

First Parish Deaconate**Historical**

First Parish deacons form a tradition of service dating back to the first deacons of record Thomas Marrett and John Bridge – elected when the Church was gathered in 1636.

While a good part of the duties, activities, and even constitution of the deaconate has changed over the years, and is constantly being updated, we bear this tradition in mind. Our attention is apportioned among the venerably ancient (e.g. the Jeremiah Dummer Bowl), the modern (deposit procedures; computer recording replacing audio tape), and the innovative (name tag racks).

Organization/Duties:

In any given church year there are four deacons serving overlapping terms of four years each. At least one deacon is elected/inducted at each annual meeting. Each deacon can expect to be appointed senior deacon during the third or fourth year of service.

The deacons maintain a rotating schedule whereby each deacon is in charge of one to two Sunday services each month. In addition, deacons are responsible for the Christmas Eve service and the two communion Services. For the most part, a deacon's duties are entirely discharged in the course of these services. Specific duties are financial, logistic and physical.

Financial:

Deacons are responsible for collecting, counting and depositing the Sunday collection plate.

The senior deacon is responsible for managing the Deacon Funds and the deacon's passbook account. The Deacons Funds are one of several funds that are included in the First Parish endowment. The funds are invested as a whole, and at the end of each fiscal year, the earnings of each portion are attributed to the appropriate budget lines. Deacon Funds have traditionally been distributed to the "table of the ministry" (First Parish) and the "table of the poor" (Paine Senior Services) via cashier checks. The Investment Committee provides direction as to the amount of each check. The remaining money in the passbook account can be used for the care/repair of silver and on occasion for other items deemed appropriate by the deacons.

Logistic:

Deacons organize and coordinate key aspects of the Sunday Service – (See details below).

Deacons are expected to assist the minister at the two annual communion services, held on All Souls' Day and Maundy Thursday. If special silver needs to be retrieved from the vault, the Senior Deacon should coordinate this task with the office and the minister.

The Senior Deacon is responsible for maintaining the deacon schedule and training new deacons. The Senior Deacon works with the Volunteer

Coordinator to ensure ushers are scheduled. In the absence of the Volunteer Coordinator, the Senior Deacon schedules ushers.