



# Deacons and Deaconesses Through the Centuries

*Jeannine Olson*

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## **Deacons and Deaconesses Through the Centuries** Jeannine Olson

This book traces the history of deacons and deaconesses from the first century to the present creating an important resource for understanding the modern diaconate.

Deacons and Deaconesses through the Centuries is comprehensive denominationally and geographically, drawing on sources from Europe, America, and the world that previously have not been brought together in one book. This ecumenical study covers the restoration of the permanent diaconate after World War II, the rise of international diaconal associations, and deacons as a topic of interchurch dialogues such as the Lutheran-Reformed and the Lutheran-Episcopal.

Historical documentation is provided in accessible form and the most current developments in living Christian churches are described, including the Lutheran, Catholic, Episcopalian, Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, Mennonite, Orthodox, and Reformed church bodies. Discussion of the diaconate covers the activities of deacons and deaconesses in teaching, preaching, liturgy, and social welfare, as well as the offices that have evolved, such as subdeacons, readers, and acolytes.

Deacons and Deaconesses also discusses the role deacons played in charitable endeavors, thus addressing the social welfare stance of the church in particular epochs. The book covers both deacons and diakonia or service. Thus the book looks at the service activities related to Christian churches or performed by Christians whether the title "deacon" was used. In addition, commentary is included that covers what is actually happening in churches today that may not yet be part of recorded history, thus providing a thoroughly contemporary study that enriches and informs the discussion of the modern diaconate.

This is the revised edition of *One Ministry, Many Roles*.

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