

# **Description of Duties and Tasks**

## **Deacons**

**First Presbyterian Church**  
**Livermore, California**

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*Revised and Updated January 2022*

## Duties of Officers

### Moderator

The duties of the Moderator, as described in the FPCL (First Presbyterian Church of Livermore) Bylaws include presiding at all meetings of the deacons and submitting a written annual report to session to be included in the annual congregational report.

Specific duties and tasks that have been assigned include:

- Serve as the primary point of contact for the deacons with session, including session committees and teams, and with the pastoral and office staff. The moderator shares information with deacons.
- Maintain a current list of contact information for the deacons, including names, task assignments, phone numbers and email addresses. This list is furnished to each deacon and to the office staff.
- Schedule monthly meetings on the third Tuesday of each month, from August through May.
- Schedule a host and a devotion provider for each meeting, typically several months in advance. The host will provide light refreshments for the meeting.
- Meet with the staff person assigned to work with the deacons at least a week before each meeting to review the agenda and other deacon activities. This meeting may also include the vice moderator.
- Prepare the agenda for each meeting and distribute it in advance of the meeting.
- Chair each meeting, following Roberts Rules of Order as necessary for approving policy and financial matters.
- Each year, canvas each deacon as to what assignment he or she prefers for the following year. The assignments that end up vacant are then forwarded to the nominating committee.
- Act as one of the deacons' points of contact for sharing specific pastoral care needs identified within the congregation, especially with those deacons assigned to specific pastoral tasks (e.g., Martha Ministry, Chariots of Care, Calling and Visiting, prayer chain, flowers).
- Propose changes in policies, procedures, organization, or task assignments as needed or appropriate to carry out the mission of the deacons.
- Make known the work of the deacons to the congregation through the Parishscope newsletter, Moments of Ministry, or other avenues as appropriate.
- Prepare the annual report for submission to the church office on request (typically in December or January).
- When out of town or otherwise unavailable for deacons' emergencies, arrange for coverage by the vice moderator or other officer and notify the church office of the backup arrangements.

## **Vice Moderator**

The duties of the Vice Moderator, as described in the FPCL Bylaws, are to serve in the absence of the moderator, aid the Moderator with meeting organization and other tasks as delegated by the moderator, and usually become Moderator following the expiration of the current moderator's term.

Specific duties and tasks that have been assigned include:

- Serve as a member of the congregational Nominating Committee.
- Meet with the moderator and pastoral staff to plan the meeting agenda as available.
- Serve as chair in the Moderator's absence.
- Arrange presentations for meetings on subjects useful to the deacons. Resources for such programs might include deacon or church members with special skills or contacts (psychotherapists, doctors, social workers) and community professionals and volunteers (e.g., Senior services, Tri-Valley Haven, housing agencies, Senior Support, Axis Health, funeral directors, medical services).
- Organize gifts and thank-you's for retiring deacons at the last meeting of each year (currently February).

## **Secretary**

The duties of the Secretary, as described in the FPCL Bylaws, are to keep accurate minutes of all meetings and to manage correspondence.

Specific duties and tasks that have been assigned include:

- Take the minutes and attendance at each Deacons meeting.
- Distribute the draft minutes of each meeting at least a week before the next meeting. Copies are sent to each deacon, the clerk of the session, and staff liaison. Because the minutes are not confidential, they must respect the privacy of any individuals discussed during a meeting.
- Gather information appropriate for cards from fellow deacons, other congregants, the church office, the prayer chain, and other prayer requests or announcements.
- Write and send notes and cards on behalf of the deacons. Types of cards may include thank-you notes for donations to the deacon's fund, get well, thinking of you, sympathy, and congratulation cards (graduation, marriage, baby) to congregants.
- Purchase needed supplies, and give receipts to the Treasurer for reimbursement.
- Handle correspondence as directed by the Moderator.

## Treasurer

The duties of the Treasurer, as described in the FPCL Bylaws, are to manage the deacon's fund, keep detailed records of deacon's fund expenditures and receipts, and submit a written summary report of income and expenditures for the deacon's fund to session by the date specified by session.

