

Policies of the Commission on Deacon Qualifications



“People of Hope ... Vigorously Making Known the Love of Christ”

Michigan District, LCMS

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INTRODUCTION	2
SPIRITUAL QUALIFICATIONS	5
ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS	6
PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS	6
TRAINING OF DEACONS	7
TRANSCRIPTS	9
DISTANCE OR CORRESPONDENCE LEARNING	9
AUDITING OF SEMINARS	10
STATUS, LICENSING, AND FUNCTIONS OF DEACONS	10
ADMISSIONS TO THE PASTORAL MINISTRY OF THE LCMS BY COLLOQUY	13
APPENDICES A-K	14
APPENDICES i-iii	36

Policies of the Commission on Deacon Qualifications (Hereafter CDQ) Michigan District, LC-MS

Introduction:

“A Deacon must have a thorough grounding in Christian Doctrine and an in-depth understanding of the Lutheran Church. To serve as a Deacon a man must be recognized as being a spiritual person whom his congregation implicitly trusts.”

C. William Hoesman, District President, MI Dist. LC-MS (May, 2004)

- **Biblical foundation for Deacon Ministry:**

- “1Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists[a] arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. 2And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. 3 Therefore, brothers,[b] pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. 4But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." 5And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. 6These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

7And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith” (Acts 6:1-7).

- 1”The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. 2Therefore an overseer[a] must be above reproach, the husband of one wife,[b] sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. 4He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, 5for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s church? 6He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. 8 Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued,[c] not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. 9They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. 10And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. 11 Their wives likewise must[d] be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. 12Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. 13For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus” (I Timothy 3:1-13).
- “12For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ” (I Corinthians 12).; “Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer”(Romans 12).; and “7 The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of

your prayers” (I Peter 4:7). (all regarding various gifts and roles in the Church’s ministry under the Office of Pastor)

- **Luther on the role and value of Deacons:**

- “The diaconate is the ministry, not of reading the Gospel and the Epistle, as is the present practice, but of distributing the church aid to the poor, so that the priests may be relieved of the burden of temporal matters and may give themselves more freely to prayer and the Word. For this was the purpose of the institution of the diaconate, as we read in Acts 5” [6: 1-6] (Luther Works, 1970. p. 249)
- “Now follows about the deacons: serious. There were deacons who also at one time preached. From Acts: they *established* seven, who presided over the church in providing for the poor and widows. These deacons sometimes also preached, e.g., Stephen, and were admitted to other offices of the church although the chief task was to provide for the poor and the widows. This custom already long ago went out of use. In the papal church the subdeacon is the one who reads the Gospel the distribution of aid and care of the poor are relegated to hospices *hospitalia*...there ought to be deacons of the church who ought serve the bishop and to rule the church in external things according to his counsel “(Luther Works, 1970, p. 98).

- **Ecclesiastical foundation for Deacon Ministry in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod: (See Appendices “A” -“E”, attached)**

Establishment of CDQ

- Membership is appointed by the Board of Directors.
- The Commission shall consist of at least 5 members and be represented by at least one Lay person, one Ordained, one Commissioned, one Deacon, and one faculty member.
- The Commission will elect its chairman annually.
- There is no term limit, but the Board of Directors may remove a member or accept a resignation upon the recommendation of the District President.

- The District President's representative and Deacon & Pre-SMP Training Program and Ministry Assistant faculty may serve as ex officio members.

Concerning finances of the Deacon/Pre-SMP Training Program in the Michigan District

- Funds generated by tuition will be held the Michigan District, but shall be accounted for separate from the "Deacon" portion of the District's Budget. Each year ten percent will be given to the Michigan District.
- Payment of instructors' fees (salaries, travel, and materials) and other related costs required to provide the actual seminars shall be paid, using the funds generated by tuition. Such costs may not exceed actual income from tuition in any fiscal year. (February 1-January 31)
- Expenses incurred by the Commission on Deacon Qualifications (CDQ), such as meeting costs, travel, Dean of Instruction position, initial funding for the Deacon Continuing Education Conference, Supervising Pastors' Conference, etc., shall be the responsibility of the Michigan District in its annual budget.
- The CDQ Treasurer and Registrar shall coordinate with the V.P. of Finance of the Michigan District regarding all matters of accounting for income and expenses of the Deacon/Pre-SMP Training Program.

Spiritual qualifications for one to be considered for the Deacon Ministry

- **Full of the Spirit and full of wisdom...(Acts 6:1-7)**
- **I Timothy 3:1-13**
 - Above reproach (Any person convicted of a felony will be

directed to the D.P. for review and consideration.)

- Husband of (only) one wife [if married]
- Even-tempered
- Self-controlled
- Respectable
- Hospitable
- Able to teach
- Not a drunkard
- Gentle
- Not quarrelsome
- Not a lover of money
- Not a recent convert to the Christian Faith

Academic qualifications for one to be considered for the Deacon Ministry

- **A High School Diploma or GED.**
- **Successful completion of the course requirements established by the CDQ.**
- **10 hours of Continuing Education Units or participation in the annual Deacon Conference as required for annual re-licensing as outlined below.**

Personal qualifications for one to be considered for the Deacon Ministry

- **Demonstrates ability and aptitude as a self-motivated adult learner with a teachable spirit.**
- **Demonstrates ability and aptitude as a collaborative leader in a ministry team.**
- **Demonstrates a teachable spirit.**
- **Demonstrates self-discipline to follow through on assignments and tasks.**
- **Demonstrates ability and willingness to serve under the direction of a**

Supervising Pastor.

**Concerning the Training of Deacons in the Michigan District,
LC-MS**

- **Each Seminar must have at least 8 (eight) participants registered (students or auditors) to be offered.**
- **The Deacon Training consists of 13 seminars (3 sessions each*). These are:**
 - Doctrine I (The Christian Faith)
 - Doctrine II (The Christian Life)
 - Old Testament Survey
 - New Testament Survey
 - Christian Care-giving
 - Lutheran Lay Leadership
 - Biblical Greek (Equipping to use multiple resources in translation)
 - Lutheran Worship
 - Homiletics (Preaching)
 - Church History (4 sessions*)
 - Office of the Ministry
 - Outreach
 - Teaching the Faith (Adult Education)
- **All Deacon Training seminars will be taught by Ordained or Commissioned Ministers, and Licensed Deacons, of the LC-MS.**
- **Instructor compensation is set at \$1300.00 for each seminar (or \$433.33 per session). In addition:**
 - **Dean of Instruction receives a flat \$100.00, per course fee, over 8 students.**
 - **Instructor receives \$100.00 over 10 and \$50.00 over each additional 5 students.**

- Registrar receives \$50.00 over 10 and \$25.00 over each additional 5 students. The treasurer will receive \$25 per course.
- If an instructor is unable to be present for part or all of a class/seminar, he/she is still compensated at the same rate. The class has three parts to it: 1) the preparation for the class, the grading of papers, and helping students; 2) the morning session, and 3) the afternoon session. The substitute teacher is to be compensated for the amount of time teaching the class plus expenses at the normal rate on a one-third basis. (For example, a morning of teaching would be \$143.33 plus mileage and expenses). The money would come from the school's general account. The Dean of Instruction needs to approve the use of a substitute teacher.
- When a course/seminary has more than 15 students, if the instructor wishes, an aide will be supplied to help students. If there are more than 30 students, the instructor may ask for another aide. The aide would be paid \$200 plus expenses for eight hours of classroom teaching. The Dean of Instruction needs to approve the use of an aide.
 - Guest instructors may be used for a session or a portion of a session, under the direct supervision of the instructor, but may not teach an entire seminar. The CDQ will be advised in advance regarding any guest instructors; and will approve contract and compensation first.
 - All seminar instructors serve under the authority of, and at the direction of, the CDQ and the Dean of Instruction.
 - The Seminars, Doctrine (I&II), Old and New Testament Surveys, Homiletics, Lutheran Worship, Outreach, and Teaching the Faith may serve as the prerequisite for the SMP program at our two LC-MS seminaries with adequate test results.
 - Deacon trainees and Interns may not miss the first session of any

seminar. Absence from the first session will disqualify the individual from that seminar.

