# The History of Diaconal Ministry

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The history of diaconal ministry, rooted in Jesus' own ministry is an exciting one. It reflects dimensions of the self-emptying of power, the empowerment of others, responsiveness, flexibility, practicality and a sharing of Jesus' vision of community. "The patriarchal cultural paradigm was replaced by the vision of a community where people lived together in love and service."[1] Preparation for this expression of ministry has never been overly concerned with questions of role or status. Instead, the educational programme has consistently emphasized the development of practical skills and knowledge which could be used to meet the immediate needs of a changing world and the church. The nature of diaconal ministry has always been: a teaching ministry; an enabling style of leadership; a response to particular needs in the church; nurturing of the community of believers; and participation in liturgical leadership through preaching, blessing, and serving the communal meal. Education for diaconal ministry has constantly evolved. Its content and expression have always been informed by the needs of the church and the specific tasks being performed by each generation of diaconal ministers.

## A. IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT

In the gospels the concept of ministry personified by Jesus is *diakonia*, a ministry of service. Central to it is the self-emptying of power. "Ministry transforms leadership from power over others to empowerment of others... The abdication of power over has nothing to do with servility. Rather ministry means exercising power in a new way as a means of liberation of one another."[2] The recovery of the meaning of diakonia is important because it embodies the essence of Jesus' teaching ministry.

Integral to the style of Jesus' ministry was empowerment of others which meant the living out of a new vision of community where people lived together in love and service. This gave birth to the early creedal statement which declared, "so there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles, between slaves and free men, between men and women, you are all one in union with Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28)[3]

The earliest Christians tried to follow Jesus' example of breaking down cultural/societal barriers: discrimination on grounds of race, sex, status, and religion. Many of the parables, stories of healing, and recorded events in Jesus' life and ministry reflect this directly.

New converts who gathered for worship in house churches were led by both women and men. "It was recognized that different members of the community would receive different gifts and exercise different leadership functions, but in principle all members of the community had access to spiritual power and communal leadership roles. God's gifts were not dependent upon religious background, societal role, or gender and race."[4]

With the emergence of the three-fold ministry—the offices of deacon, presbyter and bishop—the roles were loosely defined and often interchangeable.[5] Early mention of the role of deacon in Acts 6 intimates that the function of the first deacons encompassed responsibilities later ascribed to presbyters and bishops.[6] The Romans passage that names Phoebe deacon, makes clear that women as well as men were acting as deacons in the early church.[7]

The choice of names for people who functioned as co-workers in ministry reflected the intended humbleness of the role. *"Diakonos,* from which the word deacon is derived usually referred to the table servant, though it also applied to menial workers and slaves. *Episcopos,* from which bishop is derived, generally referred to minor employees such as overseers in the building trade, or in government service."[8]

When Phoebe is given the title *diakonos* it is the same word used by Paul to describe himself and other male leaders. When applied to men, "...scholars translate it (diakonos) as 'minister', 'missionary,' or 'servant', whereas in the case of Phoebe they render it as deaconess."[9] Many exegetes (translators) have down-played the significance of this title as it applies to Phoebe. Those who are named *diakonos* "appear to be not only itinerant missionaries, but leaders in local congregations... (they also) served in a recognized official capacity as teachers and preachers in the Christian community.[10] The text of Romans 16:1-2 does not indicate any limitations of the office of Phoebe by prescribed gender roles. "She is... the deacon... of the whole church at Cenchrae."[11]

Phoebe is also named by Paul as *prostatis* and *synergos.* "...prostatis is usually translated as 'helper' or 'patroness' even though in the literature of the time it has the connotation of leading officer, president, governor or superintendent."[12]

