

The Deacons are leaders of the congregation in caring for each other and needs that arise. We report to the Session. The Deacons meet once per month on the 3rd Sunday of each month. Our Board of Deacons is divided into several ministries which one or more Deacons carry out:

**Bereavement:** This ministry works with the family of the Bereaved to determine the family's immediate needs; i.e. Loaves and Fishes might be called in to deliver a meal. The coordinators of Bereavement also work with the family to carry out plans for any funeral or memorial service receptions. Deacons find volunteers to set up, serve and clean up after the reception.

**Card Ministry:** The coordinators of the Card Ministry have a list of major birthdays, anniversaries, and receive news of any hospitalizations, new baby or other circumstances to let the member know that our church is thinking of them and cares for them. During this pandemic, cards have also been sent to those who live alone and may not have face to face interaction with others.

**Communication:** This coordinator writes an article for the Disciple each month about any news the Congregation needs about the Deacons' work. This person also passes on to the Communication Commission any needs for publicity, etc.

**Loaves and Fishes:** We have 4 coordinators per year who each are responsible for covering a 1/4 of the year (3 months). They receive communication from Lisa, or perhaps the Pastors, that meals are needed by a member, often for illness, new baby, etc. They then organize volunteers to cook and deliver a meal. The volunteer then calls the member to find out about dietary needs and to set up delivery times, etc. The Deacons maintain a list of volunteers who have agreed to serve based on their availability.

**Mental Health Team:** This is an exciting new ministry that is developing to educate our congregation about mental health issues, some of which may be prevalent in our own church, such as anxiety. They also will be training companions to meet one-on-one with a person or family struggling with mental health issues as an extra friend/kind ear. The idea is to reduce the stigma of a mental health challenge and provide a safe space through our church to be accepted as one is. The Mental Health Team is a joint collaboration between the Deacons, Mission, members of the congregation and our community. The volunteers will not be trained in any therapy and will learn when a person needs to be referred for more help. The team is also looking to start periodic group fellowship/workshops for sharing about what helps or hinders one's mental well-being and how intentional creative activities may help promote mental well-being; i.e. creative writing, art, photography, journaling, scripture, possibly healing prayer, etc.

**Prayer Team:** This ministry has a team of people who pray for all the requests that come through our e-mail, [prayer@fpcyorktown.org](mailto:prayer@fpcyorktown.org). A Prayer Ribbon is placed for each request and contact is often made with the requester to let them know people in their church are praying for them. There are possibilities in the future for healing prayer services, a contemplative prayer group, and any other ideas focused on prayer to best care for our members and honor our Lord.

**Transportation:** This coordinator arranges rides from volunteers in the congregation for those who can't drive themselves to appointments, or even to church and church meetings.

**Visitation Team:** This is an active and vibrant ministry of the Deacons for those going through a hard time, illness or hospitalization. Contacts are made by phone, e-mail check-ins and actual face-to-face visits when possible. There are several people who also maintain a relationship with individuals in a nursing home, assisted living, or those who live alone and need company. We visit in the hospital (when allowed) and may bring cookies, flowers and prayers for encouragement.

The Deacons welcome and encourage volunteers to participate as able in each of the Deacon ministries with the goal of empowering members of the congregation to serve one another.