

Shepherd's Crook

Memory Verse: "The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."
Ephesians 4:11-12

Study Plan: Learn about the three orders of the ordained ministry in the Episcopal Church and events leading to inclusion of women in Holy Orders.



Step 1: Deacon, Priest, Bishop?

Leader's initials _____

Jesus called twelve men to be his followers and sent them into the world to do his work. He gave special authority to his apostles:

- to baptize
- to pronounce God's forgiveness
- to preside over the celebration of the Eucharist

We know that all baptized persons are **ministers** of the Church. In fact, our Book of Common Prayer (BCP) defines four types of ministers: 1) lay persons, 2) deacons, 3) priests and 4) bishops.

As **lay people**, we all are ministers. Bishops, priests and deacons are **ordained ministers**.

What is a Deacon? A deacon is ordained to assist bishops and priests in public worship and in the ministration of God's Word and Sacraments. The first deacons were ordained to help bishops with service to the poor and the distribution of alms. The deacon's ministry is to serve others, especially the weak, the poor, the sick and the lonely, and to help the church understand the needs, concerns and hopes of these people. The duties of the deacon are fully described in the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) on page 856.

During worship, the deacon has certain responsibilities: the deacon may:

- read the Gospel
- preach the sermon
- prepare the altar for Holy Eucharist
- help distribute the sacrament
- dismiss the congregation

A **transitional deacon** continues on to become a priest after at least six months of service. However, some deacons continue to serve as a deacon for their entire life and choose never to become a priest.





A **vocational deacon** works in the secular world and serves as a bridge between society and the Church. They are to bring the concerns of the world to the Church, advocating for justice and peace.

You will notice that a deacon's stole is worn diagonally across the chest. This symbolizes that a deacon has "work to do" and must keep her stole out of the way!

Archdeacon Carole Maddux greets the community for Church of the Common Ground, a ministry among the homeless that includes Sunday worship at Woodruff Park. Photo: Bill Monk



Discuss these questions with your group:

- Whom does a deacon serve?
- What are some tasks a deacon may do during worship?
- Where does a vocational deacon work?
- Why would someone choose to be a vocational deacon?
- Why do you think a priest serves first as a transitional deacon?



What is a Priest? The ordained minister we most often see is the priest. A priest is ordained to "represent Christ and his Church, particularly as a pastor to the people; to share with the bishop in the overseeing of the Church; to proclaim the Gospel, to administer the sacraments, and to bless and declare pardon in the name of God."

A priest has the duty to:

- celebrate the Eucharist
- baptize
- pronounce absolution of sins to a penitent
- preach

Priests most often serve as rectors of churches, vicars of mission churches, or assistant priests. However, priests can also serve as chaplains or as administrators in a diocesan office or other institution.

A priest wears a **stole** which hangs freely or can be crossed across the chest. The stole denotes that a person is an ordained minister and reminds us of the cloth that Jesus used to dry His disciples feet. The stole also symbolizes the yoke of Christ. There is a small cross at nape of the neck of the stole. A priest always kisses this small cross when putting on or taking of the **stole** in remembrance of the burden of the cross.



The cord tied around the waist of a priest is called a **cincture**. The cincture helps keep the priest's robes in place.

The **chasuble** is the outermost vestment worn for the celebration of Holy Eucharist. It is an oval shape, with a round opening in the middle. The color of the chasuble generally is the same as the church season.

All liturgical vestments are blessed before they are used. The color of the vestments follow the color of the church season. The church seasons are explained in the Manger badge in the Green Level.

Discuss

Discuss these questions with your group:

- What is the main duty of a priest?
- What can a priest do that a deacon is not allowed to do?
- Ask your priest to show you his/her vestments and explain the meaning and usage of the vestments.

Discern



Diane Jardine Bruce, Suffragan Bishop in the Diocese of Los Angeles.

What is a bishop? You can recognize an Episcopal bishop because he or she wears a purple shirt!