- **A trainee or intern who is absent from any subsequent session of a seminar will be required to make up that session when that seminar is next offered.**
- **In order to successfully complete a seminar, all seminar requirements and assignments must be submitted to the instructor within 30 days of the final session. Deadline extensions may be granted at the instructor's discretion.**
- **Participants will receive a certificate of completion upon satisfactorily meeting all requirements of a seminar.**
- **Tuition is \$300.00 per seminar. A scholarship fund of \$8000.00 has been established to use as necessary; up to \$250.00 per course per student. The fund cannot go below \$5,000.00 and we will seek third source funding. Student must pay the \$50.00 registration fee to receive the scholarship.**

Concerning transcripts from other training programs:

- **In general, students in the Michigan District Deacon and Pre-SMP Training Program will not be able to have seminars waived, except for courses from Concordia University Schools.**
- **However, a student who has successfully completed training in another program may request to "test out" of Old Testament and New Testament Surveys and Doctrine I and Doctrine II.**
- **Any request for waivers must be submitted in writing and be approved by the Dean of Instruction.**

Concerning distance learning or correspondence learning:

- **Distance or correspondence learning experiences will be reviewed individually.**

Concerning auditing of a seminar:

- **Any person who wishes to audit a seminar in part or in total may do so and will not be required to complete class assignments and will not receive a certificate of completion.**
- **The individual wishing to audit a seminar is required to pay an “Auditing fee.” (presently \$100)**
- **Any person, at the invitation of a trainee or instructor may “sit in” on one session at no charge.**
- **Husband or wife may sit in a session for no charge if the person is not preparing for a ministry position in the LCMS. There will be no participation in class discussion.**

Concerning the status, licensing and functions of Deacons:

- **Nomenclature:**
 - A man currently enrolled in the first five seminars (Doctrine I & II, Old Testament, New Testament, and Office of Ministry) of the Deacon & Pre-SMP Training Program is considered a “DEACON STUDENT.”
 - A man who has successfully completed the first five seminars and is currently enrolled in seminars 6-13 is considered a “DEACON INTERN.”
 - All seminars must be successfully completed to be eligible for licensing as a Deacon.
 - A man who has successfully completed all training requirements and is in good standing with the CDQ, and is eligible to serve, but does not presently hold a position in a congregation with a Supervising Pastor shall be considered a “DEACON CANDIDATE.”
 - “SUPERVISING PASTOR:” He is the pastor of the congregation where the Deacon is serving as an intern or as a licensed

Deacon. He holds the Pastoral Office under which the Deacon serves. In unique circumstances, the supervising Pastor may be the Pastor of a near-by LC-MS congregation or the Circuit Visitor.

- “SPONSORING CONGREGATION:” The congregation which asks the Deacon to serve as an intern or as a licensed Deacon.

- **Functions of Deacon Interns:**

- A Deacon Intern who has also completed the seminar on worship may lead worship and consecrate the elements for the home-bound or institutionalized settings as the congregation permits under the direction of the Supervising Pastor.
- A Deacon may consecrate the elements in the Public Worship of a congregation only after being licensed for Word and Sacrament Ministry; and with the permission/direction of the Supervising Pastor and sponsoring congregation.
- A Deacon Intern who has also completed the seminar on Homiletics may be allowed to preach under the direction of the Supervising Pastor.

- **Licensing of Deacon Candidates:**

- Deacon “Commencement” recognizes the man who has successfully completed all 13 seminars and is eligible for licensing.
- At the time of Commencement, only candidates who have met all the requirements will be recommended for licensing.
- After commencement, and upon the recommendation of the CDQ, the District President may give up to a one-year, provisional license for Word and Sacrament Ministry.
- In congregations with more than one licensed Deacon, the congregation and Supervising Pastor will determine who will actively serve as Deacon(s) in Word and Sacrament Ministry. The requirements include an interview process with the CDQ. Paperwork required at the interview includes: completion of

the 13 seminars transcript, Voters' approval to serve as a Deacon at the specific congregation, Circuit Visitor's and Supervising Pastor's signature on district paperwork, Ministry description, and a completed background check.

- Licensed Deacons are licensed to serve only a particular congregation (sponsoring congregation) and may not serve in any other capacity (as a deacon) without authorization by the District President and direction of the Supervising Pastor.
- **Concerning license renewal:**
 - Deacons must be licensed annually by the District President.
 - Deacons must document completion of continuing education and be interviewed by a member of the CDQ annually for continued licensure.
 - The District President's representative, on behalf of the CDQ will review the annual report on the Deacon from the Supervising Pastor as part of the renewal process.
 - To be eligible for license renewal, a Deacon must attend the annual Deacons' Conference. (If unable to attend the annual conference, the Deacon must provide evidence of a completion certificate of one Continuing Education Unit or 10 contact hours (Classroom experience or seminar(s)).
 - The CDQ will recommend to the District President for relicensing only those Deacons who have completed the above requirements.
 - All licenses terminate annually on December 31, regardless of the anniversary of licensure.
 - All requirements for relicensing must be completed annually by October 1 each year for recommendation by the CDQ to the District President. (see Appendix E)

Concerning Admission to the Pastoral Ministry of the LC-MS by Colloquy: (See page 5ff of Appendix “B”.)

Concerning amendment to these policies:

- **Any additional policies deemed necessary by the Commission on Deacon Qualification (CDQ) of the Michigan District, LC-MS, must reflect the intent and be in accord with the Handbook of the Synod and the Constitution and By-Laws of the Michigan District.**
- **The above policies and any subsequent additions or amendments must be ratified by the Board of Directors of the Michigan District, LC-MS.**
- **Ministry Assistant Program**
 - **A Ministry Assistant candidate completing the core courses or seminars and optional courses will receive appropriate Michigan District recognition.**
 - **Such recognition will require successful compliance with everything required for a Licensed Deacon.**

Appendix A 15.1 RESOLUTION 3-05B, 1989 CONVENTION

[The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has been working on a refinement of its lay ministry practices for many years. The most definitive action describing acceptable lay-led ministry was developed at the Wichita Convention of the LCMS in 1989.]

RES. 3-05B: TO ADOPT RECOMMENDATIONS OF LAY WORKER STUDY COMMITTEE REPORT

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has been and continues to be blessed with many dedicated full-time church workers; and

WHEREAS, The Synod in convention in 1983 adopted a three-category classification of our full-time workers: Minister of Religion—Ordained; Minister of Religion—Commissioned; and Certified Professional Church Worker, Lay (1983 Res. 5-09A); and

WHEREAS, The Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions clearly teach that there is only one divinely instituted office in the church; that is, the Office of the Public Ministry, commonly referred to as pastor (AC V, XIV); and

WHEREAS, “Except in exceptional circumstances or in emergencies” (“The Ministry,” a report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, 1981, p. 35) the distinctive functions of the pastoral office are to be carried out only by those who have received a regular call (AC XIV); and

WHEREAS, Great care must be exercised in carrying out the Great Commission so that people not be deprived of Word and Sacrament when no ordained pastor is available; and

WHEREAS, The Bylaws of the Synod provide for the licensing of certain men “for special Word and Sacrament ministry, under the supervision of ordained pastors” (Bylaw 6.97 f); and

WHEREAS, The Synod in its history has met critical needs in its ministries by employing extraordinary means, for example, the *Nothilfern* (“emergency helpers”—pastors for special circumstances) in its early history; and

WHEREAS, The experience of some of our partner churches (e.g., The Lutheran Church of Nigeria and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ghana) includes the use of specially selected, trained, and supervised laymen to assist in Word and Sacrament ministry; and

WHEREAS, Approximately 135 “lay ministers” are presently serving in the Synod in an ongoing Word and Sacrament ministry without the benefit of synodical guidelines for their service; and

WHEREAS, Concerns have been raised that the uniqueness of the divinely instituted pastoral office be preserved; and

WHEREAS, The Lay Worker Study Committee, appointed by the President of the Synod, undertook a careful study of the whole matter of recognized lay ministry in the Synod, including (1) the question of pastoral services, functions, and responsibilities being carried out by men who have not completed a seminary program and who are not ordained; (2) the questions of nomenclature, preparation, deployment,

and supervision of the present Category III (Certified Professional Church Workers, Lay) workers, and (3) the review and identification of various and perhaps new ways of involving lay people in specific congregational ministries, and especially in the planting of new missions; and

WHEREAS, The Lay Worker Study Committee has completed its task and has submitted its report to this convention; and

WHEREAS, It is in the best interest of the Synod and an effective means of promoting the Gospel that the ministry of lay people be regarded as a way to multiply, enhance, and extend the ministry of the church; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Lay Worker Study Committee be thanked for its dedicated service in carrying out its responsibilities; and be it further

Resolved, That the entire report be commended to the members of the Synod and others who would be served by its review and consideration; and be it finally

Resolved, That the recommendations of the Lay Worker Study Committee (Section VII of its report), as amended, be adopted as follows:

VII. Recommendations

A. Forms of Lay Ministry

The focus for the ministry of the church, and therefore, lay ministry, is in the world. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son” and “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself . . . and hath committed unto us the Word of reconciliation” (John 3:16; 2 Cor. 5:1□20). All Christians are called to carry out ministry in the broad sense, and this ministry is accomplished by and through Christians in everyday life. In many respects, lay people are on the front line of ministry. The individual is called to serve as part of the universal priesthood of believers. It is the task of the church to equip Christians for their ministry or service as Christians. Viewed in this way, clergy assist lay persons in helping them to fulfill their Christian vocation.

