

DEACON'S MANUAL

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The Deacon Ministry of

**First Baptist Church
Cookeville, Tennessee**

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All Scripture verses are from the New American Standard Bible (NASB)

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Our purpose is to function as servants of our Lord Jesus Christ serving in and through the church as partners with the Pastor in enabling the church to fulfill its Kingdom agenda.

Matthew 20:28

²⁸just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

VISION STATEMENT

We the Deacons of First Baptist Church feel led of the Lord to express our Deacon ministry by serving as ministers who seek to meet specific needs in the congregation according to our individual gifts and abilities.

I. INTRODUCTION AND BRIEF HISTORY

Many Godly men have served as Deacons at First Baptist Church. Their selfless service has exemplified the Biblical criteria of a deacon. This history is a brief summary of the service, sacrifice, and seriousness to commitment they have modeled for us. As the church has grown they adapted to the needs of the congregation. The Deacon ministry of this Church has undergone many changes and this brief history of our Deacon Body highlights the major changes that have taken place.

From the earliest days of this church the Deacons were elected for life. Early in 1956 the Deacon Body received a report which proposed a rotating system of active Deacons. The goal was to provide the opportunity for other qualified men to enjoy the opportunity of service through and to the church, and the fellowship which the Deacon Body offered, without having to wait until a vacancy occurred either through death or the relocation of an active Deacon to another church.

On June 11, 1956 the Deacons proposed a plan of rotating service periods for Deacons with three years of active service followed by one year of mandatory inactive status. Each sitting Deacon was given the opportunity to select "Life" status which continued those Deacons in active service without the period of inactive status. Life status was chosen by one Deacon on the basis of conscience. The status of "Retired" Deacon was also established at the same time and four Deacons chose this status. All other Deacons were divided into one, two and three years of service (before the one year of inactive status took effect). There were eight with one year terms, eight with two year terms and three with three year terms, and six new Deacons were selected by the church for three year terms. The church approved the plan and there were 25 total active Deacons at the beginning of the rotating system in October, 1956.

About 1980 the Deacons decided that a Deacon Family Ministry system should be established. This was a very ambitious program and it was believed that more Deacons would be required to implement such a system and the church did elect a number of new Deacons so that the number serving on active status each year would be about 50. The Family Ministry plan became a heavy burden and many Deacons believed they could not do a conscientious job. Each year a larger number of inactive Deacons, eligible to be re-elected to active status, refused to allow their name on the election ballot. This problem reached serious proportions so that in late 1996, after much effort to solve the problem otherwise, it was decided to study the possibility of providing the necessary ministry to the members of the church by using some mechanism other than the Family Ministry program then in effect. It was soon determined that the Family Ministry program was not operating uniformly to the membership, and in fact a sizeable number of members did not have a Deacon assigned, and many others did not know who their Deacon was. A reorganization was undertaken by a ten man committee of the Deacon Body early in 1997. This committee reported to the Deacon Body and at the meeting of August 4, 1997, the Body adopted the recommendations of the committee and forwarded its own recommendation to the church as follows:

1. Abolish the Deacon Family (Flock) Ministry and establish in its place a ministry to widows to be named the Ruth-Anna Ministry; and a ministry to church members in general to be named the Deacons-of-the-Week Ministry.
2. Abolish the Rotation System of Deacon service and replace it with a Deacon- in-Service plan without any scheduled and mandatory periods of inactive service. This plan has the effect of reverting to the elected Deacons serving for life, but there are provisions to continue a retirement option, and the provision for leave from active service for periods of one year for satisfactory medical or other good cause.

The Church approved this reorganization plan for the Deacon Body at the quarterly business meeting in October 1997 and implemented it January 1998.

II. DEACON'S MANUAL MAINTENANCE

The Deacon's Manual is designed to be a living document. As the church moves forward, new ministries may be identified and some existing ministries may become obsolete. Other ministries may require changes in procedures and responsibilities.

To adapt to these changes, the manual is created in a format that has two sections:

Section 1 – Deacon's Manual

The Deacon's Manual deals with the general duties, membership and the qualifications of Deacons. Per the Church Constitution and Bylaws, any changes affecting this section of the manual will be presented to the church for adoption.

Section 2 – Supplement to Deacon's Manual

The Supplement to the Deacon's Manual deals with procedural issues for Deacon nominations, Deacon officers, Deacon of the Week duty, Sunday Services and other Deacon ministries. This section may be revised by the Deacon Body on an 'as needed' basis, without church action.

This format has been selected by the Deacon Body to provide a dynamic framework for ministry that will serve now and in the future. The Deacon Secretary, in coordination with the Deacon Chairman and church office, will be responsible for coordinating updates as they are identified and approved by the Deacon Body. The church office will retain a permanent copy of the current Deacon's Manual and all subsequent approved revisions. The Deacon Secretary will be responsible for distribution of updates to the Deacon Body.

First Baptist Cookeville

DEACON'S MANUAL

Adopted: November 24, 1997 Effective: January 1, 1998; Revised: July 28, 2010 ; Revised: May 25, 2011; Last Revised August 1, 2011.

III. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE DEACON

It is an honor for a man to be elected by the church to the office of Deacon. It is an even greater honor for a man with a humble spirit to realize that God has chosen to use him in Christian ministry. However, far beyond any personal honor for an individual, the service of a Deacon is a charge and challenge to assume a major responsibility in the church. This responsibility must have priority when compared to other church and community requests made upon one's time and resources. In keeping with this responsibility, the scripture qualifications of the Deacon must be maintained. To assist the church in applying the scriptural qualifications, First Baptist Church Cookeville has also established a set of church requirements.

A. Scriptural Qualifications of the Deacon

Through the New Testament Church of the first century, God set forth in His Word the servant nature of the Deacon. The Deacon was to help meet the spiritual and practical needs of the congregation. The work of the Deacon enabled the church's ministry to advance unhindered. The church with the guidance of the apostles chose the best qualified men that exemplified the life of Jesus Christ.

The qualifications of a Deacon can be found in these Biblical passages of the New Testament: Acts 6:1-7 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13. In Acts 6:1-7, seven men were chosen to serve the body of believers in a complementary manner to the twelve apostles. These seven men are considered to be the first deacons, although Luke does not use the Greek word for deacon in the text. In 1 Timothy 3:8-13, Paul uses the Greek word for deacon. In his writing, Paul uses a verb tense and mood indicating that the qualities of a deacon are to be continually demonstrated.

Acts 6:1-7

1Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. 2So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. 3"Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. 4"But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." 5The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. 6And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them. 7The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.

1 Timothy 3:8-13

8Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, 9but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. 10These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. 11Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. 12Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. 13For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

Related passages for reference to the call for servant leadership in the church are found in Titus 1:5-9; Galatians 5:16, 22-24; Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-16, 25-32; Philippians 2:1-11; and Colossians 3:1-4, 12-17.

B. Church Requirements of the Deacon

These requirements provide a demonstrable way for First Baptist Church Cookeville to apply the scriptures in Section III.A.

At the time of nomination, a candidate for deacon shall be a man, single or married, who is least 25 years old, who has been a church member at least three years, and who submits to and passes a background check. The candidate, who is divorced, may be considered only if at least seven years have passed since the divorce is finalized. Satisfying these requirements helps the candidate to demonstrate his Godly character and allows the church to reasonably test that the candidate is scripturally eligible.

The wife of a married candidate must also demonstrate her Godly character.

Beyond these church requirements, the Deacon is accountable ultimately to the Lord and practically to the church. This accountability involves one's being:

1. A MATURING CHRISTIAN: knowing one's relationship to Jesus Christ is secure; believing one's character reflects Christian morality; striving to be one that will promote harmony, unity, and fellowship within the congregation; and demonstrating a wholesome spirit and progressive disposition in order to be eager to attempt worthy goals that would enlarge the Kingdom and advance the church.
2. A CHRISTIAN EXAMPLE: having a lifestyle that reflects Christian values in conduct and behavior; and having a reputation that is dependable and trustworthy.
3. A POSITIVE WITNESS FOR CHRIST: sharing the good news of salvation, through one's own life-changing testimony, with those who do not know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, helping lead them to a conversion experience, and participating in regular visitation to church members and prospective members for the church through the Sunday School and regular church visitation program.
4. AN ACTIVE CHURCH MEMBER: cooperating with the Pastor, staff, and congregation to support the entire church program, especially by regularly attending Sunday School, Sunday morning and evening worship services, Wednesday family activities and services, meetings and events such as revival services, stewardship emphasis, Biblical conferences, and other special events.
5. A FAITHFUL STEWARD: recognizing God provides everything one has; being a generous giver; giving at least a tithe on one's financial income to the work of the Lord through First Baptist Church, Cookeville; giving to special offerings of the church as the Lord leads; and committing one's time, talents, spiritual gifts, skills, and abilities to the Lord through the church.
6. A GROWING DISCIPLE: continuing to learn and to be trained for more effective service; and having, for the church, a spiritual vision filled with hope and goodwill.
7. A KNOWLEDGEABLE BAPTIST: being familiar with and supportive of the beliefs, doctrines, and practices of Baptist churches as expressed in such confessional statements as "The Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in May 1963; believing that Baptists have no creed but the Bible; believing Baptists are a free people to relate to one another in a covenant relationship; and being aware of the background, work, and plans of this congregation.
8. AN INVOLVED DEACON: working with the Deacons in cooperative endeavors; attending regularly monthly Deacon meetings; keeping confidences when necessary; and supporting the majority decision of the Deacon Fellowship and church unless it is a matter of conscience and then without contention.
9. A FAMILY-ORIENTED MAN: demonstrating the importance of maintaining a Christ-centered family as a husband and father as applicable.

