



## **Deacons: The Ministry of Compassion and Service**

“The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry.” -- Book of Order (G-2.02)

The “Diakonia” (deacons) of the church is one of the oldest offices and traditions in the New Testament. It was established when the disciples began to see that the ministry was an overwhelming task without further developing leaders in this new community. Therefore the disciples said to the church, “Pick out from among you seven individuals of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint these duties.” The duties given to them were caring for the widows, the poor, the sick and others who needed special care. Our deacons at First Presbyterian Church of El Cajon have carried on this tradition of caring established in the first church. To honor this responsibility we have organized ourselves to fulfill the following duties:

### **Supporting the Ongoing Life of the Church**

- Development of a budget to support the ministries of the church.
- Participation in the “Shepherding Program” so that every member of the church has a deacon who cares for them.
- Assist the Worship Committee on preparing and serving the Lord’s Supper.

### **Supporting the Ongoing Needs of Community**

- Oversight and distribution of the benevolence program which supplies money, certificates and food to those who need assistance.
- Visit the sick in hospitals and surrounding care facilities.
- Send cards and letters to individuals who have experienced loss or a significant life event.
- Provide food cards to members of our community who need assistance.
- Assisting the “Special Needs” program to visit and care for those who are housebound or in care facilities.

### **Supporting Emergency Needs of the Church**

- Provide financial assistance to those who have found themselves in hard times.
- Provide transportation to medical facilities or other places in which members need to go for assistance.
- Provide meals to those who have returned from the hospital or have just lost a significant other in their life.
- Provide memorial receptions and personal care for those planning funerals for their loved one.