

## RESTRUCTURING FOR BOARD OF DEACONS

Draft - Updated October 3, 2023

### PROPOSED BYLAWS FOR CONTINUED TRANSITION OF DIACONATE

#### VI.3 Responsibilities during the Interim/Transitional Period January 2023 - January 2025

During this time the diaconate will work with the Pastor to facilitate the transition of responsibilities from the former structure to the new structure; refine the structure further; describe team and sub-team roles, expectations, and activities; form ministry teams/sub-teams; invite congregants to explore ministry; and identify proposed revisions of these bylaws.

The Senior Deacons, with the Pastor, will continue to administer the Deacons' Fund.

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#### NEW DEACON MODEL (DRAFT)

##### 1. PURPOSE

We believe the overall mission of the church is to love God and neighbor, and to demonstrate that love in all that we do. The Diaconate shares with the Pastor the oversight of the spiritual life of the Church. The deacons seek to cultivate a relationship with God in all that we do, remain grounded and centered in the heart, and hold a prayerful presence of love, peace, and strength.

The deacons will:

- Provide support to the Pastor
- Serve as liaisons to the ministry teams as a source of spiritual grounding
- Encourage spiritual growth within the congregation, as well as nurture future deacons and leadership

##### 2. DEACON TERM OF OFFICE

- No less than four deacons
- 2 year term with the option to renew for another term
  - This would entail some form of a discernment process (personal and group?)
- "Recruiting" new deacons
  - Potential new deacons should have a present and active life in the congregation. They do not need to be official members of the church.

- The current Diaconate and Pastor will be actively looking for those who demonstrate the identified qualities of a deacon and invite them into discussion (“tapping people on the shoulder”)
- There will also be a way for those who feel called to this role to identify themselves and request to join the Diaconate.
- Names would be presented to the Governing Board for approval
- The ability for someone to join the Diaconate at any time, beginning with a “partial term” and identifying the date of when their “full term” would begin
- Potential “Commitment Sunday” to bless those taking on new roles, including names in the Annual Report, but not necessary to have a congregational vote

### **3. DEACON ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **a. ACCOUNTABILITY - more to explore here; how is this new model/role of deacons beneficial? How will it help to enhance our ministry?**

- i. Pastor
- ii. Ministry Teams
- iii. Governing Board

#### **b. TASKS/RESPONSIBILITIES**

- i. Support of the Pastor
  1. Provide a ‘sounding board’
  2. Assist in
    - a. orienting new members
    - b. conflict resolution
    - c. serving of Communion
    - d. Baptisms
  3. Administer Deacons Fund
- ii. Liaisons to Ministry Teams
  1. Deacon will not serve as the ministry team leader, but instead a source of spiritual support for the overall team
  2. Chaplain role - Providing a “frame” of spirituality. For example, providing prayer/devotional for meetings to offer a sense of “grounding in God”; Serving as a reminder to let God’s Holy Spirit guide us in our choices and decisions and interactions
  3. Assist with evaluating and guiding long term planning and alignment with our overall mission
- iii. Spiritual growth/nurture of congregation

1. Connection to congregation through prayer and intentional listening
2. Nurture relationships among congregation
3. Engagement with congregation to identify spiritual strengths and opportunities for spiritual growth
4. Nurture future deacons and leadership

#### **4. DEACON QUALITIES**

- a. Maturity of faith
- b. Leadership, facilitation, and communication skills
- c. Big picture thinking
- d. Understanding of the mission of the church
- e. Presence in the midst of conflict; conflict management and resolution
- f. Presence in general - ability to hold space
- g. Prayer life
- h. Active engagement in life of congregation - demonstrate commitment and show up (to gain trust of congregation)

#### **5. DEACON TRAINING/ORIENTATION DETAILS**

[More to explore here](#)