

ACSA FELLOWSHIP OF DEACONS. JULY 2020 TO MAY 2021

OFFICE BEARERS:

Interim Chairpersons*: Deacon Pieter Wesseloo - Highveld (Licensed)

Deacon Gwynne Lawlor – Highveld (Ret)

Interim Vice-Chairpersons*: Deacon Joan Jones – False Bay (Ret)

Deacon Stanton

Interim Secretary: a licensed deacon from Grahamstown?

Treasurer: Deacon Pieter Wesseloo (Licensed)

** Our Office bearers are deemed to be Interim. Covid-19 Epidemic has not allowed us, as a Fellowship to gather at Conference to vote in our new Committee. Some of the previous office bearers are no longer licensed. In an effort to ensure continuity, we have coupled previous office bearers with interim office bearers, who are licensed deacons, pending our next Conference, when voting will dictate the new Committee of the ACSA Fellowship of Deacons.*

AIMS / VISION:

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1. TO SUPPORT AND GROW DEACONS IN ALL DIOCESES OF ACSA, BY SEEKING SUPPORT FROM THE BISHOPS OF ACSA TO GROW THIS MINISTRY.
2. TO CLARIFY THE ROLE AND MINISTRY OF THE PERMANENT DEACON IN THE PARISHES AND DIOCESES OF ACSA.

VISION:

TO EXERCISE EFFECTIVELY THE MINISTRY OF THE DEACON IN GATHERING THE GIFTS OF THE CHURCH AND TAKING THEM TO THE WORLD AND GATHERING THE NEEDS OF THE WORLD AND BRINGING THEM INTO THE CHURCH IN ACSA, BY BEING THE EYES AND EARS OF THE BISHOPS AND PRIESTS IN THE COMMUNITIES, AND BEING INVOLVED IN OUTREACH AND MISSION ACTIVITIES APPROPRIATE TO THE SPECIFIC AREAS IN WHICH DEACONS SERVE, SUPPORTED BY THEIR ARCHBISHOP, BISHOPS ARCHDEACONS AND PRIESTS.

What are the 5 most important points your organisation would want to share with ACSA?

The ACSA Fellowship of Deacons exists to support, encourage and grow the permanent diaconate in our Province, Dioceses, Archdeaconries and Parishes into effective and relevant ministry for our Church in these times.

We attempt to do this by:

1. Working with our priests and bishops, to promote the understanding of the permanent diaconate as a distinct ministry in the Dioceses.
2. Where invited to do so, we work with the Fellowship of Vocation and the Board of

Ministry in the various dioceses to explore and explain the differences between the ministry of the deacon and the ministry of the priest in that diocese.

3. Where possible, through Bishops and Archdeacons we seek to build strong connections between priest and deacon (so as to meet the needs of the parish and the community in which the parish is situated).

4. The ACSA Fellowship of Deacons connects with other deacons locally and throughout the world through CuC, and through membership of DIAKONIA Region Africa and Europe (DRAE), as well as DIAKONIA World. To this end one deacon serves on CuC locally, and three ACSA Deacons serve on various sub-committees of DIAKONIA World to ensure that diaconal work is done locally, regionally and globally, and to learn from global experience and expression of diakonia. 5. Lutheran and Methodist Deacons in the geographic area of the lower part of Africa (Tanzania to South Africa, including Madagascar) are currently represented by an ACSA Deacon at DRAE and DIAKONIA World. This post will be handed over to the Warden of Methodist Deacons of Southern Africa at the next World Conference of DIAKONIA in Australia in 2022 (Covid-19 permitting).

What would you describe as 5 challenges or opportunities that your organisation would want to share with ACSA?

