

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE  
FOR THE DEACON FELLOWSHIP  
2011**

**Revised 10/27/2013**

**I. Introduction**

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure is to explain, outline and define organization, structure, principles and practices for the Deacon Fellowship as adopted by the First Baptist Church, Bryan, Texas.

**II. Organization**

A. The Deacon Fellowship shall consist of duly ordained deacons elected by the Church. Deacons so ordained will serve under one of the classifications outlined below:

1. Active Deacon

- a. A man who is currently serving (prior to the adoption of these processes) as an Active or Inactive Deacon. (All duly vetted and elected Deacons should be Active and the Term "inactive" should no longer be used.
- b. A man who has been fully vetted in accordance with the processes outlined below and has successfully completed his one-year mentorship.

2. Reserve Deacon

- a. A man who, for a period of time, has special commitments due to work, travel, family responsibilities or other extraordinary circumstances and is unable to fulfill the responsibilities of an Active Deacon. Deacons needing to serve in a Reserve Deacon Status should submit a formal request to the Deacon Officers outlining their reasons for the request and the anticipated time needed to be in this status.
- b. A man who has been vetted and duly elected in accordance with the processes outlined below, but is in at least a one-year mentorship prior to being recommended for Active Deacon Service.

- c. Reserve Deacons are not voting members of the Deacon Body but will be expected to serve as a Ministry Team Member.

### 3. Deacon Emeritus

The designation of Deacon Emeritus is primarily used to recognize a Deacon who has provided long and faithful service and who because of advanced age, health restrictions or other special circumstances becomes unable to continue in Active Deacon Service.'

- B. A Chairman, Vice-Chairman and a Secretary shall be elected annually from the deacons serving in the Active Deacon Fellowship.

The Chairman is authorized and empowered to appoint committees to study the problems and activities which properly come under the direct responsibility of the deacons, and to bring recommendations to the Active Deacon Fellowship. It is not contemplated that such committee work will supersede or duplicate the work of other church committees nor that Deacon committees will be composed solely of deacons.

- C. Regular meetings of the Active Deacon Fellowship will be held monthly at a time to be fixed by such body and called meetings shall be held on call of the Chairman or the Pastor.

To enhance leadership and guidance, recommendations from the Personnel, Finance, Missions, Properties or other committees deemed by the Deacon Officers as significant to the harmony and fellowship of our membership will be submitted first to the Deacon Fellowship for endorsement, word of caution, or without remark. The Deacon Fellowship will not have the right to change any such recommendation.

### **III. The Role of FBC-Bryan Deacons**

The Deacon Fellowship shall consist of spiritually qualified and duly ordained Deacons who are members of FBC-Bryan. Ordained Deacons should demonstrate Christian maturity and should be available to serve and assist with the ministries of the Church. All Deacons are expected to meet the qualifications set forth in the SPIRITUAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR DEACONS (Appendix A) and to subscribe to the conditions and promises set forth in THE DEACON COVENANT (Appendix B).

'Deacons are the servant leaders and spiritual leaders of the church. Deacons are to be zealous in maintaining and guarding the unity and integrity of the church's ministries. They are expected to use the spiritual gifts granted them by the grace of God to partner with the pastor and church staff to proclaim the gospel, assist with pastoral tasks, care for church members and others in the community, and lead the church to engage in fellowship, witness, education, ministry and application in accordance with the mission and vision statements of the church.

The works of the deacons should include, but not be limited to the following:

- Strengthen Sunday School ministry through personal involvement and leadership
- Listen carefully to the congregation
- Give wise counsel to the pastor, church staff, committees and congregation
- Work with the pastor to consider and formulate plans in the progress of the church
- Conduct themselves in a manner that provides role models for Godly living'
- Teach, by example and precept, the responsibility of the individual to the Lord in the matter of stewardship of talents, time and possessions, and to encourage the bringing of undesignated personal tithes and offerings to the Church, to be distributed by the will and vote of the Church.
- Participate as a member in the organizations of the Church which are designated for him.
- Participate in personal evangelism and the evangelistic ministries of the Church.
- Maintain Church discipline and promote a spirit of reverence toward God in the worship service.
- Fervently and faithfully seek and follow the leading of the Holy Spirit concerning participation and support of the ministries of the Church.
- Promote and protect, as a body and as individuals, the harmony and fellowship of the FBC-Bryan congregation.

