



Mercy Minute

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE COMMITTEE ON DIACONAL MINISTRIES

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What is Continuing the Conversation?

Continuing the Conversation is an online event, hosted by the Committee on Diaconal Ministries, that certainly won't replace being together in Chicago in June, but just might be the most encouraging Zoom call you have during COVID. Fellowship, encouragement, and equipping each other, even if we're miles apart.

As you may have heard, the OPC National Diaconal Summit IV, scheduled to take place on June 10-12, 2021 has been postponed to June 9-11, 2022. In the meantime, we need to talk and stay connected.

Deacons often deal with the same questions and the same situations, yet often feel like they are on their own. The OPC is an 800-man diaconate!

The CDM wants to connect more of that 800 more often, and not wait until summer 2022. Strength and encouragement for our deacons can't wait another year until we can meet.

So, join us. You may need it, and just as importantly, someone else on the call may need you to be there. God has shown us in many ways that He is at work encouraging and equipping even through virtual means, like ZOOM.

We hope to see all of you on June 12! You'll get the Zoom link via email once you've registered for the event.

Register: opccdm.org/continuing-the-conversation

Meet YOUR FELLOW Deacons



Pictured above are: New Hope deacons, left to right:
Mike Spronk, Jim Wilke, Rick Cohler, Todd Kirsteater and David Schoeneweiss.
Not pictured: Josh Agen and Bill Knoespel

New Hope OPC, Green Bay, WI

Deacon Josh Agen grew up attending New Hope OPC after his parents discovered orthodox preaching on Christian radio and left a mainline church. He left the Green Bay area for about 20 years for college and career but moved back in 2017. He is now beginning his fourth year as a deacon at New Hope OPC and sixth year as a deacon in the OPC. He began serving at a very small OP congregation simply because there was an acute need for men to serve. He says, "I didn't think I had gifts that were particularly suited toward serving as a deacon. However, I have found serving as a deacon to be a great blessing as it gives me an opportunity to be directly involved in one of the ways God extends mercy to those in need, and to share the gospel with individuals seeking help from outside of the church."

Deacon Rick Cohler says, "I have been a deacon at New Hope for more than 30 years and currently serve as head deacon. I was drawn by the ministry of assisting our members and others who are in need. My late wife, Fran, and I have two adult children, a son in Evanston, IL and a daughter in San Diego, each with their own family. Fran went home to the Lord in 2015. After being alone for four years, God brought a lovely woman named Charlene into my life and we've been married a year-and-a-half. She

has two adult children with families. Between the two of us we have seven grandsons and one granddaughter...

Deacon Dave Schoeneweiss has been a deacon for six years. He and his wife were active in their previous church, but when the church split, the Lord led them to New Hope OPC. Dave says that he was particularly drawn to diaconal work because of the coupling of witnessing opportunities with serving and giving to physical needs. He says that humility and service have been the greatest lessons the Lord has taught him as a deacon. When he reflects on the diaconate's strengths he says, "I like when we can debate suggestions on how to help people, with everyone having some input. By opening decisions up to debate, it gets people thinking before they vote..."

Deacon Mike Spronk has been serving as a deacon at New Hope OPC for about 8 years. Prior to being at New Hope he was a deacon in a Christian Reformed Church (CRC) in Minnesota. He was a pig farmer for many years before moving to the Green Bay area. While in the CRC he was involved in Volunteers in Ministry, which is an organization associated with the CRC that provides furniture to families in need...

Read the entire article: opccdm.org/meet-your-fellow-deacons

Do you get a copy of the Mercy Minute to your inbox? If not, contact the CDM Administrator, David Nakhla
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