

**Duties of Board of Deacons- First Presbyterian Church, Newton, Iowa  
Submitted June 2012, Revised Jan. 2013, June 2013**

**General Description**

**1. Role**

The role of the Deacons is defined in the Book of Order. (G-6.0400)

"The office of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of sympathy, witness and service after the example of Jesus Christ. It is the duty of the deacons, first of all, to minister to those in need, to the sick, to the friendless and to any who may be in distress both within and beyond the community of faith...."

**2. Composition of Board and Description of Business Meeting**

The Deacons of First Presbyterian Church are set up as a Board with a Moderator and a Secretary. It was decided by the Board that the Secretary need not be an active Deacon. The Pastor is an advisory member. Deacons are elected and ordained. The board, under the jurisdiction of the Session, consists of 12 deacons. The Board meets every month (except July and August) for at least 1 and 1/2 hours. The Board determines the date and time. (Currently the Board meets the first Sunday of the month at 8:30 A.M.) An agenda prepared by the Moderator is followed. The meetings begin with devotions, a regular type business meeting is conducted, reports of visits are given, concerns are shared, and the session is closed with prayer.

All business is conducted by majority vote. The Moderator may vote. If desired, voting may be conducted by secret ballot. A quorum is considered to be half the active Board plus one. Business may be conducted without a meeting being called as long as all Deacons are notified and given the opportunity to vote.

**3. Funds**

Deacons receive their funds through the loose offering on Communion Sundays. They do not receive money through the church budget. At times, memorials have been given to the Deacons. Sometimes the Board designates in advance that the offering be given to a special project. Other times they look at what is needed. The Church Treasurer and Office Manager prepare the financial report each month. (It is placed in the Deacon box in the office and retrieved before the meeting.)

**4. Visitations**

Deacons are paired in groups of two to make assigned visits each month. If the deacon partner is unavailable, the deacon may make visits alone or may ask another person to take the partner's place. The Moderator makes the list. No one is taken off the visitation list unless there is a death or he/ she requests that this service no longer be offered. It is hoped that each team makes contact with the visitee each month, even if it is only a phone call. Visitation cards are available and should be left with those in memory units. A report on each visit is given at the business meeting. If both deacon partners will be unable to attend a meeting, a report should be e-mailed or mailed to the Moderator. Small gifts, provided by the Deacons, are taken to visitees in December.

If Deacons have been seeing someone who has died, they continue visiting the widow or widower if that is agreeable. Over the years the list changes often due to death. Since Deacons have frequently developed close relationships with these people, many deacons, if they are able, attend funerals or visitations. People are added to the visitation list when Deacons feel there is a need or there has been a request. Sometimes a name has been given to the Board, but the person

suggested does not desire visits. Each visit can take from 30 minutes to 1-2 hours. Currently each team visits 2-3 people each month.

### **5. Other Duties**

- a.** Deacons sign up for **presenting devotions at the meeting and for delivering the tape of the service and flowers**. If there are flowers donated on a Sunday, a deacon is in charge of distributing them for a given month and also of delivering a tape of the service on the 3rd Sunday. If flowers are delivered, the Deacon can use the flower carrier which is usually found in the hall near the office. There is a list in the office on which the Deacon should write down the names of those receiving flowers. Sometimes the pastor has decided who shall receive the flowers. Other times, the Deacon makes the choice. As of June 2013, the tape ministry was discontinued because the recipient died. If there is a need, this ministry will be restarted.
- b.** Deacons are assigned as **host deacons** (currently by the Clerk of Session) and ushers (as needed-by the Office Manager).
- c.** They are responsible for the **Easter Lily project**.
- d. Cards** are sent for special needs or occasions. A member of the Deacons volunteers for this duty.
- e.** The Session has deemed that the second year class of both deacons and elders (class that will be serving third year) host the **Annual Meeting**.
- f.** A member from the board serves on **Nominating Committee**.
- g.** Deacons may assist the pastor in **delivering communion**.

Most members serve the church in additional ways- member of a committee, choir, counter, etc.

