

First Baptist Church Port Neches

Deacon Handbook

Updated September 25, 2022

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Deacon Handbook

I. Introduction

The purpose of this Deacon Handbook is to explain, outline and define organization, structure, principles and practices for the Deacon Fellowship as adopted by the First Baptist Church, Port Neches Texas. Any subsequent revisions shall be adopted by the Church as described in Section VIII below.

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 man who has been dully vetted, elected, ordained, and is currently serving according to the guidelines found in Section III of this handbook.

2. Reserve Deacon

A man who, for a period of time, has special commitments due to work, travel, family responsibilities, illness, or other extraordinary circumstances and is unable to fulfill the responsibilities of an Active Deacon should request to be moved to Reserve Deacon status.

- a. Deacons needing to serve in a Reserve Deacon Status should submit a formal request in writing to the Deacon Officers outlining their reasons for the request and the anticipated time needed to be in this status.
- b. Reserve Deacons are not voting members of the Deacon Fellowship.
- c. Reserve Deacons may assist in the service of the church as a Deacon (Lord's Supper or other Deacon ministries as he is available).
- d. A Reserve Deacon will notify the Deacon Officers when he is able to rejoin the Deacon Fellowship as an Active Deacon.

B. Deacon Officers

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

2. A Deacon Officer Nominating Team will be appointed by the Chairman ninety

days prior to the election of officers (*Usually in September* of the year of the outgoing officers to allow for a vote in December). Nominees will be identified and interviewed prior to presentation to the Deacon Fellowship. Election of officers shall be conducted in a scheduled Deacon Fellowship meeting having been announced as an agenda item. The election shall be held prior to the new calendar year. A majority vote of approval by the Deacon Fellowship shall elect the officers.

3. Deacon Officers shall serve two-year terms beginning on January 1 and ending December 31.

a. In the event of extenuating circumstances, the Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman may be nominated for an additional two-year term but shall not be eligible for election to the same office for more than two consecutive terms.

b. It is anticipated that the Deacon Nominating Team will, in most cases, nominate the Vice-Chairman to succeed the outgoing Chairman, but it is not mandatory.

c. A Secretary may serve for as many terms as mutually agreed upon between he and the Deacon Fellowship.

4. The Chairman facilitates the ministries and other activities of the Deacon Fellowship.

a. The Chairman, in consultation with the pastor or his designee, is responsible for preparing the agenda for each meeting of deacons.

b. The Chairman is authorized to appoint teams to study the problems and activities which properly come under the direct responsibility of the deacons as outlined in Sections III and IV below, and to bring recommendations to the Active Deacon Fellowship. Such Deacon Team work will not supersede or duplicate the work of other church committees and teams.

Non-deacons may be enlisted to assist with Deacon Ministries.

5. The Vice-Chairman assists the Chairman in the performance of his duties. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman performs all the duties of the Chairman including conducting deacon meetings.

6. If the Chairman and Vice-Chairman cannot attend or perform the duties of the Chairman at a Deacon meeting, then the Chairman should designate their replacement. If the Secretary is designated to lead the meeting, a replacement secretary shall be appointed for the meeting by the Chairman.

7. The Secretary records the minutes of all deacon meetings, maintains correspondence to and from the Deacon Fellowship, and maintains records relating to deacon ministries.

C. Deacon Meetings

1. Regular meetings of the Deacon Fellowship are to be held *as needed and called*. *Meeting dates should be* flexible to accommodate extenuating circumstances, including holidays, school breaks, and conflicts with other church ministry events. Deacons shall be notified of *meeting dates, times, and locations* as early as possible.

a. The Chairman in consultation with the pastor or his designee will prepare an agenda which will include, but are not limited to:

i. Providing the Pastor and staff the opportunity to share upcoming events and needs the Deacon Fellowship can provide in support of the various ministries of the church.

ii. Deacon Ministry reports from the past month. Deacon Ministries are listed and defined in Section IV. The Deacon Officers are authorized to determine if, when, and how to add new Deacon Ministries.

