ANGLICAN DEACONS CANADA

VISIONING AND STRATEGY PROJECT

FINAL REPORT

August 2024

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A) FOREWORD

This is a report on the visioning and strategy process undertaken by and for Anglican Deacons Canada from Fall 2022 to Spring 2024.

The Board of Directors of Anglican Deacons Canada thanks the Office of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada for generous financial support of the project from its Ministry Investment Fund, through the auspices of the Department of Faith, Worship and Ministry. As chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, I wish to express deep gratitude to my fellow committee members (named in Appendix C) for their dedication in seeing this work through. Thanks also to the Writing Group, chaired by the Very Rev'd M. Ansley Tucker, who are working on a draft of a shared theological statement on the diaconate, and an accompanying set of recommended best practices for diaconal ministry; the results of their work will be presented separately.[1]

To allow for broader consultation, drafts of this report were workshopped at an online presentation to deacons in May 2024, and at ADC's triennial national conference in June 2024. The final report was made available for ratification by the ADC Board of Directors on August 8, 2024.

The Ven. Kyn Barker, Deacon
Coordinator of Deacons, Diocese of Toronto
Secretary, Anglican Deacons Canada and Chair, Strategic Planning Committee

I hope that many readers will find this report full of exciting aspirations and possibilities. I know that for some who have laboured long and hard on behalf of the diaconate – often against considerable odds – parts of this report may seem rather daunting.

There's no question: it's a lot. Those of us who have been closest to this work over the past eighteen months think that this is an auspicious time to give it our best shot. We believe it is the most promising hope for the long-term health of this organization, and the order of ministry which it represents and supports: a ministry which many of us are convinced constitutes the most promising hope for the future of our changing church, in our searching and hurting world.

I have learned a lot through this process, and gained huge admiration and respect for the selfless commitment of deacons across this country. It has been a joy and a privilege to walk beside them for this part of the journey.

Canon (Lay) Ian Alexander
Project Consultant/Facilitator

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[1] Drafts of this work in progress are provided in Appendices A and B; they are "snapshots in time" as of the date of this report. The final versions still need to go through an extensive process of consultation with stakeholders, as well as ratification by the Faith, Worship and Ministry Coordinating Committee and the Council of General Synod, before coming (God willing) to General Synod in June 2025.

B) BACKGROUND

1) The Diaconate[2]

The Greek word *diakonia* is most often translated as "service among others." Some commentators interpret it to mean something more like "emissary." This ministry, entrusted to the whole Church, is rooted in the example of Jesus Christ. Deacons are called, equipped and ordained as living exemplars of Christ's own *diakonia*. They practice a ministry of service, interpretation and witness and, by prophetic word and loving example, encourage and mobilize others to participate in that ministry. They represent the Church to the world, and interpret the needs, concerns and hopes of the world to the Church.

Diaconal ministry invites the whole People of God into the service of the Gospel for the sake of the world. Deacons themselves are often fully engaged beyond the church walls, focused on concerns of social service and social justice, education and advocacy, and pastoral care – especially for the poor, the weak, the sick, the lonely, the marginalized, and those affected by inequity and injustice.

At the same time, it is the deacon's role to teach, equip and engage the Church in its own *diakonia*. For this reason, no matter what their ecclesial ministry, deacons are normally rooted in a local congregation, where they may engage in specific liturgical functions emblematic of *diakonia*. In the Anglican tradition, deacons exercise their ministry directly under the authority of their bishop.

In a church and a world which are changing rapidly and radically, the role and model of the diaconate as a full, equal and distinct order of ministry seems ever more important and relevant. More than any other order of ministry, deacons inhabit the crucial, uncomfortable intersection between the worshipping Church and the world it is called to serve. Many people believe that the most promising future for the Church is a more diaconal one.

2) Anglican Deacons Canada

Anglican Deacons Canada is the national association for deacons in the Anglican Church of Canada. It seeks to support and encourage the growth of diaconal ministry in our church, and to strengthen the order of deacons across the country.

In the 1980s, the order of deacons was being restored as a distinct and permanent ministry in both Canada and the United States. In 1986, the North American Association for the Diaconate was formed. By 2008, this international association had divided into two national ones, which continue to maintain close co-operative connections: the Association for Episcopal Deacons (AED) in the US, and the Association of Anglican Deacons in Canada (AADC).

In 2021, AADC's name was officially changed to Anglican Deacons Canada (ADC). A new logo was created, representing a cross formed of Pentecostal fire, placed on Canadian maple leaves and overlaid with a deacon's stole. The association is now federally incorporated as a not-for-profit organization, and has very recently been granted federal charitable status. At present, approximately one-fifth of the more than 400 ordained deacons in Canada are paid-up members of Anglican Deacons Canada in any given year.

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[2] Our understanding of the diaconate continues to evolve, thanks (among other things) to current deliberations on the revision of the Ordinal, the work of the Writing Group towards a shared theological statement on the diaconate, and changing practice across the church. This is a necessarily brief, high-level, and by no means official, much less definitive, attempt to summarize that understanding in a few words.

As part of the rebranding exercise, ADC articulated fresh versions of its vision and mission, which were adopted by the organization's Board of Directors in May 2021. A decision was made early in this visioning and strategy process to retain these as the basis on which to formulate the new strategic framework.

Vision:
Deacons, by the stirring of the Holy Spirit, proclaim the radically inclusive and challenging Gospel of Jesus through action, prayer and prophetic word, to call the church to action to enable the compassion and justice of God to be realized in the world.

Mission:
Through its members, Anglican Deacons Canada (ADC) calls and encourages the church to respond to human need by loving service; to seek to transform unjust structures of society; to pursue peace and reconciliation; and to protect, sustain and renew the life of the earth.
ADC supports deacons and aspirants to the diaconate, and educates the church about the role of deacons in the ministry and mission of the Anglican Church of Canada.

3) Visioning and Strategy Process

In 2022, as the next stage in its rebranding and redevelopment, the ADC Board of Directors decided to undertake a comprehensive visioning and strategy process. Through an RFP, a consultant/facilitator was engaged to lead the work, and a Strategic Planning Committee was struck to oversee it, on behalf of the Board of Directors. Members of the committee are listed in Appendix C; they include several ADC board members. The full board was engaged throughout the process, as strategic planning was a major standing item on its monthly agendas.

The visioning and strategy work has unfolded over approximately eighteen months, from Fall 2022 through Spring 2024. The process has been both emergent and iterative, and has included the following major components:

- Needs assessment, process design and work planning.
- Research, surveys and consultations with deacons, Directors of Deacons, and other key stakeholders.
- Development, validation and refinement of strategic framework, priorities and objectives.
- Preliminary implementation of selected strategic initiatives, to build momentum and gain early learnings.
- Review and refinement of draft documentation, including consultation with groups of deacons and others.

During the process, one important initiative that was identified was the creation of a shared theological statement on the diaconate, for potential adoption by General Synod in 2025, accompanied by a collection of suggested best practices for diaconal ministry. This work, which is currently well advanced, is referred to throughout the present report; its final version will appear separately later.

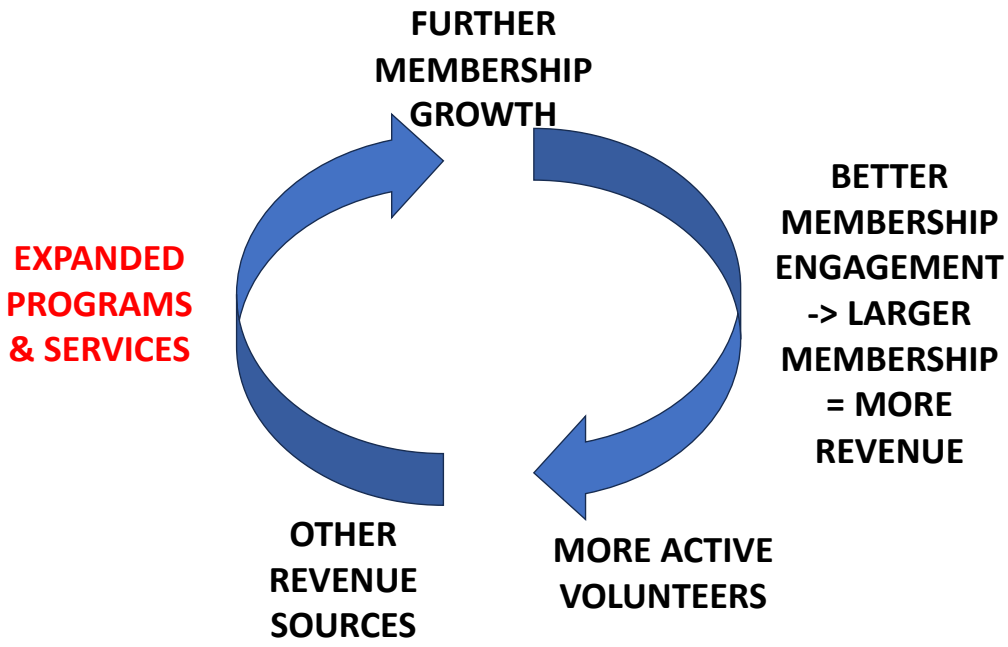
C) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & KEY CONSIDERATIONS

