

# Deacons

**Mission**

**Responsibilities**

**Qualification**

**Election**

Version 1.22

March 2016

## Deacons

### Mission, Responsibilities Qualification and Election

### 1.0 Mission of the Deacon Body

Deacons serve the Lord by conducting the caring ministry of the church - doing the benevolence work, visiting the sick, being alert to the spiritual needs of the congregation - for the purposes of freeing the pastoral staff to focus on prayer and the ministry of the Word, promoting unity within the church, and facilitating the spread of the gospel.

### 2.0 Responsibilities of the Deacon Body

2.a Benevolence Ministry. The Biblical account is quite clear on the founding of the deaconship and nowhere does Scripture repeal the original purpose:

2.a.1 "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. 2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. 3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." Acts 6:1-3

2.b The deacon is to serve or minister by visiting the sick, by visiting the negligent members, and by enlisting the un-enlisted.

2.c Free the Pastor to minister the Word. The Office of Deacon was established to free the Apostles (who functioned as the first pastors) to pray and to prepare to minister the Word.

2.d Serve with the pastor. Help carry out the program that the Holy Spirit would lead through him. Not only assist him in carrying forward this program, but uphold him in prayer and word. No member should be a better backer of the pastor and in prayer for him than the deacon.

2.e Advance the unity of the Church. When the Apostles laid out the plan for the creation of this office,

*"The saying pleased the whole multitude"* Acts 6:5

2.f And the complaints were by the Greek speaking Jews, the Hebrew speaking Jews obviously bent over backwards to preserve the church's unity, for all the men selected had Greek names. It is still true today: Any time a church has deacons who are properly doing their jobs; the church is more likely to be at unity.

2.g Advance the cause of evangelism. The immediate impact of the creation of the office of deacon was to eliminate the controversy in the church and to get the church back on course in fulfilling its mission. The Bible says,

*"Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith".* Acts 6:8

When a church has deacons who are in God's will, the cause of the world evangelization will be aided. No person ought to be a better missionary minded member and soul winning Christian than the deacon.

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### 3.0 Deacon Qualifications

- 3.a Deacons are selected for the spiritual qualifications. Acts 6 expounds the qualifications for the office of deacons; the later contains what could fairly be called the "core qualifications." Often, when someone is discussed as a possible deacon one hears a remark such as, "He attends regularly and is a good giver."

*"Men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom" -- Acts 6:3*

*"And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit" -- Acts 6:5*

- 3.a.1 Men of good reputations - of good report or repute. Meaning men of integrity, who are upright and straightforward. Not only should a deacon's deportment be right in church and in church affairs, but his activities, his character and conduct in daily life is such as to inspire respect and confidence. His witness must be good in business and social dealings, his personal behavior and habits be Christian.
- 3.a.2 Full of the Holy Spirit. Certainly a deacon should be a spiritual man. He should be spiritually minded. A spiritual man is a prayerful man and one who has a real concern for lost souls. As men are filled with the Holy Spirit they can know the eternal plan and purpose of God. They can then understand the Great Commission. They can give spiritual emphasis in the ministry of their church. Deacons should be men of consecration.
- 3.a.3 Men of Wisdom. Here is meant wisdom of a spiritual order. As the Bishop, so the deacon should know the scriptures - "Apt to teach." How can he know the plan of salvation, the meaning of Christian growth, or how to minister the commands and commissions of God or "hold the mystery of the faith in pure conscience" unless he knows the word? Then, a deacon needs to be tactful or wise in Christian grace and courtesy that he may help in the solution of church problems. He should be wise enough to control his own temper and disposition.
- 3.a.4 Men of Faith. Stephen was a man of faith. A deacon should be a man of energy and courage for faith will dare to lead on. Deacons need to be men of faith in God and His cause and who will be willing to move forward in the Kingdom work.
- 3.a.5 Honorable men who are respected. The word signifies weight - one who carries weight, or one who counts, his support counts for the church and for right influences. The deacon should be firm in his faith, stable in his convictions, sound in his beliefs and correct in church loyalty. He should add weight to the entire church program by taking his place and filling it.
- 3.a.6 Not double tongued or tale bearers. Not speaking one way with one group and the opposite way with another group or one thing to a man's face and another to his back. Straight speakers. His word should be truthful and sincere, not a gossip.
- 3.a.7 Not addicted to drink. He must be right on the alcohol question. There should be no question on where the churches stand here. They cannot hesitate or take middle ground. The deacons should ring true on this both as to sale and use of strong drink.
- 3.a.8 Not greedy of filthy lucre. The deacon should be right on the matter of stewardship. The passage means "making small gains in mean ways." Deacons are no more to be excused for being covetous than the preachers are to be excused. They need to be right when and where money is involved in the management of church funds and in personal stewardship and in

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the manner of making money not "by mean practices." The deacon should set an example before his church in bringing his tithes and offerings into the Lord's storehouse on the Lord's day.

