



First Baptist Church Allen



Deacon Ministry Handbook

Revision 2.0

January 2014

*Passionate Men Led By Passionate Leaders to Accomplish the Critical
Priorities of the Church through Service*

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REVISION HISTORY

FEBRUARY 2012

- Added Introduction section to cover purpose, scope and change process
- Added explanation for situation when vice-chairman of the Deacon Leadership Team is elected in his third year of service
- Added vice-chairman responsibility to conduct annual review of the Deacon Handbook
- Added appendix with annual re-commitment checklist example for deacons
- Added summary of recurring deacon responsibilities
- Added description of recurring deacon ministries
- Added description of the Senior Pastor review
- Reorganized sections to reflect new content

JANUARY 2014

- Changed all references from “Deacon Executive Committee” to “Deacon Leadership Team”
- Deleted sections dealing with Deacon Executive Committee duties
- Add “Key Principles” for Deacons
- Rewrote the Deacon Activation process to match revised approach
- Reorganized layout to reflect deacon priority focuses
- Added 2014 priorities
- Added church vision, mission and core values defined in 2013

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Deacon Handbook is to describe the foundation for deacon service at First Baptist Church of Allen, to explain the responsibilities and recurring activities of deacons and to document the operational processes involving the deacons.

SCOPE

By the very nature of deacon service, it is neither possible nor desirable to identify every possible service provided by deacons. By definition, deacons serve the church body and support the church staff in whatever ways they are called. Nevertheless, this document does document the regular responsibilities, activities and processes. It is intended to be a reference for all deacons to guide their understanding and performance of their deacon duties. Furthermore, the Deacon Handbook serves to clarify the role of deacons and their support responsibilities for the church staff.

CHANGE PROCESS

The Deacon Handbook is a collaborative effort jointly owned by the Senior Pastor and the Deacon Leadership Team. Both may initiate changes or additions when they see fit. After agreement between the Senior Pastor and Deacon Leadership Team, the updated document is presented to the Deacon Council for their review and comment. Once their feedback has been considered and incorporated as appropriate, the revised document is published, posted on the church website and made available to all current deacons.

KEY PRINCIPLES

The Deacons are guided by seven key principles.

1. **Vision Oriented:** The ultimate goal of the Deacon activities is to further the church's vision and mission through service and servant leadership.
2. **Forward Looking:** The focus is on the challenges ahead of us rather than the accomplishments of the past. This means that the Deacons must be closely aligned with the Senior Pastor and his vision for the church.
3. **Passionate Men:** The fundamental goal of the Deacon Council is to align the service passions of the Deacons with a specific role that is important to the church.
4. **Priority Focused:** Each year, the Deacon activities are directed once the correct priorities and the appropriate leaders for each priority are identified.

5. **Success Measures:** The ultimate measurements of success for the Deacons are the spiritual, numerical and mission growth of the church.
6. **Transformed Lives:** Every Deacon should grow while serving as a Deacon in practical and spiritual ways thereby providing a positive example to the church.
7. **Celebrated Service:** The long term, dedicated service of Deacons is worthy of recognition to encourage others and to illustrate a life well lived.

FBC ALLEN VISION AND MISSION

Deacons have a leadership role to support and work for the vision and mission of the church. These statements are defined by the Senior Pastor and lay leaders within the church to reflect God's specific calling for our church. The vision and mission are derived from the message in the following verses from Acts 2:41-47 (ESV).

“So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

The vision statement answers the questions “What do we want to become? What do we want our reputation to be?”

To be a fellowship of believers radically devoted to Jesus Christ, His people, and His mission.

The mission statement answers the questions “What do we do? Why do we do it?”

We are a fellowship of believers under the authority of God's Word, following Jesus' example, living in the power of the Holy Spirit, seeking to make disciples of all nations.

The core values answer the questions “What are our non-negotiable attributes? What are the things that ideally describe every member?” The core values are derived from the Core Principles fully explained in Appendix A.

- Biblical Authority - The Bible is our guidebook for living in relationship to God and our plumb line for measuring our approach to life and ministry. (2 Timothy 3:15-17)
- Exclusivity of Christ – Salvation is by grace through faith in Christ alone. (John 14:6)

- Power of Prayer - Prayer must be the first, last, and constant activity in every area of our lives and in our church. (Colossians 4:2)
- Grace-Filled Community – Christ-followers grow best in the context of committed relationships to one another. (Hebrews 10:24-25)
- Great Commission Living - In all our activities, programs, relationships, and ministries we will be intentional in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19-20)

Deacons are Servants

by Pastor Chad Selph

The first deacons teach us some important lessons about what a deacon is to be and what they are to do. It is always worth noting that the word “deacon” is from a Greek word “diakonos” which means “servant.” A deacon then is one who serves the Lord and serves the church.

