

SAMPLE PRAYERS WRITTEN BY SMALL GROUPS
DOTAC Board Meeting
November 2024

The Board of DOTAC (DIAKONIA of the Americas and the Caribbean) met in Houston in early November 2024. In four evening sessions, they participated in a test of the Study Guide for [*Diaconal Studies: Lived Theology for the Church in North America*](#). This happened even before the text was in print. In small groups, they used the précises, quotes, video introductions, and discussion questions to inform and focus their conversation. Each small group was assigned one specific chapter per evening. We covered one of the four sections of the book each night from Monday to Thursday.

Following group discussion, they were asked to write short prayers that reflected the themes that arose during this small group time. We came back from our small group and shared a bit about our conversations and the prayers we had written. This served as our evening prayer time.

The prayers were not originally intended for publication. Time was short; hence, polishing and rewriting were not possible. Accordingly, we offer these prayers, not as pinnacles of liturgical or poetic excellence, but with humility and the hope that these *samples* might encourage others to follow this meaningful practice of educational process.

Further, we acknowledge that prayers written about *diakonia*, and by members of the diaconate, are scarce. May these prayers offer inspiration for others to share their ideas and spiritual resources related to diakonia.

PART 1: DIAKONIA FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD
Monday, November 4, 2024

Chapter 1: “Establishing Diaconal Studies in North America” by Craig L. Nesson

God who cares for each sparrow,
Exodus Liberator of transformation,
Pentecost Spirit of empowerment,
God of the prophets and advocates,
Christ of the inclusive body,
 Transform and revitalize our communities,
 Let the healing of diakonia flow into our world.
Empower us for the ministry of diakonia,
 Let us be advocates for change,
 Let us live into relationships of care and community.

Chapter 2: “Emergent Diakonia in Response to Changing Contexts” by Sandra Boyce

God of renewal:
Refresh and re-energize our understanding of diaconal ministry,
 that your vision may become reality.
Give us courage and endurance to keep trying, in new ways,

to share this vision of hope with all of our communities.
Empower us to lead your whole church
in a better understanding and exercise of diaconal ministry,
Amen.

Chapter 3: “Ecumenical Convergence on the Diaconate in North America” by Mitzi J. Budde

Holy Parent,

We give thanks for our shared servanthood in your name.

Empower us with creativity to overcome our denominational differences.

We have more that unites than divides us.

We pray for the wider church to recognize the diaconate as a full and equal order.

Grant the Holy Spirit give us vision of training and formation,

that we might always meet the needs of the world, near and far.

In the name of the servant Christ we pray, Amen.

Chapter 4: “The Problem and Promise of the Diaconate” by Benjamin L. Hartley

O God, your Son Jesus,

was often causing good trouble and considered problematic by the powers that be:

we ask for the courage to let go of titles and labels

that constrain the diaconate and hem us in.

so that we may be your emissaries and live out your love across all boundaries,

through Jesus Christ, Amen.

Chapter 5: “Strengthening Diakonia for a Thriving Church” by Margaret Ann Crain

Teach us to realize the work and mission of diakonia in your beautiful and broken world.

We give thanks for the many diverse expressions of the diaconate, both lay and ordained.

Let the power of the Holy Spirit transcend the barriers

that keep us from living out your mission of your love for the world,

Shalom,

your kin-dom come.

Amen.

PART 2: LIBERATING DIACONAL PRAXIS

Tuesday, November 5, 2024

Chapter 6: “Christian Diaconal Practice Through the Lens of Human Dignity” by Ignatius Swart

