

**Myrtle Grove Baptist Church
Deacon and Yokefellow Handbook
2016 Revision**

I. DEACON AND YOKEFELLOW RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Monthly Meetings: The Deacon and Yokefellow meeting will normally be held the first Monday of each month, unless it is a holiday or changed by vote at the previous meeting. Meetings will normally start at 6:30 p.m. All elected deacons and yokefellows are expected to attend these meetings. A quorum, which will be one half of the elected deacons and yokefellows plus one, will be required for any vote.

B. Service: The primary purpose of the Deacon and Yokefellow is to minister to the needs of the church.

C. Deacon and Yokefellow Recommendations to the Church:

1. Budget proposals.
2. Major changes to church operations and policies.
3. Proposals for by-laws changes.
4. Additional committees to meet the needs of the church.

D. Prayer and Moral Support: The deacons and yokefellows will participate in all services of the church as well as pray for its activities.

E. Tithing: All deacons and yokefellows are expected to support the church financially. This includes a minimum of 10 percent of one's income being given to the work of the Lord. All deacons and yokefellows should support special emphasis programs that have been approved by the church, i.e., building programs, special mission emphases, etc.

F. Ex-Officio Committee Assignments: Assignments are made by the Chairman of the Deacons and Yokefellows to the committees identified in the MGBC By-laws and Constitution.

G. Ministry: As spiritual leaders, minister to the needs of church members, the community, and the unsaved.

H. Deacons and yokefellows shall be actively involved in one or more of the following ministries:

1. Sharing the gospel.
2. Evangelism/FAITH/altar call counseling.
3. Discipleship/ New Deacon and Yokefellow Training/Stewardship.
4. Homebound/Shut-ins/Emotional/Physical/Spiritual.
5. Pastoral Care (Home Visits, Hospital Visits, Grief and Comfort, Crisis Counseling).

I. All Deacons and Yokefellows are expected to adhere to the "Deacon and Yokefellow Code of Ethics."

J. Deacons and Yokefellows may address concerns or recommendations directly to the Chairman, Vice Chairman or Secretary (as appropriate) for discussion at monthly meetings.

II. DEACON AND YOKEFELLOW OFFICERS

A. Chairman: The Chairman will be a Deacon and is the elected annually by the elected deacons and yokefellows. His duties include:

1. Act as the president of the corporation (Myrtle Grove Baptist Church).
2. Conduct services when asked to do so by the Pastor.
3. Moderate business meetings in the absence of the Pastor.
4. Sign church checks.
5. Sign bonds, contracts, legal documents, etc.
6. Serve as a member of the Church Council.
7. Serve as a member of the budget committee.
8. Make deacon reports at business meetings, as necessary.
9. Have access to the church safety deposit box.
10. Administer the deacon and yokefellow work and ministry (assigns responsibility, delegate authority, and organize ministry activities using each deacon and yokefellow area of expertise).
11. Provide spiritual leadership.
12. Meet with the pastor and church staff often in sharing sessions.
13. Assist the pastor during observances of the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper.
14. Plan the annual deacon and yokefellow retreat.

B. Vice Chairman: The Vice Chairman will be a Deacon and is the elected annually by the elected deacons and yokefellows. Although not required, it is highly recommended that the Vice Chairman consider serving as Chairman the following year. This will assist in ensuring continuity from year to year in administering the Deacon and Yokefellow ministries and responsibilities within the church. The Vice Chairman's responsibilities include:

1. Monthly assignment of deacons and yokefellows to: usher; bank messenger; security; deacon and yokefellow of the week; and extended Lord's Supper. The deacon and yokefellow service list will be posted on the MGBC website, given to each Deacon and Yokefellow with no email or internet access at the monthly meeting and one copy will be placed on the foyer counter.
2. Coordinate the extended Lord's Supper for homebound.
3. Substitute for the Chairman in his absence.
4. Oversee the annual Deacon and Yokefellow Handbook review.
5. Sign church checks.
6. Contact other deacons and yokefellows for meetings, special occasions, etc.
7. Other tasks assigned by the Chairman.

C. Secretary: The Secretary will be a Deacon and is the elected annually by the elected deacons and yokefellows. His responsibilities include:

1. Keep minutes of the Deacon and Yokefellow meeting and furnish a handwritten copy to the church secretary.
2. Keep a record of the Deacon and Yokefellow rotation.

III. DUTIES OF ALL DEACONS AND YOKEFELLOWS: All deacons and yokefellows will be assigned duties monthly. They must perform these duties or arrange for a substitute. These duties include:

A. Ushering

1. Head Usher: The head usher is the first Deacon or Yokefellow listed on the monthly assignment sheet. A copy of the assignment sheet will be posted on the MGBC website, given to each Deacon and Yokefellow with no email or internet access at the monthly meeting and one copy will be placed on the foyer counter. The Head Usher is responsible for the smooth operation of the ushers during the worship service. His duties include:

- a. Ensure sufficient numbers of collection plates are available.
- b. Recruit extra ushers, if necessary.
- c. Ensure that the collection of offering is done in an orderly manner.
- d. Ensure that ushers wear coat and tie in the Morning service and are discretely dressed for the Evening services.
- e. As necessary assign greeters, individuals to pass out bulletins and an usher for each aisle to assist in seating of worshipers.
- f. Ensure each usher is wearing their nametag.

