



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
POWDER SPRINGS

DEACON HANDBOOK

PARTNERS IN MINISTRY AND GROWTH

Revised: July 2014

A Message from the Pastor

In the deacon handbook we just retired, I wrote:

“Within the pages of this Handbook is a compilation of what the First Baptist Church of Powder Springs has determined are the responsibilities of the servant leaders in our fellowship. These are going to change from time to time, for needs will inevitably arise which no one can predict. The deacon leaders in our congregation will want to meet these needs.”

This revision proves the accuracy of that forecast. Ministry opportunities have presented themselves to our congregation since the initial writing of the handbook, and also new methods by which our servant leaders go about performing their ministry. Obviously, as always, there will be tasks performed by every deacon during his term of service, which will not be covered in the pages of this Handbook, because a deacon is one who serves and meets needs as they arise within the fellowship. Sometimes we focus so on our ability to minister that we forget the most important thing regarding ministry is availability. Thank you for availing yourself to this servant ministry.

I wish to express my thanks to Jim Goldsmith, chair, John Holt, Gary Beasley and Johnny Stafford for doing the “grunt work” on this revision. May it prove to be valuable to each deacon who consents to serve in this important office, for each of you I am grateful.

As pastor and deacons, may we be about faithfully serving our Lord through this congregation until one day we hear those precious and affirming words, “Well done, my good and faithful servant.”

Michael D. Woods,
Pastor

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the First Baptist Church of Powder Springs is to be in fellowship with God and each other, worship Him faithfully, share the good news of Christ, teach what we have learned from Him and care for others.

INDEX/INFORMATION

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Article I	GENERAL	Page No.
	Paragraph 1 By-laws	3
	Paragraph 2 Qualifications	4
	Paragraph 3 Doctrinal Statement	5
Article II	DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	
	Paragraph 1 Service	6
	Paragraph 2 Deacon of the Week	6
	Paragraph 3 Baptismal Ministry Team	8
	Paragraph 4 Communion Ministry Team	9
	Paragraph 5 Crisis Ministry Team	9
	Paragraph 6 Homebound Ministry Team	10
	Paragraph 7 Prayer Team Ministry	10
	Paragraph 8 Widow/Widower Ministry Team	10
Article III	CHARACTERISTICS OF A DEACON	
	Paragraph 1 Visitor	11
	Paragraph 2 Witness	11
	Paragraph 3 Greeter	11
	Paragraph 4 Problem Solver	11
	Paragraph 5 Minister	11
	Paragraph 6 This Handbook Not All Inclusive	12
	Authentication Page	12
	Suggestion Page	12

I. GENERAL

Paragraph 1. By-laws

The following information pertaining to deacons is quoted from the church by-laws:

“The church shall elect as many deacons as the church may deem necessary to discharge the duties of the office, one-third of who shall be chosen annually for a term of three years. No deacon shall be eligible for re-election until one full year has elapsed following a full term of service. The deacons shall notify the church each year the manner that the new deacons shall be chosen. The deacons shall perform their duties in accordance with the duties outlined in the Holy Scriptures. The absence of a deacon from three regular consecutive monthly deacon’s meetings during a calendar year shall cause forfeiture by such deacon of his office; provided however, that for the purpose of this rule, no absence shall be counted if the reported cause for such absence is approved by deacons at their next regular meeting. When there is a vacancy under this rule, or as a result of an unexpired term, the chairman and secretary of the deacons shall certify such fact to the next church conference and such vacancy shall be filled after proper notice.”

Generally, the vacancy will be filled at the next deacon election, unless the Pastor and Chairman of Deacons deem a special election is warranted. In this case, the election ballot results from the previous deacon election occurring prior to the vacancy will be utilized to fill the vacancy. If the vacancy is filled at the next general deacon election, the number of deacons to be elected will be increased by one (1) deacon. The additional deacon elected will serve for the balance of the unexpired term of the deacon being replaced.

“Only persons twenty-one (21) years of age and older who have been members of the First Baptist Church, Powder Springs, Georgia, Inc. for a period of at least two (2) years shall be eligible for election as a deacon.