Synergos, meaning co-worker is used by Paul to describe those who have devoted themselves to the diakonia (service) of the saints (cf. 1 Cor 3:5,9; 11 Cor 6:1,4; 1 Cor 16:15). The texts give no indication that Paul's missionary co-workers were

dependent on or subordinate to him other than the five he named (Erastus, Mark, Timothy, Titus, Tychicus) as being subject to his instructions.[13]
Diakonos, applied to Phoebe includes her role as teacher, preacher, leader of the Christian community, helper of Paul. "Most likely she was the bearer of the letter which Paul sent to the community at Ephesus. She would there become a deacon and leader among the people, as she was in her previous home of Cenchrae."[14]

1 E.S. Fiorenza, in *Women of Spirit*, ed. R. Ruether & E. McLaughlin, Simon & Shuster, 1979. p. 32
2 Ruether, Rosemary Radford, *Sexism & God Talk*, Beacon Press, 1983, p. 207
3 Good News Bible, Canadian Bible Society, 1976
4 Fiorenza, Elizabeth Schussler, *In Memory of Her*, Crossroad Publishing Co., New York, 1983 p. 286
5 Nunnally-Cox, Janice, *Fore-Mothers*, Seabury Press, 1981, p. 127
6 ibid, p. 133
7 Romans 16: 1-2
8 The Common Catechism, Johannes Feiner & Lukas Vischer, ed., Seabury, New York 1975, p. 338
9 E.S. Fiorenza in *Women of Spirit*, p. 35
10 ibid p. 36
11 ibid p. 36
12 ibid p. 36
13 ibid p. 35
14 Nunnally-Cox, Janice, *Fore-Mothers*, Seabury Press, 1979 p. 134

## B. IN THE EARLY CHURCH

By the end of the first century definite changes occurred in the roles of deacon, presbyter and bishop. They were no longer interchangeable but became hierarchical. Two factors contributed to the change. The vision of Jesus' new community diminished in the eyes of the early Christian movement as it waited in vain for the second coming. Then, gradually, the prevailing pre-Christian social norms and customs of male domination took over. From the pastoral epistles (eg 1 Tim 5:1) we know that women presbyters were prohibited from teaching and having authority over men and were therefore denied eligibility for the office of bishop.[15]

Restrictions were placed on women deacons that only allowed them to teach other women, prepare women for baptism, visit the sick, poor, imprisoned, widows and orphans, and serve communal meals to the women. They were consecrated by the bishop and functioned as the vital connecting link between the bishop and the women of the congregation.

By the fourth century, Constantinople had become the centre of diaconal work. It is recorded that John Chrysostom, bishop of that city (then the eastern capitol of the Roman Empire) had forty deaconesses in his church. A most famous deaconess of that period was Olympias, a wealthy widow, who was known throughout Constantinople for her bravery and genius.

Some time around 600 A.D., the early diaconate with its emphasis on service in the church and the world began to disappear. It was never formally abolished, but simply fell into disuse during the period when monastic life became popular for women. Some historians suggest that the emphasis on the withdrawal of contact with the world in monastic life made the diaconate seem less relevant as a form of Christian service. Others suggest that women who were interested in service were attracted to cloistered life because of its opportunities for learning and serious scholarship. Whatever the reasons, the diaconate began to disappear. By 700 A.D. it had entirely dropped out of the Western World. In Constantinople, the office still formally existed in 1200 A.D. but it was available nowhere else in the Orient.

15 Fiorenza, Elizabeth Schussler, *In Memory of Her*, p. 290

## C. EUROPE IN THE 1800's

As the centuries passed, there were some serious attempts made to revive the diaconate in Belgium, Holland and France, but information on this stage in the history of the diaconate is scarce. It wasn't until the 1800's that there was documented evidence that attempts to reinstate the office of the deaconess were successful. The revival appears to have been a response to two very specific needs: the need for humanitarian service to people who had suffered the social upheavals of the Industrial Revolution, and the desire of an increasing number of young women to play a significant part in the activities of the Church. In 1836 in Kaiserswerth, Germany, a young Lutheran pastor, Theodor Fliedner and his wife, Friederike Münster, bought an old castle and started a training school and educational centre for deaconesses. In May, 1836, Fleidner and a few friends signed the Statutes of the Rhenish-Westphalian Deaconess Society and sent out a call for young women who wanted to serve God through a ministry of nursing, teaching and social work. Fraulein Gertrude Reichardt became the first superintendent of both the training school and the hospital it served, and was the first deaconess at Kaiserswerth with the title of "Sister".