The role of deacon has been much debated. A study of the New Testament reveals almost nothing about what a deacon is supposed to do. Acts 6 tells us one example of a deacon ministry. The deacons did whatever was necessary to relieve the disciples so they could give themselves continually to “prayer and the ministry of the word.”

The deacon ministry has taken on different definitions over the years, and I expect it to continue with that pattern. I think God left the job description open, because deacons serve the church, and whatever the church needs is what they do.

I value the ministry of our deacons in this church. Let me share then, what I need from deacons and how that ministry currently functions.

Our deacons have been set apart for the servant leadership role of “deacon,” because they are already active in the ministry of the church and in spiritual leadership. When someone becomes a deacon, I don't want them to take on a lot of new things because they are deacons. I want them to minister and serve well in their current roles and responsibilities. If they teach, then I want them to pour themselves into their classes. Whatever their gifts for ministry, I want them to apply those things with passion.

Our deacons are not responsible for a certain number of families within the church. Our Bible Fellowship Groups are the primary arm of our church for ministry. Deacons function to fill the gaps in ministry. Sometimes the church staff needs special help, and we know we can call on the deacons. Like the first deacons ministering to the widows in Jerusalem, they fill the gap or make sure it is being filled and then go on to the next challenge.

Examples ongoing ministries in which our deacons participate include:

- *Deacons are expected to attend a monthly meeting of deacons.*
- *Deacons support, encourage, and champion the ministry of the church through their involvement, influence, and prayer.*
- *Deacons provide Bibles for all our First Graders in Bible Fellowship Groups each Fall.*
- *Deacons host a senior adult banquet each spring.*
- *Deacons prepare and serve the Lord's Supper.*
- *Deacons pray at the offering time each Sunday.*
- *Deacons lead out in ministry to widows and senior adults.*
- *Deacons assist in VBS evangelism and follow-up.*
- *Deacons are leaders in key areas of our ministry.*
- *Deacons have a large "other duties as assigned" section to their job descriptions.*

Our deacons are essential in our overall church organization. They are nominated by the church. The Deacon Council (those serving as active deacons in the church) selects a Deacon Leadership Team each year. The Deacon Leadership Team serves as the Pastor's supervisor and primary administrative/decision-making support. This team functions as elders do in some churches. It provides our church with effective accountability and checks and balances.

The larger Deacon Council is instrumental in major decisions even though it is not an administrative body. I would not take a major ministry change or policy to the church without first going to the deacons - not because they require it, but because it is a huge help to me in discernment and feel for the church family as a whole. I value their spiritual counsel.

*One thing that comes with being a deacon is **visibility**. Deacons are publicly identified as church leaders, partly to help combat male passivity. Often men see commitment to Christ and the church as something for women and children and may sit*

back and chose to remain on the sidelines at church. Instead, the challenge to our congregation is to keep men in visible places of leadership in the church in order to engage them for Christ, commit them to church, and take spiritual responsibility at home. Our deacons are a key part of this strategy.

DEACON COUNCIL

The deacons serve alongside the Pastor in the pastoral ministries of the church. The Deacon Council is a service oriented, consultative body rather than a decision making or administrative one.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers.
2. To care for the church's members and other persons in the community.
3. To lead the church in the achievement of its vision and mission.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A DEACON

A deacon must be a male member of the church who possesses the following Scriptural characteristics, and who is ordained by this church or by a Baptist church of like faith and order. The following section provides an outline for describing the characteristics of a deacon.

- **A Serving Man** – Already serving the body through faithful service to God through the church in corporate worship, Bible Fellowship Group, prayer ministry and personal ministry, such as teaching, visiting, etc. (Matthew 20:20-28; John 13:1-17; Acts 6:1-8; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Peter 4:7-11)
- **A Sought Man** – Sought by the church, not a man seeking the honor of being called a deacon. A man recognized by the church for his spirit of servanthood. (Acts 6:3-5; Romans 12:3; Galatians 5:24-26)
- **A Sincere Man** – One who casts no slur on others; does not stir up dissension among the brethren; keeps his promises and commitments; lives by faith and is faithful; is not a backbiter; is truthful in love; honest and of good reputation. (Psalm 15:1-3; Proverbs 6:16-19; Acts 6:3-5; Galatians 2:20, 5:14-15; Ephesians 4:25-27)
- **A Sacrificial Man** – Willing to take the initiative to meet the needs of others; willing to participate in the caring ministry of deacons; a tither and a grace giver; a selfless man. (Malachi 3:10; John 13:12-17; Acts 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 10:24; 1 Thessalonians 3:6-10; 1 Timothy 5:3)
- **A Spiritual Man** – Full of the Holy Spirit; recognizing and exercising spiritual gifts; a man committed to prayer and the study of God's word. (Matthew 6:1-15; Acts 6:3-5; Galatians 5:22-26; Ephesians 5:18; 1 Corinthians 12:1-12; 2 Timothy 2:15)

- **A Soul Winning Man** – Willing to be trained and to train others to lead souls to Christ. (Proverbs 11:30; Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 14:16-23)
- **A Sold-Out Man to His Family** – Faithful; sexually pure; the husband of one wife (not divorced); managing his children and household well; blameless; tested; nothing held against him; abstaining from alcohol and illegal drugs; exemplary family life to the flock. (Malachi 2:16; Ephesians 5:25-32, 6:1-4; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 1 Timothy 3:8-13; Hebrews 13:4-5)

ELIGIBILITY

All men 25 years of age or above who have been church members for at least one year are eligible for nomination.