Lay persons also assist in the congregation’s life by assisting in equipping each other for Christian vocations as they serve on boards, committees, as officers, elders, and in all facets of parish life. Such service is voluntary and is based on mutual accountability between pastor and people. Lay persons are vital to the church, they are its lifeblood, and without them the church does not exist.

Because training and service of lay persons are not always uniform, it seems both wise and necessary to identify those qualities and preparation which persons who serve in positions of recognized leadership should possess.

Based upon its conclusions, the Lay Worker Study Committee recommends the following:

1. That the present Certified Professional Church Workers, Lay programs approved by the Board for Higher Education Services be continued.
2. That districts and other entities be assisted by the Synod through the Board for Parish Services in developing training programs for lay workers which are for a specific context and are locally available.

3. That the training of lay workers by districts and other entities for service within the district be encouraged and that minimum standards, including personal qualities, skills, theological preparation, and academic training appropriate to the field of service for which the prospective worker is being prepared be established by the district.
4. That information and resources regarding the training of lay workers be gathered, developed, and disseminated by the Board for Parish Services reflecting current use, supervision, trends, and issues.
5. That conferences for leaders in districts, circuits, and other groupings of congregations training lay workers be sponsored by the Board for Parish Services.

B. Nomenclature

In order to aid in removing the confusion with regard to the nomenclature which exists at the present time, the committee recommends the following:

- 1 That the category Certified Professional Church Workers, Lay be changed to “Certified Church Workers, Lay.”
- 2 That the present titles of positions in this category be retained.
- 3 That locally trained workers be referred to as lay workers and that those using these services be encouraged to use titles other than those used by synodically certified church workers.
- 4 That the title *deacon* be established by which a layman would be addressed while he is temporarily serving in Word and Sacrament ministry “in exceptional circumstances or in emergencies.” This title would distinguish him from an ordained pastor.

C. Guidelines for Congregations regarding the Performance of Pastoral Functions When No Ordained Pastor Is Available

Lutherans believe, teach, and confess that God has instituted the office of the public ministry (AC V) and that “nobody should publicly teach or preach or administer the sacraments in the church without a regular call” to serve in this office (AC XIV). Therefore, only those who hold the office of the public ministry should exercise distinctive functions of this office. However, when no pastor is available, and in the absence of any specific scriptural directives to the contrary, congregations may arrange for the performance of these distinctive functions by qualified individuals, lest God’s people be deprived of the opportunity for corporate worship and the celebration of the sacraments. The following guidelines are presented in order to assist congregations in providing for an orderly way of carrying out distinctive functions of the pastoral office in the absence of an ordained clergyman.

These guidelines consider four distinctive functions of the office of the public ministry, as identified by the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, namely,

- preaching in the services of the congregation;
- leading the formal public services of worship;
- the public administration of sacraments; and
- the administration of the Office of the Keys as it pertains to the public pronouncement of absolution and church discipline.

1. Preaching in the Public Services

In dealing with this function, a distinction should be made between the responsibility and function of composing and delivering sermons and the simpler task of serving as a “reader” who reads a sermon that has been composed and prepared by one who holds the office of the public ministry. In the latter case, the reader is serving as a kind of announcer or deliverer of a message composed by a pastor. The responsibility for supervision (episcopate) will be exercised by the supervising pastor.

a. Reading Sermons Composed by a Pastor

i. In an emergency situation when the regular pastor or vacancy pastor of a congregation is unable to be present to preach because of illness, transportation problems, or some other circumstances in which the congregation or mission would be deprived of corporate worship, the elders of the congregation or responsible congregational leadership may with the consent of the pastor select a male member of the congregation to read in the public worship service a sermon composed by one who holds the office of the public ministry.

ii. In circumstances where no resident pastor is available and the regular pastor or supply pastor is unable to preach in the congregation for a prolonged period of time, the selection of the lay reader should be approved of in advance by the district president, who will assure that the individual possesses qualities which would commend him for this ongoing role (e.g., spirituality, exemplary Christian life, excellent standing in the congregation, good communications skills, and a readiness to grow and learn.)

b. Composing and Delivering Sermons by Individuals Not Holding the Office of the Public Ministry

i. In circumstances where there is no resident pastor and no pastor available to lead worship and preach regularly, arrangements may be made by a congregation or the responsible board, in consultation with the district president, to secure the services of a layman, licensed to preach and serve under the supervision of an ordained pastor.

Such laymen shall have

- 1 successfully pursued appropriate courses of study at a synodical seminary and been recommended by the seminary faculty to serve as a field worker or vicar; or
- 2 been approved and licensed by the president of the district to which the congregation belongs.

ii. The license to preach in a given district shall be issued by that district’s president in keeping with criteria and standards adopted and maintained by the Council of Presidents. The license shall be initially for no more than one year and shall clearly state in writing the conditions under which the license may be renewed. Subsequent licenses may be issued for up to two years but must likewise identify the specific conditions required for renewal of the license.

iii. All sermonic preparation and composition by such lay ministers shall be guided and directed by the supervising pastor. All sermons delivered by the lay minister, whether prepared by the lay minister or by another, should receive the approval of the supervising pastor prior to delivery in a public worship service. It is understood that where consultation is not possible, the supervising pastor will have made appropriate arrangements for exercising his accountability for the proclamation of the Word in the congregation.

2. Leading the Public Worship Services

The lay worship leader will follow only such liturgical forms as are approved and provided by the supervising pastor and which are acceptable to the congregation.

3. The Public Administration of the Sacraments

The third distinctive function, namely, “public administration of the sacraments,” will be dealt with as follows:

a. Holy Baptism

Holy Baptism will be administered by the supervising pastor or another rostered pastor. If not possible, the licensed layman will administer it.

b. Holy Communion

The supervising pastor will normally administer Holy Communion. However, “in exceptional circumstances,” when no ordained clergy is available and the congregation would otherwise be deprived of the Sacrament for a prolonged period of time, the licensed layman will preside, when specifically authorized to do so by the congregation and with the approval of a supervising pastor and the district president.

4. The Public Administration of the Office of the Keys

The administration of the Office of the Keys by means of the personal pronouncement of the absolution as it pertains to church discipline, and possible excommunication, ought not be carried out by those who do not hold the office of public ministry, since this can always be provided for on behalf of the congregation by those who hold the office of public ministry.

D. Bylaw Stipulations—Review of Handbook Chapter VII (“Certified Professional Church Worker, Lay”), Part C (“Position Assistance and Listing”)

In order to provide support for Certified Church Workers, Lay, and to assist congregations in securing these services, the committee recommends that

- 1 the Synod provide for the placing, supervising, listing, and referral of Certified Church Workers, Lay;
- 2 the Council of Presidents be made responsible for arranging for an appropriate way of providing for these services and that this be made a matter of first priority; and
- 3 appropriate bylaws incorporating these two recommendations be developed and be presented to the 1992 convention of the Synod.

Action: Adopted as amended (13).

**Appendix B 15.2 A SUGGESTED STATEMENT ON THE THEOLOGY OF LAY MINISTRY
(Sample: NORTHWEST DISTRICT LAY ASSISTANT POSITION)**

(Submitted to the CTCR for review in August 2014)

The theological foundation of lay assistant ministry in the Northwest District is based on understanding the term “church” as the PEOPLE OF GOD (1 Peter 2:9). The church exists to express the love of God in the world (John 3:16). Furthermore, the church is God’s mission (Matt. 28:19). And, the church is God’s ministry (Mark 10:43-45). Lay ministry is part of the full involvement of the whole church mobilized to serve in mission and ministry. Lay ministry is an integral part of pastoral formation and public ministry practice. The power is in God’s Word. The authority is in the call.

All lay assistant ministers function with the understanding that all the people of God have received the keys of the kingdom of heaven and are spiritual priests (John 20:19-23). They are the people of God entrusted with the Gospel ministry, the means of grace, Word and Sacrament (2 Cor. 5:18-21; 1 Cor. 11:23-25).

Lay assistant ministers (male and female) as members of a local congregation are part of the church as the people of God called to mission and ministry. They function by vocation locally and globally, in private (personal) and in public spheres. Lay assistant ministers take the Gospel where the people are.

Male lay assistant ministers, locally trained, certified and licensed, may by regular call from a local congregation provide Word and Sacraments, through which God “as through means gives the Holy Spirit, who works faith, when and where he pleases, in those who hear the Gospel” (Article V, Augsburg Confession).

The Office of Public Ministry is established by God Himself. The holders of that office are the called and ordained pastors of the church. Male lay assistant ministers, when called, hold the title of deacon, pastoral assistant, or similar. Properly commissioned, they are entrusted with the functions of the Office of Public Ministry. They serve always under the supervision of called and ordained pastors. This is done in accordance with LCMS polity.

