

SERVE ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE

GALATIANS 5:13. NIV



Diaconate Handbook

Version 4/24/17

St. Mark Presbyterian Church

Mission Statement

To serve God by serving others, both within and beyond this community of faith, through ministries that provide support, care, love, compassion and prayer, following the example of Jesus Christ.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>REPORT</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE DIACONATE	2
DEACON MODERATOR	3
RECORDING SECRETARY	4
CARD MINISTRY	4
DEACON OF THE MONTH	5
MEALS COORDINATOR	5
DRIVERS ASSISTANCE	6
MEMORIAL / BAPTISM RECEPTIONS	6
MVP COORDINATOR (Members, Visitors)	6
HOSPITAL/ NURSING HOME VISITATION TEAM	7,8
PRAYER CHAIN	8,9

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE DIACONATE

There are 10 Deacon positions. Each deacon serves a term of three years, with classes of ~~four~~ being replaced each year. A moderator, assistant moderator and secretary are appointed or volunteer. The moderator conducts all meetings, which are currently held the third Tuesday, following the Session meeting, of each month in the FLC. In the absence of the moderator, the assistant moderator will conduct the meeting. The pastor and an elder serving as liaison with the Session of the church also attend.

The deacon(s) assigned to an area will maintain an accounting of their areas' expenditures and co-ordinate the duties and activities assigned, getting help and assistance from others in the church as needed. The deacon(s) is responsible for ensuring duties are done. However, he/she is not responsible for doing all the duties, but rather to ask for help from others.

Current Diaconate Ministries

Moderator	Recording Secretary	Card Ministry
Deacon of the Month	Memorials/Baptisms	Hospital Visitation Team
Prayer Chain	Nursing Home Visitation Team	Meals Co-coordinator
MVP Coordinator (Members, Visitors, & Prayer List)		Drivers Assistance Coordinator

Sharing of Information

St. Mark Members and/or other immediate family members who experience, or are aware of an accident, injury or serious illness will generally notify an individual associated with St. Mark when such an event occurs. This first "direct" contact may be addressed to the Pastor, Church Staff, an Elder, Deacon or, in asking for a prayer request, or Prayer Chain Deacon. It is essential, at this point in time, that communications regarding this event occur systematically so that all who may need to have any involvement in the process are notified. If confidentiality is requested prayer goes only to prayer chain and office staff and will be marked "CONFIDENTIAL NO PASTORAL PRAYER, NO BULLETIN, NO BOARD.

Any deacon hearing of a care giving need should notify the moderator . The moderator, in turn, will notify all who need to be involved, ensuring completion of the communication process. Updates will be provided by those involved as deemed necessary. Effective communication is extremely important to our care giving process. Do not assume someone knows something; make sure. It is better to "over-communicate" than "under-communicate". If each Deacon assumes responsibility for being a part of the process we will not be responsible for someone "dropping through the cracks".

Diaconate Handbook

It will be the responsibility of the Secretary of the Deacons to update the contents of the Deacon Handbook just prior to the change of classes each April/May. Ministers will be contacted regarding any changes that have occurred during the existing year and these changes will be documented in the appropriate handbook page. Copies of the updated handbook will be presented to all new Deacons and updated pages to the continuing Deacons at the first meeting of the year (May).

DEACON MODERATOR

Mission/Purpose: The Moderator is responsible for the overall organization and oversight of all Deacons serving on the Diaconate. The moderator will approve all expenditures on the expense form prior to submission to the Elder Liaison.