LENGTH OF SERVICE

Each deacon commits to serve one year on the council. At the beginning of each year, every ordained Deacon in the church that meets the eligibility requirements has the opportunity to commit to a new year of service. There is no limit to the number of consecutive years that a Deacon may serve if they are fully committed each year.

TERMINATION OF SERVICE

The term of office of a deacon shall terminate upon:

1. Death
2. Resignation
3. Termination of his membership in the church
4. Removal from his office by the church
5. Removal from his office by the deacons

NUMBER OF DEACONS

The number of deacons is determined solely by the number of men fully committed to serving. This number may fluctuate from year to year. Nevertheless, we trust that God will call the necessary men to service to meet His purposes for the church.

ACTIVATION PROCESS

The activation process is designed to identify current and prospective deacons that are called to serve the church. Typically, the identification of deacons is considered a key priority. As such, a team is formed with a deacon leader to guide the process. This team is called the “Activation Team” and will have the following responsibilities.

- Facilitate the annual deacon renewal process to confirm all FBC Allen selected deacons’ commitment to serve in the coming year or to defer their opportunity to serve to the next year.
- Facilitate the nomination, preparation and affirmation of church members to serve as deacons.
- Solicit from the church membership those they believe should serve the church as deacons.
- Remind the church throughout the year of their opportunity to nominate members as deacons.
- Assist the deacon nominees in the self-assessment of qualifications and calling.
- Work with the Development Team to provide orientation and training meetings to nominees.
- Provide (prior to affirmation by the Deacon Council) to the Deacon Leadership Team a list of nominees who have completed the deacon interview, orientation and training meetings, expressed a desire to serve and meet the requirements to be a deacon.
- Provide (following affirmation by the Deacon Council) to the church body a list of nominees who have completed deacon orientation, nominee training, expressed a desire to serve and have fulfilled the deacon requirements as approved by the church and set forth in this document.
- Be available to receive the encouraging comments or concerns from church members or nominees.
- Update the Deacon Handbook to reflect process changes that are approved by the Deacon Council.

NEW DEACON NOMINATION GUIDELINES

It is an ongoing priority to identify men called to serve as deacons of our church. The following guidelines explain the key elements of the new deacon nomination process.

- Church members can make deacon nominations anytime during the year using Deacon Nomination Forms (Appendix D).
- Deacon Nomination Forms will be made available to church members throughout the church, church web site and church office.
- The Activation Team will perform an initial review of nomination forms quarterly. The Activation Team will follow up with nominators, as necessary, to clarify nominees' qualifications and willingness to proceed with the process.
- The deacon nomination process applies to both men who have been ordained as a deacon in another Baptist church (or church of like faith and order) and men who have never been ordained as a deacon before.
- Church members can make deacon nominations anytime during the calendar year using deacon nomination forms.
- An individual can nominate another individual to deacon service by obtaining the signature of three (3) additional co-nominators. Only one form needs to be submitted.
- In order for a nominee to enter the deacon interview, orientation and training process for the upcoming year, the church office on behalf of the Activation Team must receive the nomination form no later than December 31st.

NOMINATION TIMELINE

The following steps describe the timeline for processing deacon nominations. Note that the "Development Team" works with the Activation Team to make sure that new deacons are properly training and otherwise prepared before beginning their service.

December 31

- Cutoff for nominations for upcoming year's deacon interview, orientation, training and affirmation activities. Deacon Nomination Forms should be received in the church office no later than December 31st.

January

- The Senior Pastor, Deacon Leadership Team and Activation Team will complete a final review of the nominations.
- The Activation Team will notify nominees of their nomination and meet with them as necessary to gauge the interest of the nominee to serve as a deacon.
- The Activation Team will contact the nominees and provide those interested in proceeding with the process with a Deacon Nominee Questionnaire (Appendix B).