C. Additional Requirements of a Divorced Deacon or Deacon's Spouse

First Baptist Church Cookeville allows a divorced man, or a man whose spouse has been divorced, to be considered as a candidate for deacon if the divorce was within the parameters of the scriptural guidelines in Matthew 5:31-32 and Matthew 19:3-9 (sexual infidelity) and 1 Corinthians 7:10-14 (abandonment). If the spouse of a candidate has been divorced, then the same scriptural guidelines must be met for her divorce.

Matthew 5:31-32

31 "It was said, 'whoever sends his wife away, let him give her a certificate of divorce'; 32 but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Matthew 19:3-9

Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?" 4 And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, 5 and said, 'for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? 6 "So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." 7 They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give her a certificate of divorce and send her away?" 8 He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way. 9" And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."

1 Corinthians 7:10-14

10 But to the married I give instructions, not I, but the Lord, that the wife should not leave her husband 11 (but if she does leave, she must remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband), and that the husband should not divorce his wife. 12 But to the rest I say, not the Lord, that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he must not divorce her. 13 And a woman who has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to live with her, she must not send her husband away. 14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband; for otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy.

Further, the candidate who is divorced or whose spouse is divorced may be considered only if at least seven years have passed since the divorce is finalized. This time period allows the church to further test that the divorced candidate or candidate whose spouse has been previously divorced is otherwise scripturally eligible per 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

IV. MINISTRIES OF THE DEACON BODY

A. DEACONS-OF-THE-WEEK PROGRAM

1. Purpose

The Deacons-of-the-Week program is to assist the Ministerial Staff in ministering to the church members as special physical, spiritual, or emotional needs arise and assistance is requested by the church staff.

2. Participation

Duties, scheduling and record-keeping of Deacons-of-the-Week are set forth in *Supplement to Deacon's Manual – Section I*.

B. RUTH-ANNA MINISTRY

Acts 6:1-5

¹Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. ²So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. ³"Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. ⁴"But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." ⁵The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch.

The Ruth-Anna Ministry is named for Ruth in the Old Testament (Ruth 2) and Anna in the New Testament (Luke 2:36-37). The name was first given by Mrs. Beth Prowse, former Pastor's Secretary, to the annual banquet sponsored by the Church to honor the widows of the Church.

1. Purpose

The Ruth-Anna Ministry is to provide necessary assistance, communication, and witness to all the widows of the Church.

2. Participation

Duties, scheduling and record-keeping of Ruth-Anna Ministry are set forth in *Supplement to Deacon's Manual – Section II*.

C. DEACON PROJECTS MINISTRY

1. Purpose

“The service of a Deacon is a charge and challenge to assume a major responsibility in the church. A genuine love should result in a burden for the lost to be saved, a desire for the inactive members of the church to be reclaimed, and a commitment to Christians to live in fellowship with one another.” (Section III, B)

The elements of service, assumption of responsibilities in the church, evangelism, reclamation of inactive members of the church, and promotion of fellowship are recognized as worthy and expected functions of active Deacons. Projects should relate to these functions.

2. Participation

Duties, scheduling and record-keeping of Deacon Projects are set forth in *Supplement to Deacon's Manual – Section III*.

D. DEACON PRAYER MINISTRY

1. Purpose

Mark 11:17a

^{17a}And He began to teach and say to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'?"

Jesus said that his house will be called a house of prayer. God's command is for believers to pray. Deacons will lead through private, corporate, intercessory and other prayer activities.

2. Participation

Duties, scheduling and record-keeping of Deacon Prayer Ministry are set forth in *Supplement to Deacon's Manual – Section IV*.

E. MINISTRY OF WORSHIP SERVICE DEACONS

1. Purpose

Matthew 20:28

²⁸just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

Deacons are called to be servants to the body of Christ. Deacons will serve the congregation in worship by assisting the ministerial staff and worshippers with physical and spiritual needs.

2. Participation

Duties, scheduling and record-keeping of the Ministry of Worship Service Deacons are set forth in *Supplement to Deacon's Manual – Section V*.

V. ORGANIZATION OF THE DEACON BODY

A. OFFICERS OF THE DEACON BODY AND DUTIES

1. Chairman

Serves as the head of the Deacon body, working with the pastor and ministerial staff to ensure that the needs of the congregation are served. Those duties shall include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Plan, coordinate and conduct Deacons' Meeting.
- b. Serve as member of Deacon Nominating Committee.
- c. Support Pastor and church staff.
- d. Keep all Deacons informed.
- e. Confer with all Deacon Committees.
- f. Work in partnership with the Deacon Officers.
- g. Plan Deacon training.
- h. Appoint Deacon project chairmen as needed.
- i. Serve as member of church council.
- j. Appoint parliamentarian to serve in Deacons' meetings as needed.
- k. Provide report to church office for inclusion in Quarterly Business Meetings.

2. Vice-chairman

Works with the Deacon Officers for the administration of the Deacon body and will serve as temporary Chairman in the absence of the Chairman. Those duties shall include, but are not limited to:

- a. Maintain service rosters and notify Deacons of assigned duties.
- b. Assign widows to Deacons.
- c. Assist in Deacon ministry and training.

3. Secretary

Works with the Deacon Officers for the administration of the Deacon body. Those duties shall include, but are not limited to:

- a. Maintain minutes of meetings.
- b. Maintain attendance record of meetings.
- c. Coordinate ordering Deacon literature.
- d. Coordinate maintenance of Deacon records and correspondence in office of Pastor's secretary.

4. Chairman-elect

Works with the Deacon Officers for the administration of the Deacon body and to gain the necessary experience to provide continuity upon assuming the Chairman position. Those duties shall include, but are not limited to:

- a. Assume Chairman responsibilities at October Deacon's Meeting.
- b. Designate Vice-chairman and Secretary to serve during his term as Chairman.

If the Chairman is unable to fulfill his term, the Deacon body may choose to have the Chairman-elect, the Vice-Chairman or another member of the body complete that term.

B. ELECTION OF DEACON CHAIRMAN AND CHAIRMAN ELECT

The election of Deacon Chairman and Chairman-elect is set forth in *Supplement to Deacon's Manual – Section VII*.

C. ELECTION OF DEACONS AND DUTIES OF THE DEACON NOMINATING COMMITTEE

1. Deacon Nominating Committee

The Deacon Nominating Committee shall be composed of the Senior Pastor (or an Associate Pastor designated by the church, if the church is without a Senior Pastor), the Chairman of the Deacon Body and the Chairman –Elect of the Deacon Body, and two active Deacons elected by the Deacon Body. The active Deacons will serve two-year terms with their terms offset so that one active Deacon is elected in October each year.

2. Election of Deacons

- a. When election of Deacons is required, the Deacon Nominating Committee shall notify the church body to nominate male church members whom they believe to be qualified.
- b. The Deacon Examination Council will send each nominee a copy of the *Deacon Questionnaire* located in *Supplement to Deacon's Manual*.
- c. Nominees are requested to submit the completed *Deacon Questionnaire* by an established due date if they believe they are qualified and are willing to serve.
- d. The Deacon Examination Council shall consist of the Deacon Nominating Committee and four additional Deacons elected from the Deacon Body.
- e. The Deacon Examination Council will review the *Deacon Questionnaire* of each nominee to ensure that they meet all qualifications and requirements as set forth in the Deacon Manual. Those qualified will be asked to be interviewed by the Deacon Examination Council. Those not qualified or whose *Deacon Questionnaire* is incomplete, will be contacted by a member of the Deacon Examination Council.
- f. Those nominees qualified by the Deacon Examination Council will be submitted to the Deacon Body for affirmation.

- g. Those nominees affirmed by the Deacon Body will be listed on a ballot and submitted to the Church Body for election:
 - i. The Church Body will be asked to vote for a number of nominees equivalent to the number of vacancies to be filled.
 - ii. The ballots will be collected by the Nominating Committee and counted immediately.
 - iii. The results of the count will be returned to the church before the adjournment of the meeting.
 - iv. Those nominees receiving the highest vote totals for the vacancies will be deemed elected if they have received fifty-percent or more of the ballots cast.
 - v. If an insufficient number of nominees receive fifty-percent of the ballots cast, a second vote will be taken during the same business meeting.
 - vi. For the purpose of the second ballot, if possible, a slate equaling twice as many candidates as remaining vacancies will be presented to the congregation. Those candidates having received the highest number of votes on the first ballot (excluding those deemed elected) will make up the second ballot.
- h. Newly elected Deacons requiring ordination will be ordained at an Ordination Ceremony conducted during a regular church service.
- i. The newly elected Deacons will begin active service at the next regularly scheduled Deacons' meeting following the ordination service.

Guidelines for the number of Deacons to be elected are contained in the *Supplement to Deacon's Manual – Section VIII*.

3. Discipline Responsibility of the Committee

It shall be the responsibility of the Nominating Committee to insure that all serving Deacons comply with the responsibilities and qualifications of the office of Deacon as outlined in the Deacon Qualifications (Chapter III). This committee will also act when excessive unexplained absences from Deacons' meetings are reported. If a situation arises that merits review, the following steps may be used to address the situation:

- a. A phone call will be made to the Deacon from the Chairman of the Deacons, or a member of the Deacon Nominating Committee designated by him, reminding them of their duties and to see if an undisclosed problem exists.
- b. If no improvement is noted in the following three months, a letter will be sent to the Deacon from the Deacon Chairman.
- c. If no improvement is noted in the next three months following the letter, the Deacon Chairman and Senior Pastor will meet with the Deacon. Should the situation reach this point, the Deacon will, in likelihood, be asked to resign.

- d. If the Deacon refuses to resign when asked, the Nominating Committee will present the matter to the full Deacon Body for a vote of removal.