Associate Deacons: (a) The associate deacons shall be selected by the active ordained deacons to serve one (1) year. The deacon shall exercise utmost discretion in his selection of an associate deacon. The person selected shall be approved by the church. (b) The associate deacons shall attend all meetings and participate in discussions without a vote. They shall be excused from the meetings when deemed advisable by the Chairman of Deacons. (c) The associate deacon will serve as a partner with the deacon in any capacity relative to the office of deacon.

Ministry Teams: The deacons shall be authorized to establish any such committees necessary to fulfill the duties and obligations as set forth.”

Paragraph 2. Qualifications

The office of deacon is one of ministry and service to Jesus Christ through His church. Any other understanding of this office does disservice to the New Testament record. This is not an office or position given to someone to honor him. To be eligible for this respected position, you must have been a member of this church at least two years, be over 21 years of age, and you must seek to consistently meet the following qualifications:

1. He is full of the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:3, 5) - Such men are spiritually minded and submissive to God's leadership.
2. He is full of wisdom (Acts 6:3) - Such men have spiritual knowledge and understanding that provide sound direction for the ministry of the church.
3. He is also full of faith (Acts 6:5) - Spiritual men walk by faith and not by sight because they know and trust the God of the Word and believe in the Word of God.
4. He has a good reputation (Acts 6:3) - Such a man demonstrates integrity and honesty to others. He has a believable Christian life.
5. This man should be grave or dignified and worthy of respect (I Timothy 3:8) - Such a man faces life seriously and there is a certain stateliness about him that commands respect.
6. He is a man who is not double-tongued, but is sincere in his speech (I Timothy 3:8) - Such a man should speak with verbal honesty and integrity, not saying one thing to one person and something else to another.
7. This man abstains from the use of addictive drugs for other than medicinal purposes, and from the sale and use of alcoholic beverages (I Timothy 3:8) - He realizes the importance of his Christian influence and is willing to limit his liberty for the sake of others.
8. He is not a greedy person (I Timothy 3:8) - Such a man is free from the love of money and other earthly possessions.
9. This man has a deep Biblical commitment (I Timothy 3:9) - This man holds to the truths of the Christian faith with a clear conscience. He is not easily swayed from the truth because he strives to live what he knows.
10. He must first be tested and proven (I Timothy 3:10) - This man must have proven over time that he is faithful and that his walk is credible.
11. He must also be beyond reproach and blameless (I Timothy 3:10) - Such a man must display a lifestyle free from continual patterns of Scriptural disobedience.

12. A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and household well (I Timothy 3:12).
13. This man's wife should be a woman worthy of respect, not a malicious gossip, but temperate and faithful in everything (I Timothy 3:11) - The spouse should be devoted to God and yielded to the Holy Spirit.
14. He must recognize and respect the office of pastor (Hebrews 13:7, 17) - He should be a loyal and trusted friend and supporter of the pastor of the church.
15. He shall practice "storehouse tithing" of his family income (Malachi 3:10 and I Corinthians 16:2) - A deacon's life should be a testimony to others regarding the faithfulness of God to keep His promises.
16. He should do all he can to create and preserve unity and harmony in the church (Ephesians 4:1-3) - Jesus said, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand." (Matthew 12:25)

Paragraph 3. Doctrinal Statement

1. THE SCRIPTURES: I believe that the entire Bible, all 66 books, is inspired by God. Through the providence of God, the Word has been protected and preserved, and is the only authoritative rule of faith and practice. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21)
2. GOD: I believe that there is only one true, living Sovereign, Holy and eternally existent God. He exists in three co-equal persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - each being a distinct person and with a distinct function, but all of one essence and all possessing the same nature, perfection, and attributes.
3. JESUS CHRIST: I believe that Jesus Christ is God. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, performed many miracles, shed His blood on the cross as a vicarious substitute, was buried, bodily resurrected, ascended to the right hand of the Father, and will return literally, visibly, and personally in glory and power (John 1:1-3, 14; Matthew 1:18-25; Philippians 2:5-9; Colossians 1:15; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Acts 1:11).
4. HOLY SPIRIT: I believe that the Holy Spirit is God, co-equal and co-existent with the Father and the Son. He is the chief convictor of sin, the chief agent of regeneration and sanctification. The Holy Spirit indwells every believer and empowers every believer to live a godly life (John 14:16-19; John 16:7-15; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Romans 8:9, 11; Titus 3:5).
5. MANKIND: I believe that in the beginning God created mankind in His image. Mankind was originally created with the ability to live perfectly for God's glory (Genesis 1:27, 31).

