

# DEACON RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church

March 2009

All Christians are called to care for one another, sharing joys and sorrows, supporting one another in times of stress or loss, and offering hope to those in need. Their caring ministry, the deacons represent the entire church. They are called in particular to respond with prayer, visits, and other acts that express love and support for those who are ill or facing transitions that bring joy or sorrow in human life.

Deacons, like session members, are ordained for life as officers of the church. Yet the role of deacon is completely different from that of a session member. The deacons are not a policy-making body, except in terms of their own activities. Their format is not rigid; rather, it changes over time to meet the needs of the congregation.

The Presbyterian *Book of Order* states: “It is the duty of Deacons, first of all, to minister to those in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress. They shall assume such other duties as may be delegated to them from time to time by the session.” At CCPC, we carry out these duties primarily in the following ways.

**1. *Providing rides to church for certain homebound members and Ingleside residents.***

A small number of church members (usually between two and four) will need rides to and from their homes to attend church. Each deacon Rides and Flowers Team provides vehicles and drivers, as needed, to transport these people. Deacons also meet the bus coming from Ingleside bringing residents to worship.

**2. *Visiting church members and delivering flowers, casseroles and prayer shawls to those who are in need or celebrating special events.***

After the 11:00 worship service, (10:00, if only one service that day), the sanctuary flowers are divided into smaller arrangements by the flower committee. Deacons visit with and deliver these arrangements to those church members identified by the church staff that week. Usually there are two to four flower deliveries to be made. Each deacon team provides people to deliver the flowers, as needed. There will be no flower deliveries on those weeks when the arrangements are needed in the sanctuary for church functions later in the afternoon that same day. Deacons also visit with members and regularly deliver casseroles and prayer shawls to homebound, recovering, grieving, or members celebrating events or milestones in their life.

**3. *Serve as a Church Neighbor to the persons with whom you are matched.***

Church Neighbors are Deacons and other church members who seek to provide a consistent personal contact for the homebound and other elderly members of CCPC so they continue to feel a part of the congregation and to help the congregation stay connected and in touch with these members. The relationship is a two-way connection.

Specific responsibilities for care and connection include:

- ◆ Visiting regularly, and specifically at times of illness, bereavement, holidays, etc. (These visits offer a consistent presence and connection for the member to CCPC, and are in addition to those provided by other Deacons as occasional Rides and Flowers visits.)
- ◆ Sending cards and notes for birthdays, anniversaries, Christmas, Easter, and holidays.
- ◆ Deliver news of the church to the member (church directories, recordings of worship services and sermons, etc.) and remembering the member in the life of the congregation and to other church members.
- ◆ If appropriate, offering rides to church for church programs and events outside of Sunday morning (including Chevy Chase Concerts and the 50-plus Member Recognition Lunch.)
- ◆ When able and appropriate, seeing that the member receives poinsettias, lilies, and is provided homebound communion.

#### ***4. Participating in the other ministries of the Deacons.***

All Deacons are asked to participate in the other Deacon ministries. Others in the congregation not currently serving on the Deacon Board are also encouraged to participate where able in these various ministries of care and compassion.

#### **Home Communion**

The serving of Home Communion to the homebound, ill and other members by Elders and Deacons is scheduled about twice a year. All Deacons are encouraged to participate at least once in this meaningful experience. Training is required and provided.

#### **Christmas Poinsettia and Easter Lily Visits**

It is a long-standing CCPC tradition that the Christmas Poinsettias and the Easter Lilies are delivered to the congregation's Homebound Members. **All deacons**, regardless of team assignment, are expected to assist in this effort as they are able. Each deacon will usually have two or three plants to deliver. While deacons are free to encourage and enlist others in the congregation to assist with these deliveries, ultimate responsibility for their delivery rests with the Board of Deacons and its individual members.

The Church Office will prepare address cards or a list for each member to receive the plant. These cards or the list will be distributed prior to the holiday along with instructions as to when the plants may be picked up. Generally, poinsettias will be at the church and available for delivery a few days prior to Christmas while the lilies will be available after the 11:00 service on Easter Sunday.

#### **Youth Caroling To Homebound**

The Deacons organize and often accompany the Hearthstone and Firesides youth groups to sing Christmas Carols to homebound members in December.