1) Strategic Framework: Overview

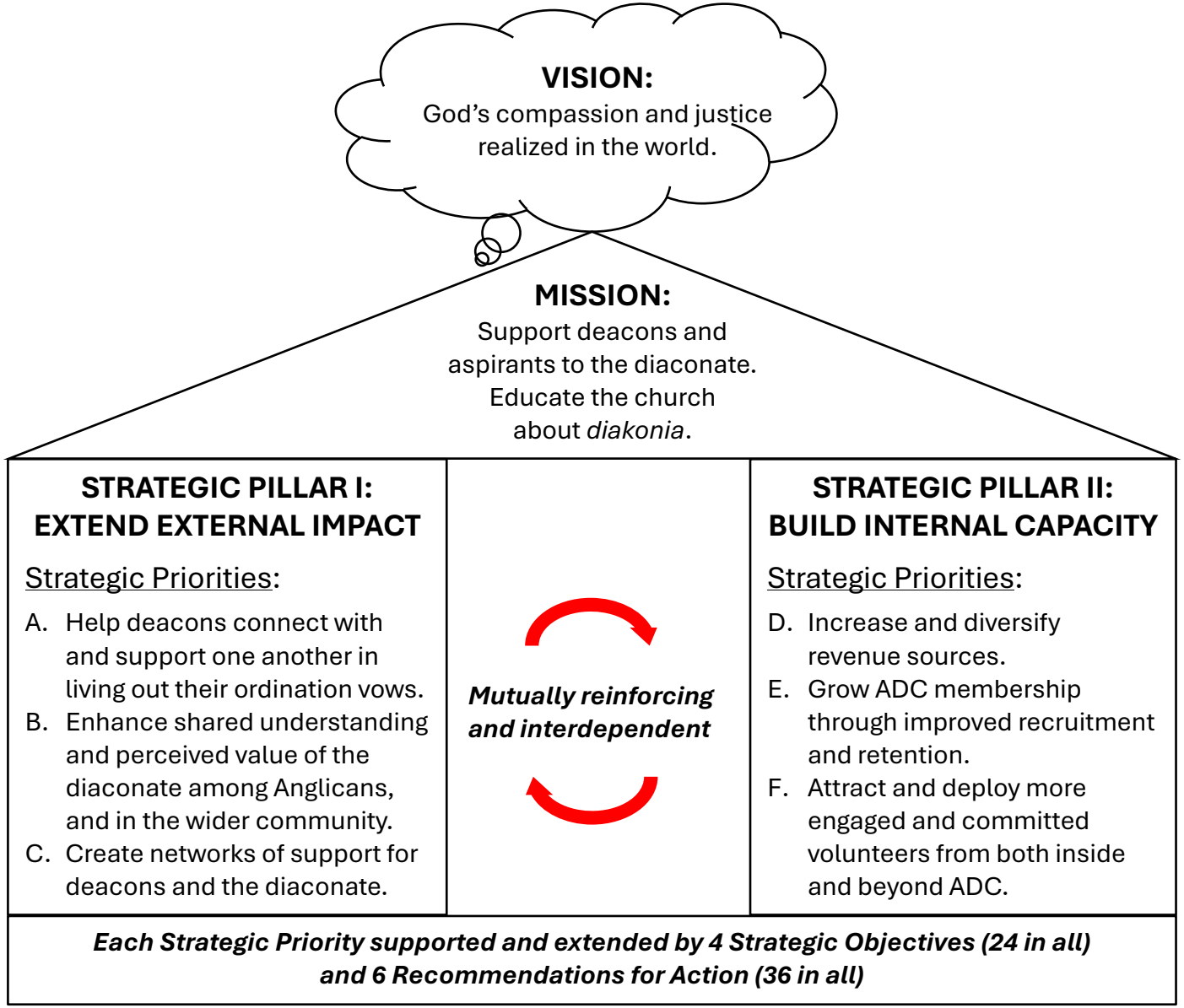
At the heart of this report is a recommended Strategic Framework to guide the work of Anglican Deacons Canada for the next several years. Two complementary "strategic pillars" are designed to further the organization's mission and vision:

I. Extend External Impact
II. Build Internal Capacity

The two pillars are explicitly seen as mutually reinforcing and interdependent; neither can exist without the other. Together, they form a "virtuous circle," as the following graphic illustrates:



Each of the two strategic pillars is underpinned by three strategic priorities (six of them in all). Each of the six strategic priorities is further supported and extended by four strategic objectives (24 in all), and will be realized through six recommendations for action (36 in all). The structure of this strategic framework is illustrated by the following graphic:



Detailed discussion of each of the six strategic priorities, with their corresponding strategic objectives and recommendations, begins on p. 19 and follows a common pattern:

- First, a *Background & Rationale* section explains how the recommendations are based on past experience, and in particular on the findings of the research and consultations undertaken as part of this visioning and strategy process.
- Second, a *Current Status Assessment* section speaks to how well each priority is currently being addressed, and some of the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges in moving forward with it.
- Third, the *Recommendations for Action* are spelled out, and each is identified as a short-, medium-, and/or long-term priority.

2) Priorities and Time Frames

As explained, the two strategic pillars are interdependent, and must be built up together, to reinforce each other. Within each pillar, the strategic priorities and objectives are explicitly not listed in priority order. Obviously, however, 24 strategic objectives and 36 recommendations for action cannot be pursued simultaneously, especially by a small organization with limited resources.

Based on the Strategic Planning Committee's deliberations, and all consultations to date, including recent workshops of the draft report with over 100 deacons, the following strategic objectives are identified as the first and second highest priority items:

FIRST PRIORITY	SECOND PRIORITY
A1 Improve communications	A2 Databases, networks, communities of interest
A3 Professional development and funding opportunities	B2 Continue exchanging best practices
B1 Shared statement on the diaconate	C1 Foster collaboration with Directors of Deacons
B4 Attract more, younger, more diverse seekers / postulants	C2 Pursue interaction with Bishops in all Dioceses
C3 Advocate for justice and equity in working conditions	E2 Modernize membership management systems
D1 Upgrade board capacity to generate / diversify revenue	E3 Intensify membership recruitment and renewal efforts
E1 Offer more value and benefits to ADC members	F1 Expand volunteer recruitment

Beyond this, as noted above, each of the 36 recommendations is identified as a short-, medium-, and/or long-term priority. Criteria for categorization include such considerations as: urgency, importance, opportunity, sequencing, resource requirements.

The suggested initial definition of these three categories is as follows:

- Short-term: beginning now and continuing through at least 2025, or beyond.
- Medium-term: 2025 through 2028, or beyond.
- Long-term: beyond 2028.

As will be seen, some of the recommendations straddle two, or even three, of these time frames. It is recognized that circumstances may require recalibration of these time frames as implementation proceeds.

It is hoped that these recommendations on priorities and timing will assist in designing an effective implementation process.

3) Research and Consultation: Overview

The strategic framework evolved out of a wide-ranging effort to better understand the needs and views of deacons and supporters of the diaconate, and to engage in conversations with key stakeholders. A summary of these findings is provided in this report, before the presentation of the strategic framework itself, so that the reader can follow the same progression of thinking as the strategic planners themselves experienced. Fuller documentation of the key research reports is available separately upon request.

Some of the most important steps in this fact-finding initiative included:

- The first-ever comprehensive survey of Canadian Anglican deacons (January 2023).
- A focus group with some younger and/or fully-employed deacons from the Diocese of Toronto (March 2023).
- A series of four "listening sessions" with members of the four provincial Houses of Bishops (Spring 2023).
- The first-ever survey of diocesan Directors of Deacons and equivalents (June 2023) + followup online meetings with them.

4) Planning: Underlying Assumptions and Approach

Striking a Balance

From the outset, a preoccupation of the board and the planning group was to find the optimal "sweet spot" between articulating a bold, aspirational, inspiring vision of ADC's future, while remaining cognizant of the constraints of a small volunteer organization with limited resources. We wanted to "dream big," but we did not want to raise expectations that would inevitably be disappointed.

Long-Term View

We also knew that this was a rare opportunity to look some distance into the future; ADC is unlikely to undertake such a major strategic planning exercise again for some years. For that reason, we felt it was essential to capture the entirety of our findings and their potential implications, even if it might take some time – if ever – to realize all of them. Members of the Board of Directors and Strategic Planning Committee recognize that they are planting seeds for trees under whose shade they themselves may never sit.

Virtuous Circle

This is where the "virtuous circle" concept outlined earlier comes into play. If ADC can find leverage to begin increasing the range and impact of its program offerings, thus enhancing its positive impact for Canadian deacons and the diaconate, then one outcome should be increased membership, more volunteers, and additional revenue in the form of both membership dues and other income – especially once the organization's newly achieved charitable status can begin to reap tangible benefits. The additional organizational capacity that results from all that can then be reinvested in still further program and service improvements, leading to even greater expressions of support. The process can and almost certainly will unfold gradually. But we need to start somewhere.

Learning As We Go

Another key methodological decision was made early on in the process; namely, to identify some of the emerging ideas and initiatives that were being surfaced through the strategic work, which seemed particularly opportune and fruitful to begin pursuing now, while the strategy itself was still being developed. This is sometimes referred in planners' parlance as "bringing the planners and the implementers into the same room," or more colloquially, "rebuilding the plane while you're flying it."

Numerous examples of this approach are cited in the Current Status Assessment sections of the detailed analysis of the Strategic Priorities; e.g.: bringing together Directors of Deacons; forming a Membership Task Force; commissioning the Writing Group to work on the shared statement and best practices project, etc.

Among the benefits of this way of working:

- Taking advantage of the presence of the consultant/facilitator to help move initiatives forward.
- Achieving some early progress, showing what can be done, and building momentum for more.
- Learning what works, and equally or more important, what doesn't.
- Laying track for future implementation.

5) Implementation: Creating Conditions for Success

At the end of the day, the success of this project will be measured by how many of its recommendations can be successfully implemented, and to what extent they contribute to achieving the aspirations of the strategic framework. In this section, we offer some practical suggestions for creating the conditions under which that has the best chance of happening.

Operationalizing the Plan

This document is a strategic plan, not an operational one. However, it will need to be made operational, through an accountability framework that clearly states who is responsible for doing what, by when, to advance the plan's goals and recommendations. Benchmarks and targets need to be established, resources need to be sourced and allocated, and a regular annual evaluation and reporting cycle must be put in place to track progress and, where necessary, do necessary course correction.

To this end, the strategic plan should be a standing item on the board agenda. Monthly updates on projects and plans should all be framed in terms of their contribution to some aspect of the plan. Periodically, each of the six Strategic Pillars, and their associated priorities, objectives and recommendations, should be reviewed and discussed. Only this way will the plan remain a living document that board members understand and own, rather than an archival curiosity gathering dust in a file somewhere.

Sourcing and Allocating Resources

Some of the 36 Recommendations for Action will definitely require financial resources in order to enable tangible progress. Examples include website development, professional development programs, and the engagement of a part-time administrative and communications specialist. As part of operational planning, these should be identified, quantified, and linked to the annual budget.

Forming Sub-Groups

Throughout the Strategic Framework, reference is made to sub-groups which have been, or need to be, set up, on an ongoing or term-definite basis, to do focused work on specific initiatives. Some of these can be summarized here: Membership Task Force, Professional Development Program Team, Website Redevelopment Project, Communities of Interest Network, Standing Committee on Revenue Generation, Volunteer Recruitment & Deployment Committee. Each will require terms of reference and membership.

Governance

By and large, this report stays away from detailed recommendations about the governance of ADC. However, *inter alia*, a number of suggestions and questions did come up through the process, which may be usefully brought together here.

- Ensure representation on, or connections with, the Board of Directors from the following constituencies: Indigenous deacons, diocesan Directors of Deacons, the Faith Worship & Ministry department of the General Synod, ecumenical and international diaconal groups (in addition to AED), educational institutions.
- Ensure that each board member has clear and specific areas of responsibility and networking.
- Review the role and membership of the Executive Committee, and its relationship with the full Board and membership.