Objections to lay ministers are addressed from the position of the Office of the Public Ministry (the pastor). These objections are defensible in this context. They, however, do not adequately represent God’s trust of the ministry of the Gospel to all the people of God.

Lay assistant ministers take seriously the essential place of God’s trust of the ministry of the Gospel to all the people of God, and understand theology of lay ministry put to practice challenges the church to both revitalization and reform.

Appendix C 15.3 A POLICY CONCERNING THE USE OF DEACONS

Before a lay worker is licensed to preach and authorized to function as a deacon in a congregation of a district of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the following conditions must be met.

1.00 The congregation shall have secured, with the assistance of the district president and the circuit visitor, the services of an ordained pastor to assume responsibility for the oversight (episkopé) in the congregation to be served by the deacon. This arrangement, together with details concerning compensation, shall be shared with the district president and the circuit visitor and shall be approved by the district president.

1.01 The ordained pastor shall have general oversight of the congregation; that is, he shall supervise the doctrine and life of the congregation and the administration of the Office of the Keys in it to ascertain that they are in harmony with the Holy Scriptures, the Lutheran Confessions, and the teachings and practices of the Synod.

1.02 The deacon shall carry out the daily work of the ministry in the congregation, including the performance of certain distinctive functions of the pastoral office, in accordance with the guidelines and under the supervision of the ordained pastor responsible for the general oversight of the congregation.

2.00 The congregation shall have secured, with the assistance of the district president and the circuit visitor, the services of an ordained pastor to assume responsibility for supervising the work of the deacon according to the guidelines established for the district. This arrangement, together with details concerning compensation, shall be shared with the district president and the circuit visitor and shall be approved by the district president.

3.00 Authorization to a congregation to permit a lay worker to function as a deacon, that is, to conduct Word and Sacrament ministry, shall expire on December 31st of that year. An application from the congregation for renewal shall be submitted to the district president by December 1st of that year.

3.01 This renewal applies only to the authorization to function as a deacon. It does not apply to the contract between the lay worker and the congregation.

4.00 The license to preach issued to the lay worker which enables him to serve as a deacon expires on December 31st of each year but may be renewed on an annual basis. Application for renewal shall be submitted by the deacon to the district president by December 1st of each year.

5.00 All congregations obtaining the services of a lay worker to serve as a deacon, as well as all lay workers serving as deacons, shall agree in writing to follow both this policy and the terms of the “Guidelines for Congregations Regarding the Performance of Pastoral Functions When No Ordained Pastor is Available” (1989 Res. 3-05B, Wichita).

6.00 In the event that any of the arrangements or renewals described in 1.00, 2.00, 3.00, 4.00, or 5.00 above is denied by the district president, the congregation may appeal the district president’s decision to the praesidium (vice-presidents) of the district. The decision of the praesidium is final and not subject to further appeal.

Appendix D 15.4 GUIDELINES FOR CONGREGATIONS REGARDING THE PERFORMANCE OF PASTORAL FUNCTIONS WHEN NO ORDAINED PASTOR IS AVAILABLE

Lutherans believe, teach, and confess that God has instituted the office of the public ministry (AC V) and that “nobody should publicly teach or preach or administer the sacraments in the church without a regular call” to serve in this office (ACX XIV). Therefore, only those who hold the office of the public ministry should exercise distinctive functions of this office. However, when no pastor is available, and in the absence of any specific scriptural directives to the contrary, congregations may arrange for the performance of these distinctive functions by qualified individuals, lest God’s people be deprived of the opportunity for corporate worship and the celebration of the sacraments. The following guidelines are presented in order to assist congregations in providing for an orderly way of carrying out distinctive functions of the pastoral office in the absence of an ordained clergyman. “The title *deacon* is established by which a layman would be addressed while he is temporarily serving in Word and Sacrament ministry ‘in exceptional circumstances or in emergencies.’ This title would distinguish him from an ordained pastor” (Wichita, 1989 Res. 3-05B VII B4).

In keeping with the doctrine of the sacred Scripture, the work of a deacon is reserved to men.

The following are guidelines provided by 1989 Res. 3-05B. They consider four distinctive functions of the office of the public ministry, as identified by the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, namely, preaching in the services of the congregation, leading the formal public Divine Service, the public administration of the Sacraments, and the administration of the Office of the Keys as it pertains to the public pronouncement of absolution and church discipline.

1. Preaching in the Public Services

In dealing with this function, a distinction should be made between the responsibility and function of composing and delivering sermons and the simpler task of serving as a “reader” who reads a sermon which has been composed and prepared by one who holds the office of the public ministry. In the latter case, the reader is serving as a kind of announcer or deliverer of a message composed by a pastor. The responsibility for supervision (episcopate) will be exercised by the supervising pastor.

a. Reading Sermons Composed by a Pastor

- 1) In an emergency situation when the regular pastor or vacancy pastor of a congregation is unable to be present to preach because of illness, transportation problems, or some other circumstances in which the congregation or mission would be deprived of corporate worship, the elders of the congregation or responsible congregational leadership may with the consent of the pastor select a male member of the congregation to read in the public worship service a sermon composed by one who holds the office of the public ministry.
- 2) In circumstances where no resident pastor is available and the regular pastor or supply pastor is unable to preach in the congregation for a prolonged period of time, the selection of the lay reader should be approved of in advance by the district president who will assure that the individual possesses qualities which would commend him for this ongoing role (e.g., spirituality, exemplary Christian life, excellent standing in the congregation, good communication skills, and a readiness to grow and learn).

b. Composing and Delivering Sermons by Individuals Not Holding the Office of the Public Ministry

- 1) In circumstances where there is no resident pastor and no pastor available to lead worship and preach regularly, arrangements may be made by a congregation or the responsible board, in consultation with the district president, to secure the services of a layman, licensed to preach and serve under the supervision of an ordained pastor.

Such laymen shall have

- a) successfully pursued appropriate courses of study at a Synod seminary and been recommended by the seminary faculty to serve as a field worker or vicar; or b) been approved and licensed by the president of the district to which the congregation belongs.
- 2) The license to preach in a given district shall be issued by that district's president in keeping with criteria and standards adopted and maintained by the Council of Presidents. The license shall be initiated for no more than one year and shall clearly state in writing the conditions under which the license may be renewed. Subsequent licenses may be issued for up to two years but must likewise identify the specific conditions required for renewal of the license.
- 3) All sermonic preparation and composition by such licensed layman shall be guided and directed by the supervising pastor. All sermons delivered by the licensed layman, whether prepared by the licensed layman or by another, should receive the approval of the supervising pastor prior to delivery in a public worship service. It is understood that where consultation is not possible, the supervising pastor will have made appropriate arrangements for exercising his accountability for the proclamation of the Word in the congregation.

2. Leading the Public Service

The lay worship leader will follow only such liturgical forms as are approved and provided by the supervising pastor and which are acceptable to the congregation.

3. The Public Administration of the Sacraments

The third distinctive function, "Public Administration of the Sacraments," will be dealt with as follows:

a. Holy Baptism

Holy Baptism will be administered by the supervising pastor or another rostered pastor. If not possible, the licensed layman will administer it.

b. Holy Communion

The supervising pastor will normally administer Holy Communion. However, "in exceptional circumstances," when no ordained clergy is available and the congregation would otherwise be deprived of the Sacrament for a prolonged period of time, the licensed layman will preside, when specifically authorized to do so by the congregation and with the approval of a supervising pastor and the district president.

4. The Public Administration of the Office of the Keys

The administration of the Office of the Keys by means of the personal pronouncement of the absolution as it pertains to church discipline, and possible excommunication, ought not be carried out by those who do not hold the office of public ministry, since this can always be provided for on behalf of the congregation by those who hold the office of public ministry.