6. SIN: I believe that Adam, the first man, sinned by disobedience. This act resulted in the fall of all mankind; therefore, all people have sinned and lost their ability to live for the glory of God. Mankind's fall has incurred both physical and spiritual death on all until there is forgiveness and salvation by the grace of God (Genesis 3:1-24; Romans 3:10-23; 5:12-21; 6:23).
7. SALVATION: I believe the salvation of lost and sinful mankind is a free gift of God's grace apart from human works, based solely upon Christ's vicarious and atoning death, effected by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, and received only through faith in the person and finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross (Ephesians 2:1-10).
8. THE CHURCH: I believe that the church is the body of Christ and the family of God. It is made up of saved and baptized believers, who regularly join together on the Lord's Day for worship, fellowship, and ministry (Matthew 16:18; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; Hebrews 10:25).
9. EVANGELISM: I believe that it is the responsibility and privilege of every Christian to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ and to seek to make growing disciples. (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8)
10. THE HOME: In addition to these important beliefs, I also believe that God has given the parents and the home the responsibility to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 22:6)

II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Paragraph 1. Service

If you know you are going to be absent, be sure to notify secretary of Deacons or Deacon Chairman. Unless providentially hindered, and with consideration for family and work responsibilities, deacons are expected to attend all scheduled meetings and to fulfill all duties and responsibilities as outlined in Article II. If unable to fulfill expected duties for an extended period of time, the deacon should consider withdrawing from the active group.

Paragraph 2. Deacon of the Week

Deacons will have the responsibility of Deacon of the Week for up to two times during the church year. The deacon or associate deacon will be responsible for delivering the offertory prayer in each of the two morning worship services and the evening service. The person so responsible will be present at the pastor's office at least ten minutes prior to the beginning of each worship service.

The Deacon of the Week will be responsible for ensuring for each of the Sunday morning services the offering is placed in the red money bags. He will lock the bags with keys that are always kept in the blue bag, and will then place the red bags in the vault in the Financial Secretary's office, room 124. The keys for the red money bags will be placed in the red bag for the 10:45AM offering and placed in the vault.

The blue bag is kept in the foyer closet during the morning services and is used for securing the offering of the evening service. After receiving the evening offering, the blue bag is placed in the door slot in room 124. When taking the money to the vault, at least two people should be present with the money bags at all times.

On Sundays when there is no planned evening service, the blue bag is taken to the vault after the morning offerings.

The Deacon of the Week should separate all visitors' cards from the offering collections and place them in the church Sunday School office next to the Financial Secretary's office.

The Deacon and associate will be responsible for Sunday afternoon visitation. They should arrive at the church at approximately 2:00 pm, having previously notified other deacons who are responsible for visitation on that Sunday. They will review the visitor information cards and make contact, as appropriate, either through a personal visit and/or telephone call. The results will be noted on the visitor cards and left on the Conference Room table.

During the following week, the deacon, visiting deacons and associates will provide security surveillance of church buildings and grounds on Wednesday evening during church scheduled events. Upon arrival for security duty, it is essential that the deacon make contact with the nursery workers and advise them of his presence on the grounds should any need arise. The deacon will remain at the church until all the nursery workers have departed and substantially all others have departed. Hand held radios are available in the workroom for use to provide immediate contact with security personnel and/or with the nursery.

On Wednesday evening, the deacon and associate should arrive at the church at a reasonable early time, work permitting, since many church activities commence about 5:30 pm. Note: Check with Jerry Webb as he may volunteer to take over until he locks up after choir practice.

On the Sunday when parking lot duty is provided, the deacon, visiting deacons (from the previous Sunday), and associates will be needed on the grounds and in the buildings from approximately 8:45 am until after the majority of all members of the congregation have departed after ending the 10:45 am service A deacon or associate should man the senior parking lot on Marietta street by 9AM prior to the 9:15 service and by 10:30AM for the 10:45 service to help direct folks to the parking shuttle area due to limited parking in the senior lot.

The deacon and/or associate will also provide security during the Sunday evening service. This will conclude Deacon of the Week responsibilities.

