

**The Seventh-day Adventist Church  
WEST JAMAICA CONFERENCE**

**DEACONESSES:  
DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES  
2025**

President  
Pastor Glen O. Samuels

Director  
Mrs. Carol Smythe-James

Administrative Assistant  
Mrs. Shadeka Haye-Campbell





December 12, 2024

**To all our Pastors, Women's Ministries Leaders and Deaconesses**

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

As we take a moment to look back on the past year, we are filled with gratitude for the courage and faith demonstrated by our women. We sincerely thank you for your remarkable leadership throughout 2024. Your commitment to guiding and nurturing our women has been essential in preparing them for this life and the life to come. We eagerly anticipate 2025 and your continued efforts in sharing Christ's love with our women.

This year's theme is "**Women of Courage: Boldly Sharing the Gospel in the Last Days.**" Let us remain dedicated to training our women and encouraging them to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ boldly. As Ellen White said, "The Lord has a work for women as well as for men. They may take their places in His work at this crisis, and He will work through them. They can do in families a work that men cannot do, a work that reaches the inner life. They can come close to the hearts of those whom men cannot reach. Their labor is needed." (Welfare Ministry, 145).

May God continue to bless us as we cultivate a fearless passion for sharing our faith. Let us stand firm in our beliefs and spread the message of hope and salvation to everyone.

May God continue to bless us as we cultivate a fearless passion for sharing our faith. Let us stand firm in our beliefs and spread the message of hope and salvation to everyone.

Yours faithfully,

Carol Smythe-James, (Elder)  
Women's Ministries Director, WJC

**WEST JAMAICA CONFERENCE  
WOMEN’S MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT**

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2025**

- January 18.....“Rescued by Jesus” Launch Program – Women’s Ministries
- March 1.....Women’s Ministries World Day of Prayer
- March 2.....Women’s Prayer Breakfast
- March 13.....Deacons & Deaconesses Virtual Workshop
- March 29.....Combined Ministries Baptism Day (Women and  
Children, Youth, Public Campus (PCM), Family  
Sabbath School Education, Deacons and Deaconesses)
- April 25-27 .....Women, Children, Adolescents & Deaconesses Training
- April 26.....Women and GEMS Convention
- May 11.....Mother’s Day Concert
- June 1-7.....“Rescue and Reunion” – Women & GEMS Ministries Evangelism Program
- June 7.....Women’s Ministries Emphasis Day
- August 23.....EndItNow Emphasis Day “No to Abuse”
- October 5.....Save Your Breast Symposium
- October 25..... End of the “Rescued by Jesus” Program – With Baptism of Rescued Women
- November 25.....International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

Deaconesses hold important roles in various religious communities, providing support, care, and guidance. Your dedication to serving others in this capacity is commendable. Remember that your work makes a positive difference in people's lives. Embrace the challenges with a compassionate heart, knowing that your efforts contribute to the well-being of others. Stay strong, stay inspired, and know that you are appreciated for the valuable role you play. Keep up the great work! Below are the job description, duties, and responsibilities of the deaconesses' body.

## **Job Description- Duties of the Deaconess**

You have been asked to serve as a deaconess in the church. The God who calls is able to sustain you as you cooperate with Him. The ministry to which a person is called when she is a deaconess includes the following duties:

- 1) **Report to Head Deaconess.** Deaconess will assist in maintaining the smooth operation of church meetings. Any needs and/or concerns should be reported to the Head Deaconess as soon as possible so that they could be addressed in an adequate manner. A quarterly meeting is to be scheduled by the Head Deaconess to address various issues and provide training.
- 2) **Visitation and Support-** Head Deaconess will coordinate deaconesses (and other interested church members) to provide card and visitation ministry to church members who are:
  - a) shut-in
  - b) sick
  - c) bereaved
- 3) **Reclaiming missing members and backsliders**
- 4) **Compassion Ministries-** The deaconesses are to do their part in caring for the sick, the needy, and the unfortunate. Organize and participate in outreach initiatives to help those in need such as:
  - a) Distributing food to the needy
  - b) Distributing clothing to the homeless
  - c) Volunteering at shelters
  - d) Organizing community events
- 5) **Assisting with the Baptismal Ceremony.** The traditional roles for this service are described below:
  - a) The deacons will:
    - i) Prepare and fill the pool.
    - ii) Assist male candidates as they prepare for the baptism
  - b) The deaconesses will:
    - i) Prepare the robes for all who are participating.

