



Deacons at Emmaus Church

INTRO/PURPOSE

The goal of the following material is three fold: first, to summarize the Biblical doctrine accurately; second, to give an overview of how the Elders see that doctrine applied in our local Church; and finally, to outline the process for ordaining Deacons at Emmaus Church.

SUMMARY OF DOCTRINE

Emmaus Church believes, consistent with historic Reformed Confessionalism¹ and more importantly Scripture itself, that Deacons are one of two offices set up by Christ through his Apostles for the governing of his Body, the Church. It's clear in Scripture that the Elders are primarily responsible for oversight, so the Lord established Deacons to enable Elders to focus on their responsibility.² Deacons must "hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience" and are held to the same standards of character as the Elders.³ The word Deacon comes from the Greek word for servant; although all Christians are Servants, this special office

¹ 1689 London Baptist Confession, Chapter 26 Section 8 and Section 9.

² Titus 1:9 is referenced as a key passage for the purpose of the Elders. You can also see Acts 6:2 as well as 1 Timothy 3:1-8. Scripture indicates a necessary priority of the Elders spending their time teaching and to "care for God's Church" as Peter is asked to "feed my sheep" in John 21. The ministry of the Word, the Gospel, is the primary role (along with prayer) of the Elder, and anything that would take away from that is the purpose of the Deacons.

³ 1 Timothy 3:1-13 outlines the qualifications for Elders, and "in the same way" deacons are given similar qualifications. The Bible prioritizes character over talents, so Emmaus Church does likewise.

is primarily focused on serving the temporal needs of the local Church as well as the community as it comes in contact with that Church.

APPLICATION AT EMMAUS CHURCH

A large part of the needs at Emmaus Church come in the form of organization and execution of the Sunday Gathering. This can include, but is not limited to volunteering in specific rolls, scheduling other volunteers, counting financial donations, providing transportation, or supporting the parents by serving their children. Outside the Sunday Gathering, there are many needs that can arise, including but not limited to babysitting, doctor visits, facilitating financial support, finding housing, and general care for members of the both the Church and the community surrounding the Church. Another aspect of Deacons at Emmaus is administrative support in technology, finance, and the day to day needs that arise operating a local Church in our current cultural context. Not every need should or will be able to be filled by every Deacon, but the Deacons should work together and with the Elder Team to ensure everything is done to love and serve both the needs inside the community as well as those we interact with outside the community.

PROCESS FOR ORDINATION

1. Recognition by the Church (Acts 6:3) – Members of the church who recognize the character, desire and qualification of other members of the Church are able to request any member in good standing as deacon to be tested and considered by the Elder Team.
2. Testing by the Elders (1 Timothy 3:8-13) – Testing includes the individual's character, their qualification to serve in the capacity outlined above, as well as their desire to be ordained as a Deacon of Emmaus Church.

3. Consent of the Members (Acts 6:3, 1 Timothy 3:8-13) – The Deacon is brought before the members of Emmaus Church and made aware that steps one and two have occurred and feedback is solicited. Barring any disqualifying characteristic as outlined in Scripture, the Deacon will be formally ordained in the designated time period.

4. Ordination/Laying on of Hands (Acts 6:6, 1 Timothy 5:22) – The Deacon is brought before the Church and the Elders lay hands on, pray for and officially recognize the member as a Deacon of Emmaus Denver.