At times during the security detail, a walk-through of the buildings would be appropriate. Be alert for anyone wandering in the hallways and invite them to the worship service, or otherwise assist them as may be appropriate. During a final walk-through of the buildings be alert to close windows or doors and to turn off lights.

The deacon of the week is responsible for getting the golf cart keys from the Sunday School office on the Sunday morning security surveillance will be provided. The deacon should make sure the visiting deacons and associates are notified that they will need to help with parking lot duty.

The golf carts should be stationed at the parking shuttle pick up banner in the main lot by 9AM. Golf carts should cycle so one of the two carts is always circling to pick folks up while the other cart is dropping off at the parking lot welcome center shelter. The carts should not drop off at the North Avenue doors due to the lack of adequate turning radius and impediment to arriving/departing vehicle traffic on North Avenue.

The carts should be returned to the storage shed and the cart covers zipped and secured at the bottom with provided hooks. Keys should be returned to the Sunday School office. If there are any cart maintenance issues noticed, complete a vehicle maintenance work order form. These forms are located under the cart key box in the Sunday School office.

During the Sunday morning time of security detail, any breach of security should be reported to the police office on duty and then to church authorities. In the event of a security problem during other times of the week, coordination will be made with the Church Administrator or other ministers and appropriate action will be taken.

Paragraph 3. **Baptismal Ministry Team**

The Baptismal Ministry Team will be composed of a team leader and such other members as are designated by the Chairman of Deacons and the Pastor. The Principle responsibilities of this team are as follows:

1. Assist minister during baptismal service.
2. Coordinate with housekeeping staff to make sure the baptismal pool is prepared in advance, in addition to making sure water heater is activated.
3. Contact pastor's Administrative Assistant regarding number of candidates and in which services they will be baptized.
4. Assist baptismal candidates as appropriate.
5. Clean up baptismal area of all standing water and make sure tiled areas are dry; especially areas that will encounter foot traffic.

6. All used towels and candidate robes should be placed in “trash bags” and placed between bathrooms on first floor of Sanctuary/Office building after the last morning service (or after evening service if baptism is performed at night).
7. Leader of this team should also keep track of how often Minister’s robe needs to be dry-cleaned and coordinate with church administrative staff to handle.
8. Spousal participation is crucial, especially when there are female baptismal candidates.

Paragraph 4. **Communion Ministry Team**

The Communion Ministry Team will be composed of a team leader and such other members as are designated by the Chairman of Deacons and the Pastor. The principle responsibilities of this team are as follows:

1. Coordinate with the Pastor and his Administrative Assistant about dates for communion service, usually held quarterly.
2. Make the necessary preparations for communion service when scheduled.
3. Maintain inventory of supplies. When necessary, order supplies with the assistance of the church administrative staff.
4. Schedule deacons and provide orientation (if necessary) as to procedure.
5. Team members, along with all deacons, should go through sanctuary to remove all used communion-cups and place them in waste receptacles.
6. Team members should assist in cleaning supplies and replacing them in appropriate storage area.

Paragraph 5. **Crisis Ministry Team**

The Crisis Ministry Team will be composed of a team leader and such other members as are designated by the Chairman of Deacons and the Pastor, in conjunction with the team leader. The principle responsibilities of this team are as follows:

1. In the event of the death of a church member or member of immediate family, accidental injury requiring emergency hospitalization, divorce (if ministry is appropriate), or other events considered to be a crisis, team members should visit in the home, hospital or funeral home as needed.
2. Upon notification by the church office, a team member (or members) should visit immediately or as soon as possible. If possible, team members should be at the funeral home in the case of a death. Assistance in making phone calls to out-of-town family or other needs would be appropriate.
3. The team leader should coordinate the ministry team to insure proper follow-through.
4. Continue ministry on a weekly basis or until needs have been fulfilled.
5. Contact the minister on call (if on the weekend) or refer specific needs to the appropriate staff member if necessary

6. In the event it is likely that food service will be needed, the team leader should coordinate needs and information with the Bereavement Ministry Team of the church through the church administrative staff.
7. If necessary, the team leader, in conjunction with the Pastor, might employ the services of women in the church for specific needs that would be better handled with appropriate gender.