The education of such deaconesses was very specific, and was designed to equip them for clearly-defined work in hospitals and humanitarian agencies. They received instruction in theology, Bible and religious education, participated in the community life of worship and daily Bible Study, and were trained to be nurses through supervised work in the community's hospital. Women were attracted to the Deaconess Order because of its unique combination of practical training and meaningful service. Within three years after its purchase, an orphanage and a shelter for persons who were then referred to as "feeble-minded epileptics" had been added to Kaiserswerth. By the late nineteenth century, Kaiserswerth supported a wide range of social service including many specialized hospitals, social service programmes and schools. Based on the Roman Catholic model of a nursing sisterhood, the education and working conditions of the deaconesses were totally under the direction of the Mother House. Kaiserswerth determined and distributed the amount of stipend, set the conditions for all appointments, and decreed that deaconess work would concentrate on nursing and the care of children.

Later in the 1800's, the diaconate was also revived in Great Britain. In 1861 Elizabeth Catherine Ferard, who had been trained at Kaiserswerth, became the first deaconess in the Anglican Church. In that day, the definition of a deaconess was "a bit of a minister, with a dash of teacher and a dash of social worker". In 1902 the Wesleyan Church in England formally adopted the Wesleyan Deaconess Order as a part of its own work, and established a training school. The period of study was two

years, and during that time the women studied Bible, church history, psychology, doctrine, Greek, homiletics, and social welfare work. At the end of the training, they were recognized as probation deaconesses and were appointed to field work for three months. If their field placements proved successful, they were then eligible to become full-fledged deaconesses. This school, with its combination of academics and practical training, continues to be the place where most British Methodist deaconesses have been educated.

In the British diaconate there was no Mother House or hierarchical structure. The diaconate functioned as an association of independent women affiliated with one another as would individuals in any profession. The diaconate in England quickly expanded and established a pattern of ministry. It was quite different from the diaconate in Germany. In England, deaconesses worked mainly in congregational settings. They often functioned as assistants to parish ministers, or worked in teaching or evangelism jobs. In addition, a large percentage of them did inner city work, functioning as Church-based social workers.

## D. IN CANADA IN THE METHODIST AND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES

The diaconal model of service quickly spread to North America. By 1890, some Canadian women and clergy were mildly agitating for the establishment of such work in Canada. There had been a few women serving in Methodist Mission Work in Canada as early as 1876, and they had made a great contribution to the communities where they were stationed. In 1893 the Deaconess Aid Society was established in Toronto and in 1894, the Methodist Deaconess Orders were instituted. At the same time, the Presbyterian Church began formulating a similar kind of expression of ministry. In 1897, the Ewart Missionary and Deaconess Training Home was established in Toronto, and in 1909, the Presbyterian General Assembly established a Deaconess Order.

The Presbyterians quickly circulated the entrance requirements for the new Deaconess Order, stating that it was open to "godly women of mature faith between the ages of twenty-two and thirty-five who had passed High School entrance and who would take the prescribed training in the Deaconess Home." Applicants were told that their activities as deaconesses would include meeting the sick, lonely, bereaved and troubled; finding employment for people; looking after travelers, and conducting Sunday Schools and clubs for women and children. All members of the order were expected to wear a uniform, and in some cases, live in a supervised home where they were required to do additional work both in the surrounding community and within the deaconess residence. The promotional material of this original Presbyterian Deaconess Order describes its members as excellent housekeepers, knowledgeable in music, able to work as religious teachers and to take Sunday services when necessary.

