

### What is a Deacon?

The word “deacon” comes from the Greek word *διακονος*, which means “servant,” “minister,” or “assistant.” As stated in our church constitution, we believe a deacon is one who serves the church by assisting the pastors. It is understood that his life and ministry are marked by humble service and godly character (1 Timothy 3:8-13).

Acts 6 describes what many believe to be the first deacon ministry in the church. These men served the widows and the poor so that the apostles (functioning as pastors) could give attention to “prayer and the ministry of the word.” Even though the word for deacon is not found in this text, it can certainly be used as a pattern for or precursor to how deacons should function in the church today.

This responsibility should not be taken lightly. Paul portrays deacons in an affirmative and respectable sense, not in a way that some might simply interpret as doing menial tasks in the ministry of the church. Our deacons have been set apart to assist the pastors in the work of the ministry.

### Who Qualifies as a Deacon?

A man of godly character ...

- Is this man worthy of your respect? Is he blameless?
- Is he sincere in his words and actions? Does “not double-tongued” characterize him?
- Is he a man of integrity?
- Does he overindulge in alcohol?
- Does he pursue personal gain through dishonest means?
- Is he a man of conviction who knows what he believes and lives it? Is his behavior consistent with what he believes?
- Has his character been tested and proven genuine?
- Is he faithful to his wife?
- Will his wife be an asset to his service as a deacon?
- Does he lead his family well?
- Does he model a Spirit-filled life?
- Is he wise?

- Is he full of faith and vision and willing to take risks to see what God will do?
- Is he actively serving in the church and does he look for opportunities to serve?
- Is the statement, “he should be a deacon before he is named a deacon” true of him?
- Is he a team player?
- Does he exemplify our church values: the gospel, community, mission, stewardship, worship, service, growth?
- Is he known as a follower of Jesus?
- Is he committed to the mission of Heritage Baptist Church ... making more people more like Jesus?

Additionally, he must be:

- 21 years old
- A member of Heritage for at least one year
- Willing to endorse and support the church constitution
- Subject to a background check and interview prior to nomination

## **What are the Responsibilities of a Deacon?**

He serves the church by assisting the pastors in promoting the spiritual and material welfare of the church.

- He assists the pastors by making hospital visits, following up on absentees, ministering to the elderly, shut-ins, and widows, assisting families in distress, and distributing aid to the needy.
- He assists the pastors with administrative duties when necessary.
- He models service and leads others to serve.
- He is actively involved in caring for people.
- He is involved in the regular deacons’ meetings.
- He plays an active role in one of the standing committees – membership, missions, buildings and grounds, finance, personnel – and other committees/teams as necessary.
- He should be a deacon before he is named a deacon.
- He champions the mission of the church by his involvement, influence, and prayer.