Paragraph 6. **Homebound/Nursing Home Ministry Team**

The Homebound/Nursing Home Ministry Team will be composed of a team leader and such other members as are designated by the Chairman of Deacons and Pastor. The principle responsibilities of this team are as follows:

1. Schedule personal visits on a regular basis to the homes and nursing care facility of homebound members.
2. When requested, deliver an audiocassette tape of Sunday worship services to members.
3. Refer special needs to appropriate staff member.
4. Communicate with the pastor's secretary to coordinate scheduling of visits (if necessary).
5. Complete Ministry Report form and submit to the team leader.

Paragraph 7 **Prayer Ministry Team**

The Prayer Ministry Team will be composed of a team leader and other such members as designated by the Chairman of Deacons and Pastor. The principle responsibilities of this team are as follows:

1. Pray for the morning worship services each Sunday.
2. Work with the Minister of Prayer and Recreation on communicating and supporting church wide prayer emphases throughout the year as scheduled.
3. Support other prayer ministry efforts in the church.

Paragraph 8 **Widow/Widower Ministry Team**

The Widow/Widower Ministry Team will be composed of a team leader and other such members as designated by the Chairman of Deacons and Pastor. The principle responsibilities of this team are as follows:

1. Maintain an accurate list of current widows and widowers in the church.
2. Assign each active deacon 2-3 widows and/or widowers to minister to each year.
3. Maintain and distribute to the deacons their assigned widows and/or widowers
4. Provide deacons with a list of ministry suggestions and be available to assist with ministry needs if called upon.

III. CHARACTERISTICS OF A DEACON

Paragraph 1. A DEACON will VISIT.

In addition to the Sunday afternoon visitation required of the Deacon of the Week, a deacon will support the church outreach program, participating in visitation as work and family situations permit. Being led of the Holy Spirit, the deacon will visit for witnessing and ministry purposes, and to promote the programs of the church.

Paragraph 2. A DEACON will WITNESS.

A deacon will be alert for opportunities to tell others of his salvation experience and the meaning of Christ and the church in his and his family's life. He should know appropriate scriptures and the basics of the plan of salvation. He should be ready and joyful to lead a non-Christian in the sinner's prayer.

Paragraph 3. A DEACON is a PERMANENT GREETER.

A deacon will be alert to greet visitors, to guide them to the sanctuary, nursery, or other appropriate place. He and his family will also greet new members, try to establish common interests and acquaintanceship, and encourage their involvement in church organizations or activities.

Paragraph 4. A DEACON is a PROBLEM SOLVER,

A deacon will be alert to problems or potential problems that the church or congregation may face. He will listen carefully to constructive criticism of church activities and, if deemed appropriate, bring such comments to the attention of the appropriate person, committee, or organization.

A deacon will not listen to extensive, harmful criticism of the church personnel or activities, but will endeavor to make positive comments about the person or situation. A deacon will be the instigator of positive rather than negative actions.

Paragraph 5. A DEACON will MINISTER.

In addition to the specific ministry duties and responsibilities outlined in Article II for the Deacon Ministry Teams, a deacon will be alert to performing individual acts of ministry. A visit to the hospital; a visit to the nursing home; a card or note; a telephone call; or other appropriate act of kindness can be important for those who are sick or grieving. A word of appreciation or commendation to the pastor, other ministers, church employees, or another member of the congregation is often very meaningful. Indeed, "a word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Proverbs 25:11).

Paragraph 6. This Handbook Is Not All Inclusive

This handbook, while containing primary duties and responsibilities, is not intended to be all inclusive of all deacon duties and responsibilities. Deacons are to be always alert for opportunities of service and ministry.

Authentication

This handbook has been reviewed and is approved for publication and distribution this 7th day of July, 2014.

Michael D. Woods,
Pastor

Jim Goldsmith
Chairman of Deacons
2013/2014

It is suggested that:

1. A copy of this handbook is given to all persons expected to be nominated as deacons, who have never served on the active group at the First Baptist Church Powder Springs, prior to their decision to accept the nomination.
2. The chairman of deacon's meet with and orient all new deacons who have never served on the active group at First Baptist Church Powder Springs about the contents of the handbook, on or about the beginning of the new church year.

Submitted by: Jim Goldsmith, Chairman
John Holt, Gary Beasley, & Johnny Stafford