The educational preparation for work as a Methodist or Presbyterian deaconess was both rigorous and practical. The Methodist Training School offered two courses: a general two-year course which emphasized social service and religious education and was required for entrance into the Deaconess Order, and a missionary course for candidates for the Women's Missionary Society. Students in both programmes took courses at Victoria University, the Canadian School of Missions, the Social Service Department of the University of Toronto, and at the Methodist Training School itself. The areas studied were: Bible, Philosophy of the Christian Religion, History and Missions, Religious Education, Sociology and Social Service, Homiletics and Evangelism, Expression and Household Science. In addition, candidates for the deaconess order were required to pass a test on a prescribed list of books each year.

The Presbyterian Missionary and Deaconess Training House offered a remarkably similar programme. The full course covered two sessions of six months each, and each session was sub-divided into two terms. Several of the courses required additional practical training and this was usually done when the academic term ended in April. Students in the Presbyterian programme could take the General Course, the General Course with a Social Service option, or the General Course with a Household Science option. Course areas included study of the English Bible, Christian Doctrine, Church History, Mission, Religious Education, Social Service, Medicine and Surgery, Voice Training, Story-Telling, and Public Speaking. Practical training was provided throughout the term of study in four areas: Religious Education, Social Service, Church and Parish Work, and Medicine and Surgery. The Calendar and publicity materials state that a university training was the best preparation for participation both in the General Course and in the General Course with Social Service option. Because of this, all candidates were required to have a minimum of university matriculation or its equivalent (that is, a Teacher's Certificate, a Nurse's Diploma or a Business Certificate with a record of three year's High School standing), followed by successful work experience. If a candidate lacked an equivalent to university matriculation, she could present a case individually and ask for special consideration of the Studies Committee of the School.

Residential living was a requirement of both the Methodist and Presbyterian educational programmes, and continued to be a part of the educational preparation in the United Church until fairly recently. Educators and administrators of the educational programme firmly believed that it was through working, learning and worshipping together that students began to form their identity as deaconesses. Being with others who were also struggling with what it meant to be a deaconess in the service of God was seen as essential to education and growth. Also living in the schools' residences were students who were training to be missionaries, and students who were from other countries. Thus, through the residential experience, students in the educational programme for diaconal work were put in touch with the concerns of Christians around the world, and were given an appreciation of the missionary work of the Church.

## E. IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

When Church Union was projected, those responsible for both schools worked hard to establish one strong united educational centre for deaconesses. Studies and negotiations for the joining of the schools began in 1924. Each school submitted to the first

General Council "a concise statement as to its history, assets, liabilities, incomes and expenditure for the last three years. persons employed, equipment, present work and requirements." Each school was also asked to make recommendations regarding amalgamation procedures for the coming year, the first year of Union. Both schools recommended that for the current year the two training centres be conducted separately, but in close cooperation with each other, particularly regarding courses of study. This was approved by the Council.

At the Second General Council a rather important recommendation from the joint Boards of the schools was passed, and the functions of training deaconesses and directing the work of the two deaconess orders were separated. Both schools believed that training and administration were distinct functions and would be given more attention if they were performed by different bodies within the Church. At this time, a request was also made that a committee be appointed to study the whole question of trained workers in the new United Church. Where were such workers most needed and what particular skills would help them most in their work? This was to be the first of many studies which the United Church would conduct on the role of "non-ordained professionals" in the Church.

Concerning the unifying of the Methodist and Presbyterian Training Schools, the following recommendation was passed at the second General Council:

> "That there be formed and developed at one of the present training centres in Toronto, the United Church Training School, under the control of a Board of Management; this Board to be subject to the supervision of the Board of Education of the United Church, the school being considered one of the educational centres of the Church, for the training of women for such departments of Church as may be approved from time to time by the General Council".

Though the wording stated that the new school was to be one of the educational centres for deaconesses, the United Church Training School was to remain, for almost fifty years as the main centre for the preparation of deaconesses. The pre-union policy of each school was continued to secure instruction "through co-operation with the Theological Colleges of the Church, the Social Service Department of the University of Toronto, and the Canadian School of Missions".