February

- Deacon Nominee Questionnaires will be completed. The Activation Team will forward the questionnaires to the Senior Pastor and Deacon Leadership Team.
- The Activation Team, working with the Development Team, will host a mandatory orientation meeting for those nominees who are feeling called to be a deacon. The orientation class is intended to further educate the nominee about deacon qualification, qualities, roles and responsibilities. Deacon leaders and the Senior Pastor will lead the orientation meeting. The nominee may bring a family member to the meeting. The agenda will consist of:
 - Review of biblical qualities of a deacon
 - Review of roles and responsibilities of deacons at First Baptist Church Allen
 - Review the deacon nomination process
 - Opportunity for nominees and family to ask questions
 - Ample opportunity will be made for make-up meetings, should a nominee be unable to attend the first meeting.
 - Nominees will be asked to prayerfully consider their calling to deacon service at First Baptist Church Allen.

March

- The Senior Pastor, Deacon Chairman and at least one of the members of the Deacon Leadership Team will interview nominees to confirm their qualifications, calling and commitment to serve. Each nominee will be asked to share his salvation experience and spiritual growth progress. Following the interview the nominee will be asked to reaffirm their interest in serving as a deacon.

April

- The Activation Team, working with the Development Team, will host a mandatory training meeting for those nominees who are feeling called to be a deacon. The training meeting is intended to give them some practical training on how to be a deacon and review the commitments outlined in the deacon Letter of Commitment (Appendix C) that all deacons sign annually.
- Nominees will be asked to prayerfully consider signing the deacon Letter of Commitment as an indication of their commitment to serve as a deacon.
- The Activation Team will submit a list of nominees who have completed the interview, orientation and training steps and have signed the letter of commitment to the Senior Pastor and Deacon Leadership Team for final review and affirmation.

May

- Nominees who have completed the deacon orientation, training and have signed the Letter of Commitment and affirmed by the Deacon Leadership Team will be presented to the Deacon Council for affirmation and given an opportunity to give their testimony.
- The nominees that have been affirmed by the Deacon Council will be presented to the church for final affirmation.
- Ordination of newly selected deacons who have not been previously ordained and recognition of those who were previously ordained, both having completed the nomination process, will be recognized during an ordination and commitment service.

June

- New deacons will begin their initial term of service that will include the remainder of the current year plus one (1) year. They will be asked to renew their commitment to serve as a deacon annually during the annual deacon renewal process following their initial term of service.

RENEWAL PROCESS

Deacons that have been previously ordained at First Baptist Church of Allen will be asked to renew their commitment to deacon service. The following timeline is used for this process.

November

- Each year all deacons that have been ordained or selected by First Baptist Church Allen will be sent a Letter of Commitment (Appendix C) that outlines the characteristics of a deacon and the roles and responsibilities of a deacon at First Baptist Church Allen.

Each deacon will have the option to agree to the commitments and serve as an active deacon in the coming year or to defer their opportunity to serve until the next year.

- The Activation Team will facilitate this renewal process making every reasonable effort possible to contact each deacon by mail, email, phone calls and/or reminders to solicit his decision before December 15th.

December

- The Activation Team will deliver to the Senior Pastor and Deacon Leadership Team a list of deacons that have indicated that they will serve as active deacons for the coming year and those who have indicated that they would like to defer their service to the next year.
- The active list will be presented to the Deacon Council and to the church body.

January

- Active deacons will begin a 12-month term of service. They will be asked to renew their commitment to serve as a deacon annually during the annual deacon renewal process.

DEACON PRIORITIES

Deacon priorities are defined yearly by the Deacon Leadership Team in consultation with the Senior Pastor. While many priorities will likely remain constant, the Deacon Leadership Team is responsible for publishing a finalized list at the beginning of each calendar year. A leader for each priority area is identified and assigned. The following table gives the 2014 priorities.

	Priorities	Leadership Team Role	Key Passions	Driving Question
Leadership	Supporting and communicating the church's vision and approach, identifying leaders for Deacon priorities, and coordinating Deacon activities	Chairman	Supporting Church Vision, Leading Leaders	<i>How can the Deacons most effectively do their part to help the church further its vision?</i>
Activation	Coordinating the identification, interviewing, recommitment of men to serve as Deacons	Leadership Team Member	Finding Men to Serve	<i>Who are the right men to serve as Deacons at our church?</i>
Development	Coordinating the practical and spiritual development of Deacons	Leadership Team Member	Developing Stronger Servants	<i>How can Deacons be stronger spiritually and more effective practically?</i>
Service	Coordinating the specific services (i.e., Acts 6) ministries	Leadership Team Member	Performing Acts of Service	<i>When and how can Deacons take care of needs within the church?</i>
Celebration	Coordinating Senior Adult Banquet, Deacon socials, recognition events	Leadership Team Member	Recognizing Servants and Service	<i>How can we suitably recognize service and servants to encourage others?</i>
Support	Helping staff members with specific activities including VBS, First Grade Bibles	Leadership Team Member	Helping the Church Staff	<i>How can the Deacons tangibly support staff-led initiatives?</i>
Worship	Helping Senior Pastor with specific worship activities including Lord's Supper, Offertory prayer	Leadership Team Member	Assisting with Worship Activities	<i>How can Deacons support the Senior Pastor-led worship?</i>

DEACON LEADERSHIP TEAM

COMPOSITION

The team includes a chairman and leaders for each defined priority area. Each priority leader is encouraged to identify a co-leader. This person may also attend the Deacon Leadership Team meetings.