1. Since the ACSA Fellowship of Deacons came into being in 2015, there has been very little improvement in the understanding, support and promotion of the permanent diaconate in our Dioceses, Archdeaconries and Parishes - with the exception of a few notable Dioceses. Our gratitude to these Bishops is heartfelt.
2. Some deacons, who retired a number of years ago, have expressed the sadness of having had a sense of isolation in their ministry, lack of understanding of their role, lack of direction or support, and sometimes even rejection when lay ministers are appointed as sub-deacons to undertake the Deacons work in church services.
3. In a few Dioceses, Chaplains of Deacons have been appointed by the Diocesan Bishop, to support and to guide the deacons, and to chair their meetings, when possible. However, locating where permanent deacons are situated in ACSA remains a challenge.
4. A retired deacon is currently undertaking research into the distinctive diaconate of ACSA, to explore blocks and opportunities to the growth of the permanent diaconate. – who appointed this person and what brief was given by who?
5. In 2019, Bishop E. Daniels was appointed to take over the Commission agreed upon at the 2018 Provincial Standing Committee to investigate the permanent diaconate role in and for the Church in these changing times.

Terms of Reference: 1. The Office of Deacon. 2 The Ministry of the Deacon. 3. The Vocation of the Deacon. 4. The Formation of the Deacon. This is a work in progress, involving exploring the Canons applicable to the Permanent Diaconate and their relevance to the ministry for such a time as this, as well as what is required in the formation of a deacon.

PROJECTS: Although projects in various dioceses and parishes are severely hampered by Covid-19, in some parishes distribution of clothing to the poor,

school shoes projects as well as delivery of knitted blankets and clothing for new and premature babies has continued. In the parish of one diocese, the diaconal ministry has included the start of a soup kitchen, food parcel ministry, a clothing bank. Food garden project and a Christmas shoe box project.

Future projects for ACSA Deacons' Fellowship include:

1. Ongoing moral support for deacons in their ministry by organizing our next ACSA Deacons Conference as soon as it is safe to do so.
2. Encouraging deacons to meet in diocesan groups under the guidance of a Chaplain, and encouraging the setting up of more WhatsApp groups and other group communication tools for deacons in diocesan groups.
3. Encouraging research into social needs in dioceses and parishes by the deacons, and ways in which the church can meet these.
4. Encouraging deacons to work with parishes on being Green Anglicans (ACSA's 5th Mark of Mission).
5. Placing more of our ACSA Deacons on DIAKONIA Committees for regional and global exposure to diaconal work.

MEETINGS/ EVENTS:

A.G.M: We hope to have our next ACSA Conference of Deacons sometime in 2022, at St Pius in East London.

Major Services/ Events:

Services and events have been severely curtailed. In the Diocese of the Highveld meetings have continued randomly and virtually. In the Diocese of False Bay the deacons have been able to meet with their new chaplain. There has been no notification of deacons meetings from the other dioceses.

FINANCIAL: It should be noted that the ACSA deacons funds are now deposited in an ACSA Provincial Account. Permanent Deacons are encouraged to deposit subscriptions annually

Income:	R	Expenses:	R
Subscriptions:	R120 pa	Project 1:	-
Fundraising:	n/a	Project 2:	-
Donations:		Project 3:	-
Other:		Project 4:	
		Other Expenses:	R
		Travelling:	Paid for by dioceses or self-funded
		Admin:	Supported by individual dioceses
		Municipal Services (etc as appropriate)	

What would your organization like to see on the agenda for ACSA's Provincial Synod 2021?

An enquiry into the viability of the permanent diaconate in ACSA, and whether the growth and development of the permanent diaconate is necessary and supported in each Province.

The Lambeth Conference takes place in 2022– What would your organisation like to see on that agenda?

THE STATUS QUO OF THE PERMANENT DIACONATE IN ALL ANGLICAN PROVINCES.

Given that in this time of a world pandemic, it has been re-iterated that the diaconate needs to be resuscitated “for such a time as this.”, a report back from each Anglican Diocese and Province on the permanent diaconate would be welcomed. It would be useful to find out whether the permanent diaconate is supported in other Anglican Provinces globally, and if so how. Also, if it is experienced as an effective and useful ministry, with examples of why this is so and how the selection and formation process works in the other Provinces.

FUTURE PLANS:

The ACSA Deacons:

1. Will work continually to grow the diaconate with the support of bishops and priests in ACSA.
2. Will plan to strengthen the ties with other diaconal associations locally and abroad, by becoming increasingly involved in serving on different regional and global platforms.
3. In this way it is envisaged to learn more about the work of deacons globally in order to improve diaconal work locally.