The formal union of the schools became effective on October 1, 1926, and the Methodist School at 135 St. Clair Avenue West was chosen as the location. The mechanics of the separation of the Order from the School were completed at the same time. Previous to Union, in both Churches, the Deaconess Order and the Training School had been under the same Board and the Principal of the School was ex-officio superintendent of the Order. At this time the supervision of the new Order and of other trained workers was separated from that of the Training School and was vested in an Inter-Board Committee on Women Workers of the United Church staffed by a full-time secretary.

The curricula of the two schools proved relatively easy to amalgamate. The emphasis in the new school continued to be on training women for a variety of roles: pastoral assistants, Christian educators. missionaries, inner city workers, nurses, Church secretaries, home visitors, and heads of orphanages or other church sponsored social agencies. Academic studies and practical work continued to focus on the development of the very specific skills and knowledge which were required to meet the present and evolving needs of society and the Church.

In 1930 the United Church Training School completed negotiations with Emmanuel College and signed an affiliation agreement which was to last for many years. The Council of Emmanuel College at its 1930 meeting passed the following resolution:

> "That having received the consent of the Senate and the Board of Regents of Victoria University and also the General Council of the United Church, this Council do now declare the United Church Training School affiliated with Emmanuel College, in accordance with terms herewith appended.
>
> 1. That the 1 year course for university graduates shall be of a standard similar to that of first year work in theology.
>
> 2. That the 2 year course for matriculants be of a standard similar to that of undergraduate courses of a university.
>
> Also, that Emmanuel College continue to give its services to the Training School as in the past."

In addition to High School matriculation, the Training School continued to require for admission into its two-year course, training and experience in a profession such as teaching, nursing or business. In 1945 fifty percent of the students at the school were university graduates. More recently, the percentage has varied from year to year, but the average over the last several years would be remarkably similar. Emmanuel professors continued to teach classes at the Training School, and supervised field work was provided for all students. The 1930 Calendar statement emphasized the importance of providing practical experience for students. "Care is taken in the assignments made and the School is under obligation to ministers who undertake supervision and who report at the end of the session on the student's work. The Church is being asked by the School to make a real contribution to the training of effective leaders."

During the next fifteen years the academic portion of the programme remained relatively unchanged, but several refinements were made to the supervised field work opportunities.

In 1936 a supervisor of field work was appointed to the staff of the School. In 1940 the Principal assumed the responsibilities of field work supervision, an indication of its growing importance in the programme. In 1946, a double system of supervision was initiated, in which students were supervised directly by the minister, or deaconess, or worker in the congregation or agency where they were placed, and were also required to meet for discussion and evaluation sessions with an experienced deaconess or church member who was not directly connected with the placement. That same year, a seminar for reflection on problems in field work became a required part of the curriculum. The next year, the time commitment required for field work was set at four to eight hours per week, and a second semester focusing on field

work research was added to the curriculum. Regular meetings of the field work supervisors were also instituted as a way of facilitating the discussion, evaluation and revision of the processes of effective supervision. These meetings of supervisors, though in a much more intentional and developed form, continue to be an important part of the educational process at the Centre for Christian Studies. All of this work on the practical dimension of education was being done at a time when field work and supervision were receiving little emphasis at those theological colleges training candidates for ordination.

Throughout the 1950's the academic portion of the educational programme for Diaconal Ministers was evaluated and revised several times. During this decade there was great excitement about the role of deaconesses and other women workers in the Church, and in the 1950's the Training School had the largest enrolments in its history. In 1952 there were 44 students, with 27 graduates. In 1953 a report on a revised curriculum was approved, providing for a two-year course for most applicants, a one-year programme for nurses, and field experience for all students during the summer. During the 1950's the admission standards remained the same, although there was considerable pressure put on the School both to accept junior matriculation as the sole requirement, and to provide a course of study which was shorter. Through memorials and correspondence, concern was expressed several times that the present entrance standards were "banning some women who might give important service to the Church" at a time when the whole Church was experiencing a shortage of trained women workers. In 1957 there were twelve graduates from the United Church Training School with eighty available openings. In response to repeated requests to simplify the programme and lower the entrance requirements, the Church conducted an investigation of the need for women workers and of the kind of educational programme which would best equip such women. The survey took several years to conduct, and at its conclusion the admission standards and programme of the Training School were upheld.

