

Celebrating 40 years of Deacon Warren Beal serving as a Hospital Chaplain and 21 years as a Deacon of Christ Church Oshawa

Whether you are a long-time member of Christ Memorial Church or relatively new, you may know, have met or at least seen our **Deacon, the Rev. Warren Beal**. Do you have any idea what role he plays in the church and outside of our walls? What actually is a Deacon? Let's find out.



- Deacons, those belonging to the diaconate, have been servants of the church for over 2000 years. References appear in several places in the New Testament, such as Acts 6:1-6 and 1 Timothy 3:8-10. There are currently about 50 Deacons in the Diocese of Toronto of which Christ Memorial Church is a part.
- Over the years the training required to serve as a Deacon has changed. It currently involves: an individual feeling called to service; the Bishop, after prayer and discussion, approving that the process can begin; a parish community and leadership that understands and accepts the role of and need for a Deacon; prescribed study and personal reflection on the part of the individual under the guidance of the Bishop and the tutelage and mentorship of other Deacons. The entire process can take years before the individual is ordained as a Deacon.
- The diaconal ministry has three parts: enabling people to worship; providing pastoral care; proclaiming the Gospel.
- They serve in the church, in the world and at the margins.
- Diaconal ministry is always collaborative. The Deacon serves alongside others in the church in mutual collaboration, support, and encouragement. "They are to serve the community in which they are set, bringing to the church the needs and hopes of all the people."

(Brown, p. 40)

- To become a Deacon, one must have a calling, a passion for service.
- Although we see our Deacon most often on a Sunday morning, this ministry is largely outside the Church. Each Deacon has his /her own passion for ministry, skill set and gifts which mean that their ministries vary from person to person.
- Regardless of the specific ministries to which he/ she is called, a Deacon is an innovator, a catalyst for growth or change, a resource person, and a representative of the church in the community. The characteristics of their service include, but are not limited to: the ability to enable and encourage others; the call to provide engagement within the parish and the community; the ability to educate others; the call to help people to grow in their faith; the recognition that everyone regardless of their beliefs or situation is a child of God. Having experienced the gratuitousness of God's love, they approach others fully respectful of their personalities, needs, and aspirations.
- The specific ministries to which they are called determine where and how Deacons carry out their service. For instance, our Deacon, Warren, spends a great deal of time in his role as chaplain at the hospital and visiting those in need in their homes. If you have ever had need of him in one of these roles, you know that his presence, support, and prayers make the world of difference.
- Within the walls of the church Deacons assist with the liturgy through readings and intercessory prayer, the setting of Lord's table, distribution of communion and also facilitate public ministry of the Bishop. There are undoubtedly many more contributions to worship and the life of the parish! Simply put, diaconal ministry is a ministry of hope in which service is the essence of the role.

Warren served in Chaplain's duties at Ontario Shores (Whitby Psychiatric Hospital) for 15 years and for 25 years at Lakeridge Health Oshawa. In November of 2000, Warren was ordained at Christ Church as a Deacon. Congratulations, Warren!