



THE DEACON IN UM WORSHIP *[a suggested model]*
Connecting the World to the Church and the Church to the World[^]
*Portions in blue indicate Deacon liturgical function/symbolism**

*The Basic Pattern of Worship***
Service of the Word

Entrance

Gathering

Greeting in the Name of Christ

Call to Worship [calling together and reminding the people of God's call, and our need to come together in community, as the body of Christ; and centered in why we worship –particular to the day, the season, the scripture theme, or occasion]

Hymn [where there is a procession with the paschal candle, the deacon bears the lighted candle and leads the procession -in place of the cross].

Opening Prayers and Praise

Proclamation and Response

Scriptures [The Deacon traditionally reads the Gospel lesson for the day/occasion]

Sermon [The Deacon may preach on occasion and brings a peculiar *Hermeneutic (interpretation/perspective)* through dual service in the world and in the church]

*(The Sermon serves as the **pivotal** movement, vs. climactic)*

Responding to the Word [see *UM Hymnal*, pp. 4]

Concerns and Prayers [The Deacon leads the People in their prayers, petitions, intercessions for the hurts and needs of the world]

Confession, Pardon, and Peace *(or following Opening Prayer and Praise)*

Offering [see notes below "Taking"]

Service of the Table

Thanksgiving and Communion

Taking [The Deacon serves with the Presider/Elder at the table- both have equal, distinct, and unique roles±; the Deacon images Christ as servant and takes the role of table-waiter; the Deacon receives the gifts of bread and wine and prepares/sets the table typically during Offertory music, or the singing of a hymn; Once the table is set, the Deacon stands to the right and slightly behind the presiding Elder, and may guide or prompt the People in their sung or spoken responses as part of the Great Thanksgiving which follows; the Presider images Christ's priestly dimension as Host at the table.]

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

Blessing

Breaking

Giving

[The Deacon may be among several who serve the People as they come for Eucharist; or the deacon may remain at table to monitor or assist the servers as communion elements may need replenished.
At the conclusion, the deacon receives the unused portions of the elements, and cleans the table, covers the elements as music/singing concludes]

Prayer after Communion

Sending Forth

Hymn

[Extending the Table]

[The Deacon’s function and symbol also includes *extending the Table* –with other (servers) or Eucharistic ministers; the communion elements may be carried out of worship in procession during the closing hymn or concluding music, accompanied with crucifer, and acolytes. The Eucharist to the shut-in, hospitalized, etc., and should be distributed that same day or as soon as possible to be served to others in homes, care facilities, etc.; *n.b.- following the end of the liturgy, the portions of the consecrated which remain should either be consumed at the table by any who wish to gather – including holy conversation- or the bread cast out of doors for birds, etc, and the juice poured in the earth; facilitated throughout by the Deacon or someone instructed by the Deacon.*]

Dismissal/Commissioning

[The Deacon charges and sends the People into the world noting a general call to serve, or a particular dimension of service emphasized in the theme for the day, or sermon.]

Blessing

Peace [If not shared previously in the liturgy]

^The Deacon’s functions in the worship liturgy [linking, prompting, & extending] correspond to and mirrors the Deacon’s call and service in the world; Deacon symbols/roles are: heralds/angels [Gk., euangelion], servant/waiter/butler/steward, exhorter; the Deacon in some respects functions as a “master of ceremonies” for the liturgy.

* Where a Deacon is not present, the Pastor/Elder may perform these acts; or the Pastor or Deacon may equip and designate laypersons to serve in these areas of the liturgy. The presence of a Deacon should never usurp or replace the ministry of the Laos in the Liturgy; the Deacon re-presents, compliments, equips, and deploys the Laos in their ministries.

** The United Methodist Book of Worship, 1992; the United Methodist Hymnal, 1998
Pastors/Elders and Deacons [by supporting, unifying, and building up the baptized and each other] re-present Christ in the work of making disciples for the transformation of the world. *“While neither Elders nor Deacons depend on the other for their call or identity, they share both a common history and a call to be in partnership for the purpose of equipping the baptized for ministry in the world....building up and unifying the church in Jesus Christ and **linking** (liturgy and life) and **extending** its life in service to the poor and marginalized.”* [Benedict and Hook, *Worship Matters* I, p. 131]

NOTES:

SOURCES:

This Holy Mystery- A United Methodist Understanding of Holy Communion, Gayle Carlton Felton, UM Discipleship Resources, Nashville, TN, 2005 [\$12.00]

By Water and the Spirit – UMC Baptism Text/Study Guide, Gayle C. Felton, 1996/2002, Discipleship Resources

Notes, Dan Benedict, GBOD-Worship Staff, UM Deacon/Diaconal Ministers Convocation, Dallas, TX, February, 2003

Quarterly Review, winter, 1999, B. Hartley, D. Benedict, D. Kriewald

The Deacon in the Liturgy, Ormond Plater, Morehouse Publishing, Harrisburg, PA, 1992

The Lord Be With You- A Visual Handbook for Presiding in Christian Worship, Hackett & Saliers, OSL Publications, Cleveland, OH, 1990 [directed mainly toward elders, but very helpful for deacons in worship]

Strong, Loving, and Wise- Presiding in Liturgy, Robert W. Hovda, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, MN, 1976 [directed explicitly toward priest/pastor, but very helpful for any liturgist/deacon]

Many Servants-An Introduction to Deacons, Ormond Plater, Cowley Publications, Boston, MA, 1991

Deacons and the Church- Making Connections between Old and New, John N. Collins, Morehouse/Gracewing Publishing, Harrisburg, PA, 2002

A Deacon's Heart- the United Methodist Diaconate, M. Crain & J. Seymour, Abingdon, Nashville, TN, 2001

The Deacon- Ministry through Words of Faith and Acts of Love, Hartley & Van Buren, United Methodist GBHEM-Section of Deacons and Diaconal Ministers, Nashville, TN, 1999

Worship Matters- A United Methodist Guide to Ways to Worship, Vol. I, E. Byron Anderson, editor, Discipleship Resources. Nashville, TN, 1999, Part III, Ch.16 and 17- *The Role of the Presider, The Role of Deacons and Assisting Ministers*, pp. 123-136]

Related Resources for the Ministry of the Deacon:

Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations, Bishop Robert Schnase, Abingdon, Nashville, TN, 2007

Sacraments and Discipleship- Understanding Baptism and the Lord's Supper in a United Methodist Context, Mark Stamm, UM Discipleship Resources, Nashville, TN, 2001

The Dangerous Act of Worship – Living God's Call to Justice, Mark Labberton, foreword by John Ortberg, Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL, 2007

The Unnecessary Pastor – Rediscovering the Call, Marva Dawn and Eugene Peterson, Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI, 2000

Spirit of Fire – Faith, Art, and Action, from the editors of SOJOURNERS, Washington, D.C., 2007

Alive Now- "Growing Together in Faith", The Upper Room Publications, Nashville, TN

[excellent for individual, personal study, Deacon covenant groups, or Deacons/Elders Orders/LP Fellowships]

1) July/August, 2001 issue – *Worship*

2) January/Feb, 2008 issue – *Serving Others*

3) May/June, 2001 issue – {*availability*} excellent issue for reflection on "availability" to God, to others, and God's availability to creation in Christ through the means of grace.