D) RESEARCH AND CONSULTATION: DETAILED FINDINGS

The first major part of this visioning and strategy process was devoted to in-depth research and consultation: listening to the voices of deacons themselves, and others closely involved in, and concerned for, diaconal ministry in Canada. This work surfaced the main themes and issues which the balance of the strategic planning process went on to address.

Four main pieces of research and consultation are particularly relevant to understand how the strategic framework emerged from what we heard. Key takeaways from each are summarized here; the full documents are available under separate cover.
The three exercises[3] are:

- Survey of Canadian Anglican Deacons (January 2023)
- Focus Group with Younger / Fully Employed Deacons in the Diocese of Toronto (March 2023)
- Survey of Diocesan Directors of Deacons (June 2023)
- Report on Listening Sessions with Provincial Houses of Bishops (Spring 2023)

1) Survey of Canadian Anglican Deacons[4]

An online survey was sent successfully to 374 of the 427 entries on ADC's then-current data base of Canadian deacons.
168 individuals responded: a completion rate of a little less than 50%.

While not statistically comprehensive, the survey provided a snapshot of Canadian deacons, based on responses received:

- 2/3 female
- <10% BIPOC
- <5% under age 50; ~70% over age 65

The survey confirmed that the population of Anglican deacons skews female, older and white, and is generally less diverse than the Canadian population as a whole. For this reason, participants cited recruitment of a younger, more diverse cohort of diaconal postulants as a high priority for the future of the Canadian diaconate.

> Our deacons are aging and we need to have more people in the program.
>
> There must be greater diversity in candidates to the diaconate – gender, race, education.
>
> Start a campaign geared towards younger people joining the diaconate.

[3] It's worth noting that in each of the three cases, this was the first time that the respective groups had ever been engaged comprehensively, collectively and intentionally on these subjects.

[4] Text enclosed in "call-out" boxes in this section represents direct quotes from survey respondents.

Among other key findings of the survey:

- Most deacons feel quite fulfilled in their ministry. However, significant numbers do not believe their diocese has a "consistent and positive understanding" of their role as deacons, or that they have a "direct and supportive" relationship with their bishop.
- Deacons are called, at their ordination, to be intermediaries between the church and the world. Unsurprisingly, optimizing between these two loyalties is a major challenge for many deacons. In particular, many deacons reported being asked to increase the amount of time they devote to "in-church" work – most often on a non-stipendiary basis.
- One of the most frequently heard concerns was the lack of consistency in standards and practices for the recruitment, discernment, training and deployment of deacons across the Canadian church. One (by no means the only) suggested solution is a national canon on the diaconate.
- Many deacons feel that some bishops, priests and lay people do not understand or value the diaconate as a "separate and equal" order. They are particularly concerned about this attitude among their clergy colleagues. They sense confusion between the vocational and transitional diaconate. A number of them would advocate the elimination of the latter.
- The deacon's lot is often quite a lonely one. There is a great appetite for more networking and professional development opportunities, as well as for coaching, mentoring and peer support.
- There is a wide range of practices with regard to financial compensation for deacons, and a wide range of opinions among deacons about this matter. A significant number believe that lack of remuneration is a bar to younger people entering the diaconate, and also that it reinforces the sense of deacons as second-class citizens. Others feel strongly that selfless service is at the heart of the deacon's calling.
- Those respondents who are aware of Anglican Deacons Canada (many are not) value it highly. At the same time, participants recognize the need for a stronger, more active, and better resourced organization that can address the key issues identified in the survey: networking, connection and support for individual deacons, and awareness and advocacy around issues of importance to the diaconate as a whole.

I feel very much respected and valued for the work I do both inside the church and outside.

I am trying to determine where I am being called to serve, or whether or not I can continue in this ministry, and I feel I would not be able to go to the Bishop for guidance. Fortunately, I have an excellent spiritual advisor.

Current wardens and incumbent have little idea what I do. They seem to see me as a glorified volunteer.

I need to remind myself that there is a life outside of my diaconal ministry.

Maintaining a balance in life, family, work, ministry can be challenging.

I have been ordained 20 years. I love my work, my parish, my people. I do not think that many people in my diocese know what a Deacon does.

Deacons' top needs and concerns, as identified by the survey:

Increased understanding within the church of my role as a deacon	88%
Deepening connections with the wider community beyond the church	86%
Opportunities to network with other deacons	84%
Ongoing training and formation opportunities	82%
Greater clarity about authority and accountability in my role	79%
More support from my bishop, Director of Deacons or equivalent, and/or priest	77%
More time and resources to discharge my diaconal ministry	74%

Need acknowledgement in my diocese that ministry in the church is ministry to the wider world, not just to the church community.

Need Indigenous deacons in Indigenous congregations and communities who are sensitive and knowledgeable to the worldview, traditions and practices of the people.

More communication and contact with other deacons.

A day off. Financial compensation for the work that I do for the church. Deeper recognition of my workplace ministry as my work as a deacon.

I don't think anything will help me right now except space to heal through rest and personal prayer practice.

Most important challenges and opportunities facing the diaconate, according to survey respondents:

Lack of consistent understanding of the role of the diaconate across the church	93%
Need to attract a wider diversity of candidates to the diaconate	87%
Changing expectations of deacons within the church	85%
Confusion between transitional and vocational diaconate	83%
Lack of training and formation for the work we are called to do	82%
Insufficient resources for the work we are called to do	81%
Inadequate or inconsistent financial remuneration for deacons	78%
Changing relationships with outside agencies	76%

It's essential to develop a consistent theology of Diaconal Ministry on a national basis.

I feel there needs to be more consistency particularly as it pertains to the deacon's role within their diocese and parish.

Need to establish clearly the equal roles of deacon and priest while being clear about their respective roles.

Deacons are called to be in the world, of the world, living out the Gospel in word and deed. Not merely as altar servants or relief workers for priests. We are a full and equal order called to hold the church prophetically accountable.

I believe that the Vocational Deaconate has a needful and vital role in the post-Covid Church, but I am unsure our Church has yet grasped this role or how to nourish it.

The survey confirms a wide variety of compensation practices for deacons:

- Many deacons serve without any remuneration at all. For some, this is a source of pride, or a defining quality of their vocation. For others, it is the cause of considerable resentment – and is seen as a barrier to many excellent candidates for the diaconate.
- A relatively small number say they have access to EAP, other benefit programs, or funding for professional development.
- Almost a quarter occasionally receive honoraria; less than half are reimbursed for expenses.

> It is challenging to maintain a non-stipendiary position within the Church with a full-time, engaging job.
>
> I don't want financial remuneration, and I am not sure that it is at all consistent with the calling of a deacon to be paid.
>
> I do long, long hours of volunteer work. I pay for my own gas and printing. I have never been remunerated. I am not sure that young people today could or should be expected to be unpaid.
>
> I do not expect to be reimbursed for the work I do. Being retired with a pension affords me this opportunity to contribute my time, however with rising cost of living it is becoming more of a challenge.

The survey points to several things that a stronger, better resourced Anglican Deacons Canada could do for its members, and for all Canadian deacons:

Expanding awareness of the diaconate with clergy and laity	92%
Championing the vocational diaconate in particular	91%
Promoting consistent discernment, formation and ordination practices for deacons	90%
Encouraging more people to consider a diaconal vocation	88%
General advocacy on behalf of deacons within and beyond the church	88%
News of what deacons are doing across Canada and internationally	87%
Opportunities for training and formation	87%
Opportunities to connect with other deacons	86%

> I'm glad to see that there is now some support for deacons.
>
> Indigenous ministry needs full acknowledgement and respect, in a contextually appropriate way.
>
> I think if more people understood what the role of a deacon is / can look like, and had support and resources to fulfil that role, the diaconate would take off in new and exciting ways.
>
> I firmly believe that the diaconate is and must be a cornerstone of the church. Being servants in the world, we are well situated to walk the talk of being the arms, legs, eyes and mouth of Christ.
>
> I think the role of the deacon will expand in many dioceses as the number of priests dwindles. I think it is very timely that the Anglican Deacons of Canada are stepping up to address our role and to advocate together for each other. I will be looking to join this Association.

2) Focus Group with Younger / Fully Employed Deacons in the Diocese of Toronto

Although this was a much smaller group, we wanted to hear from these individuals because they represent the voice of the future of the diaconate. Here are some of the things they had to say.

Key concerns:

- How to make the diaconate more inclusive and accessible to a more diverse range of people.
- Competing demands and blurry roles between diaconal ministry and paid employment.
- Balancing time between a forty-hour work week, Sunday responsibilities, and other community volunteer activity.
- Many people are in distress these days; how can we be agents of hope for them?

Role of the deacon / Relationship with the rest of the church:

- Priests think deacons are mini-priests.
- We need a clear, agreed definition of what a deacon is and is not, does and does not do.
- Our vocation is not about parishes. We have a charism to see the church differently.
- We have to be a servant church, or we are gone.

Need for support / Practical issues and ideas:

- We need some guardrails to avoid burnout.
- We need more deacon-specific networks and gatherings; easy access to a list of all deacons with contact information.
- Backfill or compensation for taking time off work to attend clergy conferences, etc.
- Better access to continuing education opportunities and funding.

Looking to the future / Next steps:

- The future of the church is service.
- How can we grow the diaconate across the country, invite others into the life and ministry of service? Can ADC help build the network of deacons and cultivate the mentorship and support that is needed across the country?
- People need a tangible vision of what we're talking about: prophetic work on the ground. Tell stories, produce videos.
- We also need a Ministry Apprenticeship Program explicitly tailored for diaconal ministry.
- The trends are toward part-time or non-stipendiary clergy, ministry in the community without buildings, etc.
  All this suggests that **deacons are the future of the church.**

3) Survey of Diocesan Directors of Deacons[5]

As far as we know, Directors of Deacons (and equivalents) had never been brought together as a group, until ADC convened an online focus group with them. That initial contact was followed by an online survey, to which sixteen dioceses responded. Since the survey, there have been further followup conversations and exchanges of documents and other information.