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The Moderator: Sets the agenda and facilitates the Deacon meetings:

- Makes certain a secretary is present to record minutes during the meeting.
- Encourages full participation of all members present. It is more important to have meetings that are relevant and useful to the deacons than to follow Robert's Rules of Order. It is not necessary to hold a meeting each month if you feel there is no business to be conducted.
- Supports all the various ministries of the Diaconate. The care needs of the congregation are assessed, with attention to what needs to be done.
- Makes adjustments in the number of deacons assigned to each ministry as required.
- Helps guide individuals into service areas where they are most needed and best suited.
- Serves as a helping hand or extra ministry member as needed. Ministries being duplicated by another Ministry in the church might be handed over to that group if appropriate, or as needs change.
- Evaluates and/or vetoes proposed projects on the basis of appropriateness to the Deacon's role as stated in the Mission Statement.
- Works closely with the Pastor on "the state of the church", getting and giving information, and exploring the best way to meet needs that fall under the Diaconate Mission.
- Arranges programs, retreats, and training sessions, to meet the needs of the individual deacons that will aid them in their service.
- Is responsible for the annual Report to the Congregation in April of each year.
- Insures training and fellowship during the annual Leadership Retreat in May.
- Assists in the training during New Member classes as requested.
- Prepares the annual budget for the Deacons and approves monthly expenditures. Voucher forms for ministry expenses are located in the church office. A completed form, with expense receipts attached, is given to the deacon liaison for approval and reimbursement.

RECORDING SECRETARY

- To take minutes of each monthly meeting including listing of attendance and guests.
- Prepare minutes and email to Moderator for initial approval. Once approved the secretary will e-mail a copy to all Deacons, and Elder Liaison
- Arrange for "substitute" if you will be absent from meeting
- Assist Moderator as requested. (agenda, budget, etc.)

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CARD MINISTRY

Purpose of the card:

- To express care and concern for members of St. Mark.
- Sent out on behalf of the deacons expressing sympathy and birthdays.
- Cards may be purchased or donated.
- Expenses (cards, stamps) will be submitted to moderator who will sign and submit for reimbursement
- Blank cards may be signed in advance by entire diaconate or by one person for the diaconate.

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DEACON OF THE MONTH

A sign-up sheet will be circulated during the first meeting of the new deacons for all deacons to sign up for the month they desire. A copy of the list will be given to Jackie. Responsibilities of the deacon of the month are described below.

*office
admin.
assistant*

Monthly Deacon Meetings

Opening devotional is presented by the Deacon of the current month
Closing prayer is presented by the Deacon of the next month

During the Month

Flower distribution:

The contributor of the Sunday church flowers has the option to keep the flowers or to designate the disposition of the flowers after the traditional service on Sunday. The Office Administrator or Church Flower Chairperson will tell the Deacon of the Month who does or does not want to take the flowers they donated. The Deacon of the Month is responsible for the flower delivery if the donor does not take them. The recipient may be a shut in, individual residing in assisted care/living centers, hospitalized or recently hospitalized church member. The donor has the right to specify the recipient if they so desire. The Deacon of the Month should maintain a list of who the flowers have been distributed to. This list should be passed from one deacon to the next or kept at the church mail room area.

General

Should you find it necessary to be absent for any of your monthly functions, please arrange for another Deacon to substitute for you and advise the Moderator of your absence and the change.

MEALS CO-COORDINATORS:

Purpose:

These Deacon Coordinators will keep a special online calendar that allows others to log in and help provide meals or other needs. This includes co-ordinating with the MVP Deacon.

DRIVER ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR:

Purpose:

To maintain a list of volunteer drivers to assist shut-ins or members who are not able to drive to doctor appointments or urgent needs.

MEMORIAL / BAPTISM RECEPTIONS:

Purpose: *To prepare and/or facilitate Memorial & Baptism receptions as requested by the congregation.*

The deacon(s) assigned to an area will co-ordinate the duties and activities assigned, getting help and assistance from others in the church as needed. The deacon(s) is responsible for ensuring duties are done. However, he/she is not responsible for doing all the duties, but rather to ask for help from others.

Duties:

The only current deacon managed event is Funeral & Baptism receptions

MVP (Members/Visitors) Co-Coordinator:

Purpose: This Deacon will maintain a list and determine members and visitors status, needs and coordinate response with either Deacons or other ministries. This includes but is not limited to meals, prayer request, communion to shut-ins and the need for St. Mark representative visitations.