(Wichita *Proceedings* 1989 Res. 3-05B VII C, pp. 112□113)

Appendix E 15.5 GUIDELINES -SUPERVISING THE WORK OF A DEACON

1. The supervising pastor shall faithfully and carefully oversee the work of the deacon for whose ministry he is responsible.
 - A. He shall supervise the preaching and teaching of the deacon. He shall see to it that the Word of God as contained in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is taught in its truth and purity and in accordance with the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as contained in the Book of Concord.
 - B. He shall supervise the deacon's administration of the Holy Sacraments in cases where the deacon is authorized because of prolonged absence of an ordained pastor. He shall see to it that the Sacraments are administered according to the divine command of Christ and in accordance with usage of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and, specifically, of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. He shall also see to it that the guidelines of the Synod concerning the administration of the Sacraments as set forth in Res. 3-05B of the 1989 Synod convention (Wichita) are followed.
 - C. He shall encourage and guide the deacon to minister to all members of the congregation of every age and social condition, to visit the sick and the dying, to admonish the indifferent and the erring, and to do so in an evangelical manner.
 - D. He shall encourage and assist the deacon in promoting the spiritual welfare of every member of the congregation through Bible study, personal and family devotions, and in other appropriate ways.
 - E. He shall supervise the deacon as he instructs the catechumens, both children and adults, in the Word of God and the teachings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in order to prepare them for communicant membership in the congregation.
 - F. He shall supervise and assist the deacon in promoting and guiding the mission activity of the congregation—specifically, to encourage evangelism, that is, to reach out to the surrounding community with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, to encourage support of mission work through district and Synod, and to train members of the congregation for the work of evangelism.
 - G. He shall supervise and assist the deacon in the work of parish administration, so that the policies and procedures of the congregation serve to help it achieve its mission for Christ and so that the work of the congregation is carried out in an orderly and appropriate manner.
 - 1 The supervising pastor shall not only supervise the work of the deacon but shall also encourage him, set him an example of Christian conduct, and be supportive and helpful to him, freely sharing ideas, insights, experience, and other help so that, by the grace of God, the combined efforts of the supervising pastor and the deacon will result in the edification of the congregation and the up-building of the Church of Jesus Christ, both in the local community and throughout the world.
 - 2 The supervising pastor is also the pastor who has assumed responsibility to oversee the congregation which is being served by the deacon.
 - 3 As the one responsible for the oversight of the congregation being served by the deacon, he shall apply the divinely ordained discipline of the church in a manner agreeable to the Word of God and, as much as possible, keep the deacon informed of his activity in this area.

Appendix F 15.6 A REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO BE SERVED BY A LAYMAN SERVING AS DEACON

Having considered our present situation carefully with the assistance of our circuit visitor and others, and having asked for the guidance and direction of our gracious God, we have come to the conclusion that at this time, the best way to provide pastoral service in our congregation is to obtain the services of a certified church worker, lay or district lay assistant to serve us as a deacon.

Therefore, we formally request permission of the district president to authorize the services of a DEACON to provide for our spiritual needs under the supervision of an ordained pastor in accordance with the established district and Synod policies and guidelines.

We also understand and agree that the ultimate spiritual oversight (*episkopé*) of our congregation shall be assumed by the ordained supervising pastor.

We further understand and agree that this permission, when granted by the district president, expires and must be renewed by December 31st of each year.

Finally, when this permission is granted and the services of a deacon have been obtained, we agree and pledge ourselves to follow and carry out faithfully and cheerfully during the time that we are being served by the deacon the provisions of “A Policy Concerning the Use of Deacons” (pp. 3□4); “Guidelines for a Pastor Supervising the Work of a Deacon” (pages 5□6); and “Guidelines for Congregations Regarding the Performance of Pastoral Functions When No Ordained Pastor is Available” (pages 7□9).

For the Congregation Located at: _____

President: _____

(or Secretary): _____

Deacon: _____

Circuit Visitor: _____

Supervising Pastor: _____

Date: _____

For Use by District President's Office

- Permission Granted
- Permission Denied

District President _____

Date: _____

[Note: Copies of the completed and signed documents will be made available to the district president (original), congregation, circuit visitor, deacon, and supervising pastor.]

Renewal of this agreement is required each year.

Reviewed April 2015

**Appendix G 15.7 THE COMMISSIONING AND LICENSING OF A DEACON FOR
MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH**

In Nomine Iesu!

[The candidate presents himself at the altar and faces the altar. The officiating pastor stands before the altar.]

Pastor: **In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.**

Congregation: Amen.

P: *[Addressing the congregation]* **Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, _____ has been appointed in the church's usual order as a Deacon in the church. This ministry has been established to strengthen and support the Office of the Public Ministry and its work. He has prepared himself for this ministry by prayer and study. He has been declared ready to undertake this sacred responsibility and privilege. Hear the Word of God concerning this ministry.**

[One or more of the following portions of Holy Scripture are read:]

Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully. (Romans 12:4-8)

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:8-11)

Jesus called [the disciples] together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:25-28)

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. [Colossians 3:16-17]

P: *[Addressing the candidate]* **Do you accept Holy Scripture to be the only rule and norm of all doctrine and life in the church?**

Response: I do.

P: Do you accept the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as contained in the *Book of Concord* to be a correct exposition of Holy Scripture?

R: I do.

P: Do you solemnly promise faithfully to serve God's people in accordance with the Word of God, the Ecumenical Creeds, and the Confessions of the Church?

R: I do.

P: Will you, trusting in God's care, seek to grow in love for those you serve, strive for excellence in your skills, and adorn the Gospel of Jesus Christ with a godly life?

R: I will with the help of God.

[The congregation stands. The candidate faces the congregation.]

P: [Addressing the congregation] Brothers and sisters in Christ, you have heard the confession and solemn promise of _____ appointed to serve in the Church. I ask you now in the presence of God: Will you receive _____, show him fitting love and honor, and support him by your gifts and fervent prayer? If so, answer "We will with the help of God."

R: We will with the help of God.

P: The almighty and most merciful God strengthen and assist you always.

[The congregation is seated. The candidate faces the Pastor.]

P: [Addressing the candidate] Are you ready and willing to assume the work of this ministry and to be licensed as a Deacon in the church?

R: I am.

[The candidate kneels.]

P: [Addressing the candidate and laying hands on his head] _____, I consecrate and license you as a deacon and install you as _____ in _____, in the name of the Father and of the  Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

[If other pastors and ministers of the Church are present, they may at this time lay hands on the candidate's head and pronounce a blessing upon him.]

[The candidate rises and faces the altar. The congregation stands.]

P: Let us pray.

Gracious and most merciful Lord, by the Holy Spirit you have given your people diverse gifts and raised up faithful men in your church to assist and support the office and work of the public ministry. Grant your blessing to _____, appointed to service in your Church, that by his labors the Office of the Public Ministry may be strengthened to the glory of your name and the building up of your people; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Almighty and most gracious God, we give thanks that you send your people true and faithful servants. Grant to _____ the direction, aid, and counsel of your Holy Spirit that through his labors your Church may be nourished, sustained, and equipped for every good work and built up into him who is the head, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who has taught us to pray:

C: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

[The pastor presents the candidate with the appropriate certificate/license and then dismisses the new deacon.]

P: Go then in peace and joy. The almighty and most merciful God, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, go with you, bless and strengthen you for your work in his name.

C: Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Appendix H 15.8 THE RITE OF INDUCTION INTO OFFICE FOR LICENSED DEACONS

[Officiant:] (Name) _____, after prayerful consideration, you have been commissioned by _____ to serve as _____. After prayerful consideration, you have accepted this responsibility. Today we add a final ingredient in that decision; we formally induct you in that ministry, pledge our support to you, and add our prayers to yours in asking the Lord's blessings upon you in your new ministry.

It is not mere chance that you are in this position. It is the Lord of Life who guides and directs his church in selecting workers in the kingdom. The Lord has been preparing you for many years for this ministry. It is with joy that I welcome and induct you in this position.

The office of licensed deacon is an office with great paradox. You are both a leader and a servant; a teacher of the word and a servant of it; a mentor and a learner; able to supervise others and under supervision yourself. It is only as you are led and guided by the Lord that you can be lead and lead and guide others to the Lord. Your greatest need will be a clear vision of the mission of our Lord; your greatest strength must be in His guidance and providence. On your own you will accomplish nothing but disaster; with the Lord you can accomplish much. This is why we dare not send you into ministry unprepared. You need the prayers of those gathered here and around Alaska to support and encourage your ministry. As you battle the forces of evil, you will have spiritual warriors praying and working with you. When you are weak and afraid, there will be others you can lean on for comfort and courage. So before I ask you about your willingness to submit to this ministry, I ask those of you gathered here this evening:

[To the assembly:] Will you lift up _____ in your prayers; will you work beside him in the furtherance of this ministry; will you be brothers and sisters in Christ to him to encourage, support, and strengthen him? If so, answer "Yes, as the Lord gives me strength."

The office of leadership in the church carries with it both privilege and responsibility. St. Paul describes it this way:

1 Timothy 3:1: Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. ² Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴ He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. ⁵ (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) ⁶ He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. ⁷ He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

(Name), be assured of the care and support of those who have invited you to this ministry. We believe you have the qualities necessary for this ministry. We believe it is God himself who has led you to this moment. Do you today, in the presence of God and these witnesses solemnly promise to be faithful in the exercise of your duties and to remain faithful to the Lord and his will? If so, answer

“Yes, with the help of God.”

Will you remain faithful to the Lord always and serve him with your heart and life so that, through you, his kingdom may be expanded and many may be brought to spiritual Life? If so, answer “Yes, as the Lord blesses me and this ministry.”

(Name), please kneel and receive the rite of induction.

