

Diaconal Ministries Canada

GREETINGS DEACONS & CHURCHES!

Being a deacon has changed over the last number of years.

Years ago, deacons were typically young and were all men. They met in smoke-filled consistory rooms in church basements. Their primary tasks were preparing the offering schedule, collecting and counting the money, and perhaps once a year delivering fruit baskets to the seniors in the church. And there was the assumption that after being a deacon once or twice, you move on to becoming an elder.

Today, in 2025, being a deacon is quite different, wouldn't you agree?

Managing the offerings and visiting the seniors is still happening but the deacon's scope is no longer just *in* the church: it has moved into the community as well.

Deacons are being confronted with increasingly complex situations without necessarily having the skills and experience to appropriately deal with them:

- We've heard stories of senior members being groomed by scammers and unwittingly transferring the majority of their retirement funds into an account that promptly disappears. After some weeks of shame and embarrassment, they've approached their deacons. ***What do you do?***

Deacon 101 Workshop, First CRC Barrie, Sept 2024



Equipping Deacons - Transforming Communities

- Deacons are often asked to help with rent but what if you learned that a person has been caught up in a Payday Loan that is pulled out of his weekly pay cheque, leaving barely nothing to live on? ***What's the next, best step?***
- Several deacons have shared how they now have a very aged membership and the deacons are being asked to do more with the seniors. ***What do you need to know about dementia and alzheimer's?***

Every day, deacons across Canada lead the way in compassion and mercy, justice, and stewardship. But they can't do it alone. This is where Diaconal Ministries comes in!

We offer ongoing support, training, and encouragement to help deacons thrive in their roles and lead lasting change.

Whether you need help training new deacons, learning how to do benevolence better, or how to develop partnerships in your local neighbourhood and region, give us a call or email! We're here to serve.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST FEW MONTHS

We looked back and reflected on how God has been working through us at Diaconal Ministries Canada over the last few months - whether we planned it or not. Here are a few things we thought were worth sharing:

1

Online Webinar is a Hit!

Our June webinar, *"Seniors, Scammers and What Deacons Should Know"* drew over 90 registrations! After hearing stories from several deacons on some of their elderly members being swindled out of thousands of dollars, we responded by asking a former deacon and police officer to help educate and guide deacons as they support these victims of fraud. Get the recorded webinar [HERE](#).



3

Annual Deacon Dinner: Good Food and Great Conversation!

We were delighted to once again co-host an annual deacon's dinner at Synod with our friends at World Renew, held at Redeemer University College in Ancaster, ON. It's a time for deacons to share, ask questions, and hear about our resources and support.

2

NewGround is Having a BIG Impact on Communities across Canada!

We handed out three (3) Youth Justice grants in the last several months:

- [The Indigenous Family Centre](#) (Winnipeg, MB) - Kids Club and Powwow Club,
- **Windsor Intercultural Neighbourhood Girls** ([W.I.N.G.S](#)) - Holistic Employment Mentorship for Young Newcomer Women (Windsor, ON), and
- **Inglewood CRC** (Edmonton, AB) - [Athletes in Action Soccer Camp](#) for newcomer neighbours

Some staff also took a "justice road trip" in July and visited current NewGround partner "[More Food - Less Hunger](#)" (Good News CRC, London). Then on to connecting with the new Community Outreach Director at Essex CRC and to Windsor to visit with the W.I.N.G.S women running a breakfast business with their Youth Justice grant!





UPCOMING EVENTS

Back by popular demand! Diaconal Ministries Canada and Resonate Global Mission are pleased to partner up for the Moving Forward in Faith Conference, happening again this year on November 14 & 15, 2025, at King's Christian Collegiate in Oakville, ON.

This year's theme is The Church Released. Danielle Strickland will be our featured speaker. Danielle will share her story, shaped by her experience of different cultures and contexts around the world. She aims to inspire, challenge, provoke, and disrupt - giving equal attention and investment to the proclamation and demonstration of God's Love. Workshops promise to be practical and helpful, covering topics like prayer, mission, ministry with youth and young adults, and more. We highly recommend coming with your entire ministry team!

REGISTRATION WILL OPEN IN EARLY SEPTEMBER. Save the date and get your team ready to attend!

Find out more on the [event website](http://www.resonateglobalmission.org/moving-forward-faith):
www.resonateglobalmission.org/moving-forward-faith

Online Cohort Starting Sept 10th

Registration is open for the Community Flourishing: Asset-Based Community Renewal cohort!

We invite Canadian deacons, church leaders and volunteers to rethink ministry and benevolence through the lens of Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD).

Instead of simply meeting needs, how can we empower people and communities to flourish?

Dates: 5 sessions on Wednesday evenings 4pm PT/7pm ET via Zoom starting September 10, 2025. Find out more on our [website](#) or register [HERE](#) if you are interested!

“Diaconal Ministries does a fantastic job of providing resources... Keep up the good work!”



NEW DIRECTOR ANNOUNCED

The Board of Directors of Diaconal Ministries Canada is pleased to announce that, following an extensive search and discernment process, **Rev. John Wildeboer has been appointed as our next National Director.**

John will officially begin this new role on September 15, 2025.

John currently serves as pastor of Rehoboth Christian Reformed Church in Bowmanville, Ontario. With a heart for servant leadership and a deep commitment to the ministry of the church, John brings valuable experience and a collaborative spirit to this national role.

Diaconal Ministries' current director, Ron Vanden Brink, will continue in his role until his retirement in November, 2025. This intentional overlap allows for a smooth and supportive leadership transition, ensuring continuity in Diaconal Ministries' mission to equip, support, and encourage deacons and churches across Canada.

More information will be coming out in the coming weeks so stay tuned!

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