4. Deacon Status Categories and Change of Status Responsibility of the Nominating Committee

The committee will also act upon requests from active Deacons for temporary leave of absence from active status and other changes in status. The committee will report the action taken to the active Body. Leave is for a period of up to one year. It may be extended, upon request, at the discretion of the Deacon Nominating Committee.

All Deacons will fall under one of the following categories:

- a. Active:
Deacons currently serving as a member of the Body.
- b. Inactive:
 - i. On Leave – A Deacon who has been approved for a temporary leave.
 - ii. Resigned – A Deacon who resigns from active service by request or fails to become active following a leave.
 - iii. Retired – A Deacon who has retired from active service.

Resigned and retired Deacons may be reelected to active if nominated.

D. RELATIONSHIP COMMITTEE

1. Purpose

This committee is to be called upon when needed in conflict prevention or resolution for the Church.

2. Composition

The group shall consist of five active and/or retired Deacons. The Senior Pastor shall be the staff liaison of the Committee.

3. Role

The role of these men will be to act as representatives of the Deacon Body in providing counsel and/or recommendations to assist in the resolution of any conflicts which may be foreseen or arise within the Church in accordance with I Peter 5:1-4. Their duties will include such things as advising various church committees, individuals and/or groups to assist in conflict prevention and resolution by taking such actions as may be necessary to promote harmony and unity within the church fellowship.

4. Election

The election process will be as follows:

- 1. The Deacon Body will nominate those men who are qualified as per Titus 1:5-14 from the active Deacons and/or from those in Retired status.

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2. Committee members will be elected to serve two year terms. Members can be re-elected at the end of their term.
3. Members will be elected alternately, two members one year and three the next.
4. The chairman of the committee will be selected by the committee members and the selection passed to the Senior Pastor and Deacon Chairman within seven days of being elected.

5. Duration of Term

The term of service will be one (1) year with no limitation for re-election to subsequent terms.

6. Scripture References

Titus 1:5-14; I Peter 5:1-4; Acts 11:29-30; Acts 15:4, 6, 23; I Timothy 5:17; James 5:14-15; and Acts 20:17, 28.

E. DEACON RETIREMENT AND EMERITUS STATUS

1. Retirement

A Deacon is eligible, by request, for retirement upon reaching the age of seventy or having completed thirty years of service as a Deacon.

2. Emeritus

The designation of DEACON EMERITUS is a conferred title. It is intended to recognize Deacons for long and distinguished service in a number of responsibilities and positions at First Baptist Church.

The following procedure and criteria apply:

1. The Deacon receiving this title must be a RETIRED DEACON.
2. In June each year, the Deacon Officers and the Pastor will review the contributions of those Deacons having retired status. Any recommendation for conferring the title of DEACON EMERITUS will be brought to the Deacon Body. If approved by the Deacons, the recommendation will then be submitted to the church during a regularly scheduled business meeting. After approval by the church, the recognition and title conferral process will proceed. This process shall be done sufficiently early each year so that the DEACON EMERITUS recognition will coincide with the Annual Deacon Service of Commitment.
3. The recognition will include a special listing in the *Chronicles* or other appropriate publications. During the recognition service, a citation of achievement will be made and a special certificate or plaque will be presented.

F. DEACONS' MEETINGS

1. When and How Often?

- a. The Deacon Body of First Baptist Church, Cookeville, TN will meet on the first Monday of each calendar month for the purpose of organizing, planning and reporting on the ministry of the Deacons.
- b. If the first Monday of the month is not available (i.e., holiday, Church being used, revival, etc.), then the meeting will be held on the second Monday of the month.

- c. If neither the first nor second Mondays are available, the Chairman of the Deacon Body has the option to schedule the meeting some other day during the month or to cancel the meeting for that month with the business to be conducted being carried over to the next meeting.
- d. At least nine (9) regularly scheduled Deacons' meetings will be conducted during the year.
- e. The Chairman of the Deacon Body may cancel any regularly scheduled Deacons' meeting in lieu of another church sponsored activity.
- f. The Chairman of the Deacon Body or the Pastor may call a special meeting of the Deacon Body when the need arises. At least one week should elapse between the time the special meeting is called and the actual meeting is held. An outline for the special meeting should be mailed to the Deacon Body at least 4 days before the meeting.
- g. The Chairman of the Deacon Body may elect to substitute the quarterly Church business meeting for the regularly scheduled Deacons' meeting. This substitute meeting will count toward the 9 regularly scheduled Deacons' meetings to be held during the year as stated in Item 4.

2. Who Will Conduct the Meetings?

- a. The Chairman of the Deacon Body will be in charge of the meetings and conduct the meetings.
- b. If the Chairman of the Deacon Body is unavailable, the Vice-chairman of the Deacon Body will be in charge of the meeting and conduct the meeting.
- c. If neither the Chairman nor the Vice-chairman of the Deacon Body is available to conduct the meeting, the Chairman of the Deacon Body will designate one member of the Deacon Body to conduct the meeting. This will not be the Deacon Body Secretary whose responsibilities entail keeping a record of the meeting.
- d. Robert's Rules of Order, latest revision, shall govern all matters of parliamentary procedure unless superseded by this document. If one of the Deacons is well versed in parliamentary procedure, the Chairman of the Deacon Body should appoint him as parliamentarian for the meetings. If none of the active Deacons is well versed in parliamentary procedures, then the Chairman of the Deacon Body should select an inactive Deacon, a retired Deacon, or a member of the Church Body to be parliamentarian for the Deacons' meetings. Decisions of the parliamentarian on procedural matters should be considered as final.

3. What Should We Accomplish at a Deacons' Meeting?

- a. Every Deacons' meeting should have a specific purpose. The Deacons' meetings must train and educate the Deacons to be better servant-leaders in the church.

- b. Periodically Deacons should: (1) tour the entire physical facilities to learn of needs and activities in all parts of the building, (2) hear reports from key committees in the church such as the Finance committee, the Missions committee, the Building and Grounds committee.
- c. Field trips should also be included from time to time. Trips to a retirement home or the Baptist Student Union are examples.
- d. Deacons should be encouraged to attend the quarterly business meetings. Consideration should be given to having the quarterly business meeting count as the Deacons' meeting on some occasions.
- e. Deacon Training should be a regular part of Deacons' meetings. Training should be an agenda activity whenever possible.

4. Announcing the Meeting

1. One of the last agenda items for the meeting should be the date, time, meeting place, etc. for the next regularly scheduled meeting.
2. Announcement of the meeting will be included in the *Chronicles* or other appropriate publications on the Sunday just prior to the meeting.
3. Announcement of the meeting will be included in the announcements made prior to the Sunday morning worship service.
4. The Chairman will send out a reminder of the next meeting not later than seven (7) days prior to the date of the meeting. The notification will contain whatever information the Chairman deems necessary.

5. How Long Should a Deacons' Meeting Last?

The starting and ending times for Deacons' Meetings shall be per *Supplement to Deacon's Manual, Section IX*.

6. Suggested Agenda Items for a Deacons' Meeting

- a. Call to order.
- b. Approval of agenda.
- c. Singing, devotion, prayer, and training.
- d. Approval of minutes of previous meeting.
- e. Pastor's address to the Deacon body.
- f. Program or activity for meeting.
- g. Old business
 - i. Review of activities since last Deacons' meeting with input from church staff.
 - ii. Any other carry-over business.

- h. New business
 - i. Preview of activities and needs beyond the next scheduled Deacons' meeting with input from the church staff.
 - ii. Church Committee Reports as deemed useful by Deacon Officers.
- i. Praise time. Prayer needs. Prayer.
- j. Announcement of next regularly scheduled meeting.
- k. Adjourn.

7. Attendance

Deacons are expected to attend all meetings or contact the Secretary prior to the meeting with an explanation of their planned absence. The Secretary will advise the Deacon Nominating Committee of Deacons with two (2) or more unexplained absences.

8. Miscellaneous

Refreshments at the regularly scheduled Deacons' meetings seem to promote fellowship within the Deacon Body. The Chairman of the Deacon Body is encouraged to plan to have refreshments at the meetings.

G. ANNUAL SERVICE OF COMMITMENT

An annual Service of Commitment provides both a means of identification and accountability to the church body. It is a reminder of the calling and ministry of the Deacon Body to the church membership and the Deacons. Participation in the Service of Commitment will allow each Deacon to declare to the church his intent, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to actively serve their church in accordance with the Deacons' Manual.

1. The Service of Commitment will be planned for September of each year.
2. Whenever possible this *Service of Commitment* will be combined with the ordination of newly elected Deacons and Deacon Emeritus recognition.
3. That Sunday, the Qualifications of a Deacon will be made available to the congregation as a handout.
4. The service will include any or all of the following that apply:
 - Ordination of newly elected deacons
 - Commitment of newly elected Deacons; those Deacons returning from leave; those Deacons declaring their intent to remain active
 - Deacon Emeritus Recognition
5. Each year in August a statement of intent will be prepared by the Deacon Nominating Committee on which each Deacon will indicate by signature their desire to serve on the active body during the following year. The statement with signatures will then be entered as a report into the minutes of the church and, combined with the Service of Commitment, will serve as a recorded History of Deacon service.