#### **Blood Drives**

The Deacons organize, coordinate, and promote occasional blood drives at CCPC

**Care Groups**

The Care Groups are organized for those who want to explore and grow their personal caring ministry. Care Group participants meet together regularly to discuss the experience of their visits and interactions with church members in a confidential setting, and to encourage one another in learning and growing in their skills together.

**Casserole Ministry**

Through the Casserole Ministry, home-baked casseroles are provided for Deacons to deliver in times of crisis, illness, members new to the church, the birth of a baby and others times.

**Monthly Birthday Recognition**

The Board of Deacons organize the bringing cakes and to prepare the list of names for the monthly birthday recognition on the second Sunday of each month following the worship service(s).

**50-Year Member Lunch**

The Deacons plan and organize the annual lunch to honor our 50-Year Members. This involves preparing the lunch, planning the program, and arranging for those who need rides to and from the church.

**Confirmation Dinner**

The Deacons plan and organize annual lunch or dinner when the Confirmation youth, along with their mentors and families, meet with the Session. This involves preparing and serving the food.

# DEACON LEADERSHIP

The Board of Deacons is organized with a small number of key leaders who work with the Associate Pastor to plan, organize, and lead the care giving ministries of the Deacons and for the congregation.

## **Moderator**

- *To provide visionary leadership to the Deacons and to the congregation in their ministry of congregational care with each other.*
- *To see to the organization and coordination of the various ministries of the Board of Deacons.*
- *Occasionally to represent the Board of Deacons to the Session and congregation.*
- *To work with the Session Moderator and pastors to assist in planning the annual combined Session and Deacons meeting.*
- *To convene the Deacon Leadership Team (Moderator and 3 Vice Moderators)*

## **Vice Moderator / Homebound Ministries**

- *Along with the Moderator, to provide visionary leadership to the Deacons and to the congregation in their ministry of congregational care with each other.*
- *To encourage and support the work of the Deacons in caring for the homebound of our congregation through the following particular ministries:*

### **Home Communion Coordinator**

- *To work with the Associate Pastor to plan, organize, and carry out the periodic serving of communion to homebound and other members as scheduled (about twice a year).*

### **Youth Caroling To Homebound Coordinator**

- *To organize the visits of the youth group to sing Christmas Carols to homebound members in December.*

### **Church Neighbor Ministry Coordinator**

- *To promote the Church Neighbor Ministry within the congregation, and to encourage and support the Church Neighbors in their individual acts of care and ministry.*

## **Vice Moderator / Care And Crisis Ministries**

- *Along with the Moderator, to provide visionary leadership to the Deacons and to the congregation in their ministry of congregational care with each other.*
- *To encourage and support the work of the Deacons in caring for members of our congregation in times of grief, illness or other crisis, through the following ministries:*

### **Blood Drive Coordinator**

- *To organize, coordinate, and promote occasional blood drives at CCPC*

### **Care Groups Coordinator**

- *To organize and coordinate the Care Teams and their work in relationship to the Board of Deacons.*

### **Casserole Ministry Coordinator**

- *To organize the promotion of the ministry sign-up, the collection of casseroles, thanking cooks, supplying the sign-up display, and to purchase pans and lids.*

### **Vice Moderator / Celebrations Team**

- *Along with the Moderator, to provide visionary leadership to the Deacons and to the congregation in their ministry of congregational care with each other.*
- *To encourage and support the work of the Deacons in celebrating events and milestones for the members of the congregation through the following ministries.*

### **Monthly Birthday Recognition Coordinator**

- *To organize the schedule of Deacons bringing cakes, and to prepare the list of names for the monthly birthday recognition.*

### **50-Year Member Lunch Coordinator**

- *To plan and organize the Deacons in presenting the annual lunch to honor our 50-Year Members.*

### **Confirmation Dinner Coordinator**

- *To plan and organize the Deacons in presenting the annual lunch or dinner when the Confirmation youth, along with their mentors and families, meet with the Session.*

### **Congregational Nominating Committee Representatives**

- *These TWO INDIVIDUALS serve with the Session representatives and those elected by the congregation at large to nominate Elders, Deacons, Auditors, and Congregational Nominating Committee representatives for the coming terms.*