ELIGIBILITY

The Deacon Leadership Team is selected from the current active Deacon Council. As the deacon priorities are established (or reaffirmed), deacon leaders are identified that are passionate about each priority. Through prayer and discussion, one will be designated the priority leader for the year. Each leader is responsible for ongoing coordination of the deacon activities for their priority and for contributing to the overall leadership through the Deacon Leadership Team.

TERM OF OFFICE

The minimum term is one year. Deacon priority leaders may serve more than one year at the pleasure of the Deacon Chairman and the Deacon Council.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Commitment to the Deacon Leadership Team includes:

1. Attending the Leadership Team meetings (usually) the first Wednesday following the first Sunday of each month.
2. Attending the Deacon's Meeting each month.
3. Helping coordinate and enlisting coordinators and workers for deacon-led activities.
4. Meeting with and caring for the Pastor; committing to pray for, encouraging and supporting, the Pastor and church activities that the Pastor leads throughout the year.
5. Supporting, encouraging and praying for all of the church ministries.
6. Acting as a sounding board and feedback source for the Pastor in regard to the church body.

DEACON CHAIRMAN

The Deacon Chairman position is a critical role for the Deacon Council and the church. He is expected to be fully aligned with the Senior Pastor to accomplish the vision and mission of the church. He specifically leads the deacons to accomplish the stated mission of the deacons.

Passionate men led by passionate leaders to accomplish the critical priorities of the church through service.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Provide the vision and leadership for the deacon ministry during his term. Establish the goals for the deacon areas of service. Promote the spiritual growth of the deacons within the ministry.
- Serve as the primary link for the Senior Pastor with the deacon ministry and keep him informed of its activities.
- Lead the deacon meetings.

The deacon chairman is selected to serve a minimum of one year typically beginning in January. He may serve subsequent consecutive years.

The chairman is selected in consultation between the Senior Pastor, the existing Deacon Leadership Team and, optionally, past Deacon Chairmen. The criteria used include an obvious dedication to the Deacon's mission, full alignment with the church vision and mission and full confidence of the Deacon Council. The proposed chairman will be presented for affirmation to the Deacon Council at the first deacon meeting of the year.

APPENDIX A: FBC ALLEN CORE PRINCIPLES

On October 7, 2001, Pastor Chad Selph shared a morning message titled, *Memorial Stones*, based upon Joshua 4. The sermon detailed twelve core principles that have been established as guiding principles for First Baptist Church of Allen. These items involve both doctrinal issues and philosophy of ministry.

1. THE BIBLE IS OUR AUTHORITY FOR FAITH AND PRACTICE.

In every area of our personal lives and in our church life we must seek to learn, study, obey, and apply its teachings. We must subject all matters to Scripture. It is truth without any mixture of error. The Bible is God's authoritative word for guidance, instruction, inspiration, and correction in all areas of the practice of our faith. (Psalm 119:105-106; 2 Timothy 3:16).

2. JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY OF RELATIONSHIP TO GOD AND ETERNAL LIFE.

Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. He said, "*No man comes to the Father but through Me.*" Jesus is not just "*an*" option. He is the only possibility for this world to find forgiveness of sin and relationship to God. He is the Savior. By God's grace through faith in Christ our eternity is secured. (John 14:6).

3. WE BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF PRAYER.

We must undergird everything we do in prayer. Prayer must be the first, last, and constant activity in every area of our church and in every decision we make. Prayer must be as much our life as it is our power. The Lord declares, "*Not by might, not by power but by My Spirit says the Lord.*" (Zechariah 4:6; Philippians 4:6).

4. WORSHIP IS CENTRAL TO GLORIFYING GOD AND BECOMING LIKE CHRIST.

Worship is absolutely necessary to be a fully developing follower of Christ. Worship is expressing our love, reverence and devotion to God. Worship puts the spotlight of our thoughts, desires and affections on God and takes the spotlight off of us. We worship with other believers according to the Bible. We also worship alone before God in our own time of speaking and listening for the Lord. Worship is a life-changing experience with the presence of God.

5. THE BIBLE FELLOWSHIP GROUP IS THE CENTRAL ORGANIZATION OF OUR CHURCH FOR GROWTH.

The Bible Fellowship Group is the Bible teaching, people reaching, caring arm of the church. It is the central organization of our church for growth...both spiritually and

numerically. It is our primary tool for new member assimilation. It develops new and mature Christians alike. It is priority! You will never find your place in our church ministry until you find a place in a Bible Fellowship Group.

