

## Deacons' message for August:

As lead deacon in July, it's my turn to write a message from the deacons for the August newsletter. This is a huge challenge, as I am not a literary person and my usual reading material doesn't lend itself to spiritual inspiration. Recently, however, the name of English humorist P.G. Wodehouse popped into my head. My father was a devotee, as was his father, and you could say I was raised on P.G. Wodehouse stories about Bertie Wooster and his inimitable butler, Jeeves.

Having pondered this writing assignment for the last week, nothing occurred to me. In desperation I googled "UCC-deacons". Daniel Hazard quotes UCC minister Martin B. Copenhaver, who writes: "According to the bylaws of one of the churches I served, deacons were charged with 'the spiritual leadership of the church.' At one of the meetings of the Board of Deacons, someone complained that, instead of being true to this high and momentous charge, they spent too much of their time washing dishes after communion and delivering food to the homebound. How could they tend to important spiritual matters when they were occupied with such mundane tasks? 'I feel like a glorified butler', one of the Deacons complained. ... The word 'deacon' means, literally, waiter or servant. So those who are deacons are, indeed, butlers, charged with the mundane task of delivering food. They are also glorified because that simple act of taking food to the widows is an important expression of God's love. Ever since that day I have considered it the perfect definition of a deacon: 'a glorified butler.'"

John Estabrook