- 3.a.9 Holding the mystery of the Word in pure conscience. He should be stable and sound in the teachings of Christ and the Word. He should be grounded in the scriptures and also understand the teachings of his denominations. He ought to be a Missionary Baptist.
  - 3.a.10 His family relations should be right. A deacon should be "the husband of one wife" who manages well his own house and exercises proper control over his children. He should claim the respect of his home.
  - 3.a.11 Let him be tested first. Proven blameless, deacons should not be new converts or new church members, but tested or proven men. He should not be a contentious man, nor one puffed up with pride. He should be a growing Christian, and informed church man and a missionary practicing Christian.
  - 3.a.12 Be a soul winner. The deacon should, by all means, be a soul winner. In Acts 8, Philip is a good example of a deacon being engaged in the work that is the high privilege of every deacon.
  - 3.a.13 Lead by example. Deacons should set the right example in Christian living, church loyalty, and New Testament stewardship. No person in the church should be more loyal attendant at the services of the church or a better leader in the church loyalty in all the Church programs.
  - 3.a.14 Be an excellent steward. No member in the church should be more willing to support the ministries of the church with his time and financial support.
- 3.b Deacons are to be capable of serving the Lord in spiritual ways. The original seven deacons were people who were able to serve the Lord in ways which were more spiritual in nature than merely delivering food. Stephen was a man of spiritual power;
- "And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people",  
Acts 6:8. "Philip was not only a deacon, but also was gifted in evangelism", Acts 8:5-7.*
- 3.c Deacons are to have a firm grasp of sound doctrine. A church is content oriented. It is a doctrinally driven community, built upon truth. Every member should have this approach in this fellowship; leaders such as deacons, not less but, more so.

*"They must possess the mystic secret of the faith [Christian truth as hidden from ungodly men] with a clear conscience" Acts 6:9.*

#### 4.0 Election and Nomination of Deacons

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- 4.a The Deacon body will form an ad hoc Deacon Selection Committee comprised of deacons who are in the last year of their term. These Deacons will be the official members of this committee.
- 4.b Also included in this committee, in an Ex-Officio status, will be the Chairman of Deacons and the Pastor. If the Chairman of Deacons is in the last year of his term, he will be an official member of the committee, and will have full rights as afforded other members. Ex-Officio members may advise the committee and present their ideas and recommendations, but will not vote or present candidates for consideration for the deaconate. However, in the case of a tie, the Chairman of Deacons will cast the deciding vote. If the Chairman is an official member of the committee, then the Pastor will cast the deciding vote.
- 4.c The Chairman of the Deacon body will formally commission this committee in the first deacon meeting of the fiscal year in which the term ends for those deacons serving on this committee.
- 4.d The members of the Deacon Selection Committee will compile a list of potential prospects who meet the qualifications of deacons in section 4 above. This compilation of prospects will be as a result of observation and prayerful consideration made during the months following the committee's inception.
- 4.e Each member of the Deacon Selection Committee will present their list of potential Deacon prospects they feel meet the qualification of a Deacon . The committee as a whole will review and openly discuss these prospects and decide on a final list of qualified Deacon Candidates. This process must be completed by July 1.
- 4.f Deacon candidates will be sent a Prospective Deacon Questionnaire along with a copy of the "Deacon Qualifications" as found in Section 3.0 of this document. They will be asked to carefully study the "Deacon Qualifications" and then, after prayerful consideration of these qualifications, complete the Deacon Questionnaire and return it to a member of the Deacon Selection Committee or to the Pastor no later than July 31.
- 4.g Deacon candidates, who have indicated that they will be willing to serve, will meet with the Deacon Selection Committee. During this meeting , the Responsibilities of a Deacon, as found in Section 2.0 of this document, will be reviewed. After all candidates have been interviewed, the committee will formally present a list of the candidates to the Deacon Body for a vote of affirmation.
- 4.h The Deacon candidates will then be presented to the church for a vote. Depending upon the number of deacon openings, and the number of candidates, the vote may be a selective vote (i.e. we need 5 deacons and there are 10 candidates) or a vote of affirmation (we need 5 deacons and there are 5 candidates). The deacon body will determine if the vote will be selective or one of affirmation.



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<b>Approved</b>	<b>By</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Comments</b>
03/21/2016	Administrator	1.22	Correct typing error: 2e and 2f are now 2e only
02/19/2014	Administrator	1.21	Correction of references to Article 2.3 (4.g) and 2.4 (4.f)
05/05/2013	Administrator	1.2	Formatting changes only
06//2003	Church	1.1	Modification of Deacon Election Process
07/17/1994	Church	1.0	Original Creation of the Policy