

Grace Community Church

Deacon Ministry

Deacon Ministry Overview

The deacon ministry of Grace Community Church exists to free the elders of the church to fulfill their God-given calling of shepherding and teaching the church. The deacon ministry fulfills this role by serving as servants in overseeing various practical ministry needs of the church at both the organizational and individual levels.

Responsibilities of Deacons

A deacon in the New Testament, and a deacon at Grace Community Church is first and foremost a servant. Their primary role is to free the elders of the church to be able to focus on prayer and the ministry of the Word by serving the practical needs of the church both corporately and individually. This may involve overseeing various practical ministry and/or other functions of the church as well as helping to meet the practical and material needs of those in the church body.

Scope of Responsibility

The scope of the deacon ministry involves two primary areas: 1] overseeing certain practical ministry areas of the church (such as the Sunday Morning Service Ministries, etc.) as deemed necessary by the Elder Board, and 2] providing practical care by helping to provide and co-ordinate care for physical, material and financial needs of those in the GCC family. Deacons serving in this second way will serve as part of a Deacon Service Committee consisting of not less than three deacons who will work together to co-ordinate and oversee care for the practical needs of the church family. The Deacon Service Committee will be chaired by a lead deacon who will be responsible for maintaining all records and administrative requirements of the committees and providing such reporting to the Elder Board as the Elder Board deems necessary.

Deacon Service Committee Responsibilities

The primary role of the Deacon Service Committee is to ensure that the practical needs of those who are part of our church body are met. It requires a heart of compassion, care, mercy, and practical ministry, but it also requires wisdom, discernment, propriety, and spiritual sensitivity.

The scope of the Deacon Service Committee includes all people who call Grace Community Church their church home; members and nonmembers, those in Community Groups and not in Community Groups. In some cases the deacons will provide the primary care while in other cases they will administrate by recruiting others from GCC to exercise their spiritual gifts to serve others. At times they will provide relief in desperate situations while at other times they will meet a longer-term need. In every situation the deacons will work to ensure longer-term personal, financial, and domestic health. The kind of ministry the Deacon Service Committee will do includes things like:

- Practical maintenance of property for those who are physically or financially unable to do so; the elderly, sick, widows, and single moms.

- Administrate benevolence for those who have financial needs; elderly, sick, unemployed and underemployed.
- Coordinate the provision of meals for those who need assistance during a season of change or difficulty(e.g. new baby or long-term illness).
- Providing other practical needs for those who are experiencing the effects of long-term illness; rides, childcare, grocery shopping, housecleaning, lawn-care, etc.

Specific Duties

1. Participate in a monthly meeting to oversee the administration of the practical care services to the church.
2. Explore all needs brought to the attention of the Committee by whatever means.
3. Determine the cause, scope, and response to the need based on information provided to, and sought by, the Committee.
4. If the Committee determines it wise to meet the need, then administrate the meeting of that need.
5. In co-ordination with the Elders, overseeing, managing and expending a Benevolence Fund on behalf of GCC.
6. Where appropriate, ensuring the beneficiary participates in resolving the need.
7. Provide practical and financial counsel to help the beneficiaries take steps to avoid further need in the future.
8. Maintain records for each family, documenting the history of care provided, the date the case was reported and opened, the date it was closed, and how it was resolved.
9. Provide monthly reporting to the Elder Board.

Other Deacon Responsibilities

Deacons who do not serve on the Deacon Service Committee serve to free the pastors to focus on prayer and the ministry of the Word by overseeing specific practical ministry areas of the church.

These Deacons or Deaconesses will serve under the oversight of a specific pastor who will direct their activities based on the specific ministry area involved. Deacons who serve in this way will not serve on the Deacon Service Committee nor attend the monthly meeting of that committee.

All Deacons and Deaconesses who are part of the GCC Deacon Ministry will meet together two times a year to discuss the results of the Deacon Ministry efforts and to discuss ways to improve and develop the Deacon Ministry to serve the pastors and the church more effectively. This meeting will be scheduled and led by the pastor overseeing the Deacon Ministry at GCC.

Governing Authority

The Office of Deacon is not a separate governing or ruling body of leaders but they are under the authority of, and report to, the Elder Board. The Office of Deacon is an administrative office with the authority to oversee specific ministry functions and to care for the practical needs of those who attend Grace Community Church within the limits of their defined responsibilities and within the limits of their financial authority.