2. Ushering and Seating

- a. Help worshipers find a seat when requested or when the worship center is almost full.
- b. Encourage seating near the front.
- c. Ask the worshiper before seating to determine his/her preference for area of seating. The usher should lead the worshiper(s) to a row that has sufficient room and then stand in front of row entrance until all are seated. This will assure everyone has a seat before the usher leaves the area.
- d. Seating should not occur during:
 - (1) Prayer
 - (2) Special Music
 - (3) Baptism
 - (4) Reading of Scripture

3. Greeting People

- a. A special effort must be made to make each person who enters God's house feel welcome with a word of greeting and a smile. Call the person by name, if possible. Bulletins or special programs are to be distributed to everyone. If the bulletins or special programs appear to be running short, an effort will be made to distribute one per family with an explanation. The church secretary should be notified and plan accordingly.
- b. A special greeting should be extended to visitors.

4. Offering Collection

- a. Offerings will be collected by the ushers. Collections will be made during Sunday morning and evening services.
- b. Morning service:
 - 1) The ushers will be seated on the back row prior to the offertory hymn.

2) The ushers will approach the altar at the appropriate time in the service (see bulletin). The approach to the altar will be made with one half of the ushers in each of the two inside aisles.

3) Prayer will be offered by the assigned Usher. The first person on the list has the first Sunday's prayer; the second person has the second Sunday's prayer, and so forth.

4) After prayer, the ushers will proceed up the aisles from front to back collecting the offerings.

5) Morning service offerings will be placed in the bank bag held by the bank messengers. The bank bag will be taken to the bank by the bank messengers as soon as possible after the Morning service offerings have been collected.

d) Evening service:

1) The ushers will approach the altar at the appropriate time in the service from their chosen seat.

2) Prayer will be offered by the assigned Usher or by another designated person. If offered by an assigned Usher, the first person on the list has the first Sunday's prayer; the second person has the second Sunday's prayer, and so forth.

3) After prayer, the ushers will proceed up the aisles from front to back collecting the offerings.

4) At the Evening service the Head Usher and an assistant will serve as bank messengers. Collections of the Evening service will be counted and placed in an appropriate sealable container. The amount of the offering will be documented on a paper and witnessed by the Head Usher and assistant. The offering can then be given to a member of the counting committee or one of the Ministers to be added to the weekly offering.

e) Special services (Revivals, Concerts, etc.):

1) The ushers will approach the altar at the appropriate time in the service from their chosen seat.

2) Prayer will be offered by an Usher or another designated person.

3) After prayer, the ushers will proceed up the aisles from front to back collecting the offerings.

4) An Usher and an assistant will serve as bank messengers. Collections from the service will be counted and placed in an appropriate sealable container. The amount of the offering will be documented on a paper and witnessed by the Head Usher and assistant. The offering will then be given to a member of the counting committee for proper processing.

IV. EXTENDED LORD'S SUPPER

A. All assigned deacons and yokefellows are to meet at the church office work room at 1:50p.m. on the afternoon the church has the Lord's Supper to receive assignments, kits, pray, and go out.

B. Coordinating the homebound service will be the Vice Chairman's responsibility. All elected deacons and yokefellows are expected to participate, as assigned.

V. THE ORDINANCES

A. Baptism: Deacons and yokefellows will participate as requested by the Senior Pastor.

B. The Lord's Supper will normally be observed during the Sunday morning services.

1. When called, the Deacons and Yokefellows will come forward and stand in front of the first pew. They will follow the Pastor's signals to stand and be seated.

2. The Chairman and another Deacon or Yokefellow will remove the cloth that covers the sacraments, fold it, and set it aside.

3. The Pastor and Chairman will distribute the plates that contain the "bread" to the Deacons and Yokefellows.

4. When all the plates have been distributed, the Deacons and Yokefellows will serve the congregation, similar to passing the offering plates.

5. Deacons and Yokefellows will remain at the rear of the sanctuary until the entire congregation has been served. The Deacons and Yokefellows will then return to the front of the first pew, in unison.

6. The Pastor and Chairman will collect the plates with the remaining "bread". The Pastor will then serve the Deacons the "bread". The Chairman will serve the Pastor.

7. The same procedure will be followed for the serving of the "drink".

8. Some Deacons and Yokefellows will be assigned to ensure that the Nursery, Musicians, and Sound Booth receive the Lord's Supper.

9. The number of Deacons and Yokefellows needed to serve will be determined by the Chairman, however; all Deacons and Yokefellows should make plans to participate in the Lord's Supper. If a Sunday School teacher or Small Group leader, they should arrange for an alternate teacher or leader on that Sunday.

All Deacons and Yokefellows will wear a coat and tie to serve the Lord's Supper.

