

Myrtle Grove Baptist Church
Deacon and Yokefellow Handbook
2018 Revision

I. DEACON AND YOKEFELLOW RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Monthly Meetings: The Deacon and Yokefellow meeting will be held the first Monday of each month, unless it is a holiday, in which case the meeting will be held the following Monday. All elected deacons and yokefellows are expected to attend these meetings. Meetings will normally start at 6:30pm. A quorum will be one-half of the elected deacons and yokefellows plus one and 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 constitution and by-laws changes
4. Additional committees to meet the needs of the church
5. Review nominations for prospective employees and major church officers and interview them if necessary.

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
3. Altar Call Counseling

4. Discipleship/New Deacon and Yokefellow Training/Stewardship
5. Homebound/Shut-ins/Emotional/Physical/Spiritual
6. Pastor 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 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 Leadership Team.
7. Serve as an ex-officio member of the Budget/Finance Committee and the Preschool Learning Center 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. (Assign 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 elected annually by the elected deacons and yokefellows. Although no 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. Ensure 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 members.

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 task assigned by the chairman.

C. Secretary: The secretary will be a deacon and is 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 ministry assistant.
2. Keep a record of the deacon and yokefellow rotation.

III. DUTIES OF 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. As necessary assign greeters, individuals to pass out bulletins and an usher for each aisle to assist in seating of worshipers.
- e. 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.
- b. A special greeting should be extended to visitors.

4. Offering Collection: Offerings will be collected by ushers. Collections will be made during Sunday morning and evening services.

a. 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.
 - (a) Prayer will be offered by the assigned usher. The first person on the lit has the first Sunday's prayer; the second person has the second Sunday's prayer, and so forth.
 - (b) After prayer, the ushers will proceed up the aisles from front to back collecting the offerings.
 - (c) 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 offerings have been collected.

b. 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.
- (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.

c. 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.

IV. EXTENDED LORD'S SUPPER

A. All assigned deacons and yokefellows are to meet at the church office workroom at 1:50pm 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:

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 technicians 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.
10. All deacons and yokefellows are encouraged to 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. If at all possible, at least one of the deacons or yokefellows on call will accompany a member of the ministerial team during their hospital, 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 nose-y and offending someone.
4. When in patient's room, talk just loud enough to be heard by 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.

VI. GROUND SECURITY

A. Purpose: The primary purpose of ground security is to keep the building and grounds safe and secure during 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. Pick up the church office key from the deacon drawer for access to medical equipment.
2. Take a radio to the sound booth and pick it up at the conclusion of service.
3. Always work in pairs.
4. 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.
5. Randomly sequence visits to the nursery area, adding to the safety of the children and workers.
6. Anyone in or around the buildings and/or parking area should be questioned if in doubt of their intent. Provide assistance as required.
7. In case of minor incidents, the person(s) should be monitored until the situation is resolved. Notify the sound booth personnel via radio that a situation is in progress. Also, notify the sound booth personnel when the situation is "all clear."
8. Law enforcement shall be contacted in case of significant damages to a vehicle or church property or threat or injury to person(s).

E. Family Life Center Security Procedures:

1. Pick up the FLC key and radio from the church office.
2. The security person shall stay in the lobby.
3. Lock the exterior doors when assuming duty.
4. Children shall only be released to his or her parent or guardian under the supervision of the nursery worker.
5. Remain on duty until the last child leaves.

F. In the Event of a Security Incident:

1. Notify the sound booth personnel if evacuation is required.
2. Notify the proper authorities.
 - a. Escambia County Sheriff's Department (850) 436-9630 or 911
 - b. Fire Department 911 or (850-471-6300
 - c. Ambulance 911 or (850) 471-6300

G. Medical Emergency: Pick up the first aid kit and/or AED from the church office and take them to the incident.

VII. BANK MESSENGERS

A. Purpose: The primary goal of the bank messengers is to take the offering safely to the bank.

B. Procedures:

1. One of the bank messengers will receive the Sunday school offerings from the Sunday school secretary, lock it in a bank bag, and place it in the deacon's drawer in the church office.
2. After the morning service collection is taken, place loose money and offering envelopes in the bank bag with the Sunday school offerings. Lock the bag, leave the bank bag keys in the office, and take the night deposit key with you to the bank. Visitor slips will be placed on the church receptionist's desk.
3. Both messengers will remain with the money at all times prior to depositing it.
4. Take the locked bag to the Bank of the South.
5. It is recommended that the time and route of travel be varied each Sunday. It is a good practice to circle the bank prior to leaving the automobile to make a deposit.
6. One person should remain in the car while the other deposits the bag. Open the deposit locker door an extra time after making the deposit to make sure all of the bags fall into the depository. Return the bank key to the office.
7. In case of a robbery, it is recommended the money be given up immediately. The church has insurance.
8. At the evening service, the head usher and an assistant will serve as bank messengers, as outlined in Section III.

VII. ALTAR CALL DUTIES

- A. Deacons and yokefellows should always be willing to assist, as needed, during altar calls.
- B. Annual training will be provided by an altar call committee member.

IX. 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:

A. 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 yokefellows. 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.

B. 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.

C. 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.

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

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

E. 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:

1. Praying for him;
2. Encouraging him;
3. Defending him when he is criticized unfairly;

4. Being frank with him when I think he is mistaken; and
5. Being his brother in Christ, his co-laborer in the church, and his moral and spiritual helper in service to people.