iii. Praying for individual needs, staff, and the church body.

iv. Presentation of committee/team reports and/or recommendations.

b. The Deacon Chairman will ensure that the length of Deacon Meetings does not extend into times reserved for church ministry events.

c. A quorum of 40 percent or more of the Fellowship should be present for meetings.

d. If a quorum is not present, the chairman can:

i. Adjourn the meeting and wait for the next *scheduled or called* meeting.

ii. Call a recess and take the time to round up enough members for a quorum.

iii. Continue the meeting discussing relevant issues on the agenda. Items may be tabled until a later date if approval is needed by a quorum. The Fellowship should not take substantive action if no quorum is present. However, regular reports can be reviewed and discussed.

iv. Allow for the meeting to continue on a later date in a separate called meeting (requires notice) in order to ensure a quorum.

2. The Deacon Officers may arrange a called meeting of the Deacon Fellowship at any time the need arises for Deacons to address matters that fall within the responsibilities of Deacons.

a. Any Active Deacon with a concern may request a called meeting of the Deacon Fellowship from the Deacon Officers.

b. The Chairman in consultation with the pastor or his designee will prepare an agenda which will identify the specific item or items to be discussed at the called meeting.

c. All Active Deacons will be contacted through normal channels of communication (usually, the church office) concerning the time and place of the meeting and the item or items to be discussed. If the schedule of the meeting allows for announcement of the called meeting in *another* meeting of the Deacon Fellowship, only those deacons absent are required to be contacted.

d. Minutes of a called meeting shall be recorded and submitted for approval at the next meeting of the Deacon Fellowship.

3. Unless otherwise specified in this handbook, the rules contained in the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall *be a guideline for* deacons' meetings in conjunction with church Constitution and Bylaws.

4. Attendance

- a. Deacons are to be active in attendance to scheduled and special called meetings. As stated in Section III, B of this document, "The deacons are to be active in ministry to the church family." Deacons have been ordained to serve the church through various ministries and to support and assist the ministerial staff as needed or requested. A deacon who is not active is not fulfilling the duties and responsibilities of a man ordained for service by the church or meeting **The Deacon Covenant** in Appendix B of this handbook – "It is my oath to maintain this covenant and should I fall short, I will work faithfully to remedy my failure(s) and renew my commitment."
- b. If a Deacon fails to attend at least 75% of meetings in any 12-month period (not calendar year) without approved absences for extenuating circumstances, the Deacon shall be placed on probation until such time that he either:
 - i. Brings his attendance to an acceptable status and keeps it there for at least 6 consecutive months, or
 - ii. Elects to be moved to the status of Reserve Deacon as outlined in Section II, A, 2 of this handbook.

- c. Absences for extenuating circumstances are approved by the Chairman and may be done with the consultation of the other Deacon Officers and the Pastor. NOTE: It is understood that a Deacon will miss from time to time due to illness, work, travel, or attendance to other ministry opportunities (such as church camps/retreats, mission trips, conventions or conferences as a representative of FBCPN, or serving the church through ministries as defined in Section IV that cannot be scheduled at another time outside of a scheduled meeting of the Deacon Fellowship). If a Deacon has a conflict with attendance to any scheduled or special called meetings, he should make the Chairman or his designee aware of his absence as soon as possible and provide the circumstance for his absence.
- d. Deacons on probation will be non-voting members of the Deacon Fellowship until they demonstrate regular attendance and are returned to Active status.
- e. If a Deacon on probation does not bring his attendance within these guidelines within a 12-month period after initially being placed on probation, he shall be removed from the Deacon Fellowship.
- f. If a former Deacon (one that has been removed from the Deacon Fellowship for failure to actively support church ministry through attendance) wishes to return to the Deacon Fellowship of FBCPN, he may be considered as part of Section V, **Deacon Selection Process** by the Deacon Review Team in consultation with the Deacon Chairman and the Pastor, but only after at least a 12-month period from his removal from the Deacon Fellowship.
- g. Attendance shall be tracked and recorded by the Secretary in the meeting minutes and a role maintained by the Secretary and Church office.