Some key findings:

There are important areas of both convergence and divergence of policies and practices with regard to the theology and ministry of the diaconate across the Anglican Church of Canada. For instance:

- While most dioceses have some form of diaconal covenant, less than half have a widely available agreed statement about the diaconate and the role of deacons.
- Most (though not all) dioceses agree that deacons should spend the majority of their time working in the world beyond the church, and should not be assigned to be in charge of parishes. However, more than half of dioceses do not have stated expectations about the minimum or maximum number of hours of diaconal work.
- Almost all dioceses identify certain liturgical functions which are reserved for, expected of, or permitted to deacons. There is broad agreement about some of them, but considerable difference between dioceses regarding others (e.g. baptisms, marriages, funerals, deacon's masses).
- About three-quarters of dioceses have a separate formal process for diaconal postulants. Educational requirements vary widely. Most dioceses always or sometimes ordain vocational deacons alongside transitional deacons.
- While most deacons never receive a salary, the majority of dioceses sometimes provide honoraria and/or reimbursement for expenses. None are compensated for taking time off from work to attend church meetings. Most are entitled to annual leave, but only about half to sabbatical leave. Less than half receive health benefits, and just over half have access to EAP. The majority sometimes or always have access to continuing education funds.
- Most dioceses invite all licensed deacons to attend their diocesan synods, with voice and vote. While most dioceses invite deacons to attend clergy conferences/days and clericus meetings, many acknowledge that they are not always able to do so.
- Most diocesan bishops meet with their deacons, either individually or as a group, but only once a year or less. Most Directors of Deacons meet with their deacons only as a group (not individually), once a year or more often than that.
- All dioceses surveyed say that deacons are subject to the same code of conduct as priests. However, most dioceses permit deacons to remain active in ministry as long as they wish, without a formal retirement policy.

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[5] This term encompasses individuals in each diocese who have had delegated to them by the diocesan bishop oversight of diaconal ministry. The position is sometimes called Director, Coordinator, Chair or Chaplain of Deacons. In some cases, this work falls within the duties of another position, such as Executive Archdeacon, Executive Officer, or Executive Assistant.

The survey confirmed earlier impressions that **the Canadian diaconate is predominantly older and female, and not representative of the cultural diversity of Canadian society.** Among the sixteen dioceses surveyed (including most of the larger dioceses in the country):

- Two-thirds are female.
- Less than 10% are visible minorities.
- In terms of age: ~3% are under 45, ~17% are 45-59, ~52% are 60-75, and ~28% are over 75.

The open-ended and reflective questions in the survey provide rich evidence that **the state of the Canadian diaconate varies widely among dioceses**. Three broad categories can be discerned:

- those who are excited and energized to redevelop, or move to the next stage of developing, diaconal ministry;
- those who see there is a problem and a need, but are exhausted or depressed by efforts which have to date been unsuccessful, and are uncertain of the way forward;
- and in between, those who are satisfied, whether rightly or wrongly, with the status quo.

These and other findings from the Directors of Deacons survey have deeply informed subsequent activities during this visioning and strategy process, including:

- identification of strategic priorities and formulation of recommendations for action;
- exchanges of documents and best practices across the system;
- informing the work of the shared statement working group;
- working towards more regular contact among people doing this work across the Canadian church.

4) Listening Sessions with Provincial Houses of Bishops

At the suggestion, and with the encouragement, of the Primate (who is ADC's Episcopal Visitor), listening sessions were held with members of each of the four provincial Houses of Bishops. Here are some themes which emerged during these conversations.

- Bishops generally welcomed the idea of a shared theological statement on the diaconate. It was recognized that much work would be required to achieve consensus.
- There is broad agreement about the confusion around deacons' roles, and the critical need for greater clarity and common expectations. This includes the need to somehow eliminate the confusion between the vocational and transitional diaconate.
- Bishops are aware of the inequities around deacons' remuneration, assistance with expenses and time off for conferences, access to continuing education funds, etc., and want to address and resolve these important practical issues.
- Most bishops agree that deacons' "real work" is to connect the church with the needs of the world. Their liturgical role is important, but it should not be all they do; much of their work should be out in the world beyond the church.
- For this reason, most bishops believe deacons should not be placed in charge of parishes – although there is recognition that this sometimes happens due to exigent need.
- Bishops are aware of the potential isolation of diaconal ministry, and the need for greater support, both from their peers and from the diocese / bishop. Bishops are eager to hear from their deacons about what the issues are.
- Many bishops said that diaconal ministry needs to be better understood, promoted and encouraged.
- There is a wide variety of approaches to diaconal education. Some use the competencies from the Iona Report, others prefer the chart from TEAC (Theological Education for the Anglican Communion). In one diocese, all licensed deacons must have gone through that diocese's Deacons Training Pathway.
- The Indigenous church needs deacons. The new training opportunities being offered in the Diocese of the Arctic need to be better known and used.
- The recovery of diaconal ministry is seen as an ongoing, emergent, organic process, that needs "both watering and pruning."
- Some bishops aspire to have a deacon in every parish, or at least in half of them.
- Broad endorsement of statements like these:
    - "We are a much better church because we have vocational deacons."
    - "The diaconate is a huge opportunity for the church."

ADC is grateful to the bishops for their expressions of support and encouragement, and is committed to continuing the conversation with them. One important next step will be another round of consultations with the provincial houses regarding the draft shared theological statement on the diaconate.

E) ANGLICAN DEACONS CANADA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2024

VISION:
God's compassion and justice realized in the world.

MISSION:
Support deacons and aspirants to the diaconate.
Educate the church about *diakonia*.

STRATEGIC PILLAR I: EXTEND EXTERNAL IMPACT		**STRATEGIC PILLAR II: BUILD INTERNAL CAPACITY**
Strategic Priorities: A. Help deacons connect with and support one another in living out their ordination vows. B. Enhance shared understanding and perceived value of the diaconate among Anglicans, and in the wider community. C. Create networks of support for deacons and the diaconate.	***Mutually reinforcing and interdependent***	Strategic Priorities: D. Increase and diversify revenue sources. E. Grow ADC membership through improved recruitment and retention. F. Attract and deploy more engaged and committed volunteers from both inside and beyond ADC.
Each Strategic Priority supported and extended by 4 Strategic Objectives (24 in all) and 6 Recommendations for Action (36 in all)		

ANGLICAN DEACONS CANADA
STRATEGIC PILLARS, PRIORITIES & OBJECTIVES: SUMMARY

I EXTEND EXTERNAL IMPACT	
A. Help deacons connect with and support one another in living out their ordination vows.	1. Improve communications to members and non-members, especially online and social media. 2. Create databases, support networks, and communities of interest for deacons. 3. Identify and provide professional development and funding opportunities for deacons. 4. Become a hub for all things diaconal in Canada.
B. Enhance shared understanding and perceived value of the diaconate among Anglicans, and in the wider community.	1. Work with others to bring a shared statement on the diaconate to General Synod 2025. 2. Exchange best practices and documents among dioceses. 3. Share inspiring stories of deacons serving the world. 4. Work with dioceses to inform, attract and support diaconal seekers and postulants.
C. Create networks of support for deacons and the diaconate.	1. Found a permanent forum for collaboration among Directors of Deacons. 2. Pursue regular opportunities for interaction with Bishops. 3. Advocate for justice and equity in deacons' working conditions. 4. Engage with educational institutions to improve diaconal training.
II BUILD INTERNAL CAPACITY	
D. Increase and diversify revenue sources.	1. Establish and achieve ambitious growth targets in membership revenue. 2. Identify and exploit early opportunities to benefit from charitable status. 3. Review parish and diocesan contributions and seek additional opportunities. 4. Brainstorm and pilot other revenue-generating initiatives.
E. Grow ADC membership through improved recruitment and retention.	1. Offer more value and benefits to members. 2. Modernize membership management systems. 3. Ensure regular contact with current and former members. 4. Reach out regularly to <u>all</u> Canadian Anglican deacons (whether ADC members or not).
F. Attract and deploy more engaged and committed volunteers from both inside and beyond ADC.	1. Expand volunteer recruitment throughout and beyond ADC and the diaconate. 2. Identify specific needs and skills; match with potential volunteers. 3. Develop succession plans for key positions. 4. Secure funding source for part-time paid administrator.

ANGLICAN DEACONS CANADA
STRATEGIC PILLARS, PRIORITIES & OBJECTIVES:
DETAILED ANALYIS & RECOMMENDATIONS

I EXTEND EXTERNAL IMPACT	
A. Help deacons connect with and support one another in living out their ordination vows.	1. Improve communications to members and non-members, especially online and social media. 2. Create databases, support networks, and communities of interest for deacons. 3. Identify and provide professional development and funding opportunities for deacons. 4. Become a hub for all things diaconal in Canada.

Background & Rationale

A key element of ADC's stated mission is *to support deacons and aspirants to the diaconate*. During this visioning and strategy process, deacons told many eloquent and moving stories about how lonely they often feel in their work, and how they long for more mutual support and encouragement from their colleagues across the country, as well as from their local communities. Deacons are often on the front lines in very challenging circumstances; it is not an exaggeration to say that many experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. This is why one of ADC's most tangible achievements to date was the extension of Employee Assistance Program benefits to non-stipendiary deacons.

In the recent survey of Canadian deacons, among the most important needs and concerns identified were: "opportunities to network with other deacons" (84%) and "ongoing training and formation opportunities" (82%). When asked to identify things that would have helped them earlier in their diaconal vocation, and that would help them now, frequently mentioned items included:

- more opportunities to connect with other deacons, both in and beyond the diocese, both before and after ordination;
- ongoing in-service training and professional development;
- a peer network for support and advice, supported with an online skills exchange and rosters of support in specific areas;
- access to mentoring, counselling, career guidance and spiritual direction.

Deacons need to know that someone is "there for them." This is what they value most about ADC, and want to see more of.

Current Status Assessment

It's difficult to facilitate effective communications among a constituency whose members, status and whereabouts are unknown or uncertain. The process of attempting to survey all Canadian deacons in late 2022 revealed significant gaps in ADC's database, and helped to rectify them.

ADC's member communications to date have been relatively rudimentary. A newsletter, *Salt and Light*, is published approximately twice a year. There is a very basic website, with infrequent updates and no "members-only" section. There is some social media activity; Facebook visits are up lately. Recently, e-blasts were sent for the first time to all Canadian deacons for whom ADC has contact details.

In February 2024, ADC offered a multi-day online preaching conference for deacons, through the Episcopal Preaching Foundation. It was a great success, with capacity registration of forty people. Financial support was generously provided by the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada. This early effort shows what can be done in professional development for deacons, and also what is required: organizational effort, publicity and funding. A working group within the Membership Task Force is currently developing future professional development offerings. This "program" focus probably needs to come under the aegis of a separate group sooner rather than later.

There has been no significant progress yet on the creation of communities of interest and support networks. This will require substantial website upgrades, as well as a considerable amount of paid and/or volunteer work. From the survey, there is a list of 34 deacons who have identified specific subject areas of particular interest to them – which would be a place to start.

Indigenous deacons, and deacons ministering to Indigenous communities, operate in unique circumstances, and have unique needs. During the visioning and strategy process, efforts were made to reach out to Indigenous deacons, unfortunately without as much concrete progress as would have been desirable. This is an important piece of unfinished business.