(Name), as authorized by the district president, I hereby induct you into the ministry of (Name/Description of Position). May the Lord bless and keep you in his grace and care. May he strengthen you when you are weak, comfort you when you are discouraged, equip you when you are afraid, and guide you when you are confused. The Lord bless you and keep you now and always. Amen.

[Pastors, guests, family, and others who wish to give a greeting or blessing are invited to come forward and do so at this time.]

Prayer

Appendix I 15.9 LICENSED DEACON AUTHORIZATION FORM



L I C E N S E

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Let it be it known to all that

is hereby licensed and authorized to serve as a Deacon at

_____ **Lutheran Church of** _____,

This license is valid for a period of one year. Its expiration date is December 31, _____. Furthermore, it is understood that if the permission granted to the above-named congregation should for any reason be revoked, this license becomes null and void at the same time.

_____ ***District President***

_____ ***Date***

“Those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.” 1 Timothy 3:13

Appendix J 15.10 LICENSED DEACON'S ANNUAL REPORT TO THE DISTRICT PRESIDENT

LICENSED DEACON'S ANNUAL REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT

of the

_____ **District**

of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Name of Deacon: _____

Place of Service: _____

Deacon's Supervisor/Mentor: _____

Date on which Service Began: _____

Directions: The Synod's policies stipulate that a deacon may be licensed to serve for a calendar year, beginning on January 1st and ending on the following December 31st. The license may be renewed for a year. Before that can happen, the district president requires that a report on the ministry being performed by the deacon be filed with him. Please answer the following questions as completely and as accurately as possible so that the district president can reach an informed decision before renewing the deacon's license.

List and describe the duties and responsibilities assigned to you. (For example, do you preach, do you teach Bible classes, do you provide staff support and counsel for church committees and boards, do you visit the sick and the shut-ins, etc.?)

What do you most enjoy about your service as a deacon? Why?

What do you enjoy the least about your service as a deacon? Why?

Revised 4/13/2016

Why do you want to continue as a deacon in the service of the church?

Describe the classes or preparation programs you have taken to prepare yourself for service as a deacon.

What are your future plans for professional growth and development?

Why should the district president renew your deacon's license for another year?

Respectfully submitted,

Deacon's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix K 15.11 MINISTRY DESCRIPTION FORM

(Sample from the Mid-South District LCMS)

Ministry Description Form

Note: Use this form to summarize the plan for the ministry of the Deacon. It is to be reviewed annually at the time of renewal (December 1).

Name of Deacon: _____

Purpose of ministry: _____

Responsible to: _____

Ministry description: _____

Desired results: _____

Time commitment (amount of time, length of service): _____

Plan for training and study: _____

Other: _____

Date: _____

Return the completed form to:

Mid-South District – LCMS – Deacon Program, 1675 Wynne Road, Cordova, TN 38016-4905

April 29, 2005

Appendix i

To Regularize Status of Licensed Lay Deacons

19 Involved in Word and Sacrament Ministry

20

21 RESOLUTION 13-02A

22

23

24

25 Overtures 13-01–47, 49–50 (CW, pp. 437–464)

26

27 WHEREAS, The Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions teach that our Lord gave the keys of the kingdom to

28 His whole church, the royal priesthood of believers (Matt. 16:15–19; Matt. 18:18–20; 1 Peter 2:9; Augsburg

29 Confession [AC] Article XXVIII, paragraph 10; Smalcald Articles [SA], Section III, paragraph 7; Treatise [Tr] paragraph 11; see also Walther’s Church and Ministry/Office); and

31

32 WHEREAS, The Scriptures and Confessions also teach that Christ established an office that is distinct from the

33 priesthood of believers (the office of the public ministry) for teaching and nurturing His royal priests by means of

34 preaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments (1 Cor. 12:29; Rom. 10:15; James 3:1; AC XIV; see also

35 Walther’s Church and Ministry/Office); and

36

37 WHEREAS, The royal priesthood and the office of the public ministry are to have a complementary and not a

38 competitive or conflicted relationship; and

39

40 WHEREAS, In its history the Lutheran church has always maintained the divine requirement (de jure divino) of

41 the office of public ministry, while it has in many and various ways prepared men for the Office of the Public

42 Ministry, since the manner of preparation for the office is by human arrangement (de jure humano); and

43

44 WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church has always ensured, on the basis of Scripture: (1) that men who are to serve in

45 the office of public ministry be examined as to their doctrine and life; (2) that the congregations they serve willingly

46 call them into service; and (3) that the wider church (other churches in fellowship with the congregation) also

47 affirms them as fellow ministers of the Word and Sacraments (see Acts 1:15–26; Acts 14:23; 1 Tim. 3:1–7; Titus 1

48 5; see also Tr 24, 26, 67–70); and

49

50 WHEREAS, The rite of ordination, although not a divine institution (Church and Ministry, Ministry Thesis VI), is

51 the apostolic custom by which Lutherans have designated and publicly acknowledged a man as a minister of Word

52 and Sacrament, that is, as one who is in the Office of the Public Ministry and recognized by the wider fellowship as

53 a fellow minister (Ap XIII 11–13); and

54

55 WHEREAS, In faithfulness to the Word of God and to its confession requiring a regular call for those who preach

374 | Page

1 and administer the sacraments publicly in the church (AC XIV; Ap XIV), The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

2 has followed the practice of identifying those who are eligible to be called into the Office of the Public Ministry by

3 the certification of one of the seminary faculties or the Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral Ministry; and

4

5 WHEREAS, In a human institution such as the LCMS, such human arrangements are necessary in order to foster

6 harmony and prevent needless confusion and division; and

7

8 WHEREAS, The LCMS has long-recognized that challenging circumstances may make it difficult or impossible

9 to provide a pastor for congregations and ministries, for example: (1) financial challenges (numerous congregations

10 and missions are unable to support a pastor financially); (2) geographical challenges (small, isolated congregations

11 in remote areas often face financial challenges and may have no pastors in geographic proximity to them); (3)

12 demographic challenges (urban, minority, non-English-speaking, and ethnically diverse congregations and missions

13 may find no rostered candidates available to fill their pastoral needs); and

14

15 WHEREAS, The practice of licensing lay deacons for temporary service in certain difficult circumstances, like

16 the afore-mentioned examples, was approved by the LCMS in 1989 Res. 3-05B as a means to address the need for

17 regular preaching of the Word and administration of the Sacraments by utilizing trained and supervised laymen to

18 serve “temporarily” in Word and Sacrament ministry when “no pastor [is] available,” “in exceptional circumstances

19 or in emergencies” (1989 Res. 3-05B, Nomenclature, Guidelines 1 b); and

20

21 WHEREAS, There has been significant dissension in the LCMS over the Synod-approved practice of licensing

22 laymen to preach and administer the Sacraments while under the supervision of an ordained pastor, but the Synod

23 needs to move forward together with deep concern for fidelity to the word of Christ as we confess it together and for

24 faithfulness in the mission that Christ has given to His Church; and

25

26 WHEREAS, 1989 Res. 3-05B repeatedly references temporary service for deacons when no pastor is available in

27 emergencies and exceptional circumstances, but in some cases deacons have served for years regularly preaching

28 and administering the Sacraments; and

29

30 WHEREAS, The presence of continuing dissension about licensed lay deacons is an aspect of further

31 disagreement about elements of doctrine and practice, e.g., the understanding of the pastoral office, the relationship

32 between the Office of the Public Ministry and the royal priesthood, the understanding of call and ordination, and

33 faithful and effective ways to share the Gospel and plant churches in our post-Christian world; and

34

35 WHEREAS, The Specific Ministry Pastors (SMP) Program was established by the LCMS convention (2007 Res.

36 5-01B) in response to the need for effective theological education and practical training to prepare pastors to serve in

37 particularly challenging settings and situations that prevent them from enrolling in residential theological education;

38 and

39

40 WHEREAS, The Synod recognizes a need for flexibility in its approach to preparing men to serve in the Office of

41 the Public Ministry while upholding the biblical requirement that they be men who are “above reproach” and “able

42 to teach,” and so offers approved training programs to prepare pastors for urban and cross-cultural service, namely,

43 the Center for Hispanic Studies, the Cross-Cultural Ministry Center, the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology

44 (EIIT), all at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and the Spanish-speaking SMP track at Concordia Theological

45 Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW); and

46

47 WHEREAS, There is a need within the LCMS to regularize the status of licensed lay deacons who are engaged in

48 Word and Sacrament ministry; and

49

50 WHEREAS, The Synod directed the President to appoint a task force to address questions 2 about the practice of

51 licensing lay deacons, and the task force, as required, reported a recommended plan to address questions (see

52 Convention Workbook, pp.234–255) and the theological framework of the report has been affirmed by both

53 seminary faculties and the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR); and

54

55 WHEREAS, The Synod has budgeted \$40,000 for the remainder of the current fiscal year and is committed to

56 budgeting at least \$150,000 per year for the next two years to assist deacons entering the SMP and EIIT programs;

375 | Page

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7/10

1 therefore be it

2

3 Resolved, That the LCMS recognize that “emergency knows no rule” and that no Synod action can or should

4 prevent a congregation from taking reasonable and scripturally faithful steps necessary to provide for the Word to be

5 proclaimed in time of emergency, while at the same time, every congregation of the Synod is required to address

6 matters involving the Office of the Public Ministry in a way that is consistent with its subscription to Scripture and

7 the Confessions, as well as its agreement to abide by the Synod’s Constitution; and be it further

8

9 Resolved, That the LCMS affirm and give thanks for the men who have recognized the needs of the church and

10 its mission, serving as licensed lay deacons, preaching and administering the Sacraments in keeping with 1989 Res.