Adopted: November 24, 1997

Effective: January 1, 1998

Last Revised: August 1, 2011

Deacon's Manual

6. Active Deacons who do not declare their intent to actively serve through this means will be considered "on leave."

SUPPLEMENT TO THE DEACON'S MANUAL

--

**The Deacon Ministry of
First Baptist Church
Cookeville, Tennessee**

I. MINISTRY OF DEACONS OF THE WEEK

A. Participation

1. The Chief Deacon of the Week (CDOW) will be the central point of contact between the Pastor's Secretary and their team.
2. The Pastor's Secretary will email an electronic form with contact information for all visits to the CDOW. This will normally occur on Monday morning after visitor tab information is gathered. Visits may include those on visitor tabs, the hospitalized, homebound, death in family etc.
3. The CDOW will coordinate visit activity with his team members.
4. The CDOW shall try to distribute the visits so that every member of the team has the opportunity to contribute. Possible ways to do this are to have two pairs of deacons and assign visitor follow-up to one pair and hospital visits to the other pair. Visits can then be made in pairs when possible.
5. Team members will report back to the CDOW after visitation contact has been made so that the CDOW can fill in the electronic form and return it complete to the Pastor's Secretary.
6. The Pastor's Secretary will provide copies of the completed reports back to the Deacon Officers so that visitation testimonies can be shared and celebrated at Deacons' Meetings.
7. Working with the same team members for several months will promote fellowship and accountability with other team members. It will also allow team members to become familiar with how best to communicate with those they are serving with.
8. The weeks each team is assigned to serve is scheduled well in advance. This allows team members to plan personal schedules such that they are as available as possible those weeks.
9. When new Deacons are elected and/or return from leave, teams can be realigned for the next Deacon year such that new Deacons join an established group that can mentor and train them.

B. Scheduling

The Vice-chairman of the Deacon Fellowship is responsible for scheduling the Deacons-of-the-Week. Once the schedule is published, it is the responsibility of the Deacon-of-the-Week to arrange for his replacement should one be needed. If a Deacon knows before the schedule is issued that he will not be available for a certain period of time, he should notify the Vice-chairman before the schedule is prepared.

C. Service Period

The period of service for the Deacons-of-the-Week will begin Sunday morning and will continue until midnight of the following Saturday.

D. Records

A detailed listing of all actions taken during the week will be recorded using one of the forms below and/or email and turned in to the Pastor's Secretary on Monday by the CD. If

during the week of service, a Deacon feels it necessary, he should update the appropriate staff member as to the results and status of his actions.

E. Church Responsibility

As needs arise requiring assistance of a Deacon-of-the-Week, the church will notify the CDOW. If he cannot be reached, the other Deacons-of-the-Week will be called in turn until one is notified of the need. Should a situation arise where none of the Deacons-of-the-Week could be contacted, the church is to contact the Vice-chairman or Chairman of the Deacon Fellowship.

F. Deacon Responsibility

It is the responsibility of each scheduled Deacon-of-the-Week to inform the CDOW as to his anticipated availability during the week. Should an unexpected situation arise where a Deacon-of-the-Week would have to get a replacement, he is responsible to notify the CDOW as to who the replacement is to be, and for what period of time the replacement will serve.

G. Possible Types of Needs

Some of the types of needs which might require assistance by the Deacons-of-the-Week when requested by the church are: sickness, hospital visits, nursing home visits, shut-in visits, accidents, financial, loss of job, medical, transportation, prayer, funeral preparations, etc.

II. RUTH ANNA MINISTRY

A. Participation

The ministry will involve all of the Deacons on active service. Deacons that change their status may maintain their ministry to their assigned widows by request and approval by the Deacon body. The Vice-chairman of the Deacon Body is responsible for the assignment of Deacons to serve each widow in the church. The Vice-Chairman should make contact with the new widow to explain the ministry and ensure that the widow wants a Deacon assigned prior to making an assignment.

B. Visitation

Deacons should visit with their designated widows as often as is deemed necessary to stay in touch and in accordance with the wishes of the widow and/or her family. Visits should be used to discuss needs and concerns of the widow, as well as to keep them informed about the activities of the Church. Visits may be by phone but should include at least one face-to-face meeting each year unless specifically requested otherwise by the widow and/or her family. Cards and notes are also encouraged for birthdays and other occasions as a means of ministering to assigned widows. It is also recommended that the Deacon take, or make arrangements for another Deacon to take, the elements of the Lord's Supper to any of their widows that are shut-ins prior to the televised service so that the widow may join in observance of the Lord's Supper.

When problems are discovered that warrant the personal skills of the Pastor, the Deacon should immediately inform the church of the need.

Whenever a Deacon learns that one of the widows assigned to his care faces sickness or bereavement he should be prompt in making a personal visit. These visits may be required at the home, hospital, funeral home or other places as the need makes evident. When visits are made in person and in a private setting the Deacon should take along their spouse or a fellow Deacon.

C. Ruth-Anna Banquet

The Ruth-Anna Banquet is a special celebration within the Ruth-Anna ministry to recognize the widows of the Church. Each Deacon is responsible for inviting and escorting the widow(s) assigned to him in the ministry program. Any Deacon unable to perform this responsibility shall enlist another Deacon to substitute for him to ensure the participation of every widow in the church, unless she chooses not to, or is unable to, participate.

The Ruth-Anna banquet is a luncheon normally held on a Sunday in April. It is held in the Fellowship Hall of the church. Deacons are to contact each of the widows assigned to them, invite them to the banquet, provide transportation if needed, sit with them, and introduce them at the appropriate time.

All attendees are guests of the Church and there is no cost for the banquet for either the Deacon or his widow. Deacon's wives are strongly encouraged to attend the banquet with their husbands also as guests of the Church.

D. Records

A record of Ruth-Anna Ministry activities should be maintained by the Deacon using one of the forms located in the *Supplement to Deacon's Manual*. This record will provide chronological listing of the Deacon's ministry to his designated widows for future reference. This record will be very beneficial in case a reassignment to another Deacon becomes necessary. The record will also help the ministerial staff to better understand the needs of a widow and minister to those needs.

E. Current Assignment of Church Widows to Deacons

A current list showing all Deacon assignments of widows can be obtained from the Deacon Vice-chairman upon request

III. DEACON PROJECTS MINISTRY

The Vice-chairman of the Deacons serves as the coordinator for Deacon projects. However, the participation of all Deacons is expected in making projects meaningful and successful. Listed below are several proposed projects for routine consideration. Projects A through E are suggested as standing activities. Projects F through H are proposed as worthy activities; however, it is proposed that these be evaluated regularly by the Deacon Body. These latter projects may be discontinued if interest and participation do not support their continuation. Additional projects may be approved by the Deacon Body from time to time as needs and interests dictate.

A. Assisting With Key Needs Within the Church

It is highly desirable that at least one Deacon serve as a member of each of the Building and Grounds committee, the Committee on Committees, the Finance committee, the Nominating committee and the Personnel committee. The Deacon Body will be appraised regularly of the need for workers within the church and will take an active role in making the needs known and in offering suggestions for solutions. The Deacons will also be apprised regularly of the financial status of the church and the status of major physical needs. The Deacons will take an active role in supporting needed changes via direct participation where feasible and appropriate and via suggestions for recommending priorities.

B. Annual Picnic

Deacons will take a lead role in service for the annual church picnic. The Deacons will be actively involved in promotion of the picnic and all the tasks pertaining to the picnic.

C. Deacon Work Day

Deacon officers will routinely examine needs involving the church, the members of the church and the community. Any suggested need can be brought to the deacon officers by any source. When a need is identified that could be solved by a concentrated day of work by a group of Deacons, a "DEACON WORK DAY" will be announced with appropriate time frame and resources. All Deacons will be encouraged to actively participate.

D. Deacon Retreat

Once each year the Deacon Body will schedule and participate in a retreat as an opportunity to renew commitment and to seek the leadership of the Holy Spirit in their roles as Deacons.

E. Newcomers Welcome/Orientation

The church staff will be expected to notify the Deacon Chairman in advance of a scheduled event for new members and their families. The Deacon Chairman will ensure that a sufficient number of Deacons will be invited to participate as needed. The Deacon Chairman will determine the appropriate and necessary Deacon body participation.

F. Fellowship Breakfast

The Deacons will provide leadership and support in conducting a breakfast for the families of the church on a regular basis. The breakfast will be held on a Sunday morning. All families will be invited to participate. The Deacons will be responsible for the preparation, cooking, cleanup and funding.

G. Upward/Devoted Program

The Deacon body will be asked to share testimonies, volunteer time and support these programs on an as-needed basis.

H. Harvest Festival

The Deacon body shall be willing to support this time of fellowship for the children and/or work with other churches to make this program successful and keep our children safe.

IV. DEACON PRAYER MINISTRY

A. Group Prayer

Worship Services: The number two Deacon will gather a few other Deacons and lead the group in prayer for the service. This is to occur after the doors are closed for the beginning of the service and before the last congregational hymn prior to the sermon.

B. Offertory Prayer

Deacons are assigned by the Vice-Chairman to do the offertory prayer at each service. These assignments are shown on the monthly duty roster and are printed in the bulletin.

C. Lord's Supper Prayer

Deacons are assigned by the Vice-Chairman to ask the blessings for the bread and wine in Lord's Supper services. These assignments are shown on the monthly duty roster and are printed in the bulletin.

D. Watchman Prayer Ministry

Deacons are encouraged to participate in this ministry by committing to an hour of prayer each week.

E. Other Prayer Opportunities

1. Annual Prayer Walk
 - a. Open to the entire congregation.
 - b. Prayer stations identified with prayer needs displayed.
 - c. Date to be determined by Church Council.

2. Visitation Scripture / Prayer Cards

Prayer and the use of prayer, cards and Scripture during visitation is encouraged. Opportunities for their use include:

- a. Salvation
- b. Illness
- c. Death
- d. Divorce / Marriage
- e. Encouragement
- f. Visitor

V. WORSHIP SERVICE DEACONS

Deacons who are assigned to serve in Worship Services each month will be referred to as 'Worship Service Deacons'. It is imperative that all Deacons be committed to meet their responsibilities in Worship Services and to make sure a replacement is secured in the event the scheduled Deacon is unable to serve. The appropriate Deacon-in-Charge should be notified of any changes.