In processions he or she carries a **crozier** and wears a **miter**. The crozier is symbolic of the shepherd's wooden staff with a curved top with which a shepherd drives off enemies of the flock and gently guides the flock. A bishop is called the shepherd of his/her people and thus the crozier can be simple or elaborate, but in any case, it is a symbol of the responsibility of the bishop to defend the faith and protect his/her flock. It is also a symbol of his/her authority to do so. The bishop holds the crozier when he/she pronounces absolution of sins and gives the blessing.

A **miter** is a special hat that only a bishop can wear.



The duties of the bishop are found on page 855 of the BCP.

A bishop is called to:

- represent Christ and his Church, particularly apostle, chief priest, and pastor of a diocese
- to guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the whole Church
- to proclaim the Word of God
- to act in Christ's name for the reconciliation of the world and the building up of the Church
- to ordain others to continue Christ's ministry

Notice that a bishop is called to be an apostle. Generally, an apostle is someone that Jesus directly called to do His work. Why would a bishop be called an apostle?

The apostles had the authority to replace themselves and increase their number. Jesus chose the apostles, who then appointed new disciples to continue their work. This continued on and is called the **Apostolic Succession**. Our bishops today can be traced all the way back to Jesus!

Four kinds of bishops

In the Episcopal Church in the USA, there are four kinds of bishops: **diocesan bishop, coadjutor bishop, suffragan bishop, and the Presiding Bishop.**



May 2010 – Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori looks on after Mary Glasspool was consecrated as one of the Suffragan Bishops in the Diocese of L.A.



Presiding Bishop of the USA (2006 – 2015) Katharine Jefferts Schori.

- **Diocesan bishop** – the diocesan bishop is elected at a diocesan convention to be the chief pastor of that diocese. The clergy (priests and deacons) vote as a group and the lay people (representatives) vote as a separate group. A candidate for bishop must earn a majority of votes from both groups. In addition, a bishop’s election must be agreed to by a majority of the other bishops and the standing committees of the Episcopal Church in the United States; each diocese votes whether or not to accept the election of other dioceses.
- **Suffragan bishop** – a suffragan bishop is elected to be an assistant to a bishop, following the same process as described for the diocesan bishop (above). The suffragan bishop helps the diocesan bishop, but is not entitled to succeed the bishop.
- **Bishop coadjutor** – a bishop coadjutor is elected to succeed when the diocesan bishop retires. This allows diocese to make a smooth transition.
- **Presiding Bishop** - The Presiding Bishop is the chief pastor, leader, of the Episcopal Church in the United States. The Presiding is also called the **Primate** of the Episcopal Church, which means the head of the church for a province or a nation. The term of the Presiding Bishop is twelve years.

Discuss these questions with your group:

- What is the name of the bishop of your diocese? Write the name here: _____
- Is there a Suffragan Bishop or a Bishop Coadjutor? What are their names?

- What do you think of the special vestments, the mitre and the use of the crozier? Discuss your views on the significance of these special garments in the Episcopal tradition.



Do at least two of the following activities:

1. On a separate piece of paper, design a stole or a chasuble for one of the church seasons.
2. Watch a video or attend an ordination of a bishop.
3. Research the original use of a shepherd's crook. Write a paragraph explaining how the bishop's symbolic use of the crook is similar to the original use of the crook by shepherds.
4. Complete the following chart. Who can perform the following duties?

	Lay Person	Deacon	Priest	Bishop
Preach the sermon.				
Read the Gospel lesson.				
Read the Prayers of the People.				
Pronounce Absolution.				
Prepare the altar for Holy Eucharist.				
Say the Eucharistic Prayer.				
Distribute Holy Communion				
Administer Confirmation.				
Ordain Clergy.				
Dismiss the Congregation.				



Step 2: Women's struggle for Holy Orders Leader's initials _____

When do you think women were first permitted to be ordained to the priesthood in the Episcopal Church? If you said 1976, you are right. Although other churches ordained women as early as 1853, the decision to ordain women in the Episcopal Church was a struggle which lasted many years.