ADC has worked hard and well to build relationships with other like-minded organizations, e.g.: Deacons of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, Diakonia of the United Church of Canada, the Association of Episcopal Deacons in the United States, Diakonia of the Americas and the Caribbean (DOTAC), and DIAKONIA World Federation. This should continue and find further expression on the website, on the board, and in other ways.

Recommendations for Action	**Short**	**Medium**	**Long**
1. Canon XVII of the Anglican Church of Canada requires each diocesan bishop to "keep a register of the bishops, priests and deacons ordained within or for the diocese and those received from other jurisdictions." ADC's recent experience suggests that this is not being done for deacons in a consistent and timely manner in all dioceses. ADC could work with dioceses and the national church to identify and overcome barriers to improving this process, ensuring access to lists of all permanent deacons, with contact information, status (active/retired), etc., updated on an annual basis, along with other relevant information, such as memorials of deaths.	✓		
2. Work with dioceses to identify all diaconal candidates <u>before</u> ordination so that ADC can come alongside them during and after that process. This could include a free membership for the first year after ordination.	✓		

3. Make it a priority to significantly enhance the ADC website, including a "members-only" area. Create a project team, including specialists from outside ADC. Start with a comprehensive needs assessment. Identify funding for this project (perhaps through sponsorship). Also identify and source ongoing website support requirements (human, technical and financial). Form a working group to begin conversations towards the creation of communities of interest and support networks among deacons. Start with the 34 deacons who self-identified in the survey.[6] Consult with Directors of Deacons for topics and names. Pilot a few of these so that they can move online when the website is ready. The aspiration to make the ADC website "a hub for all things diaconal in Canada" should begin, but not end, with the Canadian Anglican diaconate. It should gradually extend to more fully embracing and expressing relationships with ecumenical and international partners. The board should also place greater priority on nurturing and cultivating ecumenical and international partnerships.	✓	✓	✓
4. Continue work on a regular program of professional development opportunities for ADC members. Create a separate committee to lead this activity. Use the survey of deacons, and consultation with Directors of Deacons, to identify high-priority topics. Identify partners with subject matter expertise, sources of organizational support, and funding opportunities. Publicize the offerings widely. Conduct post-course evaluations to inform future planning.	✓	✓	✓
5. Consult with Directors of Deacons, spiritual directors and others with a view to creating an ongoing mentoring program for deacons. One possible place to start would be to canvass best practices around preparatory retreats for ordinands. Another would be to work to ensure the availability of good spiritual direction to all diaconal seekers and deacons.		✓	✓
6. Work with the National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop, the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, and others to identify and connect with Indigenous deacons and those who work with them, to build relationships with them and learn from them. As we gradually come to understand better the needs and interests of Indigenous deacons and those they serve, opportunities for mutual benefit will emerge. Invite an Indigenous person (preferably a deacon) to sit on the ADC board.		✓	✓

[6] Among topics mentioned during our early consultations are: climate care, seniors concerns, and the increasing prevalence of traditionally "big city" issues in more and more communities, such as homelessness, food insecurity, urban poverty, and substance abuse.

I EXTEND EXTERNAL IMPACT	
B. Increase shared understanding and perceived value of the diaconate among Anglicans, and in the wider community.	1. Work with others to bring a shared statement on the diaconate to General Synod 2025. 2. Exchange best practices and documents among dioceses. 3. Share inspiring stories of deacons serving the world. 4. Work with dioceses to inform, attract and support diaconal seekers and postulants.

Background & Rationale

Another key element of ADC's mission statement is *to educate the church about the role of deacons in the ministry and mission of the Anglican Church of Canada*. The consultation process undertaken as part of this visioning and strategy exercise with deacons, Directors of Deacons and bishops indicates that much work remains to be done in this regard. Among the needs and concerns identified in the survey of Canadian deacons, "increased understanding within the church of my role as a deacon" topped the list (88%). Similarly, "expanding awareness of the diaconate with clergy and laity" is the #1 thing deacons would like ADC to do more of (92%).

One of many reasons for increasing awareness of the diaconate is to encourage potential postulants to discern a diaconal vocation. Deacons, Directors of Deacons and bishops are all very concerned about the increasing average age of Canadian deacons. Recruitment of a younger, more diverse cohort of postulants is a high priority for the future of the Canadian diaconate. Another is to gradually form a diaconate that looks more like the population as a whole, in terms of its cultural diversity. While there are undoubtedly structural reasons why these things are such a challenge, awareness-building is clearly an important unmet need. As the population in the pews gets older and smaller, it will become increasingly important to look beyond the church walls for the deacons of the future.

Approximately a third of deacons do not believe that their parish or diocese has "a consistent and positive understanding of the diaconate." More than a third report that there is no "formal agreement describing [their] mutual covenant with the diocese/parish." Deacons would like greater clarity around roles, responsibilities, and mutual expectations; greater consistency about the diaconate among different parishes and dioceses; and sharing of best practices around diaconal formation and deployment.

A survey of Directors of Deacons, and conversations both with them and with provincial Houses of Bishops, revealed a wide divergence across the country of policies and practices regarding the diaconate. Less than half of dioceses have an agreed statement about the diaconate. Less than half have expectations for a specified number of hours of diaconal work. A third do not have a formal process for diaconal postulants. Many deacons expressed the need for a clearer, more consistent path through the discernment process.

The Iona Report, (received by General Synod 2016 and recommended for study in all Canadian dioceses) is a valuable, comprehensive review of the competencies expected of a deacon. It is used in some, but by no means all, dioceses, and has gained positive attention internationally. It may not be the best tool to explain and celebrate the role and value of diaconal ministry to a general audience.

Current Status Assessment

As a result of these findings, the Board of ADC, on the recommendation of its Strategic Planning Committee, worked with the Faith, Worship and Ministry department of the Office of the General Synod, and its coordinating committee, to jointly commission a Diaconate Writing Group. Its mandate is to produce:

- a succinct shared statement on the theology and ministry of the diaconate, for adoption by General Synod in 2025; and
- a range of recommended best practices stemming from the agreed theological statement, for commendation to dioceses.

It is recognized that context[7] is an important determinant of practice. By rooting this work in an agreed theological statement, it is hoped that even if we do not all proceed in like fashion, our choices will be based on like principles.

Drafting of these documents is already well advanced, and consultations are ongoing with ADC, FWM, Directors of Deacons, bishops, Council of General Synod, Sacred Circle, ecumenical and full communion partners, and theological colleges. The fact that this work is proceeding at the same time as revisions to the Ordinal is propitious and opportune, and those synergies are being pursued. In the meantime, ADC has taken advantage of the opportunity provided by its initiation of ongoing dialogue with diocesan Directors of Deacons to facilitate an exchange of recent relevant documents on the diaconate produced in each diocese.

At this point, there has been little progress on the other, more "public-facing" items contemplated under this strategic priority, including sharing stories of deacons serving the world, and providing resources for diaconal discernment.

Recommendations for Action	**Short**	**Medium**	**Long**
1. Continue exchanging best practices and documents among dioceses. Update and cull the collection periodically.	✓		✓
2. In close collaboration with Faith, Worship and Ministry, support the ongoing work of the Diaconate Writing Group, including engagement with ADC members at online and in-person gatherings in May and June, 2024, with a view to bringing the results to General Synod 2025. Continue aligning this work with the revisions to the Ordinal.[8] Ensure the shared statement and best practices reflect the most current and broadest range of understandings of the diaconate, including the principles of service, interpretation and witness, and embrace current and emerging forms of diaconal ministry, e.g. parish-based, community-based, diocesan, etc.	✓		

[7] "Context" can mean many things, including (for example), local liturgical practice, the demographics of the community, and the natural environment. One participant in a consultation observed that "landscape shapes ministry."

[8] It will be important to find ways of maintaining ADC's close working relationship with Faith, Worship and Ministry when the Director of that department of the national church completes her time as a highly valued member of the ADC board.

3. Once the shared statement is adopted by General Synod, and the best practices commended to dioceses, ADC to work with Directors of Deacons on ensuring that there is followup in dioceses, including around the best practices, e.g. adoption of best practices for covenants, different models of deployment (local, regional, diocesan), the provision of broad experience within and beyond the parish, etc. This could include the creation of workshops for rollout in individual dioceses, templates of documents for adaptation by dioceses, and other similar resources.		✓	
4. ADC to convene a new, cross-sectional task force on Promoting the Diaconate, with representatives from dioceses, Anglican Communications, and other stakeholders, to develop and implement strategies and tactics for increasing awareness and appreciation of the diaconate among Anglicans and Canadians at large, through effective storytelling and impactful resources, including print, online, video, personal appearances, and all other means at our disposal.		✓	✓
5. As a subset of Recommendation for Action #4, or as a separate initiative, work with dioceses to develop and implement a program to encourage and nurture discernment of diaconal vocations, particularly among younger people, and among a more culturally diverse population, including those who may be at best marginally "churched," but who are effectively living out Gospel values in the community. Involve younger and more culturally diverse deacons in this project, and include a significant social media component.		✓	✓
6. Foster awareness of the diaconate among, and forge closer relationships with, national social service and social justice organizations in the secular not-for-profit sector (housing, food, climate, health, addictions, etc.) – e.g. KAIROS, Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness, etc. Work with dioceses on common strategies to encourage such relationships at the local and regional levels. Find ways to recruit deacons more proactively from this sector, and ensure that deacons in discernment and formation are given opportunities to gain experience in it. All of this will quite likely require us to step outside our comfort zone.		✓	✓

I EXTEND EXTERNAL IMPACT	
C. Create networks of support for deacons and the diaconate.	1. Found a permanent forum for collaboration among Directors of Deacons. 2. Pursue regular opportunities for interaction with Bishops. 3. Advocate for justice and equity in deacons' working conditions. 4. Engage with educational institutions to improve diaconal training.

Background & Rationale

During this visioning and strategy process, it emerged that there are important and influential networks of support for the vocational diaconate, which may not have been tapped into or connected as assiduously as they could be. Two of these are Diocesan Bishops and Directors of Deacons (or equivalent).

Most bishops are conscious of their special relationship with deacons, and committed to fulfil it.[9] They are conscious of the challenges in doing so, and concerned with the lack of clarity and consistency around the diaconate within some dioceses, as well as from one diocese to another. They welcome ADC's efforts in this regard, including the shared statement on the diaconate.

Over the past year, ADC has been able to establish contact with individuals in 16 of 30 dioceses who occupy the role of Director, Coordinator, Chair or Chaplain of Deacons – usually on a part-time basis, or as part of other responsibilities. It turned out that they had never come together before, despite sharing similar circumstances and challenges, and expressed gratitude at the opportunity to exchange views.