#### **IV. Deacons as Servants**

The Deacon Fellowship serves the well-being of the Church Body through a “Ministry Team” and “Family Ministry” approach to service. Multiple ministries shall be selected as the primary mission of Deacon Ministry Teams. Each Team is to have an appointed Team Leader who will be responsible for coordinating the ministry of the Team. The appointment of Team Leader will be made by the Deacon Officers, and assessed annually. The Team Leader also works with the Church Staff and Deacon Officers to identify specific ministry initiatives, and support and hold accountable Team members in the completion of ministry initiatives. Each Deacon selects the Team that best aligns with his spiritual gifts, talents and interests. Every Deacon is encouraged to serve on at least one Ministry Team or in the “Family Ministry”. As noted later, a

substantial portion of Deacon Meetings is to be purposefully dedicated to reports from the Ministry Teams/individuals, and work together as a Deacon Body to provide support of the ongoing ministries.

**Potential Ministry Teams may include:**

- Widows/widowers
- Benevolence
- Ministerial Staff Support
- Spiritual Needs of the Congregation
- Hospital Visits
- Visitation (follow up on visitors and new member prospects, also including parking lot welcome team)
- Bereavement/Last Days ministry
- Homebound Visits
- Evangelism
- Community Outreach
- Handyman (including outreach to single moms and widows to care for home and automobile maintenance/tips on an ongoing basis)
- Missions
- Home bound
- 'Pastoral Staff Support – Team members will consist of the Deacon Officers. The team will be created for the purpose of being an available resource for support and assistance regarding any matter as requested by the Senior Pastor. The team and the Senior Pastor should schedule regular meetings to discuss confidential matters, assist, advise and be available when problems arise.
- 'Peacemaker/Conflict Resolution – Team members will be selected by the Deacon Officers and must complete a six hour peacemaker course and the term of service will be three years, staggered as determined by the Deacon Officers. The team will be Deacon led. The purpose of the team will be to address any conflict arising within the Church Body; as brought forward to the team by the Senior Pastor, Ministerial staff, Deacon Officers or committee chair persons.
- Advisory /Consulting Team - Members of this team will be selected for their administrative skills by the Deacon Officers in consultation with the Senior Pastor. The team will be Deacon led. The Advisory/ Consulting Team will be available to assist any committee of the church and any staff member with matters of an administrative or policy nature if needs arise that are outside the skill set of the committee or staff member. Committee Chairman or staff members

may request the assistance of the Team by making a request to the Senior Pastor or the Deacon Chairman. The Team will be available on a “when and if needed” basis upon approval from the Deacon Officers and the Senior Pastor.

New Ministry Teams can be suggested by ‘any member’ of the Deacon Body to the Deacon Officers. ‘The Deacon Officers are empowered and authorized to determine if, when and how to add new Ministry Teams.’ Role descriptions for Ministry Team members will then be developed and Team Members will receive training and support in the fulfillment of their role. As new Team Members join the Ministry Team ongoing training is the responsibility of the respective Team Leader.

Deacons will be assigned by the Deacon Officers based on the ABF population to ensure that all family units are served through the “Deacon Family Ministry”.

## **V. Deacon Selection Process**

### **A. Number of Deacons**

At least annually in order to determine the number of Deacons needed at FBC-Bryan the Deacon’s will be given a questionnaire to determine their current ministries and their ministry interests. Utilizing the ministry questionnaires and the current ministry needs of FBC-Bryan, the Deacon Officers, in conjunction with the Pastor and Deacon Nominee Selection Committee, will determine the minimum number of Deacons needed to meet the Deacon Ministry needs at FBC- Bryan. The number of Deacons identified should ensure that all family units are served.

The Deacon Nominee Selection Committee will be composed of six members, and each member will serve one term of three years. Three members, as nominated by the Committee on Teams and Committees, will be elected at large from the Church Body. Three members shall be Deacons and shall be elected by the Deacon Body. Terms will be staggered so that no more than one member will be elected by the Church Body, or by the Deacon Body, in any year.

### **B. Deacon Election**

Deacons will be elected in the following manner. By May 1 of each year the Deacon Nominee Selection Committee, current Deacon Officers and the Pastor will determine the number of new Deacons to be added for Active service as described above. Deacon candidates will be reviewed (as described below) by the Deacon Nominee Selection Committee after being nominated for Deacon Service by the leadership of the ABF and/or Small Group Ministry, any Church member, the Deacon Body or the church staff. Deacon candidates

will be recommended based on those men who are considered worthy and qualified to serve as Deacons based on the requirements for Deacon Service by FBNC-Bryan (Appendices A and B).