VI. DEACONS AND YOKEFELLOWS ON CALL

A. General Responsibilities

1. Three to four deacons or yokefellows will be assigned each week by the Vice Chairman. The first deacon or yokefellow listed is responsible for coordinating visits in homes, hospitals, and funeral homes and fulfilling other ministry needs, as necessary.

2. At least one of the deacons or yokefellows will make hospital visits prior to Wednesday and report to the church at prayer meeting.

3. If at all possible, at least one of the deacons or yokefellows on call will accompany a member of the ministerial team during their Friday shut-ins and nursing home visits.

B. Visiting Techniques

1. Be cheerful, understanding and supportive.

2. Offer prayer when possible for the person and/or family involved.

3. Talk clearly and be diplomatic. Do not ask personal questions. You may show interest and concern without being nosy and offending someone.

4. When in a patient's room, talk just loud enough for the patient. In most cases make the visit brief.

5. Good bedside techniques and common sense is essential. (Don't ask the patient how they feel, tell them you know what they are going through, or sit on the bed.) Don't tell them about your illnesses.

6. Be prepared to witness to the saved and the lost.

VII. GROUND SECURITY

A. Purpose: The primary purpose of ground security is to keep the building and grounds safe and secure during evening worship and/or special events.

B. Scope: This will require a minimum of two people patrolling the parking area and church grounds. A third person will be posted in the church nursery, as needed.

C. Assignment: Each month, two deacons or yokefellows will be assigned ground security duty. Assignments for duty during evening worship services will be indicated on the monthly Deacon and Yokefellow Service List. Nursery support and special event duty assignments will be made by the Vice Chairman. If for some reason an individual is not able to fulfill his assignment, it shall be his responsibility to arrange for a substitute.

D. Ground Patrol Procedures: Security personnel shall exercise good judgment at all times.

1. Always work in pairs.

2. While walking about the facility, be mindful of doors and windows that should be locked, lights that should be off (or on), and scheduled church activities.

3. Randomly sequence visits to the nursery area, adding to the safety of the children and workers.

4. Anyone in or around the buildings and/or parking area should be questioned if in doubt of their intent. Provide assistance as required.

5. If a theft or vandalism is in progress, call the sheriff's office (911).

6. In case of minor incidents, the person(s) should be detained, if safely possible, until the situation is resolved.

7. Law enforcement should be contacted in case of significant damages to a vehicle or church property.

VIII. MESSENGER Responsibilities: Please see hard paper copy located in office workroom

IX. ALTER CALL DUTIES

1. Deacons and Yokefellows should always be willing to assist, as needed, during alter calls.

2. Annual training will be provided by an Alter Call Committee member.

A DEACON'S CODE OF ETHICS

I am a deacon or yokefellow in a Baptist church. In Christ I am saved from sin to a life of faith and usefulness. In the church, of which Christ is head, I have an opportunity to make my life count for Him in Christian service. The members of my church have expressed confidence in me by electing me to be a deacon or yokefellow. By the grace of God, in keeping with the mind and purpose of my Lord, and in response to the confidence of my brothers and sisters, I hereby commit myself to:

Proper Authority

The church determines my specific authority, and I will be true to its constitution and bylaws and special instructions to its deacons and yokefellow. The Lord Jesus Christ has granted me spiritual authority, and I will be true to Him by setting a Christian example in everyday living. My conscience, quickened by the Holy Spirit, gives moral authority, and I will strive to be wise, fair, loving, and courageous in dealing with current issues.

My Lord

Of myself, I am neither wise, good, nor strong enough to be a deacon or yokefellow. But I am not alone in this work. Christ is my companion and through His wisdom, mercy, and power I am able to serve.

The Bible

I accept the New Testament as my source of authority on the Christian life and the work of a deacon or yokefellow. From it, I learn that we were first chosen to serve with the pastor in the ministries of the church; that they were ordained/commissioned by the church to serve people in need; and that we are expected to set an example in Christian life and service.

The Church

I will strive to work responsibly with all who are members of the church by:

- Attending the services and participating in the work of the church,
- Supporting the financial program of the church,
- Encouraging the indifferent members and praising the faithful ones,
- Supporting the decisions of the church even when I am in the minority,
- Discouraging envy, jealousy, backbiting, and strife,
- Refraining from gossip and insisting that the truth be told about all matters,
- Guarding sacredly the confidence entrusted to me, and
- Bearing witness to the unsaved and appealing to them to accept Christ and join the church.

The Pastor

I am my pastor's partner and coworker. Both of us are responsible to Christ, and we are coworkers for Christ. My pastor is shepherd of the flock, and I will strive to help him be a good shepherd by:

- Praying for him,
- Encouraging him,
- Defending him when he is criticized unfairly,
- Being frank with him when I think he is mistaken, and
- Being his brother in Christ, his co-laborer in the church, and his moral and spiritual helper in service to people.

Other Deacons and Yokefellows

I recognize that I am engaged in teamwork with my pastor and the others. I will:

- Respect other deacons and yokefellows,
- Pray for them,
- Strive to understand their points of view when we do not agree and will disagree in love,
- Carry my share of responsibility at all times, and
- Defend them if they are attacked or misunderstood by others.