6. FULL DEVOTION TO CHRIST IS NORMAL FOR EVERY BELIEVER.

Somehow our Christian world has come to believe that shallow commitment and limited devotion and haphazard obedience are the things that please God and also what God expects. We don't accept that here. We are speaking of relationship to God and such relationship calls for the total commitment of the total person for life! "*Normal Christianity*" is complete, absolute, sold-out commitment to Jesus Christ...nothing held in reserve.

7. WE HAVE HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP.

Membership is a commitment to a local church family. Apart from such a commitment your discipleship will be ineffective at best. We expect members of this church to attend, to serve, and to give. We believe in excellence when it comes to serving Jesus through the church and we are unwilling to settle for leftovers. Every member should have a ministry...a place of service. There are no spectators on God's team.

8. WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD.

The Bible declares this truth. As a church we must reach beyond what we think we can do and experience what only God can do. "*The chief way you and I are disloyal to God is when we make small what He intended to make large.*" We must be dreamers of godly dreams...for with God all things are possible and without faith it is impossible to please God (Matthew 19:26).

9. THE CHURCH SHOULD BE CULTURALLY RELEVANT WITHOUT BIBLICAL COMPROMISE.

Our world is changing. The church must be open to adjusting to our changing world. Our unchanging message is not to be compromised but our methods of delivering the message must constantly be open to evaluation and change. We want to be as effective as possible in communicating God's great truth but remembering that God's truth doesn't change.

10. WE ARE TO STRENGTHEN AND ENCOURAGE FAMILIES.

God created the family as a place of nurturing, teaching, and growing. We must seek to strengthen and care for all our families regardless of age or makeup. We are a multi-generational church. We are a family church whether yours is a family of ten or a family of one. (Ephesians 5:21-6:4).

11. WE ARE COMMITTED TO GROWTH.

There are certain barriers to the growth of an individual or a church. John Maxwell calls these barriers “*lids*.” If we are to grow we must identify the lids that would hinder our growth. These lids may be structural, organizational or in leadership patterns. We want to ever seek to identify and lift the lids that would keep us from accomplishing all God would call us to. We are willing to change in order to grow.

12. WE ARE A GREAT COMMISSION CHURCH.

We will seek to reach and win the lost to saving faith in Jesus Christ. We will be intentional in our efforts to reach out in Jesus name believing there is no other way to be saved apart from Jesus. Jesus died for every person and desires that they be saved. In all our activities, programs, relationships, and ministries we will be intentional in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with the lost. (Matthew 28:19-20). We will have a burden for our families and our community but I will not shrink away from Jesus’ call to be responsible for the world. We will be faithful and ever seeking to expand our ministry through prayer, giving, and participation in missions around the world. (Mark 16:15).

APPENDIX B: DEACON NOMINEE QUESTIONNAIRE EXAMPLE

Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

Work Phone: _____ Preferred E-mail: _____

Home Phone: _____

Occupation: _____

How long have you been a Christian? _____

How long have you been a member of FBC Allen? _____

Deacon Characteristics

A deacon shall be a male member of the church who possesses the following Scriptural characteristics, and who has been ordained by this church or by a Baptist church of like faith and order.

A Serving Man – Already serving the body through faithful service to God through the church in corporate worship, Sunday School, prayer ministry and personal ministry, such as teaching, visiting, etc. (Matthew 20:20-28; John 13:1-17; Acts 6:1-8; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Peter 4:7-11)

Please list the place(s) in our church where you are currently serving: _____

When and at what church were you ordained for the deacon ministry (if already ordained)?

A Sought Man – Sought by the church, not a man seeking the honor of being called a deacon. A man recognized by the church for his spirit of servanthood. (Acts 6:3-5; Romans 12:3; Galatians 5:24-26)

Why do think fellow church members have nominated you for the deacon ministry in our church?

A Sincere Man – One who casts no slur on others; does not stir up dissension among the brethren; keeps his promises and commitments; lives by faith and is faithful; is not a backbiter; is truthful in love; honest and of good reputation. (Psalm 15:1-3; Proverbs 6:16-19; Acts 6:3-5; Galatians 2:20, 5:14-15; Ephesians 4:25-27)

What is a deacon? _____

A Sacrificial Man – Willing to take the initiative to meet the needs of others; willing to participate in the caring ministry of deacons; a tither and a grace giver; a selfless man. (Malachi 3:10; John 13:12-17; Acts 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 10:24; 1 Thessalonians 3:6-10; 1 Timothy 5:3)

Tithing is giving 10% of your first fruits (gross pay) to the local storehouse (church). Offerings are gifts above and beyond the tithe. Are you a tither? _____ Do you participate in the church's special offerings (Lottie Moon, Annie Armstrong, Generation to Generation, etc.)? _____

A Spiritual Man – Full of the Holy Spirit; recognizing and exercising spiritual gifts; a man committed to prayer and the study of God's word. (Matthew 6:1-15; Acts 6:3-5; Galatians 5:22-26; Ephesians 5:18; 1 Corinthians 12:1-12; 2 Timothy 2:15)

Briefly describe your personal devotional life (quiet time): _____

A Soul Winning Man – Willing to be trained and to train others to lead souls to Christ. (Proverbs 11:30; Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 14:16-23)

On the back of this sheet, write the testimony of your conversion experience or be prepared to share you experience of conversion.