11 3-05B, often without remuneration and at personal cost, lest congregations be deprived of the means of grace; and

12 be it further

13

14 Resolved, That the LCMS, while mindful of the need for continued conversation within the church, affirm the

15 theological framework of the “2013 Resolution 4-06A Task Force Report,” namely, that a right calling to the office

16 of public ministry requires that a man be properly prepared and examined regarding doctrine and life, be called by

17 the congregation (or ministry) where he is to serve, and publicly appointed in a way so that the entire church

18 fellowship recognizes the validity of his service (Acts 13:1–3; 14:21–23; 2 Tim. 2:24–26; Titus 1:5); and be it

19 further

20

21 Resolved, That the Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral Ministry establish and implement an expanded regional

22 colloquy program (with appropriate regional colloquy committees) to regularize the status of current licensed lay

23 deacons (LLDs) who are 50 years of age or older and who have been preaching the Gospel and/or administering the

24 Sacraments publicly on behalf of the church for the past 2 years (de facto pastors), so that these servants of Christ

25 can be called and ordained according to the order of the LCMS and be rostered as pastors with SMP status; and be it

26 further

27

28 Resolved, That exceptions to the SMP colloquy requirements with respect to age and years of service for LLDs

29 may be granted by the appropriate regional colloquy committee with the approval of the respective district president

30 and the plenary of the Council of Presidents; and be it further

31

32 Resolved, That nothing in this resolution shall be construed as impeding the training, recognition, credentialing

33 or service of deacons who do not publicly preach or administer the sacraments, namely, those who serve in

34 ministries of mercy, education, or visitation, and so forth, or in an outreach role, assisting in evangelism and church

35 planting (but not in public preaching and administration of the sacraments); and be it further

36

37 Resolved, That district presidents may continue to recruit, train, and credential new deacons for general varieties

38 of service in the church that do not include public preaching and administration of the sacraments; and be it further

39

40 Resolved, That until January 1, 2018, district presidents may train and annually license lay deacons to preach

41 publicly and to administer the Sacraments. Beyond that date in exceptional cases, as defined in (1) and (2) below,

42 the appropriate district president may annually grant licensure with the consent of the plenary of the Council of

43 Presidents and the Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral Ministry.

44

45 (1) the deacon serves under the direct supervision of an ordained pastor and is currently enrolled in or
46 preparing for one of the LCMS training tracks for the office of public ministry and participates in the
47 public ministry as an aspect of his training, e.g., in preparation for SMP, EIIT, etc.); or
48

49 (2) the deacon serves in distinctive aspects of the office of public ministry (that is, preaching or
50 administration of the sacraments) only during times of emergency or extraordinary need (when there is
51 no ordained pastor available or able to serve), only on a temporary or occasional basis, and under the
52 direct supervision of an ordained pastor; and be it further
53

54 Resolved, That those deacons currently licensed for and serving in Word and Sacrament Ministry (that is,
55 publicly preaching and administering the sacraments) shall have until July 1, 2018, to:

56 (1) apply to one of our seminaries for admission into an alternate route program,

376 | Page

1 (2) apply for entrance into an SMP program, or

2 (3) apply to the regional colloquy committee for admission to the SMP roster, unless granted a waiver by
3 his district president, the plenary of the Council of Presidents, and the appropriate regional colloquy
4 committee, and be it further

5

6 Resolved, That the district president, the plenary of the Council of Presidents and the regional colloquy
7 committees, in making decisions related to the three resolves above, shall do so in a fashion that no
congregation or

8 current ministry will be forced to close or discontinue; and be it further

9

10 Resolved, That lay deacons licensed for Word and Sacrament Ministry who have applied for colloquy to
the

11 SMP roster prior to July 1, 2018, shall continue to serve under their current district licensure until the colloquy

12 process is complete and certification is given by the Colloquy Committee; and be it further

13

14 Resolved, That upon the certification of the Colloquy Committee, the licensed lay deacons will be eligible to be

15 called by the congregations where they have been serving, ordained into the Office of the Public Ministry, and

16 placed on the roster of SMP pastors; and be it further

17

18 Resolved, That as recommended by the Res. 4-06A Task Force, the LCMS, in partnership with districts,

19 congregations, and individuals, provide funding to ensure that financial constraints will not prevent any eligible

20 licensed lay deacon from participating in an LCMS seminary ordination-track program; and be it further

21

22 Resolved, That the First Vice-President of the Synod and three members of the Council of Presidents appointed

23 by the Council be directed to draft by June 1, 2017, necessary policies and procedures for the implementation of this

24 resolution, such policies and procedures to be finalized and approved by the Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral

25 Ministry; and be it finally

26

27 Resolved, That the LCMS thank and commend the Res. 4-06A Task Force for its work on the question of

28 licensed lay deacons.

29

30 [The estimated cost to implement this proposed resolution appears in the Report

Revised 4/13/2016

31 of the Finance Floor Committee – found in Sunday’s issue of Today’s Business.]

Appendix ii

Interpretation and application of 2016 LCMS Synodical Resolution 13-02A

To Regularize Status of Licensed Lay Deacons Involved in Word and Sacrament Ministry

7/18/2016

Foreword:

I must first commend Rev. Dr. Larry Vogel of the 2013 Resolution 4-06B Task Force and First Vice President of Synod, Rev. Herb Mueller, for being true to their word that they would continue to listen and that they were indeed “seeking consensus” not compromise regarding the service of LLD’s throughout the Synod. They did continue to listen and take council from several of us who had great concerns regarding the initial Resolution 13-02. The Floor Committee also welcomed counsel. I am grateful, even though “I didn’t get everything I wanted.”

Resolution 13-02A may not look significantly different than the original Resolution 13-02 (without the “A”); but the changes are critical. The resolution, without amendments, was passed by a significant majority at the 2016 Synodical Convention in Milwaukee, WI. You will find it attached. I would have preferred that it go back “for further study and conversation”; but if something had to be passed, this can work. Not all will agree with me. In fact some desire to take formal descent action. I will listen to them; but they will need to convince me to participate in such action.

What follows, in bullet point form, are particular highlights (or lowlights, depending on how you perceive some of them) of 2016 Resolution 13-02A and how it will (may) affect our functioning in the MI District, LCMS with regard to Deacon Training and licensure. After reading through this, you may still have questions regarding your unique ministry context. Well, that’s kind of the point of the Resolution: There are unique ministry contexts and there can be no “one size fits all” when it comes to the service of Deacons. However, there are now in place some significant clarifications that can assist us going forward so that we won’t spend energy worrying about who can do what and when, etc. Instead, we can get at the ministry that God has set before us.

In the coming weeks, prior to our District Deacon Continuing Education Conference at Camp Arcadia, I will be working with the Commission on Deacon Qualifications (CDQ) to frame a questionnaire for all of our deacons, deacon students, supervising pastors, and congregations served by deacons. This questionnaire will help all of us discern just who needs to be “licensed” as a lay deacon, who needs to be “credentialed”, or who may need to seek SMP colloquy and placed on the ordained roster of synod. The hope is to bring clarity and consistency, now, and going forward.

Hear this clearly: Deacon Training and deacon ministry is NOT shut down!!!!