A. Assignment of Worship Service Deacons

Monthly Worship Service Deacons will be assigned by the Vice-chairman of Deacon Body to serve in Worship Services as follows:

1. AM Service: Nine Deacons (Balcony Deacons rotate phone duty weekly).
2. PM Service: Three Deacons.

Positions will be assigned for each service as follows:

#	Deacon in Charge of Service
\$	Bank Duty
CD	Chief Deacon of Week Duty
D	Deacon of Week Duty
B	Balcony Duty
P	Offertory Prayer
LS PB	Lord's Supper – Prayer for the Bread
LS PW	Lord's Supper – Prayer for the Wine
*	Deacon Prayer Ministry

B. Responsibilities of the Deacon in Charge of Service #

- Contact his assigned Worship Service Deacons during the week prior to their month of service to remind them of their responsibilities.
- Serve at station one (1) in the sanctuary (see diagrams below).
- Insure Deacons are in place prior to each service.
- Make sure Prayer Ministry Deacons are prepared.
- Insure placement of offering plates as follows:
 - AM Service: Eight (8) offering plates on the front center pew; four on each end. One (1) offering plate on the organ side of the choir. Three (3) offering plates in the balcony (are normally not removed, but should be checked).
 - PM Service: Four (4) offering plates on the front center pew.

C. Pre-Service Responsibilities

- Strive to report for service fifteen minutes before each service.
- Indicate presence by checking name on the roster in the Deacons' room.

- Pick up nametag in the Deacons' room.
- Greet at assigned door (see diagrams below); shake hands; distribute bulletins and Chronicles.
- Assist in seating when necessary.
- Distribute hearing device upon request. These are located at the sound board in the balcony. The Deacon should instruct the worshipper to return the device to any Deacon at the exits upon close of service.
- Close doors when service starts.

D. Invitation

In the morning service, Deacons will move down the aisles at the beginning of the invitation to assist staff as they minister to people making decisions. Possible means of assistance may include prayer, counsel and aid in filling out decision cards.

E. Receiving Offering

- The Deacons will be at the front for the offering, having moved forward for the invitation.
- The Offertory Prayer will be handled by the designated Deacon (P) or the staff.
- Deacon 1 will pass the offering plates out to the Deacons.
- In the AM service:
 - Deacon 6 will assist in the passing out and taking up of the plates.
 - Deacons 3 and 4 will receive two (2) plates each.
 - Deacon 6 will give their plate to one of the other Deacons upon reaching the rear of the sanctuary and retrieve the offering plate from the choir loft. He should use the rightmost corridor and reenter the sanctuary as the *Doxology* starts so as to minimize distractions to the service as he proceeds forward.
- Immediately following the prayer, Deacons will begin collecting from the front of their service area.
- The Deacons in the balcony will bring the collected tithes and offerings to the tower entrance where they will exchange a full plate for an empty plate.
- In the AM service, after the offering has been collected, the Deacons are to wait at the rear of the sanctuary until the *Doxology* begins. They will then proceed to the front where Deacon 1 and Deacon 6 will collect the plates and place them on the platform in front of the pulpit. After the service, the designated bank Deacons will take the plates to the Deacons' Room. For the PM service, Deacons will take the offering directly to the Deacons' room, and prepare the bank deposit.
- The deposit will then be taken to the bank night deposit by the designated Deacons (\$).

F. Post Service Duties

- One of these Deacons *may* be called upon by staff to voice the closing prayer.

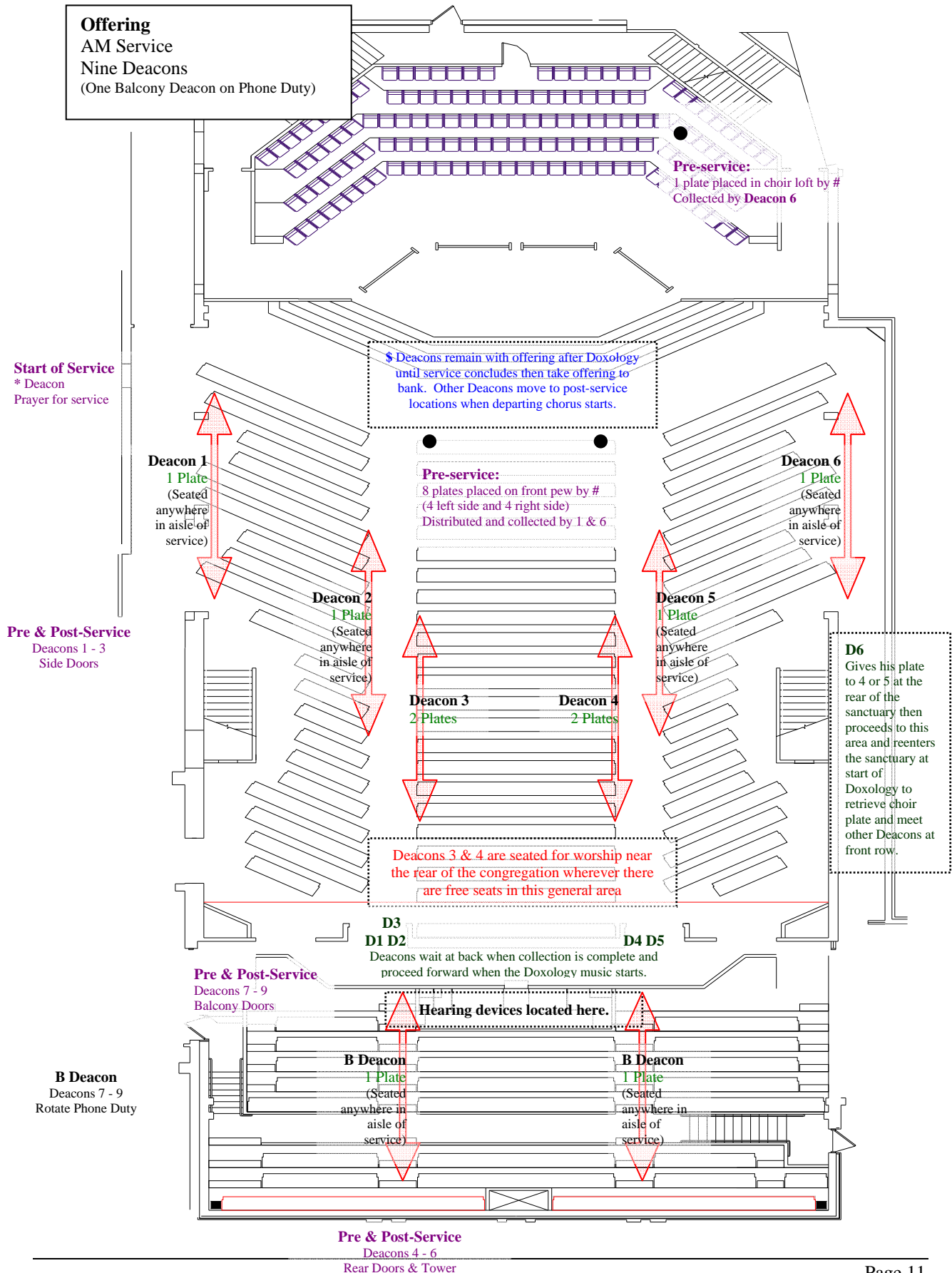
- All Worship Service Deacons except those with bank duty will then move to assigned doors to assist worshippers exiting the building. Refer to diagrams below for door locations for each Deacon station. Bank duty Deacons will remain in position until the close of the service at which time they will handle the deposit per above.

