelled and outwardly affirmed for service in both the congregation and the world.
- Is an essential connection between serving God and serving our neighbor.
- is historically part of the threefold structure of the Church: bishops, presbyters, deacons.
- ministers by nurturing their life in Christ, thus grounding their ministry in the gospel, for the sake of the community.

Steps/requirements to become a Synodical Deacon...

- high school diploma or equivalent
- discernment with pastor, family and friends
- endorsement by one's pastor
- application submitted to the Synod Parish Deacon Oversight Committee
- course requirements and practicums
- Table Talk (conversation between candidate, pastor, Bishop's Oversight Committee)
- approval for commissioning by Parish Deacon Oversight Committee
- Commissioning

What is the difference between a Synod Parish Deacon and an ELCA Deacon?

- The Synod Parish Deacon is commissioned. The ELCA Deacon is ordained to Word and Service.
- The Synod Parish Deacon is listed in the Florida-Bahamas Synod. The ELCA Deacon is rostered in the ELCA.
- The Synod Parish Deacon is a volunteer. The ELCA Deacon is compensated and receives benefits.
- The Synod Parish Deacon serves in one's home congregation through the invitation of the pastor. The ELCA Deacon is open to the entire ELCA and participates in a mobility process.

- The Synod Parish Deacon applies to and is approved by the Synod Parish Deacon Oversight Committee. The ELCA Deacon must apply to and be approved by the Candidacy Committee.
- The Synod Parish Deacon serves at the pleasure of their pastor, not council or congregation. The ELCA Deacon serves the Synod Bishop and the Presiding ELCA Bishop.

What is the function of a Synod Parish Deacon?

- **Liturgical**
 - To carry the Paschal Candle in procession.
 - To assist in Liturgies and Sacraments.
 - To read the gospel lesson in worship.
 - To compose and say the bidding prayers of the congregation at worship services.
 - To prepare the table for Eucharist at worship.
 - To distribute Communion to sick and homebound, and to train other lay assistants to distribute communion to the homebound.
 - To lead music and other specific forms of ministry if trained.
- **Pastoral**
 - To visit the sick and homebound.
 - To visit prospective new member of the congregation.
 - To participate in new member orientation.
 - To teach catechism and other classes.
 - To lead study groups and prayer groups.
 - To coordinate and train ushers, greeters, Altar Guild and other liturgical participants.
 - To respond in crisis situations providing physical and spiritual attendance.
- **Outreach and Service Ministry**
 - As a ministry of Word and service of the laity, the ministry of the Synod Parish Deacon is also directed outward from the congregation, modeling the Baptismal calling to the mission of the priesthood of all believers. Bases upon congregational needs and the personal gifts of the particular Synod Parish Deacon, the ministry is also directed in service to the community as a ministry and witness to both members of the congregation and community.
- **Ongoing Ministry**
 - To meet with the pastor regularly for ongoing study and nurture.
 - To attend to the Synod Parish Deacon's own spiritual growth.
 - To meet with the pastor for "mutual consolation and conversation."
- **Accountability**
 - Deacons will submit regular reports to the pastor.

OUR MISSION

"To equip the saints for the work of ministry for building up the body of Christ." (Ephesians 4:12)

OUR RESPONSE TO FAITH:

"What does Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."
(Romans 4:3)

THE SERVICE OF THE BAPTIZED:

"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." (Ephesians 5:21)

Have questions?

**Contact the chair of the Synod Parish Deacon Oversight Committee at
Deaconchair@yahoo.com.**