A Sold-Out Man to His Family – Faithful; sexually pure; the husband of one wife (not divorced); managing his children and household well; blameless; tested; nothing held against him; abstaining from alcohol and illegal drugs; exemplary family life to the flock. (Malachi 2:16; Ephesians 5:25-32, 6:1-4; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 1 Timothy 3:8-13; Hebrews 13:4-5)

Are you married? _____ How long? _____

Have you been married before? _____ Have you been divorced? _____

How many children do you have? _____

Do you abstain from alcoholic beverages? _____

APPENDIX C: COMMITMENT LETTER EXAMPLE

I desire to engage my passions, resources and talents to serve. In so much it is in my power to do so, I will fulfill the following responsibilities of a deacon at First Baptist Church of Allen.

I will support and serve in the deacon priority areas:

Leadership... supporting the church vision
Service... performing acts of service
Support... helping the church staff
Worship... assisting in worship activities

Activation... finding and developing men to serve
Development... developing stronger servants
Celebration... recognizing servants and service

I will attend the deacon meetings.

I will serve in other ministries within the church and represent the mission of the church within the community.

=====

Print Name: _____

Address of my preferred method of communication: _____

Phone number: _____

Agree – I wish to be an active deacon. Signed _____

Defer – I wish to defer my service to 2014. Signed _____

At this time, I am unable to substantially meet the obligation in 2013. Please allow me to step down from my deacon service for this term.

APPENDIX D: DEACON NOMINATION FORM EXAMPLE

Name

Address/City/Phone

E-Mail

Age _____ *How long has he been a member at FBC Allen? (years)* _____

Why should the nominee be considered to be a deacon at FBC Allen?

Nominators:

1.

Printed Name

How long have you known Nominee?

Signature

Relationship to Nominee (friend, BFG, etc.)

2.

Printed Name

How long have you known Nominee?

Signature

Relationship to Nominee (friend, BFG, etc.)

3.

Printed Name

How long have you known Nominee?

Signature

Relationship to Nominee (friend, BFG, etc.)

Printed Name

How long have you known Nominee?

APPENDIX E: OFFERTORY PRAYER GUIDELINES

Deacons serve as visible prayer leaders in the church.

During each Sunday morning worship service, one deacon is designated to give the offertory prayer at all worship services. The schedule for performing this service will be published far in advance of the date at which a deacon prays. In the event the scheduled deacon cannot pray, he is responsible for securing a substitute (another deacon) and informing the church office at least a week before the service date. This allows time for the bulletin to be printed with the correct name listed.

RECOMMENDED DRESS

The appropriate attire is usually coat and tie, although business casual is acceptable.

WHERE TO SIT

The deacon may sit wherever he wishes during the worship hours on the day he is designated to pray the offertory prayer.

WHEN TO STEP OUT

Once the invitation song begins, the deacon should step out from his seat into the aisle. This encourages others in the service to make spiritual commitments during the invitation.

WHERE TO STAND

The deacon should proceed to the center front pews in clear view of the Pastor and remain standing through the invitation.

APPROACHING THE PULPIT

As soon as the invitation song ends, the deacon should begin making his way to the pulpit. The Pastor will say a brief introduction to the offering. The deacon should be at the pulpit when the time comes to begin the prayer.

APPENDIX F: LORD'S SUPPER SERVICE PROCEDURES

The Deacon Council assists the Senior Pastor to periodically serve the Lord's Supper to the congregation. This sacrament reminds the church of the sacrifice that Jesus made and illustrated by Him in his last supper with his disciples prior to being crucified. Typically, the church celebrates the Lord's Support quarterly according to a schedule established by the Senior Pastor.

Additionally, the deacons serve the Lord's Supper to others that cannot attend the normal worship service. This means homebound church members, members living in assisted living facilities and all others that make a specific request.

A deacon appointed by the Deacon Leadership Team coordinates the Lord's Supper. He is responsible for identifying the number of deacons required, soliciting deacons to participate, clarifying the responsibilities of each deacon that participates, gathering the needed supplies and running the process after the Senior Pastor determines the format for the service.

TRADITIONAL FORMAT

The tradition format of the Lord's Supper means that the elements are passed out to the congregation seated in the church pews.