In joyful service to Jesus and His Church,

Rev. Dr. Robert E. Kasper

Resolution 13-02A Points of interest:

1. “Emergency knows no rule”. In other words, stuff happens and we simply need to graciously and creatively respond to ministry needs as they present themselves. Let’s be generous with one another and trust that each, and all, are doing the best with what we’ve got.
2. There is a distinction made between “publicly” (understand here “congregational worship”) preaching and administering the Sacraments and serving in Word and Sacrament ministry. In many respects, nearly all ministries are some aspect of Word and Sacrament ministry, or are seeking to lead toward Word and Sacrament.
3. “Nothing in this resolution shall be construed as impeding the training, recognition, credentialing, or service of deacons who do not publicly preach or administer the sacraments...” Note: This is pretty huge! And a major difference between the initial 13-02 and the 13-02A that was passed. More about this later.
4. “District Presidents may continue to recruit, train, and credential new deacons for general varieties of service in the Church...” Note: This is the other major change over against the former resolution.
5. “District Presidents may continue to train and annually license deacons to publicly preach and administer the sacraments...beyond (January 1, 2018) that date in exceptional cases...with the consent of the plenary (understand here “plurality”) of the Council of Presidents and the Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral Office...” (Understand here the First Vice President of Synod and his Colloquy Committee.) If this is more of a “report” so that the right hand knows what the left hand is doing, rather than seeking permission, I’m fine with this. We’ll have to wait until the process is tested.
6. Regional Colloquy Committees will be set up by the First Vice President of Synod (That’s just an expansion of his job to handle colloquy requests) for the purpose of routing deacons “publicly” preaching and administering the sacrament on a “regular basis” for the congregation to be ordained and placed on the Synod roster as SMP (colloquy). This SMP colloquy will be substantially different (less demanding) than the requirements for “General Pastor” ordination. Again, we’ll have to wait until this is rolled out and tested. And an SMP is still under the supervision of a general route (MDiv) pastor; but he (the SMP) is ordained and “called” by the congregation he serves. (AC V & XIV)

7. Licensed Lay Deacons who are “Publicly” preaching and administering the sacraments (de facto Pastors) will have until January 1, 2018 to “apply” for colloquy to thereby be rostered as an SMP.
8. Funding for this colloquy process for LLD’s serving as de facto pastors will be provided by a cooperative effort of the congregation, District where the deacon serves, and national synod.
9. The policies and procedures for the SMP colloquy will be outlined by the First Vice President of synod and three members of the Council of Presidents appointed by the Council and have their work done by or before June 1, 2017.
10. “Colloquy” means “conversation” and therefore may not require any additional coursework.
11. No congregation shall be threatened with closure because of the actions directed by this resolution.

Application and interpretation: (Or...“What does this mean?”)

1. We continue to recruit and train deacons in the Michigan District! Yeah!! Let’s get at this as we have been doing! We have been and continue to do a great job.
2. We will make a distinction between “Licensed” and “Credentialed” Lay Deacons, based upon their job descriptions and contexts of ministry. More will be “credentialed” than “licensed” because of the nature of their work in the congregation.
3. Deacons who serve directly under their pastor in their congregation and do mercy work, evangelism, education, etc. and only rarely are asked to preach and/or consecrate the elements in public worship will be “credentialed”.
4. Deacons who serve directly under their pastor in their congregation and make shut-in calls and hospital calls on behalf of the called pastor and provide “private” word and sacrament ministry to these individuals and rarely are asked to preach and/or consecrate the elements in public worship will be “credentialed.”
5. “Licensing” of deacons will now be reserved for those who “Publicly” preach and/or consecrate the elements on a “regular basis” even if under the direct supervision of the called pastor in their congregation because of an “emergency situation”; and then for a preferably short and defined period of time such as a vacancy, pastoral illness, etc.
6. Only a “credentialed” deacon can be “licensed”; and a “licensed” deacon may revert back to “credentialed” when/if his position description no longer requires his being “licensed.”
7. Requests for “licensure” will be made by the congregation to the District President based upon the needs of the congregation. The District President will then “do his magic” with the Council of Presidents, etc.

8. The District President, in emergency situations may ask a congregation to receive a “licensed” deacon to serve them “temporarily” when no pastor is available to serve.

9. A “licensed” deacon serving a congregation as de facto pastor for more than a brief time of transition (We have four such situations in the MI District.),. (A “credentialed” deacon would have an extra step of “licensure” in this process.) This is particularly applicable to “Licensed” or “credentialed” deacons who are 50 years of age or more.

10. The SMP (former Licensed Deacon) would then be called by the congregation as an ordained SMP.

11. Points 3-10 above, always assumes that the congregation is on board and even wants the deacon to serve in the first place. In no way does this resolution, or the implementation of it, place a requirement on the congregation in question. Nor does it require of the congregation any financial burden that it does not willingly offer for the services of a “credentialed” or “licensed” deacon, or an SMP. Although, such conversations should be had with the congregation as “a worker is worthy of his hire” and we ought not to “muzzle the ox while it grinds the grain.” Still, in some cases the “worker-priest” model of pastoral or deacon ministry may well be required and serve the needs of God’s people.

12. This resolution, in some respects, opens the door even wider for us to recruit, train, credential, and deploy even more deacons who want to serve, and whose congregation wants them to serve. Such training, credentialing, and experience in ministry will create an even larger net for ordination through SMP (Program or colloquy) as well as being a “proving ground” for those who are led to seek rostered status through the Residential route, Alternate Route, Center for Hispanic Studies, or Ethic Immigrant Institute of Theology.

13. Such clarifications also help us to really recruit women who want this advanced training to become “Credentialed Ministry Assistants” to work with their pastor and congregation.

14. Our Deacon/Pre-SMP Training can now boldly communicate that we are raising up “Credentialed Ministry Assistants” (CMA’s), “Credentialed Lay Deacons” (CLD’s) and when the ministry position requires it, “Licensed Lay Deacons” (LLD’s). All of these will be at the request of the “sponsoring congregation” and under a “supervising pastor.” I assume that each of these designations will be subject to annual renewal through the District President’s Office as they are presently.

Appendix iii

Ministry Description/Deacon

(August, 2016, REK, MI District)

In response to the 2016 LCMS Resolution 13-02A, **To Regularize Status of Licensed Lay Deacons in Word and Sacrament Ministry**, the following template is provided to congregations of the MI District served by a Deacon, under the supervision of a called/ordained pastor. The request of the congregation for the services of a Deacon, as you outline it below, will determine whether the man in question will be a "Credentialed" Lay Deacon (CLD) or a "Licensed" Lay Deacon (LLD), or be directed to a regional Specialized Ministry Pastor (SMP) Colloquy for ordination. Please use this form. You may attach any additional information regarding the services requested of the deacon that do not clearly fit the format offered below.

General Ministry functions: (check all that apply)

- Outreach/evangelism
- Outreach/evangelism-(training/supervision)
- Outreach/evangelism-new member orientation/teaching the Faith/adult confirmation
- Outreach/evangelism-new member assimilation
- Missions/local
- Missions/global
- Missions/cross-cultural
- Mission/new church plant or dual parish/merger
- Christian education-children (Sunday school/midweek school)
- Christian education-children (Sunday school/midweek school administration/training/supervision)
- Christian education-Confirmation instruction
- Christian education-adult (teaching)
- Christian fellowship-(initiate/coordinate/lead)
- Stewardship-(education/coordination)
- Stewardship-Spiritual gifts/volunteer engagement
- Finances-supervision
- Facilities-(supervision/usage/maintenance)
- Visitation-general membership/inactive membership
- Pastoral Care-shut-in/hospitalized/infirm (Word ministry only)
- Pastoral Care-shut-in/hospitalized/infirm (Word and Sacrament/Private Communion)
- Pastoral Care-Counseling
- OTHER (Please attach addendum to this document.)

In the space provided offer any specifics regarding items checked above:

Public Ministry functions/Worship: (Check all that apply)

Assist with liturgy: never occasionally usually

Preach: emergency only 0-3/year 4-5/year 5+/year

Consecrate the elements for Holy Communion:
 emergency only 0-3/year 4-5/year 5+/year

The Deacon is being asked to serve as the primary/sole leader for our public worship for reason(s) listed below:

- Prolonged absence of our called Pastor (due to illness or leave of absence)
- Prolonged vacancy while working through the Call process
- Prolonged vacancy due to unique ethnic/cultural need
- Non-calling vacant congregation due to financial constraints

In the space provided offer any specifics regarding items checked above:

Relationships/supervision: (Check all that apply)

Meeting with Supervising Pastor: weekly every two weeks monthly

- Purpose of meeting with Supervising Pastor:
- Review sermon/worship preparation
 - Evaluate work
 - Ministry planning
 - Review pastoral care situations
 - Continuing education
 - Fellowship
 - Other (please provide additional information below)

Deacon reports to the Board of Directors/Church Council and/or Elders
 Indirectly, through the Supervising Pastor

- Directly as a member of the congregation's staff responsible for his areas of ministry
- Written report of accomplishments and planned ministry activities
- Deacon reports to a different Board or Committee: (please state relationship(s) below)

In the space provided offer any specifics regarding items checked above:

Will the Deacon be financial compensated?

Yes

Annual salary of _____

Hourly, at _____/hr. Expected hrs/week: _____

Ministry related expenses only (Ex. Mileage, conference participation, etc.)

No, only the cost of the annual Deacon Continuing Education Conference

In the space provided offer any specifics regarding items checked above:

Please offer any additional details you would like regarding the service of the Deacon in the congregation:

Revised 4/13/2016