As a result of its own internal evaluation process, the United Church Training School began to increase the number of theoretical and academic course offerings, beginning in 1950.

By 1960, seventeen courses were being offered in theology, biblical studies, and church history, in comparison to the eleven courses offered in 1930. Similarly, in 1960 nine courses were offered with an academic or philosophical approach to religious education, courses such as "Philosophy of Christian Education" and "Developmental Aspects of Christian Nurture". In 1930, only two courses of this nature had been available.

At the same time that the Training School was in the process of adding courses to its curriculum, Emmanuel College, in 1954, was seeking approval to institute a Bachelor of Religious Education degree. In 1954 approval was given to begin "a two year post-graduate course of study intended for those who seek to specialize in some form of educational work within the Church, at home, or overseas". The degree granted was changed several years later to a Masters Degree in Religious Education. In 1959 an agreement was approved between the United Church Training School and Emmanuel College whereby the 1959-60 class of UCTS students, if they were college graduates, could enroll in the BRE programme of Emmanuel and the UCTS diploma programme at the same time. Thus, previous graduates of a university could for the first time simultaneously obtain a diploma from the Training School (and with it the right to be designated a deaconess) as well as a B.R.E. from Emmanuel College (and with it the right to do post-graduate studies in theology). One of the results of this arrangement was the separation of degree from non-degree students. It was now possible for field work seminars and community events to be the only activities in which all students shared together. With the finalizing of this agreement with Emmanuel, the expectation was clearly stated that the United Church Training School would "become an institution which normally asks from prospective students a standing of college graduation."

The dual arrangement offered many new opportunities in the area of academic course work. It seemed to work fairly well, although some students spoke of the lack of understanding which candidates for ordination had of diaconal ministry, and of the possibility of conflicting loyalties arising when they were students of two parallel institutions. Many described it as a valuable opportunity. They appreciated the dialogue which occurred as they learned and worked with others who were preparing for a different kind of professional work in the Church. Many saw it as a chance to educate ordination candidates about the history and activities of Diaconal Ministers. During this period, field work continued to be emphasized as crucial for the successful training of deaconesses. The Studies Committee of the Training School spent a considerable amount of its time discussing various aspects of the field work situation, and establishing new standards for supervision. Also the required amount of time for field work was increased in 1957 to 150 hours per term.

During the 1960's the course offerings and requirements for field work remained relatively unchanged, but the home of the School was changed to Covenant College and the constituency which it was to serve was enlarged. In 1962, a proposal that the work of training men for non-ordained professional work be undertaken was approved, and the section in the Manual referring to the mandate of the College was changed to allow the inclusion of men in the programme. Though the number of men interested in this form of ministry has remained small over the years, the opening of Diaconal Ministry to men was a highly significant event. Males were first called Certified Employed Churchmen. The name was later shortened to Certified Churchmen in 1969.

Also in 1969, the Anglican Women's Training College and Covenant College — formerly The United Church Training School — amalgamated to become what was one of the first ecumenical theological centres in Canada. The name chosen for the new college was the Centre for Christian Studies. When negotiations between the two Colleges had begun in 1967 it was hoped that the current degree work with Emmanuel College could continue, but at the time of the founding of the Toronto School of Theology, the agreement was terminated and a joint degree and diploma programme was no longer a possibility for diaconal candidates.

Subsequently, students at the Centre for Christian Studies who

had university degrees were encouraged to register in the Toronto School of Theology as special students and to take individual courses at Emmanuel and the other TST Colleges. Students who did not have a prior degree registered as special students at the University of Toronto and took individual courses in Religious Studies or other departments. Thus it continued to be possible to undertake university work, but not to complete a degree, during the two-year programme at the Centre for Christian Studies.

