

THE MINISTRY OF THE DEACON



FULL GOSPEL CHURCH OF GOD

HEAD OFFICE: 012 667 1072/3/4/5

Compiled by Pastor Tienie Berrangé 083 456 0946
Director of ISAAC, Evangelism arm of the FGC

THE MINISTRY OF THE DEACON

DEACONS: GREEK = [DIAKONOS] PHIL. 1:1; 1 TIM 3:8,12; 3:10,13

In the official salutation of Paul the apostle to the Philippians (1:1) it is clear that deacons were officers of the church and were fully recognised by the apostles. Service, in the sense of caring for the needy and administration of funds, as opposed to preaching or teaching is implied in the original Greek word used [diakonos]. This does not exclude the deacon from witnessing or preaching but such a ministry on the part of the deacon will be as a result of a personal gift or ability and not necessarily as a result of his/her deaconship. The origin of this office in the Church can be traced to the "attendant" of the Jewish synagogue (Luke 4:20) and it is fair to conclude that such duties as the preparation of the house of God for worship and all that a Church service may require, and the general care of the house of God with all contained therein, are the responsibility of the deacon. A place of honour is afforded the deaconship in the administration of the church in general (Philippians 1:1). Deacons therefore are recognised in the Church, and shall be elected to office as set forth in these Rules.

DEACONESSES: ROM 16:1; 1 TIM 3:11; TITUS 2:3

It is apparent that deaconesses were also in evidence in the early Christian Church and early Church history establishes that they had a special service to perform with regard to the female members of the Church, particularly at baptism and when visiting the sick. There is no evidence however those deaconesses had any part in the general administration of the Church. Deaconesses are recognised as such in the Church.

Deacons, as they are acknowledged by the Church, shall be elected to their office, and serve as set forth as follows:

1. QUALIFICATIONS

The scriptural qualifications for deacons shall be in accordance with the standard laid down in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3

Deacons:

- a. Shall be worthy of respect. (verse 8) They should fulfil their tasks with dignity, integrity and devotion.
- b. Shall be sincere. (verse 8)
Their "yes" should be "yes" and their "no" should be "no".
Their words should reflect confidence and respect.
- c. Shall not indulge in much wine. (verse 8) Abstinence is a powerful witness in the world.
- d. Shall not pursue dishonest gain. (verse 8) They should not put their own interests above the work of the Lord.

7. **CONTROL MEASURES AND PRIVILEGES OF DEACONS**

a. **Under the authority of the Pastor:**

He shall serve the Church under the authority of the pastor.

b. **Tithes:**

He shall give a tenth of his income to the congregation where he holds office.

c. **Cooperation with programme:**

He shall support to the full programme of the church.

d. **Member of Church Council:**

He shall be a member of the church council of the congregation where he holds office.

8. **TERMINATION OF STATUS**

a. **Term of service:**

The deacon's term of office will not exceed two (4) years, but he may be re-elected provided that his good standing in the church is maintained.

b. **Disciplinary Action:**

Any disciplinary inquiry that confirms improper conduct or doctrinal deviation shall lead to the termination of the status of the deacon.

c. **Transfer of Membership:**

Transfer of membership from one congregation to another shall immediately terminate the status of the deacon.

9. **DUTIES OF THE DEACON**

a. **To assist Elders:**

According to Acts 6:1-7 a deacon should assist the elders, but focus more on the practical side of the ministry. It is also good for the deacon to join the Elders in spiritual work so that he can be prepared for eldership. The ministry of the deacon is supportive to that of the elder. Their ministries should complement one another.

b. **Taking care of widows:**

The deacons should be available to assist in the daily care of widows like caring for their welfare, transport, housing, safety, etc. He should not try to do everything himself, but arrange for help and assistance (delegate).

c. **Taking care of the congregation:**

During church services the deacons play a valuable role which includes welcoming of visitors and members, collecting of offerings, altar work, etc.

d. **Bridge Builders:**

- The deacon can assist people in distress and grief with comfort and support.
- The deacon can play an important roll to encourage and motivate members to engage in service to the church.
- The deacon can set an example and encourage members to support the entire program of the church.
- The deacon can be used to equip members for their service in the church. The equipment and mobilization of the members is an important key to church growth.
- The deacon can also reach outside the boundaries of the church to give support, assistance, comfort, etc. Thereby he will be leading people to Christ.
- Deacons shall give brief monthly reports in writing to the pastor so that their work can be coordinated and therefore effective service be distributed throughout the congregation.

e. **Administrative and business involvement:**

All departments of the church have a need for administrative and business principles. It is important that deacons will be involved in Evangelism Action, Youth, Children's Ministry, Social Society, Musicians and Worship leaders, Sound operators, etc. depending on their different gifts. This allows them to give updated reports to the church council

f. **Spiritual ministry:**

While all this involvement is spiritual in nature, the deacon, depending on his ministry, shall assist with the spiritual care of the assembly. The deacon can also minister the Word of God, pray for people and minister Holy Communion. It is also important that the deacon shall contribute to the support, care and education as well as maintenance of equipment of the whole church.

g. **Leadership:**

Deacons can also successfully serve as leaders of cell groups, during camps, in sports and recreation, team building, field trips, etc. They can also teach administrative business principles like stewardship, estate planning, retirement, etc. Videos can also be used to equip people.

CONCLUSION

Deacons play an important role and are indispensable to the growth and expansion of the local church. May God bless and strengthen them in performing their duties and ministry.