Most vocational deacons are non-stipendiary. A little less than half of them work full- or part-time outside the church. There is a very wide range of working conditions, e.g.: reimbursement for expenses, arrangements for time off to attend church meetings, and benefits such as annual leave, health coverage, EAP, continuing education funds, etc. There are perceived inequities among deacons, and between deacons and presbyters. Formation, as well as ongoing training, can be prohibitively or discouragingly expensive for people who are in most cases largely non-stipendiary. For some (though not all) deacons, these things are a cause of considerable resentment, and is also seen as a barrier to many excellent candidates for the diaconate – especially working people in their prime earning years. "Advocacy on behalf of deacons" is identified as one of the things deacons would like ADC to do more of (88%).

"Opportunities for training and formation" (87%) and "promoting consistent discernment, formation and ordination practices for deacons" (90%) are high priorities for Canadian deacons. This includes both pre-ordination courses and life-long learning. The Directors of Deacons survey reveals a very wide range of current practices and requirements. This will be addressed in the drafting group's best practices work.

[9] At their ordination, deacons are called to "a special ministry of servanthood, directly under the authority of your bishop" (BAS, p. 655).

Current Status Assessment

Directors of Deacons (or equivalent): A focus group was held, followed by a comprehensive online survey, whose results were shared. There has been an exchange of diocesan documents, plus focused consultations on specific subjects. Efforts are being made to engage Directors of Deacons as a way of communicating with deacons who are not already members of ADC about opportunities such as courses and conferences.

Bishops: Listening sessions were held with each of the four provincial Houses of Bishops. It is planned to engage again with bishops at the provincial level around the draft shared statement on the diaconate.

Advocacy: ADC has undertaken a preliminary investigation of options and opportunities for access by non-stipendiary deacons to diocesan and national continuing education funds. This work needs to be completed, and other topics for advocacy identified.

Formation: ADC has had some contact with individual theological colleges on specific issues, but as yet no systematic, comprehensive approach. Some of this will be happening through the shared statement drafting process.

Recommendations for Action	**Short**	**Medium**	**Long**
1. Strive to always have a Director of Deacons (or equivalent), who is themselves a deacon, on the ADC board. Designate this person, or someone else, to be responsible for maintaining regular contact between ADC and Directors of Deacons, including annual or semi-annual online gatherings.	✓		
2. Work with the Primate (ADC's episcopal visitor) to build on the relationships formed with diocesan bishops and metropolitans through the visioning and strategy and shared statement drafting processes. Ensure that bishops are invited to ADC conferences and events, informed of the organization's work, and consulted on major initiatives. Establish a regular pattern of meetings with provincial Houses of Bishops. Consider a joint gathering of bishops and Directors of Deacons for some time after 2025.	✓	✓	
3. Continue and complete efforts underway to improve access by non-stipendiary deacons to diocesan and national continuing education funds, and issue a report on the results. Identify and pursue other sources of funding support for deacons, and publicize them widely.	✓	✓	
4. Work to have diaconal voices heard more loudly and clearly in the councils of the church, through intentional, affirmative action and possibly proportional representation on all diocesan and national committees, working groups, task forces, councils, synods and other gatherings. This is especially important in – but by no means limited to – the church's efforts in the social justice arena.		✓	✓
5. Canvass Directors of Deacons to identify other priorities for advocacy by ADC on behalf of deacons, including working conditions, work/life balance, and barriers to entry for otherwise qualified seekers. Designate individuals and/or small working groups to follow up with recommended actions.		✓	✓

6. Build on the work of the Diaconate Writing Group to establish closer, more regular relationships between ADC and Canadian theological colleges and other educational institutions that offer training to deacons regarding matters of mutual interest. Base the conversations on the competencies identified in the Iona Report, as well as the theological statement and best practices currently in development. Designate an ADC board member with particular expertise in theological education and the diaconate as liaison person. Ensure that the needs of the diaconate are included in conferences about theological education.		✓	✓

II BUILD INTERNAL CAPACITY	
D. Increase and diversify revenue sources.	1. Establish and achieve ambitious growth targets in membership revenue. 2. Identify and exploit early opportunities to benefit from charitable status. 3. Review parish and diocesan contributions and seek additional opportunities. 4. Brainstorm and pilot other revenue-generating initiatives.

Background & Rationale

ADC's #1 priority in terms of building organizational capacity is to increase and diversify its financial resources. The association's current annual base budget is miniscule: under $10,000. As a result, every good idea for enhancing programs and services is constrained by the necessity of finding a source of even the most limited funding for direct expenditures on such basics as travel and other out-of-pocket costs, let alone program development, professional services, and the other necessities of a state-of-the-art professional association. The simple reality is that if this does not change, the strategic directions of this plan cannot be realized.

In addition to simply increasing the amount of revenue, it's essential to diversify the sources of that revenue. At present, the overwhelming proportion of basic income comes from very modest membership fees. It's hoped that better communications will yield more memberships, and that enhanced programs and services will justify a gradual increase in income from those memberships: a double multiplier effect.

A separate Strategic Priority E in this plan lays out objectives and recommendations around growing membership. While this is almost certainly the most fruitful avenue for increasing revenue in the short term, in the longer term ADC should work to mitigate the vulnerability that results from its current over-reliance on membership revenue. Many other organizations have realized the limits of the membership model – especially as habits and patterns of organizational loyalty evolve with the generations. Moreover, non-stipendiary deacons are likely a particularly unpromising source from which to count on large incremental increases in membership fees.

At present, targeted grants must be sought and confirmed before any incremental activity can be undertaken. While this may continue to be necessary for major initiatives, it would be very helpful if there were some flexibility within the base budget to plan a modest annual program of activities, confident that there would be a modicum of financial resources on hand to fund at least the initial steps in bringing them to life.

Clearly, the greatest potential for long-term revenue growth comes from the very recent granting of charitable status to ADC. This opens up all kinds of possibilities; it also demands a concerted strategic response. The achievement of charitable status must be seen as, not the culmination of an effort, but the starting point of a much longer, and ultimately more important, process to capitalize on this key opportunity.

Current Status Assessment

Membership Revenue: As discussed further below, membership renewals this year have not shown year-over-year growth. The plan includes recommendations for addressing this. Per capita membership fees are set to increase marginally in 2025. Further increases are dependent on progress in achieving objectives to enhance member benefits.

Diocesan Support: As reported elsewhere, some dioceses support ADC through diocesan memberships, and/or by funding the memberships of their individual deacons. Improved relationships with dioceses through deepened connections with Bishops and Directors of Deacons, plus additional tangible benefits for dioceses, should lead to more opportunities for direct financial support by dioceses of the work of ADC.

Special Grants: ADC is most grateful to such sister organizations such as the Anglican Foundation, the Office of the General Synod (through the Faith, Worship and Ministry department), and provinces and dioceses of the Anglican Church of Canada (e.g. Ecclesiastical Province of Canada, Diocese of Kootenay) for financial assistance with special projects such as the recent Preaching Conference, the most recent triennial conference, and this visioning and strategy project.

Charitable Status: Over the past couple of years, a great deal of organizational energy and attention has been focused on this complex process. Now, the priority is to plan for how to leverage this new tool for the benefit of Canadian deacons and the cause of *diakonia* in the Canadian church.

Upgrading organizational competency in this area will be a particular challenge for ADC; this is recognized in the recommendations.

Recommendations for Action	**Short**	**Medium**	**Long**
1. Identify revenue generation, stewardship and fund-raising as key competencies to be sought in new ADC board members and volunteers. Seek other opportunities to upgrade ADC's professional competencies in this area, through professional development, volunteer secondments of outside advisors, etc.	✓	✓	
2. Create a new standing committee on Revenue Generation, whose mandate is to develop and oversee an overall organizational strategy to increase and diversify revenue. The committee will liaise closely with the Executive (particularly the Treasurer) and the Membership Task Force. One of its first tasks should be to set multi-year targets for revenue growth by category, with plans for achieving them. A regular evaluation and review cycle will be required to assess progress and recalibrate targets on an ongoing basis.	✓	✓	✓
3. Revenue Generation Committee, with Board of Directors, to focus particular attention on opportunities arising from ADC's charitable status. Work with like-minded Anglican and non-Anglican philanthropic entities on this. Set annual targets, with strategies for achievement, and an evaluation cycle.	✓	✓	✓
4. Continue working with dioceses, the Pension Fund, and other entities to identify existing pockets of funds which could be appropriately redirected to ADC-led initiatives in support of the Canadian diaconate. This includes, but is not limited to, continuing education opportunities.	✓	✓	

5. Work with Directors of Deacons, Faith, Worship and Ministry, theological colleges, and others to identify specific programming and professional development opportunities for Canadian deacons, which might be particularly fruitful beneficiaries of funding opportunities. Co-ordinate efforts to match the interests of potential donors with promising projects.		✓	✓
6. Over the longer term, create, cultivate and celebrate a wider circle of support for ADC of people and organizations who may or may not be in the diaconate, but who are committed to principles of *diakonia*, and are able and willing to demonstrate that commitment through the contribution of tangible support.		✓	✓

II BUILD INTERNAL CAPACITY	
E. Grow ADC membership through improved recruitment and retention.	1. Offer more value and benefits to members. 2. Modernize membership management systems. 3. Ensure regular contact with current and former members. 4. Reach out regularly to all Canadian Anglican deacons (whether ADC members or not).

Background & Rationale

Membership is the lifeblood of any representative organization like Anglican Deacons Canada. The members are at once the association's *raison d'être* and the source of its strength and vitality. There is a synergistic relationship between membership and impact (the so-called "virtuous circle" referred to earlier in this report). More memberships generate additional financial resources, which can be invested in providing more benefits to those members, which in turn should encourage even more deacons to join. Members are the principal source of volunteers to carry on the work of the organization. Membership growth also enhances the impact of advocacy efforts.

For all of these reasons, growing the membership of ADC is a key ingredient in building organizational capacity. This includes:

- reaching out proactively to all Canadian deacons to encourage them to join and demonstrate the tangible benefits of belonging;
- encouraging parishes and dioceses to provide financial support for their deacons to belong to ADC, and to join themselves;
- making membership enrollment and renewal as easy as possible; and
- connecting regularly with all current, former, and potential members.

There is obviously a close, mutually supportive relationship among membership, communications, and programming.

Having emphasized the role of membership, for both financial and non-financial reasons, some important caveats should be borne in mind. In Strategic Priority D, the limits and risks of relying too heavily on membership to underpin revenue were noted. On the non-financial side, the question needs to be asked whether ADC's programming and advocacy efforts ought to be aimed solely or primarily at members, or whether they are for all Canadian deacons. Membership, as they say, has its privileges, and ADC needs to enhance its member benefits for reasons of pragmatic self-interest. But at the same time, the work of ADC clearly does – and ought to continue to – yield benefits for all deacons, and for the cause of *diakonia*. As additional programs and activities are developed, the question will need to be asked and answered, on a case-by-case basis, which ones are for members only, and which are open to all deacons.