IN ADVANCE

Spend time preparing your heart before the Lord for the serving and taking of the Lord's Supper.

RECOMMENDED DRESS

- Morning Services: coat and tie
- Evening Services: business casual

ARRIVAL

The serving team should arrive in the Bride's Room no later than 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the assigned worship hour and review assignments and instructions for any last minute updates.

WORSHIP SERVICE

Deacons typically sit with their families until the Pastor calls for them to come forward sometime during the service. When requested by the Pastor, deacons make their way to the front of the Worship Center to their assigned position.

SERVING THE ELEMENTS

1. Two deacons, usually the deacon chairman and vice chairman, distribute the trays. Deacons then serve their assigned rows. After serving an element, deacons go to the back of the Worship Center and prepare to replenish any servers that are running out of element.
2. After serving the first element, all serving trays are returned to the Bride's Room except for one, which must have enough of the element remaining for all the deacons and Pastor.
3. After everyone is ready, deacons line up in two lines and return down the center aisle to the front to be served by the Pastor. (Alternatively, the Pastor may request that the Deacons remain at the back of the auditorium. In that case, each deacon will take an element and wait to participate with the rest of the congregation.)
4. After the Pastor serves the deacons the element, he will ask the deacons to be seated on the front rows while the element is explained to the congregation. This helps with visibility for the congregation.
5. The process is then repeated for the final element.

INVITATION

At the end of the service, during the invitation, deacons move to the pews on the outer edges to allow room for those making decisions.

CLEANUP

Deacons help with cleanup after the service. Specific volunteers will clean the trays. All deacons are needed to retrieve cups. Resetting for the Lord's Supper between the morning services requires 6-10 volunteers.

SERVING TABLE FORMAT

This format for the Lord's Supper sometimes involves church members moving from their seats and going to serving tables at various locations in the building. Preparation in advance, recommended dress, arrival, worship service, invitation and cleanup are the same as the traditional format. However, in the serving table format, deacons stand at the tables and are available to pray with members as needed. After the congregation has been served, deacons may then take

the Lord's Supper. Deacons are also encouraged to take the Lord's Supper with their families as they arrive at their table.

OFF CAMPUS SERVICE

When the Lord's Supper is served off campus, at least two deacons will be assigned for each location. The Lord's Supper coordinator will provide the necessary elements and basic instructions. The serving deacons will determine the appropriate time for the service by contacting the homebound person or the facility coordinator, as appropriate. After the service, the deacons are to pray with those they have served, cleanup as necessary and return any extra elements to the coordinator. Additionally, when needs are expressed or are evident, the serving deacons should report those to the coordinator of the Acts 6 ministry.

APPENDIX G: SENIOR ADULT BANQUET

The Senior Adult banquet is an annual event planned and executed by the Deacon Council to honor the senior citizens of the church. The Deacon Leadership Team identifies a coordinator for the banquet and he leads (in consultation with the Senior Adult Pastor of the church) the Deacon Council to complete the banquet. The banquet is usually scheduled in the spring (April).

Specific responsibilities usually include:

1. Setting the date by coordinating with the Senior Pastor (and the church calendar).
2. Arranging for the banquet menu
3. Scheduling entertainment
4. Soliciting deacons to assist in the following areas.
 - a. Greeting
 - b. Setup
 - c. Room/Table decoration
 - d. Publicity
 - e. Serving food
 - f. Table hosting
 - g. Cleanup
 - h. Transportation

APPENDIX H: VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL HARVEST SATURDAY SUPPORT

At the conclusion of the week of Vacation Bible School, the church staff coordinates an effort to contact families in the community who had kids attend VBS at FBC Allen. This effort involves leaders throughout the church with a special one-day emphasis to distribute family contact information and initiate contacts as soon as possible. This event, "Harvest Saturday", is special outreach opportunity and all deacons are encouraged to actively participate in the event and volunteer to make as many contacts as needed so that all families listed are reached.

APPENDIX I: FIRST GRADE BIBLE DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

The Deacon Council is committed to providing every first-grade student at FBC Allen with their own Bible. The deacons believe that as children start to learn to read that they should have a Bible to serve as their guide for life and to point them to salvation in Jesus Christ. The funds to purchase Bibles are provided through designated offerings from the deacons. Deacons are asked to give toward this ministry so that enough Bibles can be purchased for every first-grade student at FBS Allen, plus additional Bibles to be distributed by church staff in special cases (VBS visitor or newly saved child from VBS for example).

The Deacon Leadership Team designates a deacon to coordinate with the church staff the process of purchasing and distributing the Bibles. The distribution is typically done on a designated Sunday morning early in the school year, and usually includes a deacon participating in the children's sermon on that morning to explain the ministry and encourage the children to read their Bible. The full range of activities and processes are determined by the designated deacon and the church staff. The Deacon Council will be called upon to participate as needed in the distribution activities.