



DEACONS AT CENTERVILLE: BEING JESUS TO OTHERS

What is the purpose of Deacons?

We exist to sacrificially serve those in need by loving and caring for God's people, the Church, as the hands and feet of Jesus.

Where do we see Deacons in Scripture?

The word Deacon comes from the Greek word “**διάκονος**” (pronounced dee-ak-on-os) meaning “servant.” The first Deacons were commissioned in Acts 6 to meet a specific problem: to ensure the vulnerable members of their community were not neglected in the distribution of food.

Therefore, Deacon ministry at its core is a ministry of compassion to serve and care for those in need. In this, we fully embrace the way of Jesus, who “*did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*”¹

What does the ministry of a Deacon look like?

Deacon ministry is a ministry of compassion. Simply put, a commitment to being a Deacon is a commitment to living more like Jesus each and every day. **Deacons embrace the life Jesus modeled as a servant leader, prioritizing the needs of others above their own.**² Our Deacons care for and build relationships with those in our church family who are going through seasons of grief or hardship. We represent the love of Jesus to our suffering brothers and sisters in Christ, so they know they're not alone in their struggle. And we serve knowing that ultimately we are serving Jesus Himself, because “*whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.*”³

Am I “Deacon material?”

You're Deacon material if you love God, desire to serve, enjoy helping others, and want a sense of purpose in your life. You don't need to be perfect to be a Deacon. You just need to be a willing servant, open to how God may use you. And as God uses you to bless others, God will work in you in ways you never saw coming. We encourage you to spend time in prayer, asking God if He is calling you to serve as a Deacon.

¹ Mark 10:45

² Philippians 2:3

³ Matthew 25:40

1. Deacon as Shepherd

A Deacon's role is to compassionately care for the needs of those placed under their care according to the servant leader model given to us by Jesus. Deacons will typically have anywhere from 3-6 individuals on their regular care list. Deacons are asked to regularly engage with those under their care. These relational rhythms include but are not limited to:

- a. Contacting them monthly to build relationships
- b. Building relationships with them at church, if possible
- c. Regularly praying for and with them
- d. Visiting or reaching out to them in times of distress, such as hospitalization
- e. Responding to their needs as they arise
- f. Serve Communion to them on visits if possible/requested
- g. Provide monthly updates to Deacon Executive Team

All of these things empower **you** as a Deacon to be the hands and feet of Jesus as we share the unconditional servant love of Jesus with our brothers and sisters in need. This will be an incredibly meaningful and powerful experience for you as a Deacon as you grow to deeply love and care for those under your care.

2. Deacon as Leader

Deacons are also expected to actively participate as part of the Board of Deacons. The Board of Deacons meets regularly for building community, encouragement, spiritual formation, and training. Deacons are also asked to participate in various gatherings connected to their ministry. These include:

- a. Monthly Deacon meeting after church (2nd Sunday of the month, September-June)
- b. Annual Deacon retreat
- c. Annual Deacon-Elder gathering
- d. Occasional Grief ministry events

3. Deacon as Servant

Deacons are vital to the life of the Church. Part of being a Deacon is playing an active role in the Centerville family. Deacons are asked to:

- a. Attend services regularly
- b. Be a warm, welcoming presence on Sunday, especially looking to welcome new guests
- c. Attend events, and look for opportunities to connect with others
- d. Look for opportunities to serve others as Jesus' hands and feet
- e. Participate in annual Deacon service project

4. Deacon in Scripture (Acts 6, 1 Timothy 3, Mark 10)

According to Scripture, Deacons must embrace and embody the following spiritual traits:

Humble	Trustworthy	Reserved
Sincere	Temperate	Full of the Spirit
Sober	Wise	Flexible
Selfless	Respected	Elder-Directed

Deacon Testimonies

Being a Deacon is a transformative experience. Here are some testimonies from current and former Deacons on how God worked in their hearts through Deacon ministry:

"As a Deacon, I feel that it was a privilege to enter hospital rooms, homes, and apartments to offer comfort, spiritual strength, and friendship. **God changes you as you serve.** He smooths off your rough edges. You may find hurting places exposed that you didn't know you had and then those holy hugs and wise counsel from understanding Deacons makes it better. You may find at times that the job is too hard and then you turn back to God for His sustenance or cry with a pastor or Deacon who knows you can't do it in your own strength. Through it all, you mature as a branch in the vine and also grow closer to the church body, thankful that you have been given this opportunity to make a profound difference in the community that is going to last: our Forever Family. **That is the true joy of being a Deacon.**

"I remember reflecting on why I wanted to be a Deacon and decided that being a Deacon gave me a sense of purpose in my life. Sometimes, particularly as we get older, we need to refocus and think about what is really important. Living our lives as Christians means following Christ's example and loving one another and supporting one another. Being a Deacon "officially" gives you this opportunity.