Qualifications for Deacons

Biblical Qualifications

A person must first meet the biblical qualifications for deacons as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:8 – 13 in order to qualify for deacon nomination. A person meets the biblical qualifications for deacons when their life and character are substantially marked by growing maturity in the categories outlined in Scripture. After appointed as a deacon, the person continues to qualify as a deacon as long as their life and character continue to be substantially marked by growing maturity in the biblical qualifications for deacons.

*Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. **1 Timothy 3:8 – 13***

Women Deacons

Based upon our understanding of the New Testament teaching regarding deacons, along with how GCC has defined the role of deacon, including its focus on service and not on authority, and along with practical considerations for serving our entire church body, women may serve as deaconesses at GCC.

Other Qualifications

In order for a person to qualify as a deacon at Grace Community Church, they must meet these additional qualifications:

1. They must be a church member in good standing for at least two full years.
2. They must actively support and promote GCC's purpose and values in the use of their time, efforts, and financial resources.
3. If married, their marriage must reflect a functional understanding and practice of biblical manhood and womanhood as outlined in GCC's Statement of Faith.
4. They must demonstrate active participation in Community Group life.
5. They must demonstrate a servant-heartedness and desire to meet the needs of others through practical acts of service.
6. They must demonstrate a spiritual-mindedness that results in compassion, care, and sensitivity to those under care.

Selection and Tenure

Deacon candidates will be nominated and selected in accordance with the procedures included in the GCC constitution. Deacons are affirmed by the church membership for a three-year term. Deacons may serve additional terms as long as they remain qualified as deacons, are willing to do so, and are reaffirmed by the Elder Board. Deacons may also request a one year sabbatical from serving in the Deacon Ministry during any three year term subject to the approval of the Elder Board. The need for a sabbatical will also be evaluated by the Elder board when a deacon is affirmed for a third consecutive term.

Grace Community Church

Deacon Service Committee Guidelines

1. The Deacon Service Committee will be responsible for oversight of an annual benevolence budget that will be allocated each ministry year as part of the overall church budgeting process.
2. Benevolence requests may be submitted by church members/regular attendees who are in need, or they may be brought to the committee's attention by pastors, leaders or other church members who may be aware of situations involving need. Benevolence help may be in the form of financial assistance or practical service provided or arranged by the committee.
3. Where a benevolence request is submitted to the committee a deacon will be assigned by the Lead Deacon to evaluate the request and make a recommendation to the committee on the type and/or amount of assistance to be provided. The deacon assigned to the situation will complete a Benevolence Request Form (Attachment A) as a part of completing the initial evaluation.
4. If the need for assistance is immediate, the deacon assigned to evaluate the benevolence request will forward the completed Benevolence Request Form electronically to the other deacons on the committee and seek approval to authorize the assistance from the Deacon Service Committee. Approval of a benevolence request requires a majority vote of committee members.
5. The Lead Deacon will determine whether the request is approved, and if so, authorize the submission of a Check Request Form (Attachment B) if the request involves financial assistance up to an amount of \$200. Any request in excess of \$200 will require the approval of the pastor who oversees the Deacon Ministry.
6. A completed Check Request form will be submitted to the church office in order for a check to be issued. Checks should be made payable directly to the creditor when possible (e.g. BGE, etc.) rather than to the individual to ensure that funds are used for the purposes requested.
7. When the check has been issued it will be distributed according to instructions provided by the Deacon Service Committee indicated on the Check Request form.
8. Repeat requests for financial assistance should be reviewed with the appropriate pastor who has pastoral responsibility for the person in need to ensure that a long term plan of care and help is being provided to the degree possible.
9. Benevolence requests that do not require immediate response may be reviewed and appropriate assistance determined at the monthly Deacon Service Committee meetings when possible.
10. The Deacon Service Committee will be responsible for overseeing and administering the Benevolence budget allocated to the committee to ensure that funds are distributed in such a way as to meet needs throughout the ministry year.

11. The Lead Deacon will be responsible for maintaining records of all benevolence requests and actions taken and submit a quarterly summary (Attachment C) of the committee's activities, including funds distributed, to the pastors by the end of month following the quarter end. The schedule for reports will be as follows:

Quarter End Date

November 30

February 28

May 31

August 31

Report Due Date

December 31

March 31

June 30

September 30

12. The Deacon Service Committee will consist of a minimum of three deacons and will be comprised of an odd number of members whenever possible.