Before the issue of women's ordination arose, it is important to note that women and girls have always participated in the life of the church in a variety of ministries. In the colonial era, women were the primary Christian educators in the home, and often supported the work of their churches by caring for the sick and the needy. (Remember your study of **Florence Nightingale** and her work in the Lamp Badge in the Red Level?)

In the 19th century women's ministries outside of the home grew rapidly; Episcopal sisterhoods were founded and through them women built important service institutions such as hospitals and schools. (You may remember studying about **Constance** in the Blue Level, an Episcopal nun.) Foreign and domestic mission opportunities allowed women the opportunity to use their gifts in the United States and



Women have long been the primary Christian educators in the home.

throughout the world. Other women were “set apart” as Episcopal deaconesses. Deaconesses worked in local churches and in the mission field as teachers, nurses, and administrators, to bring God’s love and necessary help to people. Episcopal women built important organizations, such as the Girls Friendly Society in 1877 to serve women and girls in local communities. Throughout the 19th centuries and to the present day, women serve the church in a wide variety of roles as teachers, visitors, administrators, youth workers, and chaplains.

Prior to 1970, only one woman in the entire Anglican Communion, **Florence Li Tim-Oi**, had ever been ordained a priest. She was ordained in 1944 by the Bishop of Hong Kong, but his actions were rejected by other Anglican leaders. Florence Li Tim-Oi was already a deacon in the Anglican Church in China during the Japanese invasion. There were no male priests to provide Holy Communion in her war-torn territory, so Bishop R.O Hall licensed her to preside at the Eucharist. After three years, he asked her to meet in Free China and ordained her as a priest. He knew that this was as momentous step similar to when the Apostle Peter baptized the Gentile Cornelius. Just as St Peter recognized that God had already given Cornelius the Baptismal gift of the Spirit, so Bishop Hall was merely confirming that God had already given Tim-Oi the gift of priestly ministry. She was the only priest not blocked by border crossfire for the duration of the war. Indeed, she rode her bicycle right on through it. In the war zones, she organized clinics and schools and provided pastoral care and the sacraments. She was much loved for her kindness, strength, courage and generosity of spirit.

Florence Li Tim-Oi’s ordination cause so much controversy, that she surrendered her priest’s license five years later, but not her Holy Orders. This knowledge carried her through the Maoist persecution.



Florence Li Tim-Oi at her ordination. She chose her English name after Florence Nightingale.

Women’s Ordination in the Episcopal Church

In the Episcopal Church in America, women’s ordination had been studied since 1919. Finally, in 1965 the Bishop of California ordained Phyllis Edwards a deacon. In 1970 that the General Convention, the major governing body of the whole church, took a major step and acknowledged women deaconesses as “deacons” and recognized them as clergy.

Nevertheless, in 1970, the same General Convention which recognized female deacons voted down opening the priesthood to women. So, **Suzanne R. Hiatt**, a newly ordained deacon, began to organize a strategy to open the priesthood and episcopate to women. In 1971 the Episcopal Women’s Caucus (EWC) was formed as a network of lay women, seminarians, and deacons supporting women’s full participation at all levels of ministry. The Caucus, along with other groups, attempted to change the position of the Episcopal Church on the ordination of women at the General Convention in 1973, but their efforts failed to obtain the necessary votes.

Florence Li Tim-Oi



Suzanne Hiatt

Unwilling to wait until the next General Convention in 1976 to approve the ordination of women to the priesthood, Suzanne R. Hiatt and 10 other women deacons, Merrill Bittner, Alla Bozarth-Campbell, Alison Cheek, Emily Hewitt, Carter Heyward, Marie Moorefield, Jeannette Piccard, Betty Schiess, Katrina Swanson, and Nancy Wittig organized their own service. On July 29, 1974, these women, known as the “**Philadelphia Eleven**,” were ordained by three retired bishops at Philadelphia’s Church of the Advocate.