With the amalgamation of the two Training Colleges, plans were begun for a revised curriculum which would incorporate the strengths of both previous programmes, and move towards an "involvement and reflection" model of education. Throughout this period, educational preparation for Diaconal Ministry continued its long-standing emphasis on practicality and flexibility. The first years were ones of both challenge and struggle, during which both denominations began to identify and work out the problems and practical steps involved in doing education together. At the same time, many Christians began to shift towards a new social gospel and to express their dissatisfaction with both the structures and practices of the institutional Church.

In the midst of this, in 1972 the United Church initiated a major study on education for Diaconal Ministry, and began to look at the possibility of partially integrating the educational programmes of diaconal and ordained candidates. The committee which was constituted to conduct the study was asked to consider making the MRE (Masters of Religious Education degree) course the "normative" requirement for entrance into diaconal ministry, and to examine models of partial joint training with ordination candidates at Emmanuel College. It was suggested that there might be common courses provided in Biblical and Theological Education which diaconal and ordained candidates would take together, as well as separate and specialized courses for each. The committee's work took the major part of a year and included extensive interviews with Diaconal Ministers, with Ordained Ministers, and with members of the congregations they served.

As a result of the committee's work, several major changes were made to the educational programme for Diaconal Ministry. The committee recommended that, as far as possible, common educational experiences be provided for both ordained and diaconal candidates. In addition, Emmanuel College's MRE programme was approved as an acceptable alternative avenue of preparation for Diaconal Ministry, but the committee recommended that it not be considered as normative. Thus, there were now two approved possibilities for educational preparation for diaconal ministry, both located on the same street in Toronto. In terms of number of students, the Centre for Christian Studies remained the main centre for education, with relatively few choosing the MRE programme. Those who did choose Emmanuel often spoke of it as a "mixed blessing". They often experienced the isolation of being the only diaconal candidate in their classes, and the accompanying lack of opportunity to share concerns with others preparing for the same kind of ministry. On the positive side, Emmanuel graduates spoke with appreciation of the opportunities provided to develop working styles and an appreciation of the ordained ministry which would help them in congregational situations later.

In addition to these recommendations, new educational guidelines for Diaconal Ministry were approved and written into the United Church Manual:

> "The Basic Programme for all candidates (will) make adequate provision for:
>
> a) Biblical Studies
> b) Theology and Ethics
> c) Church History
> d) Pastoral Theology (including Worship, Christian Development, Church Policy and Administration, Supervised Field Education).
>
> In addition to the basic programme of training for diaconal ministry, each candidate shall engage in a MAJOR and a MINOR area of concentration. These two areas of concentration shall be:
>
> a) The Congregation
> the educational process
> group leadership
> planning
> administration
> community-building
> visiting
>
> b) The Community
> social and power structures
> community agencies
> how to help people help themselves
> change agent skills
> visiting."

The programmes for diaconal education at the Centre for Christian Studies and at Emmanuel College both focus on training people for a ministry of education, service and pastoral care, but the emphasis and strategies used at each institution are very different. After several years of experimentation and struggle, the Centre for Christian Studies instituted a new programme of studies in 1974. The focus was clearly on providing training in educational theory and skills, although the definition of education was vastly expanded to include conscientization, social analysis, and strategies for social change, as well as nurturing, counselling and leadership training techniques. The programme eventually came to include an emphasis on discovering and eradicating sexism in the Church, and on working towards an expanded understanding of male and female roles in society. The Centre for Christian Studies was one of the first educational institutions both to offer courses for laity and Order of Ministry on feminist theology and to begin to integrate its insights into the process and content of its own educational programme. Throughout its history, the Centre had become painfully aware of the devastating effects of sexism. Though Diaconal Ministry and training had been available to men since 1962, the education and service ministry of the Church had attracted few men. It continued to be perceived as "women's work", and was both undervalued and marginalized by the Church. The Centre for Christian Studies was also perceived by many as a "women's college" and, though its programme was highly innovative and always advanced in terms of the field education it provided, it was consistently labeled as inferior or "not real theological education". Part of this had to do with the

fact that the Centre for Christian Studies was not in and of itself a degree-granting institution, but another part of it was a result of the Church's sexist attitudes, and its assignment of women to less important and less visible roles.