III. The Role and Relationships of Deacons

A. The Role of FBCPN Deacons

The Deacon Fellowship shall consist of spiritually qualified and duly ordained Deacons who are members of FBC Port Neches. 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, biblical theological soundness, and the spiritual and moral 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 by example to engage in fellowship, witness, education, ministry and application in accordance with the guiding documents of the church.

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

- Strengthen Sunday School and other ministries of the church 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
- Participate in personal evangelism and the evangelistic ministries of the Church
- 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 FBCPN congregation

B. The Relationships of a Deacon

Certainly, the deacon's primary relationship is to his Lord. Without that vertical relationship, the horizontal relationships will be distorted. A deacon should be more concerned about his walk with God than anything. Next in importance is the deacon's knowledge and understanding of his role in relation to his family, pastor, church committees, and the church membership at large.

• A Deacon's Relationship to his Family

The New Testament mentions a deacon's responsibility in relation to his wife and children. Therefore, a deacon should give his family first priority in his devotion, care and ministry.

• A Deacon's Relationship to the Pastor

A deacon should serve under the leadership and spiritual direction of the pastor and be loyal to his pastor in prayer support, encouragement and fellowship. First Baptist Church looks to the pastor for giving overall spiritual leadership and administration to the church and its ministry. The church, therefore, expects the deacons to respect the office of pastor and to welcome the unique opportunity to learn from and serve with the

pastor. As a deacon functions in the practical ministry of the church, he partners with the pastor in ministering to the members of the church.

- ***A Deacon's Relationship to the Church Staff***

A deacon should serve in partnership with the staff, recognizing the mutual support to the pastor and providing leadership to the congregation. Giving leadership and participation in the role of support and encouragement is the soundest means of serving both the church and the church staff.

- ***A Deacon's Relationship to Church Committees***

The Deacon Fellowship gives counsel to, but does not have control of, all church committee/team actions. Deacons are servants first and last. Any committee/team may bring a recommendation to the Deacon Fellowship for information and feedback. Some committees/teams, including Personnel and Finance committees, bring to the Deacon Fellowship certain recommendations in accordance with church guiding documents. In giving counsel, the Deacon Fellowship may choose to endorse the recommendation issue a word of caution, or refer the recommendation to the church without remark, but deacons can neither instruct committees as to what they can or cannot propose to the church for official action nor can they change any such recommendation.

- ***A Deacon's Relationship to the Church Membership at Large***

The deacons are to be active in ministry to the church family, promoting peace, harmony and a spirit of cooperation among the membership. The primary relationship of the deacons to the church is as follows:

1. Deacons are to be problem solvers and preservers of church harmony. Every deacon carries two imaginary buckets: one of water and one of gasoline. He determines in many situations whether he will help put out the fires of disharmony or if he will fuel the problem.
2. Deacons are to be active in ministry to support the pastor as he feeds the flock faithfully. In sharing the load together, the pastor is also able to spend the time needed in prayer and the ministry of the word for God's direction to lead the church.

IV. Deacons as Servants

Deacons serve the church through various ministries including, but not limited to, hospital visitation, ministering to widows, widowers and others in our church who have lost loved ones, assisting with baptism and serving the Lord's Supper. Deacons will support and assist ministerial staff as requested. New deacon ministry areas can be suggested by any member of the Deacon Fellowship to the Deacon Officers. The Deacon Officers are authorized to determine if, when and how to add new Deacon Ministries. Reports from Deacon Ministries shall be provided at scheduled *or called*

Deacon Fellowship meetings. However, if it is necessary to provide an update, communicate a need, or if there is a concern that needs to be addressed, the Deacon Officers should be made aware as soon as possible versus waiting for another scheduled meeting. Confidentiality should remain a focus if it is needed when sharing or reporting on some items in regards to personal health and spiritual needs especially if it is requested by the individual or family. All newly elected and ordained Deacons should participate in these ministries as soon as feasible.

