



## THE DEACON IN UM WORSHIP *[a suggested model]* *Connecting the World to the Church and the Church to the World* *Comments on the accompanying .pdf outline*

**THE DEACON IN UM WORSHIP – a Model and Interpretation** was developed by Rev. Roger Dowdy, a DFC in the Virginia Conference, Director of CROSS-PATHS Ministries, and currently the Director of Ministry and Event Development at Lake Junaluska Conference and Retreat Center in western North Carolina.

The outline incorporates the *traditional* liturgical actions [sign acts] and symbolism of the deacon and the United Methodist Basic Pattern for Worship [the UMC Hymnal/Book of United Methodist Worship, pp.2-5 (UMC Publishing House, Nashville, TN, 1989)].

This interpretive piece grew out of several converging pathways:

- ❖ The author's own passion for worship – designed and led with creativity and integrity – and worship education and consulting.
- ❖ The creation of the ordained Deacon (Deacon in Full Connection) in the UMC as a life-long Order, vs. the former 'transitional' deacon moving to Elder.
- ❖ The lack of liturgical 'memory' or experience related to the work of the deacon in the liturgy – on the part of clergy in general, the church, and newly ordained deacons.
- ❖ The surprising absence of intentional interpretative material to assist and equip new deacons for their role in leading and assisting in worship.

**THE DEACON IN UM WORSHIP – a Model and Interpretation** is intended to clarify the historic/traditional functions and theological symbolism of the deacon in worship, and even more importantly, to show the parallel between the liturgical functions of the deacon and the call to the Ministry of the Deacon.

With the sole purpose of equipping the Deacon to live out her/his call to ministry in the world and in the church more faithfully through vivid liturgical example – honoring and clarifying the equal but distinct actions and symbolism of the People, Deacon, and Elder.

*Deacons who explore this outline and then wish to begin implementing these elements into worship in their local setting are urged:*

- i. to use caution: first share, teach and educate congregation and clergy colleagues*
- ii. proceed with what seems most 'right' for the setting, culture, and order of worship*
- iii. to consider the personal dynamics/working relationship with the pastor in charge.*

The author has facilitated explorations and holy conversation of this outline/model for several Order of Deacon retreats, combined gatherings of Elders/Deacon/Laity, and Annual Conference training – Board of Ordained Ministry, Licensing School.

**Persons interested in hosting such and event are invited to contact Roger Dowdy at [RDowdy-cp@mindspring.com](mailto:RDowdy-cp@mindspring.com), (828) 454-6710.**