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### **Duties of All Deacons**

1. Meet or contact partner to select date for visiting.
2. If applicable, call visitee to set up appointment.
3. If partner is unavailable, contact another deacon or formerly active deacon to go on visits with you. Deacons may make a visit by themselves if necessary.
4. Make visit. Listen to concerns if any.
5. Leave a visitation card for those with memory problems or others deemed needing one.
6. If Deacons are unable to make a visit, at least make phone contact if possible.
7. Report on visit at Deacon meeting.
8. If unable to attend meeting, inform Moderator. If both partners are unable to attend, send written report of visits to Moderator.
9. Take turn in giving devotions and delivering flowers/ tape.
10. If possible take turn ushering or obtaining ushers.
11. Be available to deliver Easter lilies.
12. Take turn being host deacon and do duties as assigned on list. If unable to attend on assigned day, switch with someone and notify office.
13. Be respectful of privacy issues.
14. Prayerfully consider and vote on dispersing funds to help others.
15. Vote on emergency items when contacted.
16. Make report of suspected abuse as noted in Book of Order.
17. May volunteer to assist the Pastor in delivering communion.
18. Take a small gift to the visitee in December.

## **Duties of Moderator:**

### Before first meeting:

1. Pair deacons for visitation schedule prior to first meeting.
2. Set up visitation schedule prior to first meeting. Include a) names of deacons, b) names, addresses, phone numbers (if applicable) and birthdates for those being visited, c) rotation for visits
3. Organize information for deacons for the year prior to first meeting. Information may include the Manual of Operations (Description of Duties) or similar items things such as the Book of Order description, host schedule, names of deacons and their phone numbers and e-mail addresses, meeting dates, description of monthly visits, flower delivery, sending of cards, deacon funds, tape delivery, ushering schedule, tape delivery, Christmas gifts, and anything else deemed of value. Some of this information may come from the Clerk of Session. The information may be sent via e-mail prior to the meeting. Work with Office Manager to have information printed and ready for first meeting.
4. Make up sign up sheets for devotions and tape/ flower delivery prior to first meeting. Pass out at first meeting to be filled. Send copies of completed form to Deacons and Office Manager.

### Prior to second meeting

5. Set up e-mail address list for Deacons
6. Generate list of those formerly active Deacons who will call on visits if needed.

### Each meeting

7. Make up agenda for monthly meetings. Send agenda and minutes to Deacons, Secretary of Deacons if not active, Clerk of Session, and Pastor prior to meeting via e-mail . Make copies for those Deacons who do not have e-mail and pass out at meeting.
8. See that treasurer's report (generated by Church Treasurer) is picked up from office and ready for meeting.
9. Moderate meeting, using agenda. If unable to attend, see that there is a moderator pro-tem.
10. If Secretary is unable to attend, see that there is a secretary pro-tem.
11. See that concerns are addressed and all deacons and pastor are given opportunity to freely discuss. If necessary, speak to pastor in private.
12. If donations are to be made, see that appropriate forms are filled out for office use.
13. If names of possible new people to be visited are mentioned, see that these people are contacted as to their desire.
14. See that ushering spots are filled.
15. See that someone from Deacons will represent Board on Nominating Committee.
16. Write articles for Messenger when applicable.
17. See that appropriate information concerning visitees and Session is shared with Deacons prior to meeting if necessary.
18. Notify office of any known changes of duties.
19. Conduct emergency business without calling a meeting as long as all Deacons are contacted, the business is explained, and each Deacon is given the opportunity to vote.
20. See that miscellaneous duties are done.

#### Easter Lily Cross

21. Generate list of those who will receive Easter lilies from Lily Cross. This job can be shared with pastor. See that Office manger has list and will make up cards to go with lilies.
22. See that article asking for help in delivering lilies is put in bulletin, Messenger, and Church Happenings.
23. See that some Deacons assist in setting up Cross if needed. Custodian and someone from Buildings and Grounds usually set up form, and Deacons put lilies on it.
24. See which Deacons are available to deliver lilies on Easter morning.
25. Set up logistics for delivering lilies. Explain procedure to congregation.

#### End of year

26. Write article for Annual Report and turn in by assigned date.
27. Conduct election of new officers.

#### **Duties of Secretary**

1. Take minutes at meeting. Use last names of Deacons.
2. Send minutes to moderator at least a week prior to next meeting.
3. Let moderator know if unable to attend.

#### **Duties of Card Care Deacon**

1. Send cards to those with illness, loss of family member, and those needing special thoughts including special birthdays, graduation, confirmation, etc.
2. Card Deacon can receive names of those needing care via personal contacts, joys and concerns during church, at Deacon meetings etc.
3. It is understood that some people will accidentally be missed.
4. Bill may be submitted.