A. Current/On-going Deacon Ministries

1. Lord's Supper

- a. The Team consists of 4 Active Deacons to ensure that all preparations (dependent on service method) are made and that there are an adequate number of Deacons available for the service (again, if needed dependent on service method).
- b. Non-deacons may be recruited to assist with this ministry.
- c. Deacons and staff (along with any recruited non-deacons) shall ensure that all homebound individuals are provided an opportunity to participate in the Lord's Supper if that desire is expressed.

2. Baptism

- a. The Team consists of no less than 3 Active Deacons and their wives.
- b. Deacons shall assist with the baptism of males and Deacon wives shall assist with the baptism of females.

3. Hospital Visitation

- a. Deacons of the Week shall ensure that contact is made with the Church Office daily during their assigned weeks of the year to inquire if there are any visitations needed at the local hospitals.
- b. Visitation should be made if possible based off of hospital policy. At a minimum, phone contact should attempt to be made in lieu of an in-person visit.
- c. If it is known in advance that the patient will be having surgery or a procedure, make contact the afternoon or evening before (if possible) for prayer.
- d. Follow-up with the patient or their family the day following the surgery/procedure if at all possible.
- e. Once contact is made (in person or over the phone), a report back to the Church Office should be made to update the staff on the patient's status.
- f. Deacons should make hospital visitations in pairs (either two Deacons together or a Deacon and his wife). A male should not make a visit to a female alone.
- g. Visits can and should be made to family members and friends of church members if requested or there is a spiritual need.
- h. All newly elected and ordained Deacons should make hospital visits with their mentor for their first year.

4. Service/Representation on Committees and Teams

- a. All deacons are encouraged to serve on Committees and Teams in order to provide wise counsel, be active in ministry to the church family, promote peace, harmony, and a spirit of cooperation. Deacons give

counsel to, but do not have control of, all church committee/team actions. Deacons are servants first and last. Deacons can neither instruct committees as to what they can or cannot propose to the church for official action nor can they change any such recommendation.

- b. A deacon representative on a committee or team should serve in partnership with the group, giving leadership and participation in the role of support and encouragement.

B. New Deacon Ministries

1. Needs for new Deacon Ministries can be recommended to the Deacon Fellowship by any Active Deacon or staff member.
2. Requests or concerns from non-deacons can be presented by an Active Deacon or staff member as necessary.
3. New Deacon Ministries shall be discussed, require a motion and a second, and approved by a vote at a scheduled meeting of the Deacon Fellowship.
4. A two-thirds majority of Active Deacons present and voting shall be required for approval of new Deacon Ministries.
5. If not approved, follow-up communication to the individual(s) requesting the new ministry/presenting the need (if not present) should be made as soon as possible by the Chairman of Deacons. Some requests may be better suited to be sent to an already existing committee or team of the Church to be addressed versus the Deacon Fellowship.
6. If approved, the Chairman shall recruit volunteers or make appointments if necessary to staff the team for the new ministry.
7. Reports from the new Deacon Ministry should be made at scheduled meetings of the Deacon Fellowship.

V. Deacon Selection Process

Deacon Officers will consult with the pastor to assess the need for new deacons. The number of new deacons needed shall be determined by the Deacon Officers in consultation with the pastor. Candidates must have been members of this church for a minimum of one year. Previously ordained Deacons from another Baptist church must have been a member of First Baptist Church Port Neches for a minimum of six months (see sub-section K below). The following provisions serve as guidelines for nominations for election.

A. According to Scripture, deacons are to be selected based upon their character, their commitment, and their service to Christ and His church. (See Appendix A) Deacons shall be nominated through a ballot circulated through the church for two consecutive Sundays. (See Appendix E) The Deacon Review Team described in sub-section C below will count the ballots and report to the Deacon Chairman the names and number of nominations received by each nominee.

B. The Deacon Chairman will meet with the pastor concerning potential deacon candidates.

C. The Deacon Chairman will appoint a Deacon Review Team consisting of the current Deacon Vice-Chairman, a past deacon Chairman and two Active Deacons. The current vice-Chairman will serve as Chairman of this group as a non-voting member.