HOSPITAL / NURSING HOME VISITATION TEAM

Mission/Purpose:

This team stands ready to visit members of the church family who are confined to a hospital and nursing homes. The visits which include the offer of prayer are brief, at the discretion of the committee member, and may be made prior to surgery or following surgery or at any time in the hospitalization or nursing home setting. Significant information obtained during this visit is to be passed on to the church office or other committees as appropriate. When there are no or few hospitalizations, the Hospital visit team will visit shut-ins and nursing homes.

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Protocol Detail:

Visits:

- **Depending on circumstances, most visits are brief, and all include the offer of prayer.**
- **After each visit, an update is communicated to the church office, the MVP Deacon and the Deacon Moderator with updates on patient status.**
- **Any pastoral concerns should be reviewed with the Pastor.**
- **In lieu of visit, may make phone call either to home before entry into hospital, or during hospital stay.**
- **Visits may be made by members other than deacons.**

Hospital Practices, Procedure, and Requirements:

- **Confidentiality: You may not release any information regarding a care receiver (even their presence in the hospital) to anyone without the expressed permission of the care receiver.**
- **Do not discuss care receivers with staff unless you are sure that no one can hear what you are saying.**
- **Do not share information about one care receiver to another care receiver.**
- **Exceptions: You must tell the care receiver's nurse should you receive information from the care receiver that they are:**

Threat to themselves

Threat to others

Victim of violence or abuse

Hospital procedures: Obey all hospital policies

Be sure to read instructions on the door regarding protective clothing.

Give priority to medical staff.

Referral to hospital staff when you believe there are things that would help the staff better to know what the patient needs or concerns. (Do not presume that the staff does not already know these things.)

Hand washing is a strict requirement between visits.

Communication: Communication of information is extremely important between members of Diaconate, Pastor and church office. Often you possess information others do not have. E-mail is an efficient and time saving mechanism of informing all concerned in a group mail.

PRAYER CHAIN

Mission/Purpose: to communicate requests for prayer, thereby initiating prayers by the volunteers who compose the group. Prayers can be requested by anyone for conditions that are stressful (i.e. illness, accident, surgery, death, emotional crisis, etc.) Prayers are continued until need has passed.

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Protocol Overview

- **Leader of prayer chain notified of a need for prayer by: 1) an individual requesting the prayer, or 2) office, prayer chain member, friend of individual requesting, someone aware of a prayer need**
- **Individual receiving prayer request, if other than prayer chain leader (i.e.)**
- **Individual for whom request made must give permission for prayer to be on prayer chain**
- **Leader of prayer chain will notify phone group leader(s) of request (s)
Group leaders will notify members of their prayer group E-mail group notified by prayer chain leader**
- **If request for member of church or their family, Deacons and pastors also notified of request by e-mail for purpose of communication**
- **If an illness of a church member or the death of a church member's family, then the Elders, Deacons and office staff (includes pastor) should be notified for the purpose of placing the name on the board in the office and in the church bulletin if approved by the individual**
- **Name can be removed from board/bulletin after two weeks**
- **Some people do not want public notice of bulletin, board, pastoral prayers. (See**

- confidential prayer requests)
- Updates, when received, passed along in same fashion

Protocol Detail

- **Confidential**
 - A. **Matter of privacy only**
 - B. **Mark confidential, not for use in bulletin, on office board or pastoral prayer may be sent on e-mail**
 - C. **Something that could be harmful in some fashion if heard should go by phone only not to be e-mailed unless done anonymously without use of name**
 - D. **Recipient of prayer does not have to be a member of St. Mark**
 - E. **Time on prayer chain can vary, use common sense. A general rule of thumb as needs demand. Two weeks may be considered reasonable**
- **Communication**
 - A. **Prayer requests involving church members or their families passed on to Deacons, Elders and office staff as well as prayer chain for purpose of information and possible service**
 - B. **Prayer chain leader notifies other committees of potential needs: (Hospital visitation, temporary illness, older adults and fellowship).**
 - C. **Leader should notify pastor by phone in any case of an emergency of a member or their family as they may not open their e-mail until later. Examples of emergency: deaths, sudden surgeries, severe auto accident, in other words anything you think may need**