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

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

Deacon and Yokefellow Nomination Procedures

MAY

1. The Deacon and Yokefellow Nominating Committee shall be appointed per the church bylaws.

JUNE

1. The Deacon and Yokefellow Nominating Committee will begin seeking prospective deacons and yokefellows.
2. Announcements will be made that nomination for Deacons and Yokefellows from church members will be accepted in the church office no later than June 30. Members nominating candidates shall use the MGBC Deacon and Yokefellow Nomination Form which will be available on a table at the main entrance of the sanctuary or in the church office.
3. The nominating committee will contact candidates nominated by members to determine their willingness to serve as deacons/yokefellows.
4. Men agreeing to be candidates will be given the Myrtle Grove Baptist Church Deacon and Yokefellow Questionnaire to be completed and returned in a sealed envelope to one of the committee members. The information on the form is confidential and shall be shredded upon completion of the deacon and yokefellow election during the August business meeting.

JULY

1. The Deacon and Yokefellow Nominating Committee will screen the MGBC Deacon and Yokefellow Questionnaires and begin interviews with qualified candidates.
2. The committee will use the Bible, Deacon and Yokefellow Questionnaire, and church bylaws, and the Deacon and Yokefellow Handbook to determine each candidate's qualifications.
3. An interview will be conducted with each candidate.
4. Upon completion of the interview process, the committee will make recommendations to the currently elected deacons and yokefellows at the August deacon and yokefellow meeting.

AUGUST

1. The Deacon and Yokefellow Nominating Committee will present their recommendations to the deacons and yokefellows at the monthly deacon's meeting. The deacons and yokefellows shall vote on the recommendations.
2. The chairman of the deacons and yokefellows will present the recommendations for deacons and yokefellows to the church at the monthly business meeting.
3. The church will vote by secret ballot and those candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected as deacons or yokefellows.

Deacon and Yokefellow Nomination Form

Please read the following information before making a nomination for deacon or yokefellow.

1. A deacon or yokefellow candidate must be a person who works well with people. Because a deacon' and yokefellow' ministry is to people, the deacon's and yokefellow's ability to get along with people will demonstrate the qualities of love, patience, understanding, compassion, and sensitivity.

2. The deacon and yokefellow manages the affairs of the church subject to the approval of the church. They make recommendations to the church on major issues such as budget and finance proposals, land acquisition, building programs, ministry and mission efforts, pastor search committee recommendations, pastor ordination (Ordination Council), deacon and yokefellow selection, and pastor recall. Deacons and yokefellows are also servants and spiritual leaders of the church.

3. A deacon or yokefellow candidate must show the potential for developing an effective ministry. A deacon or yokefellow candidate must be a person who is willing to serve. Deacon and yokefellow election is not just "an honor." It is a call from God and a charge from the church to assume a servant's role.

4. Any candidate must be a member of Myrtle Grove Baptist Church for a minimum of one year.

5. Use the guidelines of I Timothy 3:8-13 when determining whether or not the person you are nominating as a candidate for deacon or yokefellow is qualified. Please note that I Timothy 3:12 is interpreted to mean that both the deacon candidate and his wife have not been divorced. This qualification applies to deacon candidates and not to yokefellow candidates.

6. All nominations are due in the church office no later than June 30th of the current election year.

7. After prayerful consideration, I nominate _____ as:
 - a. _____Candidate for Deacon
 - b. _____Candidate for Yokefellow

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Deacon and Yokefellow Questionnaire

Myrtle Grove Baptist Church has nominated you to be considered for service as a deacon or yokefellow. Deacon and yokefellow ministry carries a high level of responsibility in the church and should be held only by those men whose lives demonstrate the qualities outlined in I Timothy 3:1-13.

The responsibilities of deacons and yokefellows are contained in the Deacon and Yokefellow Handbook.

Please read I Timothy 3:1-13 and the Deacon and Yokefellow Handbook before prayerfully answering the following questions.

Note: The word deacon herein refers to both deacon candidates and yokefellow candidates with exception of question 20.

1. When did you accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior? _____
Give a brief description of your conversion experience on the back of this page.
2. Do you believe in the inspiration of the Bible and that the entire Bible is the infallible word of God? _____
3. Do you accept your responsibility as a Christian to evangelism and missions? _____
4. Do you and your spouse strive to meet the biblical qualifications of I Timothy 3:8-13? _____
5. Are you in good fellowship with your fellow church members? _____
6. Do you recognize that the deacon is a minister and not a manager of the church's affairs other than making recommendations to the church on major issues such as budget/finance proposals, land acquisitions, building programs, ministry/mission efforts, pastor search committee recommendations, pastor ordination (Ordination Council), deacon and yokefellow selection, and pastor recall? _____
7. Do you attend church services regularly and special activities unless hindered by some reason which is approved by a good conscience? _____
8. Does your family attend church services with you? _____
9. Will you attend the monthly deacon's meetings unless you are sick or providentially hindered? _____
10. Are you willing to accept other positions of leadership in the church? _____

11. Do you support church programs when decisions are adopted by a majority vote even though you have voted in the minority? _____

12. Are you willing to work in a harmonious, supportive relationship with the pastor as well as other staff members and elected leaders of the church? _____

13. If a problem arises, will you try to put down murmuring and complaining, facing the decision frankly, dealing with it fairly and then stand with the majority when a decision is made? _____

14. Do you tithe, returning your tithe to the Lord through the church? _____

15. Do you have any serious problems with any of your children at home? _____

16. Are you committed to a growing spiritual life? _____

17. Will you commit yourself to become trained in deacon ministry, understanding, and skills? _____

18. If you can no longer affirm the qualifications for a deacon or are unable to actively serve, do you agree to remove yourself or accept removal by action of the church? _____

19. After considering the matter carefully and prayerfully, are you willing to serve as a deacon if nominated and elected by the church? _____

Deacon candidates, please answer the following question.

20. Have you had serious domestic troubles, divorce, or separation on your or your wife's part? _____

Yokefellow candidates, please answer the following question.

20. Have you had serious domestic troubles, divorce, or separation on your or your wife's part? _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____