



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN MAINE

Retirement of Deacons

The Canons of The Episcopal Church expect the retirement of deacons during the year of their 72nd birthday. Deacons are required to submit their resignations in writing, and bishops are required to accept them. However, deacons may be reappointed on an annual basis in consultation with the bishop and the congregations in which they serve. (Canon III.7)

Retired deacons remain clergy in good standing of the diocese, may attend diocesan and deacon community events and meetings, and are expected to be present and to vote at Diocesan Convention.

Deacons wishing to be reappointed must meet with the bishop annually around the time of their birthdays to discuss the nature of their continuing ministry. By mutual agreement, deacons may be reappointed for one year and a letter so stating will be written by the bishop. The deacon's Letter of Agreement (LOA) may be adjusted at this time. However, at any time, the bishop may request a deacon retire from his or her ministry.

Retired deacons may continue to worship in the church of their choice, which may be the community of faith in which they have served. They may also volunteer for occasional activities and ministries as a member of the community of faith.

However, retired deacons are expected to let go of regular leadership and liturgical functions, except at the direct and infrequent invitation of the rector or priest-in-charge. If they have been regular in attendance at meetings of the Vestry or Bishop's Committee, retired deacons are expected to cease such attendance. Retired deacons are expected to turn over leadership of mission committees, pastoral care and prayer teams, healing ministries, etc. Participation in such ministries must be as volunteers with the consent of the current leadership.

Because retired deacons are beloved by their communities of faith, it is important they offer support and encouragement to the active clergy staff. Any disagreements with clergy staff should be handled privately or through the Bishop's Office.

Deacons may continue to wear clerical attire or may choose to wear street clothes. They may continue to be addressed as the Rev. Mr. /Ms. (name) or Deacon (name). Retired deacons may be listed in parish publications as "The Rev. Mr. /Ms. (name), Retired Deacon."

Retired deacons are encouraged to join a retired clergy group and may be contacted by one of the diocesan Chaplains to the Retired.

Retired deacons are expected to file an annual report to the Bishop of Maine.

The Bishop remains the pastor of all retired clergy. I invite you to talk with me about any and all concerns. *Any change in status must be formally requested of and approved by the Bishop.*

Thank you for your service on behalf of Christ and to the Diocese of Maine. We are grateful for the gifts you have offered.