Each man nominated to be a Deacon will be given a Deacon Qualification Questionnaire (Appendix C) and will be asked to return the completed form to the Deacon Nominee Selection Committee. Upon receiving this form the Deacon Nominee Selection Committee will interview each candidate. Interviews should remain confidential.

After all interviews are complete, the Deacon Nominee Selection Committee will recommend a slate of Deacon Nominees for election by the Church Body. Prior to the election, the Deacon Nominees will share their testimony in each of the general assembly worship services (Contemporary and Traditional). Upon completion of the testimonies the Church will vote on the nominees to fill the number of Deacon positions needed. Church members must be present to vote (no absentee or proxy votes). It is anticipated that this process will take place multiple Sundays. Those Deacon Nominees not selected in the church-wide election will be retained. Those Deacon Nominees not selected in the church-wide election will be retained for one more election. Thereafter, if the Deacon Nominee is not elected in the next election, the Deacon Nominee will once again be eligible to be nominated and, if nominated, will repeat the interview process.

C. Newly Elected Deacons and Deacons Transferring in to FBC- Bryan – Reserve Deacon Designation and Deacon Emeritus Designation

Once elected by the Church Body, the Deacon will be ordained in an ordination service. The newly elected Deacon will be mentored for at least one year (see Mentoring below). A Deacon shall serve as an Active Deacon until he asks to be removed from Active Deacon Service, asks to be placed in a Reserve or Emeritus status or until the Deacon Nominee Selection Committee and Pastor request that the Deacon be removed from Active Service.

For the Deacon who transfers to FBC-Bryan, who has been ordained as a Deacon in another Southern Baptist Church, he must complete a Deacon Qualification Questionnaire, be interviewed by the Senior Pastor and after his advice and recommendation he will be eligible to be an active Deacon

## **VI. Training**

Deacons at FBC-Bryan should hold at least an annual training event to address identified needs and to enhance the ministry of the Deacons. Ministry Team members will receive ongoing (at least once annually) training related to the fulfillment of the role of their Team and their part in meeting the Team goals. This training will be identified by the Team

members based on their needs and the needs of the recipients of their ministry.

## **VII. Mentoring and Orientation**

The FBC-Bryan Deacon Fellowship will provide a formal mentoring program (Appendix D) for newly elected Deacons. Once a man has been elected for Deacon Service by the Church, he should enter Deacon Service for at least one year as a Reserve Deacon to be mentored concerning the expectations for Active Deacon Service at FBC-Bryan.

At the end of the mentorship period, the new Deacon shall appear before the Deacon Nominee Selection Committee, Pastor, and Deacon Officers, who will consider the man for Active Deacon Service. The Deacon Nominee Selection Committee, with the advice of the Pastor, and considering the recommendation of the Deacon Officers shall decide by majority vote if the Reserve Deacon should be placed in Active Service or retained in a mentorship program for an additional year.

## **VIII. Support / Resources**

Revisions to the Deacon SOP will be ongoing and targeted to the changing needs of the Church Body whom we serve. To this end the Deacon Officers shall appoint annually a standing committee of the Deacon Body to serve as a interpretive group (named the "Deacon SOP Interpretation Committee") to review and make recommendations to the Deacon Body regarding changes and improvements to the Deacon SOP. As a result the SOP will serve as a living document that is dynamic with the purpose of meeting the needs of our Church body and Deacon Body.

## **IX. Accountability**

All Deacons will be held accountable for their service through monitoring of their involvement in their Ministry Team(s) by their Ministry Team leader(s), in consultation with the Deacon Officers.

## **X. Deacon Involvement**

### **A. Deacon Fellowship**

To enhance the fellowship of the Deacon Body, to the extent possible (1) meals be served/catered at individual deacon expense at Deacon

meetings at least once a quarter; (2) there be an annual fellowship gathering (in addition to the Christmas Banquet), e.g. chili cook-off, domino/42 tournament, etc.; (3) there be a Deacon/Staff retreat at least once a year; and (4) other activities to be determined as needed to foster and improve Deacon fellowship.

