

SERVING AS A DEACON

an informative guide

Definitions and requirements:

OFFICE OF DEACON (from the EPC book of order)

17-2 Ordinary Responsibilities

To oversee the ministry of compassion of the congregation to the sick, friendless, bereaved, and those in any way distressed.

17-3 Other Responsibilities

The Session may retain some or all of the above duties for itself. It may assign other duties instead of or in addition to the ordinary duties.

Deacon Responsibilities - Part 1:

1. Attend meetings which are the second Tuesday of each month (with the exception of the months of July and January) - 6:30 p.m.
2. Be responsible for one Homebound member of our church. This involves making a physical connection once a month - visiting their home or residence. (This is often a very blessed experience for the deacon too.)
3. Helping with the birthday card ministry to those 75 years and older members of our church. Each deacon will have one month assigned to him/her in which they will send a card (those are provided) to the individuals on their designated month.
4. Each deacon is assigned to a college student to make a monthly connection. This can be in the form of a card, email, text, or box of goodies. The deacons also all sign cards twice a year as a whole and enclose money for our college students. The money comes from the deacon fund.
5. As a whole we also send encouraging cards with a gift card to each of our military personnel.
6. When a church member passes away we are often asked to provide a funeral luncheon. Deacons help with set-up, serving, clean-up and making a dessert or salad. Phone calling for volunteers is also something a deacon may be asked to do.
7. Deacons help with homebound communion. A deacon accompanies an elder to a homebound person's residence and helps with serving communion.
8. Deacons keep their eyes and ears open for those in our congregation that need help or encouragement. They also inform the deacon chair(s) about any changes to a HB member's living arrangement or health.
9. Deacons give assistance to needy families around Thanksgiving annually.
10. Deacons pray for our congregation and serve where they see a need.

Specific Responsibilities of Deacons at FPC - Part 2:

1. To be actively involved in the ministry of First Presbyterian Church. Deacons are specifically called to serve at the discretion of the church Session in ministries of compassion (see EPC Book of Government 9-12)
2. To participate regularly in church services and other church activities.
3. To maintain a daily discipline of Bible reading, prayer and other spiritual disciplines; meditating upon God's Word daily that it may transform your life, and praying daily 1) for the leadership of this church, 2) for the families in the congregation and 3) for the vision and mission of our church and faithfulness to the Lord.
4. To participate in the monthly Deacon's meeting and other special Deacon's meetings called by the leadership of the Deacons.
5. To contact and visit assigned Homebound members at least monthly.
6. To participate in the various ministries of love and compassion sponsored and/or supported by the Deacons. In particular, this includes visiting sick or lonely members, supporting new parents, assisting at funeral luncheons, and other ministries of care to members of the congregation and community as assigned.
7. To assist in the distribution of communion to Homebound members at least once a quarter.
8. To intentionally seek out and introduce yourself to guests, helping them as needed, that they may feel comfortable and welcome in this church.
9. To attend the annual Officer Training in the fall.

We know that much of what is identified above is already a part of your life and ministry, and for that we give thanks. However, we do believe that to be an officer of the Church of Jesus Christ is both a tremendous honor and great responsibility. Therefore, we want to encourage you to serve in your position as an officer with diligence and joy as the Lord ministers through you.

Questions for Deacon Candidates:

- **TESTIMONY:**

How and when did you come to accept Christ?

How has this decision impacted your life?

- **THEOLOGY:**

Have you read and do you agree with:

By-laws of the First Presbyterian Church of Aurora?

Essentials of Faith of EPC?

The Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms?

EPC Position Papers on Abortion and Marriage/Human Sexuality?

- **PERSONAL PRAYER AND DEVOTIONAL LIFE:**

Please describe your Bible reading / devotion and prayer time.

Do you have any goals for this essential area in your life?

What activities help you grow spiritually (i.e. Sunday school, Bible study, choir, small group, etc.)?

- **CALLING AS A DEACON:**

Why do you feel called to be a Deacon?

How do you see yourself in light of the standards in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9?

How do you see your gifts and abilities matching up to the role and duties of a Deacon?

How might you utilize your strengths and weaknesses to help you serve?

Where do you see the future of the church, what is your hope?

- **PRAYER / VISITATION:**

Are you willing to visit and send cards to those who are sick or shut-in; to pray with them and for them; to bring them encouragement and hope?

- **TIME COMMITMENT:**

Do you believe you would be able to commit the necessary time for meetings and to fulfil your duties and obligations?

Would you be able to adjust your priorities to make this commitment?

How would this commitment affect your family?

References:

FPC Vision: First Presbyterian Church is sent to Aurora so that hundreds of families will know Jesus Christ, grow in faith, care in love, and share in hope.

FPC Mission: First Presbyterian Church exists to glorify Jesus Christ, making Christ-following, kingdom minded ambassadors and missionaries to the City of Aurora and beyond.

Essentials of Faith:

All Scripture is self-attesting and being Truth, requires our unreserved submission in all areas of life. The infallible Word of God, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, is a complete and unified witness to God's redemptive acts culminating in the incarnation of the Living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible, uniquely and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, is the supreme and final authority on all matters on which it speaks. On this sure foundation we affirm these Essentials:

- We believe in one God, the sovereign Creator and Sustainer of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. To Him be all honor, glory and praise forever!
- Jesus Christ, the living Word, became flesh through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. He who is the true God became a true man united in one Person forever. He died on the cross a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. On the third day He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, where, at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He now is our High Priest and Mediator.
- The Holy Spirit has come to glorify Christ and to apply the saving work of Christ to our hearts. He convicts us of sin and draws us to the Savior. Indwelling our hearts, He gives new life to us, empowers and imparts gifts to us for service. He instructs and guides us into all truth, and seals us for the day of redemption.
- Being estranged from God and condemned by our sinfulness, our salvation is wholly dependent upon the work of God's free grace. God credits His righteousness to those who put their faith in Christ alone for their salvation, thereby justifying them in His sight. Only such as are born of the Holy Spirit and receive Jesus Christ become children of God and heirs of eternal life.
- The true Church is composed of all persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit are united together in the body of Christ. The Church finds her visible, yet imperfect, expression in local congregations where the Word of God is preached in its purity and the sacraments are administered in their integrity; where scriptural discipline is practiced, and where loving fellowship is maintained. For her perfecting, she awaits the return of her Lord.
- Jesus Christ will come again to the earth—personally, visibly, and bodily—to judge the living and the dead, and to consummate history and the eternal plan of God. “Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (Revelation 22:20).
- The Lord Jesus Christ commands all believers to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world and to make disciples of all nations. Obedience to the Great Commission requires total commitment to “Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.” He calls us to a life of self-denying love and service. “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10).

These Essentials are set forth in greater detail in the Westminster Confession of Faith.