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## Crain's "The United Methodist Deacon: Ordained to Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice" (Book Review)

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parents. Each chapter includes discussion questions that allow the reader to review what they learned in order to evaluate the information they have been given. It is also a valuable purchase for any student who graduates from high school. This fall, the authors are publishing an expanded and more academic edition to this book called *Truth in a Culture of Doubt: Engaging Skeptical Challenges to the Bible*.

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**The United Methodist Deacon: Ordained to  
Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice,**

by Margaret Ann Crain. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2014. 134 pp. \$16.99.

ISBN 9781426776113

*Reviewed by Mary Ann Buhler, Director of Library Services,  
Manhattan Christian College, Manhattan, KS.*

After having been the organist at a Baptist church for 17 years, in 2004 I started playing organ at a Methodist church. As a boy my father was a member of a small Methodist church, but until I joined this church I had virtually no experience with that denomination. Therefore, when I saw this book in the list of books to be reviewed, I jumped at the chance to find out what a Methodist deacon does.

The author, Margaret Ann Crain, is a professor of Christian education at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. In addition to drawing upon her own experiences as a Methodist deacon, she interviewed numerous deacons about how they became interested in becoming a deacon and how they served once they became ordained. Throughout the book she gives real-life examples drawn from the conversations that she had with those deacons.

After providing the history behind the office of deacon, Dr. Crain discusses how a deacon is different from a regular pastor, and then delves into exploring their duties. While deacons are ordained, they do not just work in a church, but provide the bridge between the world and the church. For example, some are teachers or college professors, while others may work with the poor or serve as a social worker at a local hospital.

Of course, this relatively easy-to-read book would be excellent for a Methodist church or college library. Because of its thoroughness, it would be an excellent resource for anyone interested in becoming a deacon. Besides the Methodist connection, though, it would be valuable for any library desiring to provide information about the Methodist hierarchy.