Current Status Assessment

ADC's annual membership has fluctuated in recent years, usually approaching the level of ≤100 paid members (or less than a quarter of all vocational deacons in Canada). Half-way through 2024, in spite of increased communication efforts, membership renewals are still lagging behind the pace of previous years – despite this being a conference year, which normally results in increased membership.

Membership fees, which are extremely modest, have been to date almost the only source of revenue for the organization. There are options for stand-alone ADC membership or a joint membership with the Association of Episcopal Deacons in the United States. Most memberships are paid for by individual deacons. Some dioceses pay for their deacons to belong to ADC, or take out a diocesan membership.

To date, the principal benefit of membership has been to receive the twice-yearly *Salt and Light* newsletter. This year, a discount on the cost of registration for the triennial conference, equivalent to the value of a membership, has been offered as an incentive. There are occasionally other benefits, such as access to professional development opportunities.

One limiting factor on maximizing membership has been the cumbersome manual process for processing renewals and new memberships. This is not only a barrier for users, but also gets in the way of efficient and effective customer service management.

The ADC board recently approved a very modest increase in membership fees, effective in 2025. As part of the transition to registered charity status, the board has also been working on a revised membership category structure.

As part of the visioning and strategy process, a Membership Task Force has been created to address some of the challenges outlined above. Some excellent early work has been done on several fronts, including:

- developing additional member benefits; and
- preparing to pilot an automated, integrated, online membership management system.

It is essential that this work continue and bear fruit, if ADC is to expand its capacity sufficiently to achieve the aspirations in this plan.

Recommendations for Action	**Short**	**Medium**	**Long**
1. Make the Membership Task Force a permanent standing committee of ADC; connect it closely with the Executive and Communications Committee. Recruit experienced assistance in membership management. Continue efforts to identify, develop and implement additional "value-added" membership benefits. Liaise closely with the work being done to redevelop the website, including the creation of a "members-only" area, and other "programming" initiatives discussed under Strategic Pillar A above. Make strategic, intentional decisions about which new initiatives are designed as benefits for members only, and which are available to, and have positive impacts for, all Canadian deacons. Conduct research into the experiences of other membership-based professional organizations, to mine their learnings about changing trends in membership loyalty patterns, and how to respond to them.	✓	✓	
2. Develop and implement an annual cycle of communications to current and former members, and to <u>all</u> Canadian deacons, to encourage them to join ADC. Be more proactive with membership renewals (using the new membership software). Consider alternative strategies for this work, e.g. a "phone tree" to connect all Canadian deacons. Support volunteer communications efforts with some paid professional help.	✓	✓	

3. Implement the proposal for a pilot project using a free membership management software platform. Conduct an evaluation after the first year, and make further adjustments, eventually evolving to a system that is sufficiently sophisticated to integrate registration, renewal, payment transactions and receipts, and membership contact database. Ensure provision is made for individuals without reliable access to high-speed internet connectivity.	✓	✓	
4. Consult with Directors of Deacons to encourage policies and practices that optimize contributions by parishes and dioceses to support their deacons' memberships in ADC, and to ensure that no deacons are excluded from the organization due to financial circumstances. Incentivize parishes and dioceses to become members themselves, by offering them specific benefits.		✓	✓
5. Explore other ways of expanding ADC membership, e.g.: • offering free ADC memberships to all newly ordained deacons in their first year of ministry; • encouraging "friends of the diaconate" to become associate members; etc.	✓	✓	
6. Over the longer term, explore possibilities for ADC to become a recognized professional association for Canadian vocational deacons, to which all deacons are expected or required to belong. This would not only generate significantly increased membership revenue, but could open the door to many other opportunities; e.g. tax deductions for membership dues; the potential for national church funding; perhaps fees for specialized services – such as if ADC became the repository of a system for tracking accredited professional development courses taken by individual deacons across the country.			✓

II BUILD INTERNAL CAPACITY	
F. Attract and deploy more engaged and committed volunteers from both inside and beyond ADC.	1. Expand volunteer recruitment throughout and beyond ADC and the diaconate. 2. Identify specific needs and skills; match with potential volunteers. 3. Develop succession plans for key positions. 4. Secure funding source for part-time paid administrator.

Background & Rationale

As has already been made clear, if ADC is to have a hope of achieving the ambitious goals it has set for itself through this visioning and strategy process, it will need to find ways to increase the resources available to it: both financial resources and human resources. Having already discussed the former, this section of the plan turns its attention to the latter.

For the foreseeable future, most of ADC's human resource capacity will come from volunteers. Volunteer recruitment and management has become a sophisticated area of expertise in not-for-profit sectors, including the church. It is no longer sufficient to welcome people who show up on an ad hoc basis. The organization must be able to: (1) identify what skills and competencies it most needs now and in the future, and (2) intentionally and proactively seek and attract motivated individuals who match those profiles – both within and beyond its own membership.

In order to make a significant breakthrough to the next stage of its growth and development as an organization, it will be essential for ADC to supplement an expanded and enriched roster of skilled and committed volunteers with at least a part-time paid administrator. This will be particularly crucial as the organization seeks to substantially upgrade its technical infrastructure in such areas as online presence, customer relations management, and member services. This is both a critical challenge and a timely one – in terms of both need and opportunity.

The approval of ADC's application for charitable status should present an ideal occasion to seek potential funders who would be open to a business plan that seeks shorter-term support to engage an administrator whose efforts, over the longer term, will generate revenue to help pay for their position, while at the same time enhancing organizational activity and impact.

Current Status Assessment

Over the past few years, ADC has made significant progress in its evolution as an organization, including renaming and rebranding, articulating its vision and mission, attaining not-for-profit and (hopefully soon) charitable status, and undertaking the present quite comprehensive strategic renewal process.[10] All this has been accomplished with God's help, and thanks to the selfless efforts of a relatively small number of very dedicated volunteers, who have remained fairly consistent over an extended period of time.

[10] At the same time, there is a need to preserve and make more widely accessible the history of the organization prior to these changes, including going back to the early roots of the order of deacons in the Anglican Deaconesses (whose archives are preserved at the Centre for Christian Studies).

Not surprisingly, and in common with much of the rest of the church, ADC is currently experiencing the effects of seeing many of its most committed volunteers aging and/or burning out. Symptoms include individuals, for entirely valid reasons, being unwilling to make new commitments, and/or finding themselves unable to follow through on existing ones. Resulting challenges include lack of capacity to undertake essential projects, difficulty finding appropriate successors for mission-critical roles, and the sensitive matter of helping valued long-time contributors navigate the transition to a less intense level of involvement.

In the 2022 survey of Canadian deacons, 80 of 168 respondents self-identified as willing to have further contact with ADC. That is an encouragingly high ratio. A number identified specific areas where they would be willing to get involved. Ironically, lack of capacity has so far hindered efforts to follow up with most of these people. There have been a few tentative attempts to recruit new volunteers for particular tasks, and one or two notable successes. It is absolutely critical that this work be undertaken in an energetic and systematic way, going forward.

Recommendations for Action	**Short**	**Medium**	**Long**
1. Create a new standing committee for systematic volunteer recruitment and deployment. Start by identifying and publicizing high priority skills and competencies needed, and seeking to fill them from all known sources.	✓	✓	✓
2. Review all expressions of interest from Canadian deacons through the survey, match them to the needs assessment, and follow up as appropriate with all these individuals.	✓		
3. Canvass Directors of Deacons for potential volunteers among deacons they know with particular skill sets.	✓		
4. Reach beyond the Canadian diaconate, into other areas of the Anglican church, ecumenical partners, related fields such as social justice, and volunteerism agencies to expand the pool of potential volunteers and board members. Place ads in free “help wanted” listings. Include volunteer opportunities in all public awareness materials, and on the website. Encourage Directors of Deacons and deacons to tap into their own networks beyond the diaconate.	✓	✓	
5. In addition to a generic role description and expectations for board members, ensure that each board member understands the particular “portfolio” for which they are responsible, and the two-way connections beyond the board and the organization which they are expected to facilitate. Develop job profiles and succession plans for all key volunteer positions.		✓	

6. Develop a job profile and business case for a part-time paid administrator, to be funded for up to three years through grants and donations, on the basis that the position could gradually become at least partially self-sufficient. Identify and approach potential funders for this initiative. The role of the part-time administrator should encompass, among other things: membership database management, website maintenance and development, communications support, and fund-raising support. Explore the possibility of getting started with a summer student program, or offering an opportunity for one or more individuals who are in discernment for the diaconate to gain employment and experience in this way, as part of their formation. These people might also undertake the historical research project mentioned earlier.	✓	✓	✓

F) AFTERWORD

While considerable time and energy on the part of many deacons from across Canada – as well as some very helpful lay leaders, presbyters (priests) and bishops – has gone into the preparation of this strategic plan, ADC is deeply conscious that this human effort and commitment is by no means sufficient for the realization of any of the strategic objectives and goals articulated therein.

If ADC is to realize its hopes and dreams of strengthening the ministry of deacons in the Anglican Church of Canada, and encouraging and challenging our whole church to live out its collective call to *diakonia*, then all of our plans and efforts need to be spiritually grounded in the ministry and witness of Jesus, crucified and resurrected, and enabled and empowered in and through the Holy Spirit.

We call upon all future ADC board members and volunteers, every deacon who serves in the Anglican Church of Canada, and all those who share our diaconal vision, to spend intentional and regular time praying for the needs, cares and concerns of the world and seeking God's wisdom and strength to enable them to serve faithfully in their own particular callings. We also ask for prayers for Anglican Deacons Canada and the diaconal ministry of the Church in all places (local, diocesan, provincial, national, ecumenical and international), that these expressions of the one holy and apostolic Church may also be faithful and responsive to God's call.

The Rev'd Lisa Chisholm-Smith
President, Anglican Deacons Canada

This report is aptly described in the Foreword as "by and for" Anglican Deacons Canada: its mission, strength, and future. In the mandate given by ADC's Board of Directors, the Strategic Planning Committee was very ably guided by Canon (Lay) Ian Alexander who served as our consultant and facilitator. His commitment to research and consultation, analysis of findings, and creating a framework for moving things forward has been huge, and we are enormously grateful for his dedication to this work.