Specific duties and tasks that have been assigned include:

- Maintain a record of the balance, receipts, and expenditures of the deacon's fund, working with the FPCL accounting specialist. The deacon's fund is managed within the church's accounting system. Contributions to the deacon's fund are recorded by FPCL's church recorders. All payments from the fund are made by the FPCL accounting specialist.
- Prepare the annual budget for the deacon's fund, to be approved by the deacons for each calendar year. This budget may be amended during the year as appropriate.
- Prepare and distribute a monthly financial report of the deacon's fund to the deacons, including the monthly balance and all receipts and expenditures from the fund and a comparison of budgeted to actual receipts and expenditures. This report should be sent to all deacons during the week prior to each monthly meeting.
- Prepare a report at the end of the calendar year for inclusion in the annual report to the congregation.
- Collect receipts for deacon's expenditures made by individual deacons and present them to the accounting specialist for reimbursement.
- Maintain a supply of vouchers in the deacons' crisis box in the church office cabinet:
  - approximately \$50 in \$10's for food and personal care items; each coupon hand-inscribed "not for alcohol, tobacco or lottery,"
  - approximately \$25 in \$1 McDonalds' coupons for immediate meals,
  - approximately \$25 in Wheels coupons for local transportation, and
  - 3 gas cards from Safeway (\$20-25 each) **NEED TO UPDATE AMOUNTS!!!!**

## **Duties of Other Deacons**

### **Calling and Visiting**

Call on members of the church community, by telephone, email or personal visit. Suggestions or requests for calls may come from your contacts, from the pastors, the church office, other deacons, other congregants, and personal observation and awareness.

Specific duties and tasks that have been assigned include:

- Call, send cards, and visit people to explicitly express the love, concern, and support of the church community at times of celebration and need.
- Make contact at least monthly with those on your visiting list.
- Periodically, in Deacon's meetings, ask for referrals.
- Maintain a list of those in need of contact and those contacted each month and report progress (keeping confidences) in Deacons' meetings.
- Where appropriate, report needs identified through calling to pastors and other deacons in other care areas (Chariots of Care, Martha Ministries, Durable Medical Equipment, for example.)

### **Chariots of Care**

Act as a transportation coordinator for church members who need rides to church with volunteers who will pick them up and bring them; and matching church members who need transportation to medical appointments with volunteers who will take them.

Specific duties and tasks that have been assigned include:

- Respond to referrals of need for transportation to medical appointments from pastoral staff, session members, or other deacons.
- Maintain a list of volunteer drivers for appointments and solicit volunteers who should be available during weekdays, have a car available, and be willing to spend anywhere from an hour to most of the day providing someone transportation.
- Coordinate and communicate with other deacons involved in pastoral care. In some cases, rides may be provided through friends or fellow members of small groups.

### **Extended (Home) Communion**

Assist pastors and in serving communion to those unable to attend church.

Specific duties and tasks that have been assigned include:

- Coordinate and communicate with other deacons and congregants to identify those who would benefit from extended communion and are unable to attend church.
- Work out times and dates with the minister and those you will be visiting.
- Deacons pick up the elements.
- Follow-up with flower Deacon if appropriate.
- Coordinate with Calling and Visiting deacons if more regular visits are needed.

### **Flower Distribution**

Coordinate and enlist deacon volunteers for the delivery of flowers from the sanctuary after the second service.

Specific duties and tasks that have been assigned include:

- Maintain a schedule of volunteers for Sunday delivery, usually at least 2-3 months in advance. Ensure by email that the church office always has a copy of the current schedule.
  - Each week, the church office will contact the deacon volunteer for the coming Sunday if delivery is required. The office will inform the deacon and let them know if any specific request has been made or suggest a name.
  - Otherwise the deacon volunteer may choose where to deliver them.
- For Christmas and Easter, when there are many plants in the sanctuary, arrange for deacon volunteers to deliver those not claimed by donors.
- Where flower arrangements are too large and heavy for delivery to a single person, these may be delivered to the Veterans hospital or nursing homes or divided into smaller more manageable bouquets for delivery.
- When a baby is born to a family in the church (this information usually comes from the church office), purchase a single rose in a small vase and give to the Head Usher prior to the service. Give the receipt for this purchase to the deacon Treasurer for reimbursement.