The "Philadelphia Eleven" – In 1974, 11 female deacons were ordained to the priesthood at Church of the Advocate, a traditionally black parish. In the background stands Barbara Harris, serving as the crucifer for the service. She eventually was herself ordained and ultimately became the first female bishop in the United States.

It was a very exciting and nerve-wracking time for those who supported these women. The Rev. Alla Renée Bozarth wrote:

*On the day of our ordinations the bright red felt cloth that had covered the front of the altar spelled out in rainbow color block letters one of the best passages of St. Paul from his Epistle to the Galatians (3:28): **There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ.** We did not process down the center aisle to our places in the choir for security reasons, and because there was no clear passage through the crowd. The Senior Warden (chief lay person) of the parish, Barbara Harris, had flown back from a business trip to California so that she could carry the cross at the head of the procession from the north transept entrance up front.*

When her plane had stopped in Minneapolis, it picked up my husband Phil. Barbara had stepped off the plane to make a call to Paul Washington, rector of the Church of the Advocate, to make sure that the service was still going to take place the next day. The bomb threats had caused hesitation about carrying out the plans in the vulnerable venue of the church, but Paul said, "Yes, the service will take place tomorrow." Security guards and the Philadelphia police would be on hand from early morning onward. They found a stink bomb in the back of the church and removed it, but no other bomb was found.

By the time Barbara got back on the plane, Phil had boarded and was sitting in an aisle seat wearing his clerical collar. Always interested in people with that wonderful gregarious extrovert trait of most parish clergy, he smiled broadly and warmly when Barbara saw him and smiled. An intelligent looking man with an open face and a warm smile and wearing a clerical collar made Barbara think that he was on his way to the same place and for the same reason as she. She paused before continuing on to her seat and asked him where he was going. He said, "I'm going to Philadelphia to help my wife be ordained one of the first women priests in the Episcopal Church." Barbara said,

"That's where and why I'm going, too! See you tomorrow!" And right there, the first in-person bond was made between those two flying pilgrims going onward to the Church of the Advocate with a common purpose.

Many bishops were very angry about these ordinations. They met in emergency session, and without hearing the women, declared their ordinations "invalid." (This decision was later modified and the ordinations were declared "irregular.")

Soon afterward, on September 7, 1975, a similar service was held in Washington D.C., ordaining the "Washington 4," Lee McGee, Alison Palmer, Betty Rosenberg, and Diane Tickell. Under the leadership of the Episcopal Women's Caucus, along with other organizations, the 1976 General Convention in Minneapolis approved women's ordination to the priesthood and episcopate. Although women's ordination to the priesthood and episcopate was officially recognized in the Episcopal Church in 1976, it took many years for acceptance to spread across the entire church. Finally in 1997, the General Convention mandated the ordination of women in all dioceses.

In 1988 **Barbara C. Harris** who served as crucifer for the Philadelphia ordinations, was elected suffragan bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts. At her 1989 consecration as the first woman bishop in the Anglican Communion was the first Anglican woman priest, **Florence Li Tim-Oi**, and Carter Heyward, one of the Philadelphia Eleven.



Barbara Harris celebrates the Eucharist after being consecrated Suffragan Bishop of Massachusetts. Florence Li Tim-Oi stands to her right.

By the year 2000 there were nine Episcopal women bishops and approximately 2000 ordained women, 14 percent of the total number of clergy. Included in this number are over 70 Black women, and much smaller representations of Native American, Asian-American, and Latina women. In 2002, Carol Joy Gallagher, a Cherokee priest was elected suffragan bishop of the Diocese of Southern Virginia, and the first American Indian woman bishop.

In 2006, the bishop of the Diocese of Nevada, Katharine Jefferts Schori, was elected the

Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, the first woman elected primate of a church in the Anglican Communion. Although The Church of England voted down women bishops as recently as 2012, women continue to be appointed and elected bishops throughout the Anglican world, in places such as Canada, New Zealand, Southern Africa, India and Ireland. Today women, lay and ordained, are active in ministries on every level of the Episcopal Church.