Lead Deacon

Job Description

The role of Lead Deacon provides oversight and direction to the Deacon Service Committee and the other deacons serving in practical ministry areas of the church under the supervision of a designated pastor.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Schedule and lead the monthly Deacon Service Committee meetings.
2. Assign benevolence requests to specific deacons for evaluation and recommendations for assistance.
3. Coordinate the approval of benevolence requests by the committee, initiate actions to provide assistance, and provide necessary follow-up as required.
4. Oversee and coordinate the distribution of financial assistance and/or practical assistance to meet the needs of the church family.
5. Maintain records and documentation of benevolence requests and assistance provided as required.
6. Provide a quarterly report to the elders summarizing the activity of the Deacon Service Committee.

Deacon/Deaconess

Job Description

The role of Deacon/Deaconess is a servant role focused on providing support to the elders in caring for the practical and material ministry and personal needs of the church body. Deacons serve in roles that help free elders to focus on prayer and the ministry of the word.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. May be assigned ministry oversight of practical ministry areas in the life of the church with specific responsibilities determined by the pastor of the ministry assignment.
2. May serve on the Deacon Service Committee which provides practical and material assistance to those in need in the church family.
 - a. Seeks to be alert to and identify material and practical need situations among the church family.
 - b. Evaluates benevolence requests and makes recommendations on assistance to be provided
 - c. Assists in the distribution of financial assistance as approved by the Deacon Service Committee
 - d. Coordinates with local community resources to meet the material and practical needs of those in the church body where appropriate
 - e. Coordinates and recruits volunteers for various materials projects to meet specific needs
 - f. Keeps records and completes required documentation on benevolence requests and assistance provided as required
 - g. Provides appropriate follow-up to ensure that assistance goals have been met and needs are adequately addressed to the degree possible.
 - h. Other appropriate duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Deacon Service Committee or the Lead Deacon.

BENEVOLENCE REQUEST FORM

[Attachment A]

Office Use Only

Date Diaconate Notified: _____

Deacon Assigned: _____

Intake Received: _____

Actual Interview: _____

Identifying Information

Name: _____
Address: _____

Work Phone: _____
Home Phone: _____
Email: _____

Age:
Gender:
 Male
 Female

Married?
 Spouse Name: _____
 Dependent Names/Ages _____

 Family Members Living with you _____

How did diaconate hear of the situation?

Church Member? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No How long? _____	If No, Regular Attender? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No How long? _____	If Not a Regular Attender, how connected to GCC?
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Previously assisted by Diaconate? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No If yes, when & extent of help: _____	Has the individual previously received financial assistance? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No If yes, when & extent of help: _____
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Employment/Income (To be completed if requesting financial assistance.)

Currently Employed? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	Self Employed? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	If yes, what is your current job? _____ Current annual salary? _____
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What is your average monthly balance in your checking and savings accounts?
 Checking: _____ Savings: _____

Current Situation/Request
 What is the person's description of his/her situation? (and other important details)

How long has this problem been going on? What steps has this person taken to remedy the situation?

What is the person's specific request of the Diaconate?

Recommendation: Assistance not required Provide assistance
 If recommending assistance be provided, describe recommended assistance and any follow-up that is appropriate:

 Signature of the Deacon

 Date

GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH CHECK REQUEST & INVOICE CODING FORM

[Attachment B]

Vendor (Payee) Name (written on check) (A): _____

Mailing Address (only provide if new vendor): _____

Budget Approval & Date by Appropriate Staff Member (C): _____

(if necessary)

	Account # (4 digit) (D)	Account Name (D)	Invoice Date (E)	Due Date (F)	Invoice Description/Purpose (G)	\$ Amount	Totals By Account #
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							

Total Amount of Check Request: \$ _____

Notes:

- (A) Prepare a separate check request for different vendors.
- (B) Fill in if known.
- (C) Please approve or have approved by appropriate individual.
- (D) From Chart of Accounts
- (E) Pull from invoice, if available
- (F) Expected date that you need check to be mailed; if omitted it will be put in normal accounting cycle.
- (G) Attach receipts/invoice(s) to this check request and identify purpose.

Office Use Only

Entered in A/P: _____

Check Date (paid): _____

Check #: _____

Treasurer Approval: _____

Deacon Service Committee Quarterly Summary Report

[Attachment C]

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Type of Assistance</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Prev Assist</u> <u>Y/N</u>	<u>If so, Type &</u> <u>Amount</u>	<u>Comments</u>
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							

Budget at beginning of the quarter:
 Funds distributed this quarter:
 Budget remaining this ministry year:

Submitted
 by: _____
 Date: _____