At the time the new programme was put into place, the educational stance at the Centre for Christian Studies emphasized the importance of joint education for ministers and laity. Learning experiences were offered in two programmes: the Professional Study and Action Programme, designed primarily but not exclusively for those who wished to work professionally in the outreach or educational ministry of the Church, and the Continuing Study and Action Programme which provided short courses (one or two weeks, weekends, or a series of evenings) for both volunteers and employed workers in congregations and in the community.

The Professional Study and Action Programme combined three areas: academic studies at colleges within the Toronto School of Theology or at the Departments of Religious Studies at the University of Toronto; the Core Group, which provided an opportunity to work in a group at integrating biblical, theological and life experiences with practice in an educational ministry; and a practical field work experience in a congregational and in a social service ministry. Since the programme's inception in 1974 there have been several adjustments, but the basic three-part format has remained the same. Opportunities for evaluation have always been built into the Centre's educational offerings, and because of this the present programme has continued its predecessor's strong tradition of listening to and responding to the changing needs of both the Church and society. The educational process used in Core facilitates self-discovery within a learning community and encourages the development of skills to work with people whose background and ideas are different. Participants are helped to develop enabling skills which will be useful in helping a community or a group discover its gifts and carry out ministry.

The programme at Emmanuel College is also focused on equipping people for leadership in educational or outreach ministries. The programme includes biblical and theological studies as well as courses in Church history, worship, pastoral theology, psychology, Christian education, and involvement in Field Education. The professors believe that one of its greatest strengths is that all of its courses are integrated with those of students for ordination. Through this combining of courses, the opportunity is provided to learn about the other form of ministry and to get practice in teaming and learning together. The goals and objectives of the Master of Religious Education Programme include the following: the ability to reflect upon and interpret the meaning of documents and heritage of the Judeao-Christian tradition; the ability to communicate the concerns of the Church, and understand the human situation as set forth in theology and in other disciplines; the ability to understand the assumptions and practices of education; and the ability to plan and carry out an educational ministry in many settings.

For the Emmanuel programme the integration of the practical and the academic is facilitated through the Church and Society course and through supervised Field Education experiences. In order to develop skills in education, all students are required to teach in a practicum and to take, during their final semester, an Advanced Seminar in Education. Styles of teaching and learning in the two-year educational programme include anecdotal journal writing, colloquia, forums, panel discussions, symposia, workshops, case studies and demonstrations, as well as lectures and seminars. Many elective courses are provided for students who wish to explore specific areas or develop individual talents.

In recent years, the Centre for Christian Studies has had an increasing number of older students in its programme, men and women who were entering a second or third career. Many came with a wealth of experience in lay leadership in the Church. Also on the increase is the number of students wishing to work part-time, taking from three to five years to complete the programme. Both of these developments have been possible because of the flexibility of the curriculum and the willingness of the staff to adapt to the changing needs of the Church. Also, for many years, there have been requests for the provision of diaconal ministry educational preparation in other parts of the country. Many people have been attracted to an expression of ministry which emerged from and continues to focus on the laity, but have been unable to come to Toronto for the two-year programme. Work has begun on the expansion of access to diaconal ministry educational preparation so that its emphasis on nurturing and empowering laity for their work in the world can be strengthened and expanded. The resurgence of interest in Diaconal Ministry can, among other things, be seen as a recognition and affirmation of the ministry of women in the church.

The material beginning in Section C is taken from the Report entitled, "Educated Ministry: Diaconal Ministry Report".

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