"Serving others as a Deacon is extremely rewarding. You can see God's handiwork made manifest right before your eyes! You can tangibly be the arms and feet of Jesus, allowing Him to work in and through you. There's no better feeling than seeing the Light of Christ in someone's eyes or hearing the joy in their voice when we demonstrate genuine compassion, care, concern and intentional relationship. **It's love as God designed.**"

"As a Deacon, I've become more confident and out-going about who I am and what I believe! GOD's purposes for my life become more clear and I can look back now and see how He's interceded in my life to guide me to become the strong Christian that I am today. I love the close relationship and trust that comes through my daily walk and talks with my Father GOD. **It is my joy and privilege to serve HIM as a Deacon! That's a blessing!**"

"I enjoy caring for people in-need; not only do I feel it uplifts their spirits and brings comfort to their pains, but it has the same effect on me. I believe that God gave me a nurturing disposition and deep empathy and love for people and I am able to use this treasured gift to bring Him glory through this ministry. I enjoy feeling connected to our church family in this meaningful way... **Through serving others, I feel I am closest to Christ - emulating His heart.**"

"I love being a Deacon because of the wonderful interaction with the fellow Deacons and the people I shepherd. You should be a Deacon if you love your fellow Christians at Centerville Presbyterian Church and you want to be involved in showing them your love. Deacons serve and lead where needed at CPC. It's very rewarding and fulfilling of Christ's mission to love one another."

"I love helping others and helping God in His works. Being an official Deacon makes me more comfortable to reach out to others in compassion and friendship... You get to be part of the church in action. I'm a person who likes to feel needed and lift peoples' burdens, but I think the real blessing of being a Deacon is getting connected in a deeper way to God and to people - those who are hurting and those who are ministering alongside you on the Deacon team."

"I first met my neighbor, Samantha, when her husband died, and I went to take her flowers and express my sympathy as a Deacon. We are friends and neighbors to this day. In the same way, I met Cassie, when her father passed away overseas. With no family in the US, my heart went out to her. She was a very special lady and we became close friends... I realize now, writing this, that I seem to have a lot of empathy for women who have lost a loved one, and being a Deacon has provided me the confidence and opportunity to reach out in love to support them."

Deacon Promise

Deacons in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church are asked to affirm the following vows:

Do you reaffirm your faith in Jesus Christ as your own personal Lord and Savior?

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, totally trustworthy, fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, the supreme, final, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
2. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?
3. Do you promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with the system of doctrine as taught in the Scriptures and as contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church you will, on your own initiative, make known to your Presbytery the change which has taken place in your views since the assumption of this ordination vow?
4. Do you affirm and adopt the "Essentials of Our Faith" without exception?
5. Do you subscribe to the government and discipline of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church?
6. Do you promise subjection to your fellow Church Officers in the Lord?
7. Have you been induced, as far as you know your own heart, to seek the office of the holy Ministry from love to God and a sincere desire to promote His glory in the gospel of His Son?
8. Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in promoting the truths of the gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto you on that account?

Additionally, as a Deacon of Centerville Presbyterian Church, you are committing to:

9. Embrace the servant-leader lifestyle embodied by Jesus Christ, willing to serve wherever needed by the Church.
10. Embody the call of a Deacon as Shepherd, Leader, and Servant.
11. Faithfully meet all expectations and qualities listed on the previous pages, especially attending regular Deacon gatherings, faithfully contacting those placed under your care, and submitting regular monthly updates to the Deacon Executive Team.
12. Fully embrace and promote the vision of the Pastors and Elders of Centerville, promoting unity while resisting conflict and dissension within the body of the Church.

As a Centerville Deacon, I acknowledge and understand the expectations for me as a Deacon. I know that I am accountable to Elders and other Deacons to meet these expectations and I promise to faithfully serve in this role as God has called me to the best of my abilities.

Deacon Signature

Pastor Signature

Moderator Signature