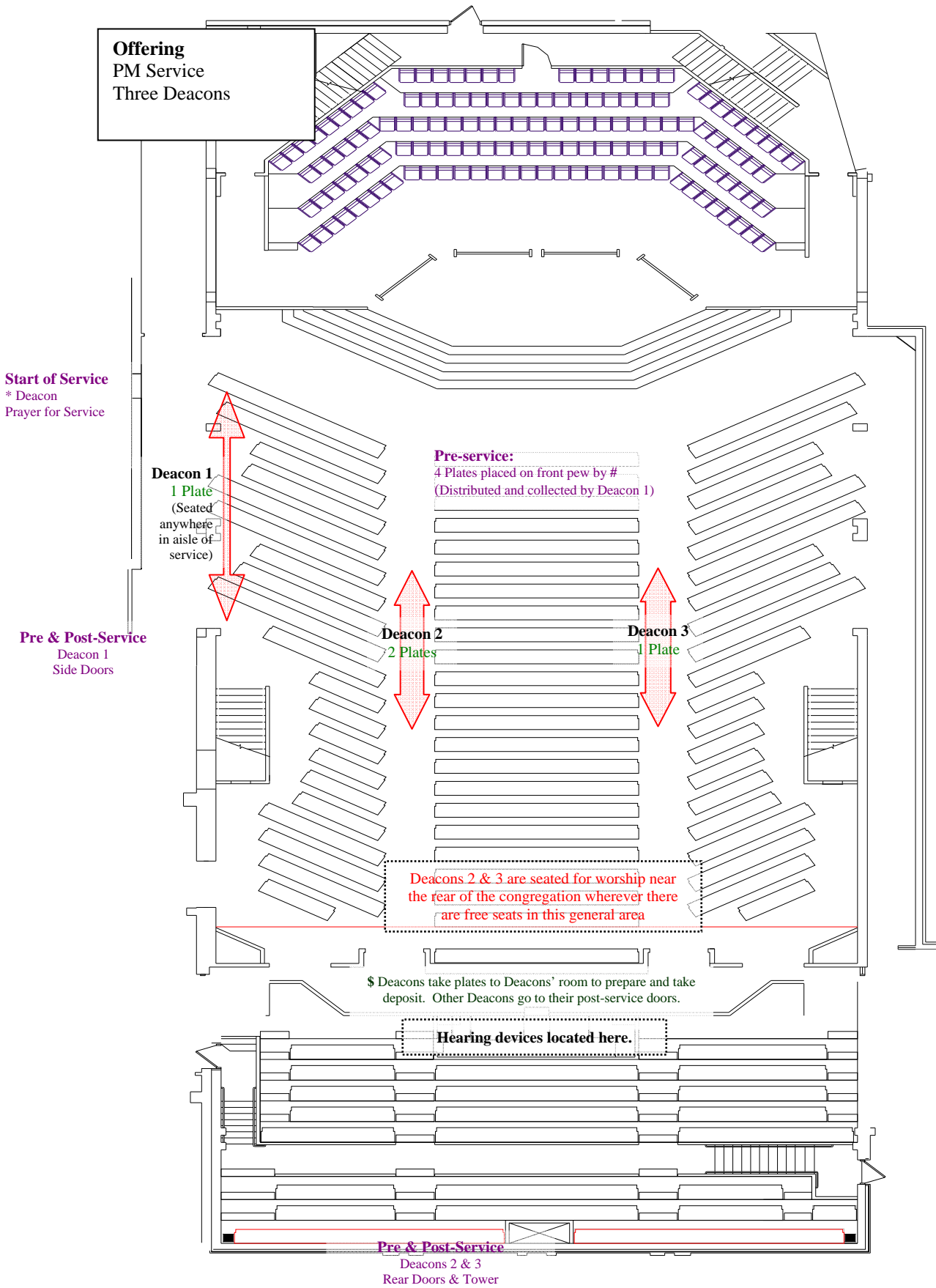
G. Lord's Supper

- When there is a Lord's Supper following the offertory, Deacons will remain standing at the front after the Doxology and respond to instructions from the Pastor.
- The Deacon Chairman will join the Worship Service Deacons as they come forward at the Doxology and stand at the designated location (see diagrams below).
- Deacons will be assigned on the duty roster for the prayers at the table for the bread and wine (see Table above) and will use the microphone provided when prompted by the Pastor.
- The Deacon Chairman will assist the Pastor in distributing the plates and trays to the Deacons when prompted by the pastor.
- Deacons will serve their aisles as shown on the diagram below.
- The Deacon Chairman will serve those in the choir loft and the pastor at the appropriate time.
- Elements for the balcony will be placed in the balcony area prior to the service. Balcony duty Deacons will remain in the balcony to distribute the elements.
- Balcony duty Deacons should not be assigned prayer at the table on the duty roster.
- The balcony Deacons will serve the contact ministry crew in the second morning service. Deacon 4 will serve them in a PM Lord's Supper Service.
- The deacon assigned to phone duty is responsible for serving the elements to the Nursery workers. Elements for the nursery area will be placed in that area prior to the service.

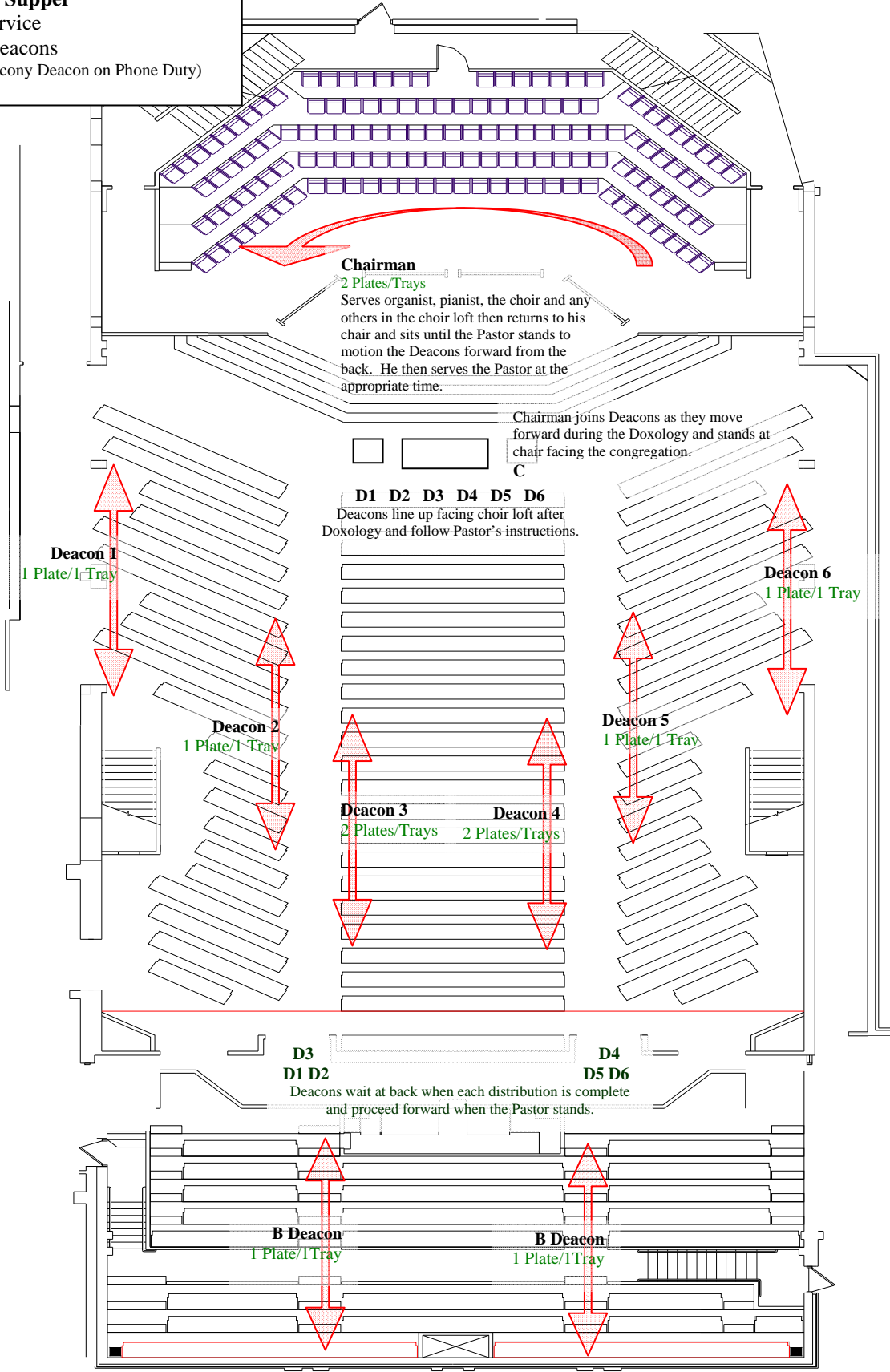
VI. SANCTUARY MAPS FOR WORSHIP SERVICE DEACONS

- A. Offering – AM Service
- B. Offering – PM Service
- C. Lord's Supper – AM Service
- D. Lord's Supper – PM Service

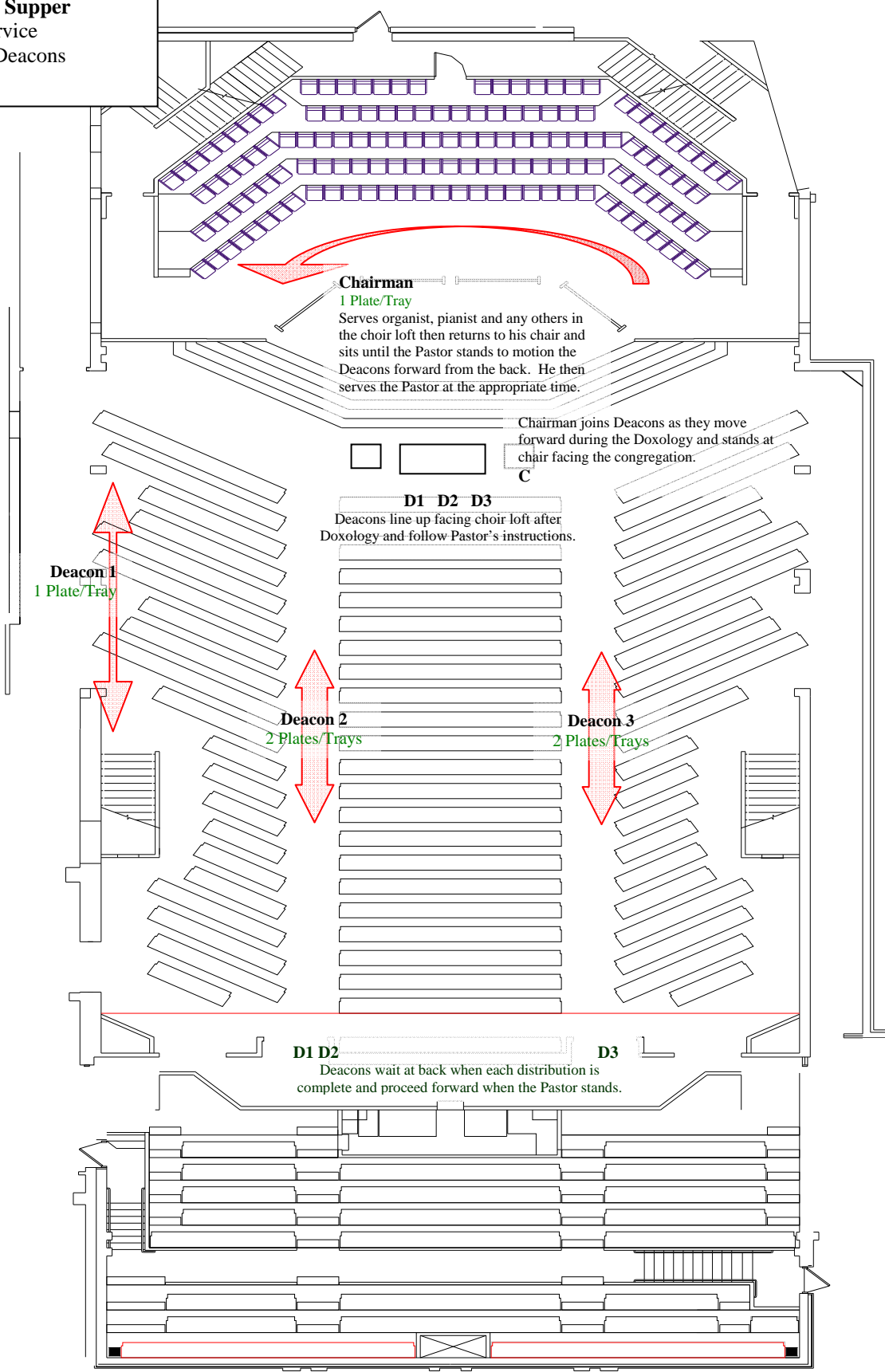




Lord's Supper
AM Service
Nine Deacons
(One Balcony Deacon on Phone Duty)