God of the Poor –

You sent us a living definition of diakonia---

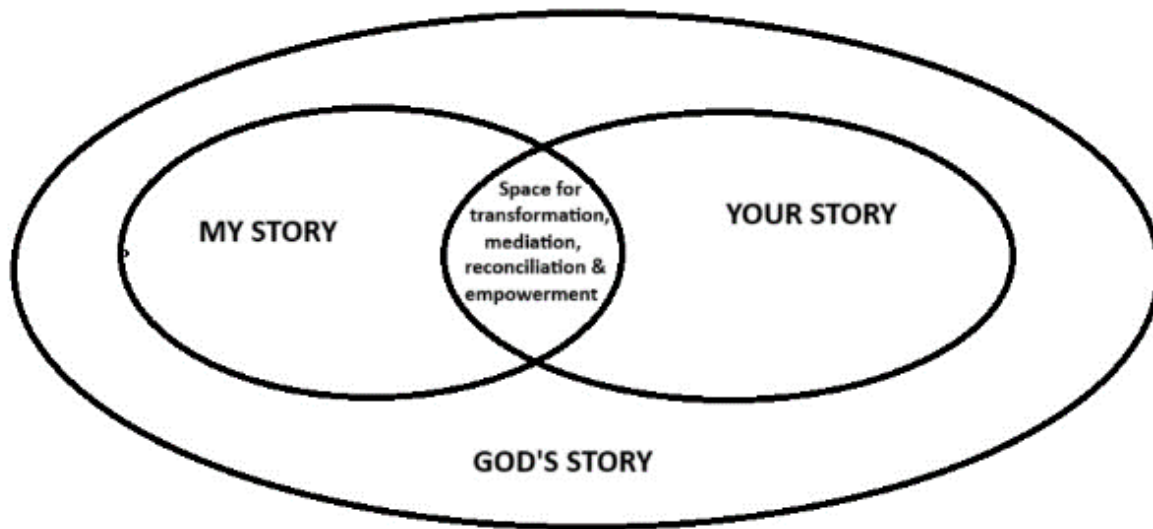
Calling on our hearts, our souls, our minds and strength

To serve boldly and deeply –

Probing and breaking apart the systems that oppress!

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Chapter 7: “Liberating Diakonia in a Brazilian Perspective” by Dionata Rodrigues de Oliveira



Lord, listen to your children praying.
Lord, send your spirit to this place.
Lord, listen to your children praying.
Send us love, send us power, send us grace.

(Lyrics by Ken Medema, “Lord, Listen to Your Children,” © 1973 Hope Publishing Company.
[https://www.hopepublishing.com/find-hymns-hw/hw2988.aspx.](https://www.hopepublishing.com/find-hymns-hw/hw2988.aspx))

Chapter 8: “A Theology of Diakonia at the Margins” by Norma Cook Everist

Surprising God,
Thank your for the example of Jesus
 who modeled diakonia for the world!
Help us as Deacons through our experience of being marginalized,
 to understand the plight of those who sit on the margins of our communities.
May you give us the grace to appreciate each person and
 the gifts they bring that we may build a more inclusive and loving relationships.
In the name of the Diaconal Minister, Jesus!

Chapter 9: “The Work of Diakonia Toward Koinonia Among LGBTQIA+ Persons and the Church” by Leo Yates Jr.

O God, you are three person in unity,
Your Son and fully God and fully human,
 breaks all distinctions and binaries:
we ask that you open all eyes to the belovedness of every person,
 so that they each become all you’ve created the to be; fully alive to your Glory.

Chapter 10: “De-Subjugating the Servant Image as a Theo-Diaconal Intervention” by Man-Hei Yip

God, who loves dusty feet.
Dust us off.
Shake the dust off our feet.
Christ of the resurrection, rise in every heart.
Make us willing messenger of your Word and love to those in need
so they, and we, may realize their and our own worth.
In your name we prayer. Amen.

Chapter 11: “Developing a Trauma-Informed Diaconal Praxis” by Darryl W. Stephens

God of compassion and love,
we know our world needs to be healed and
that cannot happen until each one of us is healed.
Give us the courage and strength to humbly be of service
to those whose lives are upended and overturned.
Remind us that while we may lack a full understanding of another’s pain,
we can still offer your love and healing
through word, action, and demands for justice.
Let us be your love lived out so that our service may be a blessing
and not be a cause of more harm.
In the name of Jesus, our healer and guide.
Amen.