D. The Deacon Review Team will meet with nominees and their wives. At that meeting, the Team will review Scriptural Qualifications for Deacons and wives as described in Appendix A, explain the role and responsibilities of a deacon as outlined in this Handbook, and review the Deacon Selection process from nomination to ordination. The Team will distribute and review the Deacon Qualification Questionnaire (Appendix C) and request that nominees return the completed questionnaire to the Team.

E. Upon receiving the completed questionnaire, Appendix C, the Deacon Review Team and pastor will meet individually with each nominee and their spouse. The information shared by the nominees in the meetings shall remain confidential. The purpose of the meeting is to review the nominee's responses on the questionnaire, to discuss with the nominee more fully the role and responsibilities of serving as a deacon, to ask the nominee to share his spiritual journey with the Team, and to answer any questions the nominee may have.

F. Those candidates recommended by the Deacon Review Team will meet with the Deacon Fellowship. At that meeting, candidates will share their testimonies and be available to answer questions from Deacons on doctrinal and scriptural issues as they relate to their service as deacons. After all candidates have shared their testimonies and answered any questions, Active Deacons will vote on whether to recommend candidates to the church for ordination. A two-thirds majority of Active Deacons present and voting shall be required to recommend a candidate to the church for ordination.

G. Those candidates approved by deacons shall be recommended to the church for ordination as deacons. Prior to their election, each candidate shall share his testimony in a ministry conference/church service. A two-thirds majority of those present and voting at a ministry conference/church service shall be required to ordain a man as a deacon.

H. Once approved by the church as a deacon, a candidate may attend the meetings of the Deacon Fellowship, but shall not have voting privileges until he is ordained.

I. After approval by the church, the Deacon will be ordained in an ordination service. Following his ordination, the new deacon will be assigned a mentor from the Active Deacon Fellowship. (See Section VII below.)

J. A Deacon shall serve as an Active Deacon until

1. He asks in writing to be removed from Active Deacon service; or

2. He asks in writing to be placed in a Reserve status; or
3. The Deacon Review Team and Pastor request that the Deacon be removed from Active Service for failure to fulfill the role and responsibilities of a deacon as outlined in this handbook.

K. At times an ordained man from another Baptist church may join FBCPN. After the man has completed *six months* of membership in the Church, the Chairman of deacons/designee will visit with the ordained brother to see if he is willing to serve. The Church is under no obligation to extend the request to such an individual.

1. If the man is willing to serve as a deacon, he will complete the Deacon Qualification Questionnaire, Appendix C, and be interviewed by the Deacon Review Committee and pastor.
2. Following the interview and with the recommendation of the committee, the man will be invited to meet with the Deacon Fellowship. At that meeting, the man will share his testimony and be available to answer questions from Deacons on doctrinal and scriptural issues as they relate to his service as a deacon. After he has shared his testimony and answered any questions, Active Deacons will vote on whether to recommend him to the church as an Active Deacon. A two-thirds majority of Active Deacons present and voting shall be required to recommend the man to the church as an Active Deacon.
3. A previously ordained man recommended by deacons to the church and approved by two-thirds of those present and voting at ministry conference/church service shall serve as an Active Deacon. Prior to the vote to approve, the man shall share his testimony in a church service.

VI. Training

Deacons at FBC Port Neches will receive ongoing training at least annually related to the fulfillment of their roles as Deacons. This training will be identified by the Deacon Officers in consultation with the pastor or his designee based upon ministry needs.

VII. Mentoring and Orientation

The Deacon Mentoring Team will assign each newly elected deacon an Active Deacon mentor for a period of not less than twelve months. The mentor will work with the newly elected deacon serving as a resource and providing counsel and assistance as the newly elected deacon fulfills his role as a deacon. Appendix D contains more information regarding the Deacon Mentoring Program.