Lord's Supper
PM Service
Three Deacons



VII. ELECTION OF DEACON CHAIRMAN AND CHAIRMAN-ELECT

- A. The Chairman-elect from the previous year will become Chairman at the October Deacons' Meeting each year and will designate the staff officers who will serve with him for the one year term. No Chairman will be eligible to serve more than two terms within a period of six years.
- B. The Chairman-elect will be elected at the October meeting by popular vote. The Chairman will remind Deacons of the coming election at the September meeting. Deacons will be given a minimum of three weeks to withdraw their name from the ballot if they would be unable to serve. If a clear winner is not evident after the first ballot, a second run-off ballot will be held with the top vote-getters at the clearest break point.
- C. The out-going Chairman will coordinate a short installation service for the incoming Deacon Officers at the October meeting.

VIII. NOTES ON DEACON ELECTIONS

- A. The target range for the number of active Deacons shall be 55 – 60.
- B. In January, the Deacon Nominating Committee shall begin the election process as outlined in the Deacons' Manual any year that the number of active Deacons is below the minimum of the target range.
- C. Only willing candidates who: meet all of the qualifications; have been screened by the process in the Deacon's manual; and have received the required votes will be elected.
- D. The number of new Deacons elected, will be the quantity it takes to bring the number of active deacons back into the target range letting the number of votes received by the candidates decide the proper break point.
- E. If there are an insufficient number of qualified candidates to bring the number of active deacons back into the target range, the deficiency will be carried to the next year's election.
- F. The nominating, screening and election process will be completed by the Deacon Nominating Committee in time for a late summer ordination such that the newly elected Deacons can begin their participation at the beginning of the new Deacon year at the October meeting.

IX. DEACONS' MEETINGS

- A. The regularly scheduled Deacons' meeting should start promptly at 5:30 p.m.
- B. Attempt should be made to end the meeting by 7:00 p.m.

X. CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS FOR DEACON CHAIRMAN

October

- 1st Monday – **Deacons' Meeting** – Changing of Deacon Officers; elect Chairman-elect; elect 2 to Deacon Nominating Committee to serve with Chairman and Pastor; elect 5 to Deacon Relationship Committee (instruct them to select and advise their choice of committee chairman); nominate Church Moderator and Alternate
- Quarterly Business Meeting – bring Church Moderator & Alternate to church for vote
- Church Council – Attend meeting when invited; get church calendar information for Deacon Body to present at November meeting

November

- 1st Monday – **Deacons' Meeting** – Start Committee for Deacon Retreat; hand out church calendars; get Deacons signed up for Christmas services
- Church Thanksgiving meal
- Thanksgiving

December

- 1st Monday – **Deacons' Meeting** – Christmas Baskets for Widows
- Christmas Musical
- Christmas Eve Communion Service

January

- 1st Monday – **Deacons' Meeting**
- Quarterly Business Meeting

February

- 1st Monday – **Deacons' Meeting** – Plan Deacon Easter breakfast; Ruth Anna Banquet preparation
- Prayer Walk

March

- Early March – **Deacon Retreat**

April

- Early April – Ruth Anna banquet
- 1st Monday – **Deacons' Meeting** – Deacon signup for Maundy Thursday
- Maundy Thursday Foot Washing & Communion Service
- Easter – Deacon Breakfast
- Quarterly Business Meeting
- Late April: announce upcoming Deacon nomination process in Chronicles and perhaps coordinate a sermon from the pastor on Deacons

May

- 1st Monday – **Deacons' Meeting**
- Early May – receive Deacon nominations from the church for two weeks
- Late May – mail a Deacon Questionnaire to all valid candidates (have met the three year church membership and age requirements; are not already active or on leave etc). Set a deadline for the return of the Questionnaire in the cover letter that is mailed with it. Indicate that responding by the deadline with a completed Questionnaire is how to indicate a nominee's willingness to go to the next step in the process.

June

- 1st Monday – **Deacons' Meeting** – Proposed Church Budget presented to Deacons + Elect Deacon Examination Council
- Proposed Budget presented to church
- Vote on Budget
- Look at Eligible Deacon Emeritus Candidates
- Review returned Questionnaires and contact any nominees whose Questionnaires are incomplete or that seem to indicate disqualification.

July

- Deacon examination council screens nominees who have submitted a Questionnaire that seems to indicate that they are qualified to go to the next step.
- Churchwide Picnic – Normally NO Deacons' Meeting
- Quarterly Business Meeting

August

- 1st Monday – **Deacons' Meeting** - Examination council presents Deacon nominees who have been satisfactorily screened as qualified to the Deacon body for a vote of affirmation.
- 2nd week of August – church election of Deacons from those affirmed by the Deacon body.

September

- 1st Monday – **Deacons' Meeting**
- **Deacon Commitment Service**
- New Deacon orientation
- Outgoing Chairman notify Deacons they have 3 weeks to remove their name from the Chairman-elect ballot that will be cast in October and remind of upcoming change of Deacon Officers.

RUTH-ANNA MINISTRY RECORDS

Deacon: _____

Widow: _____

Relatives: _____

Comment or Action

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

DEACON QUESTIONNAIRE

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The Deacon Ministry of

**First Baptist Church
Cookeville, Tennessee**

Deacon Questionnaire

Name: _____ Date: _____

Birth Date: _____ Date Joined FBC: _____

Joined by: Letter Statement Baptism Other: _____

Return this form upon completion to:

First Baptist Church

18 South Walnut Avenue
Cookeville, TN 38501-3284

Attention: Chairman of Deacons



Please briefly describe your salvation experience and name the church where you were baptized.

Have you ever been ordained as a Deacon? Yes No

If yes, give the name of the church: _____

Do you feel that you can conscientiously support the total church ministry? Yes No

Are you willing to serve as a Deacon? Yes No

Have you carefully and prayerfully read the Scriptural and church qualifications of a Deacon and a Deacon's wife found in Acts 6:1-7, 1 Timothy 3 and the Deacons' Manual of First Baptist Church? (see last page of this questionnaire) Yes No

If you are married, has your wife also read these Scriptures and church qualifications? (Please read them carefully together.) Yes No

One qualification of a Deacon is that he be a *"faithful steward: recognizing God provides everything one has; being a generous giver; giving at least a tithe on one's financial income to the work of the Lord through First Baptist Church, Cookeville; giving to special offerings of the church as the Lord leads; and committing one's time, talents, spiritual gifts, skills, and abilities to the Lord through the church."*

Are you/will you be faithful in your stewardship by tithing to First Baptist Church? Yes No

One qualification of a Deacon is that he be a *"positive witness for Christ: sharing the good news of salvation, through one's own life-changing testimony, with those who do not know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, helping lead them to a conversion experience."*

Will you be able to actively participate in the Outreach Ministries of First Baptist Church? Yes No

If not, why? _____

Are you willing to abide by the *Church Constitution and Bylaws*? (available for review at www.fbccookeville.org) Yes No

Would you be willing to give a testimony before the church and submit to the questioning of the *Deacon Examination Council*? Yes No

Would you object to this questionnaire being reviewed by the *Deacon Nominating Committee and Examination Council*? Yes No

One qualification of a Deacon is that he be a *"knowledgeable Baptist: being familiar with and supportive of the beliefs, doctrines, and practices of Baptist churches as expressed in such confessional statements as "The Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in May 1963; believing that Baptists have no creed but the Bible; believing Baptists are a free people to relate to one another in a covenant relationship; and being aware of the background, work, and plans of this congregation."*

Do you adhere to the central doctrines accepted by Baptists in the May, 1963 *Baptist Faith and Message* (available for review at www.fbccookeville.org) as far as you know? Yes No

One qualification of a Deacon is the commitment to be an active deacon: *“working with the Deacons in cooperative endeavors; attending regularly monthly Deacon meetings; keeping confidences when necessary; and supporting the majority decision of the Deacon Fellowship and church unless it is a matter of conscience and then without contention.”*

Can you be faithful in attendance at the regular Deacons' Meetings (usually the 1st Monday of each month); keeping confidences when necessary; and supporting majority decisions of the Deacon Fellowship? Yes No

One of the responsibilities for a Deacon is to be available to assist the staff in receiving new members at the worship services. Would you make yourself available after being trained? Yes No

Have you ever been trained to share your faith? Yes No
If yes, what training did you receive?