PART 3: DIACONAL LEADERSHIP AND SPIRITUALITY

Wednesday, November 6, 2024

Chapter 12: “The Diaconal Spirituality of Activism in the Philippines” by Norma P. Dollaga

Lectio Divina
“The greatest among you will be your servant” Matthew 23: 11
Breathe 3 times
“The greatest among you will be your servant.”
Sing: “Will You Let Me Be Your Servant”

Chapter 13: “Women Shaping Diaconal Theology in The Episcopal Church” by Valerie Bailey

God of the oppressed and the hurting,
our world has human made systems and structures that cause more harm than good.
Understanding that hurt people hurt people,
we ask that you give us strength in our diaconal calling
so that by using our time, resources, talents, and lives
we may contribute to the continuing struggle
for the realisation of God’s reign here on Earth.

Chapter 14: “Reclaiming the Lessons and Legacies of the Earliest Episcopal Deaconess” by Daphne B. Noyes

God of the Invisible,
We thank you for the lives and ministries of our courageous and visionary ministries,
serving in inhospitable frontiers.
Teach us their resilience and dignity, and
grant us the ability to stand up to the powers that be.
May we make their ministries visible and honour their commitment, dedication and faithfulness.
In the name of Jesus, who valued women. Amen.

Chapter 15: “Imagining the Future of Diakonia” by Jessica Bickford

Creative and innovative God,
You are always creating and recreating our world and
Challenging our perception of reality.
Use the diaconate as agents of change to call the church back to its roots.
Help us to establish authentic partnerships with the marginalized and
with the agencies outside the church,
to create mutual ministry and understanding.
Lead us to radical discipleship in your Son’s name. Amen.

Chapter 16: “Reclaiming Spirituality in Diaconal Work in Germany” by Johannes Eurich

Creator God,
You hear the prayers of our hearts.
You have created us with varied gifts and called us to use them for good.
Open the eyes of our hearts to see the belovedness of your creation
in everyday and everywhere.

PART 4: DIACONAL STUDIES AND FORMATION

Thursday, November 7, 2024

Chapter 17: “Diaconal Studies in an Interdisciplinary PhD Programme in Norway” by Annette Leis-Peters

God of diakonia,
We give thanks for the faith and commitment of deacons around the world
who faithfully carry out your mission.
We give thanks for congregations
who have the missional vision to call a deacon,
and for the institutions that equip them.
Strength us to serve all your people. Amen.

Chapter 18: “A Norwegian Case for Formation in the Diakonia Curriculum” by Kristin Husby Dyrstad

Jesus your followers fed people.
Your followers sat at your feet and learned.
May we bring all of who we are – our hearts and minds –
to serve the world you love so much. Amen.

Chapter 19: “Investment in Diaconal Flourishing in The Episcopal Church” by Lori Mills-Curran

Provide us a church that values all the gifts, vocations and experience among the diaconate.
May the diaconate flourish in its mission
to not only those within the walls of the church but
to those outside those walls who need our engagement.
May we be well prepared and educated not only in theology but
in all the areas where you call your servants.
Please compensate our efforts. Amen

Chapter 20: “A Competency-Based, Mentor-Assessed Path for Diaconal Formation” by Julie Anne Lytle

Creative God,
You sent your Son to meet people where they are and
He called disciples from various walks of life.
We give you thanks for the imagination and determination
to create flexible learning opportunities.
In the calling and formation of people within the diaconate
we ask that you encourage leaders, and those discerning,
to develop together practical, useful and effective programs
to train and form the diaconate in their contexts.
In the name of the one who called disciples who transformed the world
Amen

Chapter 21: “Theology of Liberative Service” by Mary Elizabeth Moore

Servant Lord,
In your wisdom and grace fill us with understanding that who we are as diakonia
is more than acts of service.
You call us into relationship with peoples and communities to work
for the protection, care and cure of All of God’s creation.
May your spirit guide us to that place of liberative service
that you may be experienced through all we and who we are.
As your people Amen.