#### B. Deacon Meetings

Meetings of the Deacon Body are to be held at least monthly. The primary purpose of every Deacon meeting should be to share reports from the Ministry Teams and ministries to individual Deacon Families as deemed appropriate. These reports are to consist at least of activities accomplished in the last month by the Ministry Teams, and plans for activities in the coming month. Recognition will be made by the Team leader of unusual accomplishments in the last month and leadership qualities he has observed on his Team. The Ministry Team's acts of service to the Church Body are to be the focus of every report. Every effort should be made by the Team Leader to use all available Audio/Video resources to bring his report to the Deacon Body each month. The Deacon Officers will determine the inclusion of business/financial reporting at Deacon Meetings. Individual prayer needs, and prayers for the Church Body as a whole, are to be maximized.



## **APPENDIX A SCRIPTURAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR DEACONS**

According to Scripture, deacons are to be selected based upon their character, their commitment, and their service to Christ and His church. Accordingly, a deacon should:

- Be above reproach, both within and without the church. (1 Tim. 3:10)
- Be filled with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 6:3)
- Not be self-centered, quick-tempered, violent, or contentious. (1 Tim. 3:3)
- Abstain from any association with alcohol, drugs, etc., that would distort their testimony or cause another believer to stumble. (1 Tim. 3: 3 and 8)
- Be in control of his tongue as evidenced by the fact that he is not a gossip, can keep confidences, and is not a critical person. (1 Tim. 3:8; James 3:2)
- If married, be one who manages his own household well, resulting in love and respect from his wife and children. (1 Tim. 3:12)
- If married, model faithful devotion to one spouse, committed to the sanctity of the marriage bond. (1 Tim. 3:12)
- Know what he believes and be able to discern false doctrine, as well as to share the Truth with others. (1 Tim. 3:2, 9, and 16)
- Be free from the love of money and diligently seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. (1 Tim. 3:8; Matt. 6:33)
- Be a mature Christian, not a new and immature convert. (1 Tim. 3 and 10)
- Be a New Testament steward as evidenced by his regular practice of giving generously through First Baptist Church, Bryan as God has prospered him. (1 Cor. 16:2)
- Do all in his power to create and preserve harmony in the church. (1 Tim. 3: 3; Eph.4:3)
- If married, be one whose wife is guided by these same principles. (1 Tim. 3:11)

## **APPENDIX B THE DEACON COVENANT**

Because of the Biblical qualifications and ministry of deacons given by Acts 6: 1- 8 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13, and supported by the requirements of a pastor in 1 Timothy 3: 1-7, and

Because I have as my goal the common purpose of all Christians, to come to the "fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13); and

Because I believe God is leading me to share in the Deacon Ministry of First Baptist Church, Bryan, Texas,

I solemnly and joyfully covenant with Christ and my fellow deacons:

- To be faithfully involved in the life of my church and to fully support its covenant;
- To give regularly, joyfully, and proportionately to the Lord's ministry, beginning with the tithe;
- To share in the Deacon's Ministry of care and concern to the congregation and community;
- To cooperate with my fellow deacons by attending every deacon's meeting unless hindered by just cause. To serve as a deacon striving as my goal to fulfill the ideals and principles of the Deacon Ministry.

Should I fail in my purpose to keep this covenant, I will seek forgiveness and renewal as I take up anew the Deacon Ministry.

**APPENDIX C**  
**Deacon Qualification Questionnaire**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Joined FBC, Bryan: \_\_\_\_\_

Joined by:    Letter    Statement    Baptism    Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Return this completed form to:  
**First Baptist Church**  
3100 Cambridge Dr.  
Bryan, TX 77802  
Attention: Deacon Nomination Committee

Please attach  
a photograph  
in this area.

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Business Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Are you married? \_\_\_\_\_ Wife's name \_\_\_\_\_

Year Married \_\_\_\_\_

Number of children \_\_\_\_\_

Name

Age

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor's Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Employment (years/months) \_\_\_\_\_

***While some of the following questions address potentially sensitive areas, none of these questions are individually disqualifying.***

1. Do you consent to and authorize us to run a formal comprehensive background check?

Yes  No

Driver's License:

Social Security:

2. Have you ever been ordained as a Deacon?

Yes  No

If yes, give the name of the church, denomination and year of ordination.

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3. Please give any leadership roles within the fellowship along with years of service.

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4. Do you feel that you can conscientiously support the total church ministry?

Yes  No

5. Are you willing to serve as a Deacon?

Yes  No

6. Have you carefully and prayerfully read the qualifications of a Deacon and a Deacon's wife in Acts 6:1-7 and I Timothy 3?

Yes  No

7. If married, has your wife read these Scriptures?

Yes  No

8. Are you faithful in your stewardship by tithing to FBC, Bryan?

Yes  No

9. Are you able to actively participate in the Deacon Ministries of FBC, Bryan?

Yes  No

If not, why?