F.A.I.T.H. Share Jesus Without Fear The NET Other: _____

One qualification of a Deacon is: *“participating in regular visitation to church members and prospective members for the church through the Sunday School and regular church visitation program.”*

Would you be willing to accept such 'Deacon of the Week' assignments as outlined in the Deacons' Manual (training/mentoring is provided)? Yes No

One qualification of a Deacon is that they: *“rule their children and their own houses well.”*

Do you personally feel that you provide loving, godly leadership for your home and that you are committed to managing your household with Christ-like principles? Yes No

One qualification of a Deacon is that: *“Deacons be the husbands of one wife and also that a man, who is otherwise deemed to be qualified, will be eligible for election to the position of Deacon if he meets any one of the following:”*

Can you say 'yes' to one of the statements below (if so, please check the one that applies). Yes No

- If he is married and has never been divorced.
- If he is single and has never been married.
- If he is the husband of but one wife. He has never been divorced although his wife has been divorced, under scriptural guidelines.
- If he has been the husband of but one wife, but is now divorced, under scriptural guidelines, and has never remarried.
- If he is the husband of but one wife, has been divorced under scriptural guidelines, and has remarried.
- If he is a widower and is either single or remarried.

Please list areas where you believe you are spiritually gifted; are serving; desire to serve in the life of **First Baptist Church** (e.g. Worship Service, Bible study, choir, outreach etc.)

Please give your view on the following and cite scripture references:

State your belief about salvation and what you believe about the security of the believer.

What do you believe about the authority and inspiration of the Scripture?

In your opinion, what is the mission of the church?

What do you believe the Bible teaches about the Deacon's responsibility to their home?

Briefly explain who the Holy Spirit is and what He does for believers and what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Remarks or comments:

The Deaconship

The word '*Deacon*' means servant or minister and came to be used by the church to designate a special position in the church. The Deaconship, therefore, signifies a position of special Christian service. Both the Scripture and the dignity of the ministry demand a man of the highest spiritual, moral and practical qualifications:

I. SPIRITUAL QUALIFICATIONS (Acts 6:1-6)

- A. Full of the Holy Spirit.
- B. Full of wisdom.
- C. Full of faith.

II. MORAL QUALIFICATIONS (1 Timothy 3:8-10, 12-13)

- A. Worthy of respect.
- B. Sincere.
- C. Not indulging in much wine.
- D. Not pursuing dishonest gain.
- E. The husband of one wife.
- F. Manages his children and household well.

III. QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE WIFE OF A DEACON (1 Timothy 3:11)

- A. Worthy of respect.
- B. Not a malicious talker.
- C. Temperate.
- D. Trustworthy in everything.

IV. PRACTICAL DUTIES

- A. Loyal support of the pastor and staff.
- B. Faithful attendance at the services of the church.
- C. Encouragement of and participation in the ministries of the church – Sunday School, music, discipleship, outreach, prayer ministry etc.
- D. A good example in the stewardship of giving with at least a tithe.
- E. Personal evangelism among the lost and visitation of the sick, shut-ins.
- F. Ministry to the widows of the church.
- G. Regular attendance at the meetings of Deacons.
- H. Assistance with service and ministry needs during worship services.
- I. Participation in the *'Deacons of the Week'* program.

I have read the spiritual and moral qualifications and the practical duties for being a Deacon. Believing that those qualifications and duties are Scriptural and reasonable, I pledge myself to do all within my power to bring honor to this ministry and glory to the Name of Jesus Christ by striving in His power to meet them.

Signature

Did your wife also read the qualifications for being a Deacon and the wife of a Deacon? If she has and is in agreement with the qualifications and supportive of you if elected, please have her sign below.

Signature

YES, my wife and I will attend the *Deacon Orientation* sessions together.

Signature

Qualifications of a Deacon

(From The Deacon's Manual)

First Baptist Church, Cookeville, TN

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE DEACON

A. Scriptural Qualifications of the Deacon

Through the New Testament Church of the first century, God set forth in His Word the servant nature of the Deacon. The Deacon was to help meet the spiritual and practical needs of the congregation. The work of the Deacon enabled the church's ministry to advance unhindered. The church with the guidance of the apostles chose the best qualified men that exemplified the life of Jesus Christ.

The qualifications of a Deacon can be found in these Biblical passages of the New Testament:

Acts 6:1-7

¹Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. ²So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. ³Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. ⁴But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." ⁵The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. ⁶And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them. ⁷The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.

1 Timothy 3:8-13

⁸Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, ⁹but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. ¹¹Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. ¹²Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. ¹³For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

Related passages for reference to the call for servant leadership in the church are found in Titus 1:5-9; Galatians 5:16, 22-24; Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-16, 25-32; Philippians 2:1-11; & Colossians 3:1-4, 12-17.

If a candidate feels that after prayerful consideration he has met qualifications listed in Acts 6:1-7 and I Timothy 3:8-13 along with above related passages and the Deacon Nominating Committee approves, he may serve if elected by the church.

B. General Qualifications of the Deacon

It is an honor for a man to be elected by the church to the office of Deacon. It is an even greater honor for a man with a humble spirit to realize that God has chosen to use him in Christian ministry. However, far beyond any personal honor for an individual, the service of a Deacon is a charge and challenge to assume a major responsibility in the church. This responsibility must have priority when compared to other church and community requests made upon one's time and resources.

The Deacon is accountable ultimately to the Lord and practically to the church. This accountability involves one's being:

1. A MATURING CHRISTIAN: knowing one's relationship to Jesus Christ is secure; believing one's character reflects Christian morality; striving to be one that will promote harmony, unity,

and fellowship within the congregation; and demonstrating a wholesome spirit and progressive disposition in order to be eager to attempt worthy goals that would enlarge the Kingdom and advance the church.

2. A CHRISTIAN EXAMPLE: having a lifestyle that reflects Christian values in conduct and behavior; and having a reputation that is dependable and trustworthy.
3. A POSITIVE WITNESS FOR CHRIST: sharing the good news of salvation, through one's own life-changing testimony, with those who do not know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, helping lead them to a conversion experience, and participating in regular visitation to church members and prospective members for the church through the Sunday School and regular church visitation program.
4. AN ACTIVE CHURCH MEMBER: cooperating with the Pastor, staff, and congregation to support the entire church program, especially by regularly attending Sunday School, Sunday morning and evening worship services, Wednesday family activities and services, meetings and events such as revival services, stewardship emphasis, Biblical conferences, and other special events.
5. A FAITHFUL STEWARD: recognizing God provides everything one has; being a generous giver; giving at least a tithe on one's financial income to the work of the Lord through First Baptist Church, Cookeville; giving to special offerings of the church as the Lord leads; and committing one's time, talents, spiritual gifts, skills, and abilities to the Lord through the church.
6. A GROWING DISCIPLE: continuing to learn and to be trained for more effective service; and having, for the church, a spiritual vision filled with hope and goodwill.
7. A KNOWLEDGEABLE BAPTIST: being familiar with and supportive of the beliefs, doctrines, and practices of Baptist churches as expressed in such confessional statements as "The Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in May 1963; believing that Baptists have no creed but the Bible; believing Baptists are a free people to relate to one another in a covenant relationship; and being aware of the background, work, and plans of this congregation.
8. AN INVOLVED DEACON: working with the Deacons in cooperative endeavors; attending regularly monthly Deacon meetings; keeping confidences when necessary; and supporting the majority decision of the Deacon Fellowship and church unless it is a matter of conscience and then without contention.

C. Additional Church Decisions Regarding Qualifications of a Deacon

1. The nominee shall be a man who is at least 25 years old.
2. The nominee shall have been a member of First Baptist Church Cookeville for at least three years at the time of nomination.
3. The nominee shall submit to, and pass, a background check.
4. A man, who is otherwise deemed to be qualified, will be eligible for election to the position of Deacon if he meets any one of the following:
 - a. If he is single and has never been married.
 - b. If he is the husband of but one wife. He has never been divorced although his wife has been divorced, under scriptural guidelines.
 - c. If he has been the husband of but one wife, but is now divorced, under scriptural guidelines, and has never remarried.
 - d. If he is the husband of but one wife, has been divorced under scriptural guidelines, and has remarried.
 - e. If he is a widower and is either single or remarried.

DEACON MINISTRY RECORD

Deacon Name: _____

Date: _____

Monthly Deacons' Meeting		Month of: _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Attended	<input type="checkbox"/> Planned Absence <i>(Notified Deacon Secretary)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent <i>(Forgot or otherwise gave no notification)</i>		
Sunday Worship Services	AM	AM Phone	PM	PM Phone
Number of Services Served				
Number of Services Obtained Substitute				
Number of Services Absent Without Obtaining Coverage				
Deacon of the Week Duty		Served Week of: _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> I was Chief Deacon of the Week		<input type="checkbox"/> I served with _____ who was CDW.		
If you were Chief Deacon of the Week:				
<input type="checkbox"/> I met with the outgoing Chief Deacon of the week to exchange information about ongoing ministry needs.		Outgoing Chief Deacon's Name: _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> I met with the incoming Chief Deacon of the week to exchange information about ongoing ministry needs.		Incoming Chief Deacon's Name: _____		
Deacon of the Week Ministry Report Turned in to Church Office: _____ <div style="text-align: right;"><i>Date</i></div>				
Ruth Anna Ministry		Made Contact by:		
Widow Name: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> In person <input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Card <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____		
Widow Name: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> In person <input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Card <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____		
Widow Name: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> In person <input type="checkbox"/> Phone <input type="checkbox"/> Card <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____		
Notes/special needs/concerns: _____ _____ _____				
Other Ministry Activities:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Prayer Time Spent		<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday Visitors Contacted		<input type="checkbox"/> Visits to Church Members
<input type="checkbox"/> Cards Sent		<input type="checkbox"/> Hospital Visits Made		<input type="checkbox"/> Witnessing / Testimony Shared
Comments: _____ _____				

First Baptist Church
Cookeville, TN

Deacon of the Week Report

Visit Date	Contact Name	Purpose of Visit	Notes or Comments