- ii) Assist female candidates.
  - iii) Launder and store robes, towels, etc., after the ceremony
- 6) **Coordinate Fellowship Meals-** The assigned deaconesses will be responsible for the following items:
- a) Warm and serve food for fellowship dinners
  - b) They will ensure the tables are covered with tablecloths
  - c) They will ensure the dishes are washed and the kitchen is clean after everyone is finished
- 7) **Assisting with the Communion Service.** The traditional roles for this service are described below.
- a. The deaconesses will:
    - i. Prepare the bread and grape juice.
    - ii. Arrange the emblems and covering on the table.
    - iii. Dispense water and basins for the women during the Ordinance of Humility, giving attention and assistance to visitors, new members, and the aged.
    - iv. Assist in the ordinance of foot-washing, giving special aid to women visitors or those who have newly joined the church.
    - v. Clean and store the linens and serving pieces used in Communion.
  - b. It is appropriate for either deacons or deaconesses, who have been ordained, to assist in distributing the emblems and uncovering and recovering the table during the service.
- 8) **Caring for the Congregation.** In many congregations, an unwritten tradition gives the women who serve as deaconesses the responsibility of preparing hot meals for any church family that experiences a death or other tragedy. This may mean simply taking food to the home or, in some cases, the serving of an entire meal to family and guests after a funeral.
- 9) **Women's Ministries-** Deaconesses can lead, and support programs specifically designed for women within the church such as:
- a) Bible studies
  - b) Mentoring
- 10) **Assist in funeral services**

## COMMUNION BREAD

It is important for each deaconess to learn how to make the communion bread. Here is a simple recipe for making the communion bread.

### Unleavened Bread Recipe for the Lord's Supper

- 1/2 Cup of Olive Oil
  - 1/2 Cup of Water
  - 1/4 tsp. Salt
  - 2 Cups of Whole Wheat Flour - Whatever you use, make sure it is **whole wheat**. You can tell if the flour is brown.
1. Preheat the oven to 350 F
  2. Combine the olive oil, water, and salt. Wisk it with a whisk or a fork until its near-frothy white. Alternatively, you can put it in a blender instead.
  3. Loosely mix the flour to the blend. You don't want to mix it too much or gluten chains will start to form. When making normal bread, this is desirable. But, since we're making unleavened bread, it will make it too hard.
  4. Make sure the dough is the same consistency of a drier batch of cookie dough.
  5. Grease a cookie sheet well with a hard fat like Crisco, Smart Balance, or any other Trans Fat/Saturated Fat.
  6. Roll the dough flat (as thin as pie crust). I find it helpful using a hand roller
  7. Once the dough is flat, it is necessary to make some incisions so that bubbles will not form in the baking process. I like to cut it into cracker-like squares. If you want to keep larger pieces, simply make a sizable incision every 6-12 inches.
  8. Bake for about 10 minutes. Watch it constantly after 9 minutes to avoid burn. Brownd (not just burnt) communion bread tastes bitter. Adjust the time for crispier or flimsier bread.
  9. Makes 12-16 servings

“Women who are willing to consecrate some of their time to the service of the Lord should be appointed to visit the sick, look after the young, and minister to the necessities of the poor. They should be set apart to this work by prayer and laying on of hands.”—[\*The Review and Herald, July 9, 1895.\*](#)

## QUOTATIONS FROM ELLEN G. WHITE

1. "The Lord has a work for women as well as for men. They may take their places in His work at this crisis, and He will work through them. . . . They can do in families a work that men cannot do, a work that reaches the inner life. They can come close to the hearts of those whom men cannot reach. Their labor is needed." —*Welfare Ministry*, 145
2. "Women are needed who are not self-important, but gentle in manners and lowly of heart, who will work with the meekness of Christ." —*Welfare Ministry*, 150
3. "There certainly should be a larger number of women engaged in the work of ministering to suffering humanity. . . . When believing women shall feel the burden of souls, . . . they will be working as Christ worked. They will consider no sacrifice too great to make to win souls to Christ." —*Evangelism*, 465

## BIBLE TEXTS

The Bible does not explicitly mention the role of "deaconesses," but there are passages that refer to women involved in serving and ministering in the early Christian church. Here are a few verses that are often considered relevant to the concept of deaconesses:

1. Romans 16:1-2: "I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae. I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been the benefactor of many people, including me."
2. 1 Timothy 3:11: "In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything."
3. Acts 9:36-39: This passage speaks about Tabitha (also known as Dorcas), a disciple known for her acts of kindness and charity to the poor.
4. Acts 16:14-15: Lydia, a businesswoman, is described as a worshipper of God and someone who extended hospitality to the apostle Paul and his companions.

### Resource

<https://www.ministerialassociation.org/deacons-and-deaconesses>