VIII. Support / Resources

Revisions to the Deacon Handbook will be targeted to the changing needs of the Church Body whom we serve. As the need is determined by the Deacon Fellowship by majority vote, the Deacon Chairman shall appoint an ad hoc committee to review and make recommendations as necessary to the Deacon Fellowship regarding changes and improvements to the Deacon Handbook. Any recommended changes to the Handbook require a two-thirds majority vote of the Active Deacons present and voting at a scheduled deacons' meeting in order to recommend the changes to the church body. Any changes to this Handbook must be approved by majority vote of the church body in a ministry conference or scheduled business meeting. As a result, the Deacon Handbook will serve as a living document that is dynamic with the purpose of meeting the needs of FBCPN and our Deacon Fellowship.

IX. Accountability

As a part of Deacon training, Deacon Officers will lead deacons in evaluating the effectiveness and participation of Deacons in ministry during the past year and plan ministries for the upcoming year. While ongoing training should be done at scheduled meetings throughout the year, a singular effort should be made in the late summer/early fall of each year to address training needs and plans for the upcoming year. This training planning effort will be led by the Chairman or his designee.

X. Deacon Fellowship

Recognizing the importance of fellowship between deacons and staff, Deacon Officers will review the Church calendar and provide an opportunity to schedule an annual fellowship whenever possible to provide deacons (including Reserve Deacons), staff, spouses, and widows of deacons the opportunity for informal fellowship.

Appendix A

Qualifications for Deacons

Christians must have salvation that can only be provided by God's son, Jesus. They should continually strive for spiritual growth (in knowledge of the Bible, faith, ministry, stewardship, love and more through the ministry of the Holy Spirit). They should humbly desire and do the will of our Lord. The overall spiritual condition of the candidate should be considered. In addition, men set aside by First Baptist Church of Port Neches as Deacons shall be required to also meet the following scriptural qualifications:

Acts 6:2-3 (NIV)

So, the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them."

I Timothy 3:8-13 (NIV)

Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.

In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

Matthew 5:31-32 (NIV)

It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Appendix B

The Deacon Covenant

Because of the Biblical qualifications and ministry of deacons given by Acts 6: 1- 8, 1 Timothy 3:8-13, Matthew 5:31-32, 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, Port Neches, Texas,

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

- To be faithfully involved in the life of my church;
- To give regularly, joyfully, and proportionately to the Lord's ministry, being an example of a good steward;
- To share in the Deacon's Ministry of care and concern to the congregation and community; and
- To cooperate with my fellow deacons by attending every deacon's meeting unless hindered by just cause.

It is my oath to maintain this covenant and should I fall short, I will work faithfully to remedy my failure(s) and renew my commitment.

Appendix C

Please Return This Completed Form To:

First Baptist Church
1900 Magnolia
Port Neches, TX 77651
Attn: Deacon Review Committee

Deacon Qualification Questionnaire

Name: _____ Date: _____

Birthdate: _____ Date Joined FBCPN: _____

Joined by: ___ Letter ___ Statement ___ Baptism ___ Other: _____

Address: (Street Address) _____

(City) _____ (State) _____ (ZIP) _____

Telephone: _____
Home *Mobile*

Email: _____

Are you married? _____ Yr. Married: _____ Wife's name: _____

Number of children: _____

Name	Age
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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

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

(You) ___Yes ___No Signature: _____

(Wife) ___Yes ___No Signature: _____

Driver's License Number: Yours _____ Wife's _____

Social Security Number: Yours _____ Wife's _____

2. Have you ever been ordained as a Deacon? ___Yes ___No

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

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

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 carefully and prayerfully read these scriptures?

___Yes ___No

8. Are you faithful in your stewardship by tithing to FBC, Port Neches? ___Yes ___N

9. Are you able to actively participate in the Deacon Ministries of FBC, Port Neches?
 Yes No

If not, why not?

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 *1963 Baptist Faith and Message*?