Do 1 of the following activities.

1. Research one of the women of the "Philadelphia 11."
2. Watch a video about this part of the history of the Episcopal Church.
3. Find out who were the first women clergy in your diocese and learn about their story. Interview them if you can.
4. Look in your diocesan newspaper or church newsletter. What are the roles for women in your diocese or church? What are they doing?



Step 3 (Optional): The Steps to Ordination

Leader's initials _____

What if you felt called to become a priest? What would you have to do?

In order to become a priest, a person must first have a B.A. (or equivalent) from an accredited college or university – any major will do. This is because attending seminary is master's degree work, which occurs after receiving a bachelor's degree. One also needs to be a full member (baptized and confirmed) in good standing of the Episcopal Church.

The Discernment Process

The first step in the journey towards becoming an Episcopal priest is called "discernment." This is a time of thought and reflection, when a potential priest-to-be must consider seriously whether or not he or she would be right for the ministry and whether or not the ministry would be right for him/her.

To begin the process, one should speak with the priest of her home parish. He or she gives guidance and explains fully how the discernment process works.

Eventually, a potential Episcopal priest must meet with a discernment committee, which will often consist of the local priest and the Vestry (the elected body of a church) that runs the home parish. The committee will ask the candidate a series of questions about faith, personal and professional goals, family situation, and anything else that might affect one's ability to carry out the duties of the clergy.

Once the committee has approved the decision to pursue the priesthood, the person needs to meet with the bishop of the diocese and then meet with the diocese's Commission on Ministry, which usually can be achieved at a yearly meeting where everyone who is currently engaged in the discernment process can come together and meet.

Often, potential candidates will be asked to meet with a general practitioner and/or a mental health professional, who can help to determine whether or not the Episcopal priest candidate is healthy enough to continue in the process. Background checks may also be performed; this is a required element in many dioceses.

Postulancy

After one has been approved by her committee, the bishop, and the diocese's Commission on Ministry, she is officially named as a postulant for Holy Orders. This indicates that she is ready to begin pursuing the Masters of Divinity degree.

An aspiring priest must decide where to attend seminary in order to begin the theological education. There are ten accredited Episcopal seminaries in the country. Candidates may also choose to attend a non-Episcopal seminary in order to complete the Masters degree requirements. However, the candidate will still need to acquire a Certificate in Anglican Studies from an Episcopal seminary before he or she can be ordained in the Episcopal Church.

Applying to seminary will often require an application form, several essays and letters of recommendation, an interview, and (for some, but not all) an application fee.

Seminary

Seminary education usually takes three years to complete. First-year students are called "juniors," second-year students are "middlers," and students in their final year are known as "seniors." At some point during studies the student becomes a candidate for ordination, and after, attends a candidacy conference.

Senior students take the General Ordination Exams (GOEs) in January. These exams must be completed successfully in order to graduate from seminary. These exams last three days and are very difficult.

Diaconal Training

Following graduation from seminary, the candidate is ordained as a transitional deacon, which provides hands-on parish training under the guidance of an experienced, ordained priest. This training lasts a minimum of six months, after which one can be ordained as a priest. Sometimes, depending on the diocese, ordination as a transitional deacon occurs before graduation.

Some people choose to remain as deacons, as they may prefer the pastoral opportunities there. These deacons are known as vocational deacons, because they are called to be deacons (either in parishes or as chaplains at hospitals, camps, and schools), not rectors, as their main vocation.

Becoming a priest isn't easy. However, for those who have experienced God's call to service, the priesthood is a rewarding way of helping others to experience God's love!



Do 1 of the following activities:

1. Interview an ordained minister (deacon, priest or bishop) and find out how they were called to the ministry. Ask what they like best about their vocation. Ask them what surprised them about their chosen vocation.
2. Draw a diagram to illustrate the path to ordained ministry.
3. Write a short essay on your own ministry – how do you see yourself serving God and the church, now and in the future? Remember, you have many options.