# **RIDES AND FLOWERS INSTRUCTIONS**

**March 2009**

Providing rides and delivering flowers, casseroles and prayer shawls is one way that deacons reach out to share joys and sorrows with those in our community of faith and their families and friends. Giving rides provides a lifeline to the church to people whose mobility is severely limited and offers an opportunity for rich and ongoing support by a group of caring people. Visits by Deacons bringing flowers, casseroles, or prayer shawls offers a way to recognize, celebrate, and support one another as we face hardships or key transitions or to celebrate a life event. A visit by a deacon who stays for a while to talk with the member may bring cheer or solace long after the flowers have faded and the casserole is eaten

Rides and Flowers procedures are discussed together because the 'assigned' deacon team for the week handles these functions as a package.

## **PROCEDURES**

The three deacon Rides and Flowers Teams rotate responsibilities so that each team is responsible for rides and flowers every third Sunday. A different member of the team is in charge of making assignments each time a team is responsible for a Sunday. Every deacon gets to be the "Deacon-in-Charge" once or twice during the year. The Moderator of the Board of Deacons will develop a rotational schedule listing the deacon teams 'on duty' and the 'Deacon-in-Charge' each week.

## **GETTING SUBSTITUTES**

It is expected that each deacon will carry out his or her rides and flowers responsibilities or obtain a substitute to do so. It is also recognized that deacons live full and complicated lives and may thus be unavailable on a particular Sunday. The success of the Rides and Flowers program depends totally upon having full deacon team equivalents available each week.

1. If your team is up for rides and flower delivery for a particular week but you will be unable to assist that Sunday (out of town, ill, other commitments, etc.) then it is your responsibility to your team mates to trade with a deacon from another team.
2. Once you have made an agreement with a deacon from another team to trade for a particular Sunday, then you should notify Louise Trent in the church office (202-363-2202, or [louise@chevyCHASEPC.org](mailto:louise@chevyCHASEPC.org)). Please call or email her with your name, the name of the deacon who will be substituting for you and the date they will be substituting for you, and the date you will be serving for them (if this is a trade). Both persons who have agreed to trade will notify Louise, as a double-check that she gets the information. (PLEASE do not copy Louise on emails where you are looking for a trade; notify Louise only when you have someone who has actually agreed to the trade.)

3. Louise will keep track of substitutions for each week, and will include those names on the weekly Rides and Flowers sheet so that the information is readily available to the Deacon-In-Charge.
4. **If you are the Deacon-in-Charge** for a given week, and cannot fulfill your responsibilities, you must find TWO substitutes. You should find a substitute from another team to replace you on your team (as in above), AND you should find a substitute to be Deacon-in-Charge. (The substitute Deacon-in-Charge may be another person from your own team, or it may be the substitute deacon from the other team that you are trading with.)
5. If you have a last-minute emergency and are unable to make substitution arrangements, please notify the Deacon-in-Charge for the week and Steve Robertson and Louise Trent so that they can make suitable arrangements as necessary.

### **WEEKLY RIDES AND FLOWERS LIST**

The church office will assemble the list of those receiving rides, flowers, prayer shawls and casseroles for the week and prepare the Rides & Flowers List. Substitutions of Deacons known by the church office will be noted on the Rides & Flowers List, such as “Deacon Dee substituting for Deacon Dan.” Other special circumstances relating to the given Sunday and the persons to receive rides and visits with flowers, casseroles, or prayer shawls will be noted on this sheet.

The weekly email will be sent to all members of the Team responsible for the week. The email will also be copied to the pastor and associate pastors and to Jamie White. A printed copy of the printed Rides/Flowers List will be distributed as follows:

- Flower Room
- Deacon-in-Charge’s mailbox

Many of the other resources which the Deacon-in-Charge may need will be found on the church web site. These will include the Team Contact List (for all 3 Teams), a copy of these Instructions, the Team Preference List, and other materials. (See separate instructions for logging on to the church web site.)

## DEACON-IN-CHARGE CHECKLIST

### *Friday*

- If you have not already received your assignments from the church office, call Louise Trent (202/363-2202, voice mail #11) by 9:00 a.m. Friday to get the names and addresses of people needing rides and those to receive flowers (the list can be faxed or emailed to you). Begin calling team members and any substitutes to assign rides and flower delivery responsibilities.