(http://baptistcenter.net/confessions/Baptist_Faith_and_Message_1963.pdf)

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

15. 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

If "Yes", please explain: _____

18. Have you ever been convicted of a crime?

Yes No

If "Yes", please explain: _____

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

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

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

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.

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

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

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

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.

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

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

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.

Signature

Deacon Mentoring Program

Appendix D

The Deacon Mentoring Program of First Baptist Church, Port Neches, Texas, is a defined sequence of steps through which men are mentored in their first year as Active Deacons at First Baptist Church Port Neches.

Managing the Deacon Mentoring Program

The Deacon Mentoring Program is extremely important to FBC Port Neches and the role and function of the Deacon Fellowship. The Deacon Mentoring Program will be managed by the Pastor's office and overseen by a Deacon Mentoring Team comprised of the Pastor, Deacon Chair and three Active Deacons. The Pastor and Chairman will determine the need for mentoring when new members are ordained and seek to fill these mentor positions if the need arises. Other members of the Deacon Fellowship 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 Team to ensure that Deacon Mentors are aware of their responsibilities and the timeline for completing assignments.

Deacon Mentoring Program Purpose

The Deacon Mentoring Program is designed to provide newly elected 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/election.

Content for Deacon Mentoring Training Sessions

The following meeting content will be presented during mentorship training. This training for newly elected Deacons in the mentoring program will be in addition to ongoing mentor training by assigning Active Deacons to mentor newly elected Deacons. Wife attendance to training sessions will be determined by content and how appropriate it is for a newly elected Deacon's wife to be involved. Newly elected Deacons are responsible for completing all 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)
- Guiding church documents including Deacon Handbook and Constitution & Bylaws
- Deacon Meetings – Annual Schedule and General Description of Items Considered (Financial Report, Deacon Team Reports, Staff Reports, Special Reports, etc.) The rule of confidentiality, communications between husband and wife, avoidance of any criticism of pastor, staff, etc.
- Deacon Teams – Description and Responsibilities presented by Deacon Officers during training sessions. (This could be combined with other ministries to show relationships between Deacon Responsibilities and other ministries, teams and committees.)
- Ministry Opportunities including hospital visitation and pastoral support
- Discipleship and Mentoring Role of Deacons
- Evangelism – personal and visitation
- Current List and Contact Information for all Active Deacons.
- Lord's Supper Set-up, Schedule, and Deacon Responsibility
- Deacon of the Week responsibilities

All Mentor training will be for the purpose of helping newly elected Deacons and wives understand the role and responsibilities of Deacons.

Appendix E

DEACON NOMINATION FORM

Due by [MM/DD/YYYY]

This form is to be used by members of First Baptist Church to nominate individuals who may be qualified to serve as deacons. (Please see scriptural qualifications for deacons on the reverse side.) A nominee may or may not have been previously ordained, but must have been a member of First Baptist Church at least one year. Candidates that have been previously ordained at another Baptist church must have been members of First Baptist Church Port Neches for at least six months. Return the completed form to the Deacon Nominating Committee by placing in the box provided in the Foyer or by the Church Office, or by mailing to the church office to the attention of Deacon Nominating Committee.

ALL INFORMATION SHOULD BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL BETWEEN THE NOMINATOR AND THE DEACON NOMINATING COMMITTEE.

Name of Nominee: _____

Why do you believe this person is qualified to be a deacon of FBCPN?

Provide current FBCPN Involvement:

Provide examples that demonstrate this person has a servant's heart.

Name of Nominator (Please print): _____

Signature of Nominator: _____

Qualifications for Deacons

Christians must have salvation that can only be provided by God's son, Jesus. They should continually strive for spiritual growth (in knowledge of the Bible, faith, ministry, stewardship, love and more through the ministry of the Holy Spirit). They should humbly desire and do the will of our Lord. In addition, men set aside by First Baptist Church of Port Neches as Deacons shall be required to also meet the following scriptural qualifications:

Acts 6:2-3 (NIV)

So, the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them.

I Timothy 3:8-13 (NIV)

Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.

In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

Matthew 5:31-32 (NIV)

It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.' But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.