



Diocese of Missouri
THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Qualities We Seek in a Deacon

Since the ministry of a deacon is quite dynamic and varied, no single list of qualities will be comprehensive across the width and breadth of the Church. Indeed, while the Book of Common Prayer reminds us that deacons are called to “a special ministry of servanthood directly under your bishop [serving] all people, particularly the poor, the weak, the sick, and the lonely,” we understand that this will be shaped by both the gifts of the deacon and the context in which they live, work, and serve. Knowing that seekers come to discernment at varying stages of life, we fully anticipate that in a younger candidate these qualities may be in “seed” form. In a more mature person we would anticipate these qualities should also be more mature. But overall, there are some qualities which are often found by the members of this ancient order of ministry.

While these are not comprehensive, these are the qualities which a person seeking the diaconate will embody:

1. **Passionate leaders for servant ministry and justice** – The deacon will be a truth-teller reminding the church of the needs, concerns, hopes and dreams of the world around us – an inspiration to serve others. Deacons act as fearless role models that help others see and experience the transformation which comes from serving others in God's name.
2. **Passionate Gospel storyteller** – The deacon will be grounded in the Gospel, have an authentic desire to continually proclaim the Word, learn from it, and teach others our faith stories. Having a foundation in Scripture and practical theology, deacons help others to see God’s hand at work in the world around us and call everyone to the sacred work of serving others.
3. **Humble, spiritual practitioners who can lead and organize others** – The deacon will be a person of spiritual maturity who practices self-care and understands

boundaries – both personal and communal. Possessing a caring and compassionate center, the deacon is an empathetic, steady, and peaceful presence in the world and in the parish community.

4. Flexible and effective communicators in community – The deacon will embody active listening. Deacons discern and empower baptismal ministry finding creative ways to call communities into God's ongoing mission in the world. Through community engagement with local and faith groups, deacons maintain a focus on community as a way to live into God's dream for the world.