## **Giving Tree**

Coordinates gathering Christmas gifts for families identified through by Tri-Valley Haven.

Specific duties and tasks that have been assigned include:

- Call Tri-Valley Haven early September for giving schedule.
- Arrange to have publicity in the weekly bulletins beginning the last week in October and to have articles in the November and December Parishscopes. Meeting deadlines for the bulletin and Parishscope is important.
- Create the tree ornaments, with a gift description placed on each ornament.
- Arrange with the office for the space for the Giving Tree on the Sundays needed, normally the 5th and 4th Sundays before Christmas.
- Arrange for the tree to be placed before the first Giving Tree Sunday.
  - For each of the two Sundays, place the ornaments and gift descriptions on the tree and remove after the services.
  - Gifts are received on the second Sunday and the Sunday following (3th and 4rd Sundays before Christmas).
- Worship Committee will add new decorations and trees will become the Jesse Tree.
- Arrange to transport the gifts received to Tri-Valley Haven, generally on the Mondays following receipt of gifts.

## **Martha Ministry**

Coordinate the work of Martha Ministers, a group of church members who prepare and take meals to people in crisis. Create and maintain a list of people to call as needs arise.

Specific duties and tasks that have been assigned include:

- Maintain a list of Martha Ministers; enlist new ones as needed.
- Identify needs through contact with the church office, the deacon's moderator, other deacons involved in care, and others in the church.
- Identify whether needs are being met or could be met by family or friends within the church. Encourage this where appropriate.
- When a need is identified, schedule a series of meals for the person or family in need and enlist Martha Ministers to provide individual meals. Meals might be taken for several days for a week or two; once a week for a month or more, or in whatever way is most suited to the family in need.

## **Memorial Receptions**

Plan and coordinate memorial receptions at the church.

Specific duties and tasks that have been assigned include:

- Communicate with families regarding reception arrangements.
- Recruit volunteers to work at receptions, usually other deacon volunteers.
- Purchase or receive donations of refreshments (cookies and fruits) for receptions. Submitted receipts to the treasurer for reimbursement from the deacon's fund.
- Set up tables with tablecloths, provide centerpieces, make coffee and other beverages.
- Serve cookies, fruit, and drinks at the reception. Volunteers may also serve food provided by the family.

## **Prayer Chain**

Receive prayer requests for the FPCL Prayer Chain and regularly prepare a prayer request email that is sent to prayer chain participants. Requests come from the church office, church members, and the wider community. You may also get prayer request ideas from the pastoral prayer in the Sunday service, and prayers of joy and thanksgiving are encouraged as well as prayers for identified concerns and needs. The email address for prayer requests is provided on the website:

[prayerchain@fpcl.us](mailto:prayerchain@fpcl.us)

Specific duties and tasks that have been assigned include:

- Maintain a list of prayer chain participants to receive prayer request emails. These include staff, session members, members of the congregation that request to be on the prayer chain and members of the board of deacons.
- Prayer request emails also include congregation members in long term care situations.
- Confidentiality and discretion are controlled by the church office and the prayer chain deacon



## **Medical Equipment**

To better meet the needs of our congregation emergency medical equipment is available for temporary loan.

Specific duties and tasks that have been assigned include:

- Chart the locations of the medical devices and supplies on the church campus.
- Maintain a list of medical items that are available for loan.
- Receive requests and referrals for the loan of equipment. Loan equipment and track equipment loaned and returned.

**Grief Support** (This position is filled selectively when someone with the training and gifts required responds to the call to serve in this capacity.)

Call on and maintain contact with those who have lost loved ones or are otherwise in need of support in a time of grief. As appropriate, establish or lead groups for those in need of grief support.

Specific duties and tasks that have been assigned include:

- Respond to referrals received from the church office, from the memorial committee and the congregation at large.
- Connect those in need of support.
- Maintain a list of those connected.
- Meet once a month as a group.