It must first be recognized that the entire undertaking is richly grounded in the highest of regard for the diaconate as a full, equal, and distinct order of ministry in the Church. Deacons are called – indeed "ordered" – to model, enable and multiply the *diakonia* of all the baptized. In the face of so much suffering and brokenness and despair in the world, the servant ministry of the Church is more urgent than ever. This report, along with a shared theological statement on the diaconate in the Anglican Church of Canada, and concomitant revisions to the Ordinal – both of the latter to be brought to General Synod 2025 – are indeed timely.

This report is born out of much deep, careful listening to the lived experience of deacons, conversations with Directors of Deacons or their equivalents, and consultations with the bishops of our Church. It is a hefty report! Two strategic pillars – one focussed on extending the external impact of diaconal ministry and the other on building internal capacity for the work of ADC – are supported by six priorities, twenty-four objectives and thirty -six recommendations for action. "It's a lot," writes our consultant, but we hasten to add, "an exciting lot"! In its mission of educating the Church about *diakonia*, supporting deacons in their ministry, accompanying those discerning a call to this ministry, and guiding their training and formation, ADC will be well supported by the directions set forth in this report, positioning it for a strong and vibrant future.

While this strategic plan is “by and for” ADC, many will see it as gift to our entire Church, given its commitment to serving God’s mission in the world, and working for the day when all people everywhere will rejoice that “Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.” Truly on that day, “Truth shall spring up from the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven” (Psalm 85:10-11).

The Most Rev’d Fred Hiltz
Assisting Bishop, Diocese of Moosonee
13th Primate, Anglican Church of Canada (2007-2019)

APPENDIX A
CURRENT DRAFT OF SHARED THEOLOGICAL STATEMENT ON THE DIACONATE

This is Draft 5 of the statement. It was prepared for initial consultation with deacons, including at the triennial conference of Anglican Deacons Canada, held at the Sorrento Centre this June. The Writing Group is currently working on Draft 6, for further consultation with stakeholders through the fall and winter, before a final draft is offered for consideration by the Council of General Synod and General Synod itself in 2025.

Preamble[11]

The following statement on the theology and ministry of deacons is the result of collaboration between Faith Worship and Ministry (FWM) and Anglican Deacons Canada (ADC), and of wide consultation with deacons, bishops, theological educators and ecumenical partners. In 2022, ADC sponsored a national survey of Anglican deacons, which revealed significant diversity between and within dioceses respecting both the function and understanding of the diaconate. Many expressed a desire for greater consistency. This statement is presented for adoption by General Synod as a shared theological basis for local decisions concerning such matters as discernment, formation, placement, ministry descriptions, accountability and compensation.

Why does this matter at this time? The recovery of a robust diaconate promises renewed relevance for the Church in a fractured world. As the Church reclaims its outward-facing missional identity, deacons will ignite and mobilize the People of God to fulfill their baptismal ministry not only in the praise of God, but in service of the world.

Statement on the Diaconate

Deacons, with bishops and presbyters, belong to the threefold order of ministry which characterizes the Anglican Communion and much of the wider Church. The diaconate emerged alongside the episcopate and presbyterate as one of three distinct streams of ministry, each rooted in its own biblical imperatives for faithfulness to the will and nature of God.

The ministry of diakonia is entrusted to the whole Church, and is rooted in the very nature of God and the example of Jesus Christ. The covenant between God and the people based in the Law of Moses reveals a God of mercy, who shows and demands special care for the poor, the marginalized, the weak, the bereaved, and the foreigner. This concern continues to find expression in the psalms and in the preaching of the prophets, who repeatedly call the people back to this vision of a society where the weakest are honoured and protected (Isaiah 42.1-4). Similarly, Jesus befriended those on the edges of society, preaching good news to the poor,

[11] Note that the Preamble assumes consultation which has not yet occurred.

recovery of sight to the blind, freedom to the oppressed, and the year of the Lord's favour (Isaiah 61.1-4, Luke 4.16-21). The Church's diaconal calling is thus a direct expression of the fundamental mission of God to our world.

All Christians are baptized into Christ's diakonia. Some are called, equipped, and ordained as deacons to serve as living symbols of Christ's own diakonia. They are to show what it is to bring the light of Christ where there is darkness, to recognize and respond to injustice and need, to organize and distribute resources for their remedy, to bring the brokenness and hunger of the world to the attention of the faithful for prayer and healing, and to invite the whole People of God into the service of the gospel for the sake of the world.[12] This is the consecrated, ancient and proper work of deacons.

Over the centuries, however, as the boundaries of the western Church overlapped increasingly with those of mainstream society, the focus of diaconal ministry began to shift inward toward the Church's internal needs and life. The diaconate was eventually reduced to an explicitly inferior and temporary status, oriented to the perfecting of skills for presbyteral ministry.[13] This is evident in the ordinal of the Book of Common Prayer (1962), which presents deacons in an assisting role in worship, with limited authority to preach, and a ministry directed primarily to the care of children, the poor, and the indigent.

More recently, we have experienced global shifts towards secularity, changes in societal values, and diversity in religious belief and practice, along with a growing distrust in institutional religion, and a reduction in the Church's reach and influence. Together these factors underscore both the opportunity and the urgent need for the Church to reclaim its God-given mission to the world outside its doors. An ecumenical renewal of our ecclesiology has highlighted the responsibility of all the baptized to strengthen the Church's capacity to witness and serve on the edge of the dominant culture. Many Christian denominations are rediscovering the diaconate as an order particularly suited to help the Church meet this sacred challenge.

So far from being an inferior order of apprenticeship for the presbyterate, the diaconate is recovering its origins as a full, equal, and distinct order of ministry: full, because deacons are in their own right "ministers of Jesus Christ;" equal, because what they do is of equal importance to presbyteral and episcopal ministry; and distinct, because it is different.

More than any other order of ministry, deacons inhabit the uncomfortable intersection between the worshiping Church, and the world it is called to serve:

To the world, deacons represent the Church. They are emissaries, giving witness to gospel hope, embodying Christ's compassion, solidarity, and protest. Deacons are particularly oriented to the needs of those who are most vulnerable or at greatest risk, especially the poor, the sick, the disempowered, and those at the mercy of systemic inequities.

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[12] The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada. *The Iona Report: The Diaconate in the Anglican Church of Canada*. (Toronto: 2016), pp. 17-18.

[13] Various formulations of the Anglican ordinal are based on the English BCP (1662), which includes a prayer that the new deacons "may so well behave themselves in this inferior office, that they may be found worthy to be called unto the higher ministries in thy Church." Our own BCP (1962) retains a rubric that deacons should prove themselves "sufficiently experienced in the things belonging to the Ministry" that they may be admitted to the Priesthood. The Lambeth Conference of 1968 called for the removal of any reference to the diaconate as an "inferior" office.

To the Church, deacons interpret the needs, concerns and hopes of the world and its creatures. They are emissaries, who call and assist the Church to minister faithfully to those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, and bring to the Church words of encouragement, practical wisdom and rebuke. Deacons participate in the councils of the Church in order to advance its diaconal ministry.

Deacons exercise their ministry directly under the authority of their bishop, who may commission them to assist or represent the bishop in matters of wider concern to the Church and world. The bishop may also assign deacons to a parish or parishes, in whose life and worship they participate while mobilizing the gathered community's diaconal ministry. Within the parish, deacons function under the authority delegated by the bishop to the local incumbent.

The roles assigned to deacons within the liturgy are a direct reflection of their ministry in the world as heralds and servants. These typically include proclaiming the gospel, preaching, leading the prayers of the people, attending the altar (setting and clearing the holy table), administering the wine or, if necessary, the bread, and sending the gathered community back into the world.

This renewed theology of the diaconate is reflected in changing ordination rites, which situate all ordained ministry within the context of baptism and the ministry of the whole people of God. Deacons are to equip the saints for this ministry. They are selected for their compelling manifestation of the distinctive gifts needed to inspire and mobilize the faithful to fulfil the fundamental mission of God to the world. They remind us who and whose we are.

APPENDIX B
CURRENT DRAFT OF BEST PRACTICES IN DIACONAL MINISTRY

The work on best practices is ongoing, and is deeply informed by a review of existing material from dioceses across the country. Early drafts of content were shared with the ADC conference in June.
Here is a brief summary of the approach being taken, and the areas being covered.

Principles guiding the work:

- Rooted in the theological statement.
- A list of practices to address chafing points identified by deacons and others in the Strategic Planning survey and process.
- Document to be commended to the Church for study and implementation as possible.
- Best practices are stated briefly, without "mediation," and where necessary, supplemented by commentary.

Content areas to be covered:

- Discernment
- Formation
- Placement, Licensing, Compensation, managing transitions in parish or episcopal leadership
- Governance
- Nomenclature
- The deacon's role in the liturgy

APPENDIX C:
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The following individuals served on the Strategic Planning Committee for Anglican Deacons Canada's visioning and strategy project. We are most grateful to all of them for contributing their time, talent, expertise and experience, and for their expressions and demonstrations of passionate commitment to the cause of *diakonia* and diaconal ministry.

Canon (Lay) Ian Alexander (Consultant/Facilitator)	Lay canon of the Diocese of Islands & Inlets (British Columbia); Prolocutor of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada; independent management consultant
The Ven. Kyn Barker (Chair)	Deacon, Parish of St. Matthew the Apostle; Coordinator of Deacons, Diocese of Toronto; Secretary, ADC
The Rev'd Earl Campbell	Deacon, Parish of St. Dunstan of Canterbury, Diocese of Toronto
The Rev'd Lisa Chisholm-Smith	Anglican Chaplain at Queen's University out of St. James Kingston; Deacon, Parish of St. James, Kingston, Diocese of Ontario; President, ADC
The Rev'd Elizabeth December-Lovell	Deacon, Parish of Julian of Norwich, Diocese of Ottawa
The Rev'd Krista Dowdeswell	Deacon, Cathedral Church of the Redeemer, Diocese of Calgary; Safe Workplace Strategist, City of Calgary; Board member, ADC
The Rev'd Canon Nancy Ford	Deacon, Diocese of Islands and Inlets; Past President, ADC
The Most Rev'd Fred Hiltz	Former Primate, Anglican Church of Canada; Assisting Bishop, Diocese of Moosonee
The Rev'd Jeffrey Preiss*	Deacon, Diocese of New Westminster; Director of Development & Communications, BC Crisis Centre
The Rev'd Cheryl Rafuse*	Deacon, Parish of Hatchet Lake/Terence Bay; Coordinator of the Community of Deacons of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island; former Board member, ADC
The Very Rev'd Ansley Tucker	Dean Emerita, Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria; Director of Deacons, Diocese of Islands & Inlets; Chair of the Drafting Group
The Rev'd Steve Zytveld	Chaplain, Carlington Community Chaplaincy; Deacon, Parish of St. Barnabas, Diocese of Ottawa

*Participated for part of the committee's term.