If you will not be available on Friday, please make arrangements in advance with the church secretary or a team member to obtain the rides and flowers information. You may make these assignments earlier in the week if the information is available.

- Assign yourself or one or more Team Members the responsibility to assist, if needed, to carry flowers from the sanctuary to the Flower Room after the service. (This could be done by one of the deacons delivering flowers that day.)
- Assign yourself or one Team Member to meet the Ingleside Bus (about 10:30 AM for an 11 AM service, or 9:45 AM for a 10 AM service.)
- Arrange rides for the people who will need them. The list is reasonably stable over time. **Be sure the team members call their riders by Saturday morning** as members like to know in advance who will be picking them up.
- Check a map for locations of the flower, casserole, and prayer shawl recipients and when possible, assign these visits to the deacons living nearest them (unless there are reasons, other than location, to assign flowers to a particular deacon).

### *Saturday*

- Complete all assignments to Team Members and any substitutes. Be sure to contact the entire team, even if all members are not needed, as people will be expecting assignments and may delay making plans until they hear from you.
- Send an email to all the Team Members and to Steve Robertson ([steve@chevyCHASEPC.org](mailto:steve@chevyCHASEPC.org)) listing out which Team Member has which assignment.

### *Sunday*

- Make sure that if desired by the flower arranger, the flowers are carried to the Flower Room immediately after the service. (This can be delegated to a team member delivering flowers that day.)
- Make sure that someone meets the Ingleside Bus as it arrives from Ingleside.

### *Monday*

- Assemble the responses from the team members who made visits with prayer shawls, flowers, or casseroles and email Associate Pastor Steve Robertson with those responses ([steve@chevyCHASEPC.org](mailto:steve@chevyCHASEPC.org)).

## TEAM MEMBER CHECKLIST

### *Friday or Saturday*

- If you are giving a ride, call the rider to introduce yourself and make specific arrangements for picking up him or her. Leave your name and phone number in order that you may be reached if the rider later decides not attend the service. If the rider will not be attending church that Sunday, call the deacon-in-charge for another assignment.
- If you will be out on Saturday or have not heard from your deacon-in-charge, call him or her to find out how you can help.
- If you find you cannot make a visit with flowers for that weekend (recipient is away, etc.) please contact the flower arranger (see contact information on the Rides and Flowers sheet) or leave a note at the Flower Room door on Sunday morning so that an arrangement is not made.

### *Sunday*

- There are several spaces in the parking lot for deacons to use when bringing people to the church – several with movable signs labeled “Reserved,” or “Reserved for Deacons or Those with Special Needs”. Please feel free to use those spaces when providing rides to members.
- If you are delivering flowers, pick up your arrangement from the Flower Room after the last service allowing 15-20 minutes for the arrangements to be made.
- Write your name on the card attached to the bouquet so recipients can check your name later if they would like. Call ahead to confirm your visit; some would enjoy the visit but rather not have flowers.
- If you try but cannot make your delivery, or if you learn anything the Associate Pastor should know, please call (202) 363-2202, voice mail #21, and leave a message for Steve Robertson, or send an email outlining the details. ([steve@chevyCHASEPC.org](mailto:steve@chevyCHASEPC.org)) Occasionally you will have to schedule the visit later in day or the week to accommodate schedules. If possible, please keep the flowers fresh and the casserole frozen.

If the Flower Room is closed, your flowers will be on the floor outside. If you will be very late for pickup, you may wish to have another Team Member pick up your flowers for you so they may be put in water and saved for you. If you will not be delivering the assigned flowers for any reason, please let the arranger know by leaving a note at the Flower Room on Sunday morning, so they do not make up a bouquet.

If you are delivering a casserole, please pick it up from the freezer in the kitchen next to Geneva Hall. You may wish to check with the recipient to determine if there are any food allergies that you should watch the ingredient list for. Casseroles are frozen, so you may want to bring a bag to church to carry and transport the casserole in.

If you are delivering a prayer shawl, please pick it up from the kitchen next to Geneva Hall. The letter inside the bag has a prayer on the back side which should be used when delivering the prayer shawl.

- After you make a visit with flowers, a casserole, or a prayer shawl, please send an email message to the Deacon-in-Charge of the results and observations concerning your visit. Individual emails will be assembled on Monday by the Deacon-in-Charge and forwarded to Associate Pastor Steve Robertson.