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10. Would you be willing to give a testimony before the church and submit to the questioning of an ordination council?

Yes  No

11. Do you adhere to the central doctrines accepted by Baptists in the latest, adopted version of the *Baptist Faith and Message*?

Yes  No

12. Will you be faithful in attendance at the regular Deacon's Meetings?

Yes     No

13. 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

14. Will you commit yourself to a growing spiritual life?

Yes     No

When you can no longer affirm the qualifications for a deacon, do you agree to remove yourself or accept removal upon action of the church?

Yes     No

16. Do you recognize that the deacon is a servant and not a manager of the church's affairs?

Yes     No

17. Have you ever been divorced?

Yes     No

18. Have you ever been arrested?

Yes     No

19. Please list areas where you believe you are spiritually gifted.

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20. Please list the areas you are serving in now, and have served in previously at FBC, Bryan (e.g. choir, ABF, small group, discipleship, committees, etc.)

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

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**Please give your view on the following and cite scripture references. If you need additional space, please attach additional pages.**

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

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

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

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25. What do you believe the Bible teaches about the Deacon's responsibility to their homes?

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

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27. Please list any questions or concerns or provide any comments that you would like to share.

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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.

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Signature

If married, 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.

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Signature

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Deacon Mentoring Program**

The Deacon Mentoring Program of First Baptist Church, Bryan, Texas, is...

**....a defined sequence of steps through which men are mentored to become Active Deacons at First Baptist Church-Bryan.**

Content of the Deacon Mentoring Program:

- Managing the Deacon Mentoring Program
- Content of Deacon Mentoring Program

#### **Managing the Deacon Mentoring Program**

The Deacon Mentoring Program is extremely important to FBC-Bryan and the role and function of the Deacon Body. The Deacon Mentoring Program will be managed by the Pastor's office and overseen by a Deacon Mentoring Committee comprised of the Pastor, Deacon Chair and three active Deacons. Other members of the Deacon Body will share in the implementation of the Deacon Mentoring Program through individual mentoring and class training. An orientation for "Deacon Mentors" will be conducted by the Deacon Mentoring Committee to ensure that Deacon Ministry Teams are aware of their responsibilities and the timeline for completing assignments.

#### **Deacon Mentoring Program Purpose**

The Deacon Mentoring Program is designed to provide prospective Deacons with:

- Principles for Deacon service based on God's Word;
- Training for Deacon service based on identified areas of ministry within the Church, and
- Relationships through Deacon Service based on a mentoring opportunity with current, Active Deacons.

The Deacon Mentoring Program will require 12 months from the initial Deacon ordination.

#### **Content for Deacon Mentoring Training Sessions**

The following meeting content will be presented during the year of mentorship training and be divided into three deacon mentor training sessions. These three (3) formal training sessions for Reserve Deacons in the mentoring program will be in addition to ongoing mentor training by assigning Active Deacons to mentor Reserve Deacons. Wives will attend the first session. Wife attendance to other sessions will be determined by content and how appropriate it is for wife to be involved. Deacons must complete all training sessions to qualify as an Active Deacon. To be eligible for Active Deacon Service, Reserve

Deacons must complete at least the one-year mentoring program and attend the three formal training sessions.

Information to be presented in training sessions will include at least the following:

- Biblical Responsibilities of a Deacon (Review of Scriptural basis)
- Expectations of a Deacon (Role and conduct, including wives of Deacons)
- Baptist Faith and Message (Any other written policy or doctrinal statement should be included here)
- Deacon Meetings – Annual Schedule and General Description of Items Considered (Financial Report, Deacon Committee Reports, Staff Reports, Special Reports, etc.) The rule of confidentiality, communications between husband and wife, avoidance of any criticism of pastor, staff, etc.
- Deacon Committees – Description and Responsibilities presented by Ministry Team Chairs during training sessions. (This could be combined with other ministries to show relationships complementarily between Deacon Responsibilities and other ministries.)
- Ministry Opportunities
- Discipleship and Mentoring Role of Deacons (including materials, preparation)
- Evangelism – personal and visitation
- Current List and Contact Information for all Active Deacons.
- Prayer Room Description and Deacon Responsibilities
- Lord's Supper Set-up, Schedule and Deacon Responsibility

All Mentor training will be for the purpose of moving Reserve Deacons to the Active Deacon status.