

# COVENANT AGREEMENT FOR DEACON VICARS

## Diocese of Albany

### ***The Deacon is called to a special ministry of servanthood directly under his/her Bishop***

*... to serve all people, particularly the poor, the weak, the sick, and the lonely.*

*... to study the Holy Scriptures, to seek nourishment from them, and to model their lives upon them.*

*... to make Christ and his redemptive love known, by word and example, to those among whom they live, work, and worship.*

*... to interpret to the Church the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world.*

*... to assist the Bishop and priests in public worship and in the ministration of God's Word and Sacraments*

*... to show Christ's people that in serving the helpless they are serving Christ himself.*

*(Book of Common Prayer, p. 543)*

Deacon \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_,  
*(Name of Deacon) Name of Church*

\_\_\_\_\_, as well as my spouse, \_\_\_\_\_, and  
*Location of Church Name of Spouse*

\_\_\_\_\_ agree that the exercise of this diaconal ministry related to this parish  
*Bishop of Albany*

will be in accord with the terms set forth in this covenant.

### **The Deacon accepts the following principles of ministry:**

1. The Church is a body with many members, each sent by Christ with special gifts to serve first one another and then others.
2. Under the present canons the Deacon is subject to the authority of the Bishop and is assigned to his or her ministry by the Bishop.
3. Deacons may serve as administrators of congregations or other communities of faith, but no Deacon shall be in charge of a congregation or other community of faith. (Canon III.7.4c)

The Bishop's approval of this covenant constitutes assignment to this ministry in this parish.

### **The Deacon's proposed pastoral and/or charitable ministry(s) in this parish will be as follows:**

+The Deacon Vicar shall preach a biblically based sermon at every service.

+The Deacon shall perform the ministry of Deacon Vicar with the heart of a deacon looking after the needs of the spiritually and materially poor, weak, sick and lonely.

+The Deacon Vicar shall be regular in visits to hospitals, nursing homes and to the homes of the shut in.

+Just as the Deacon was presented with a bible at ordination as a sign of authority to proclaim God's Word and to assist in the ministration of His Holy Sacraments the Deacon Vicar shall provide the parish with Sunday services of Holy Communion from the Reserved Sacrament using the form approved by the diocese.

+The Deacon Vicar shall:

Baptize,

Officiate at the Sacrament of Marriage but may not marry a couple who has been divorced without the written permission of the Bishop. (No cleric is compelled to officiate at any marriage.)

Prepare individuals for Confirmation using the diocesan curriculum..

Anoint the sick.

Minister to the dying and bury the dead.

NO Deacon shall hear confession.

+The Deacon Vicar shall preside at Vestry meetings without a vote.

+The Deacon Vicar shall provide education programs to both children and adults.

+The Deacon Vicar shall represent the parish in ecumenical and community events.

**The Deacon and the Diocese:**

The Deacon Vicar shall participate in the annual Diocesan Convention, Parish Leadership Conference, Clergy Spouse conference and Deacon’s Retreat, unless excused by the Bishop. The Deacon Vicar shall also participate in continuing education and other gatherings for deacons (such as the Deacon’s picnic) to the greatest extent possible as their schedule allows.

The Deacon Vicar shall provide the Bishop a copy of the annual parish report when completed each year.

The Deacon Vicar and his/her mentor agree to meet on a regular basis and also agree to participate in regular prayer.

The Deacon Vicar and Bishop shall have an annual review of this covenant at the time of the Annual Meeting and make amendments, as necessary, consistent with changes to ministry focus and/or responsibilities that have occurred since the last review or are planned to occur in the next review cycle.

**Remuneration:**

The Deacon Vicar shall be entitled to full remuneration for expenses e.g. office supplies, mileage, etc.

The Deacon Vicar’s stipend shall not exceed \$6,000 yearly.

The parish shall fund the cost of the Deacon Vicar attending the Convention and the Clergy Conference.

**In Conclusion:**

The Deacon Vicar agrees to minister to the people of this parish and community according to the description above. Realizing modern life is filled with many activities that need to be properly balanced (e.g., family, work, education, exercise, community service, etc. as well as parish ministries), the Deacon Vicar will share in the ministry of this parish and community, to the best of his/her ability, by setting realistic priorities that place serving God foremost in their lives.

To be signed and dated by all of the following in pledge to this covenant agreement:

\_\_\_\_\_

*Deacon Vicar*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Spouse (if applicable)*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Bishop*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date*

*A copy shall be provided to the church wardens.*