

# Deacon Update

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26 March 2023

# Origin of the Concept for Deacons at Cole

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# Purpose of Meeting

What are we trying to accomplish?

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- Provide update of the progress made in defining the roles of the deacon council
- Get feedback from the congregation
  - Please hold questions until the end
- It is not to recruit deacons
- It is not to present a final plan, but a work in progress

# Operating Principles of the Exploratory Team

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- Plan under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This is Christ's church to further His kingdom.
- Under the supervision of the Elders
- Focus on the practical and specific needs of the body
- “Make room” for a different approach for governing the church body
  - Shift from a large paid staff to volunteer who serve the body
- Encourage an integrated structure
- Seek and leverage wisdom from the community of believers outside our body
- Provide an initial structure and adjust based on situations which arise
- Realize many people in the body are faithfully serving the practical needs today

# Purpose of Deacons

Why? What are we trying to accomplish?

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- Serve the elders
  - Free the elders up to lead spiritually
- Lead in serving the practical (operational) needs of the body
- The Biblical Model: Acts 6
  - Initially set up to diffuse a tense cultural situation regarding the care for widows in the church at Jerusalem
  - Note all the deacons appointed were Greek, not Jewish
- Elders serve to lead; deacons lead to serve.

# Vision for Deacons

## What does “success” look like?

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- Qualifications
  - 1 Timothy 3:8-13
- Characteristics
  - Servant heart
  - Observer of the needs of the body
  - Buffer
  - Unifier
  - Peacemaker (not peacekeeper)
  - Problem solver
- Women as Deacons
  - Romans 16:1-2 Phoebe
  - Cole Community Constitution
    - Article VIII, Section 4

# Vision of a Deacon Council

What does “success” look like?

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- A group of servant leaders working together to:
  - Serve the needs of the elders
  - Serve the needs of each other’s ministry
  - Provide leadership to those serving in a ministry
  - Provide a way to engage for those who want to serve
  - Provide a way for those with needs to get them addressed
- Communicate needs other deacons
- Promote unity and peace
- Help each other solve problems

# Goals for Deacon Council

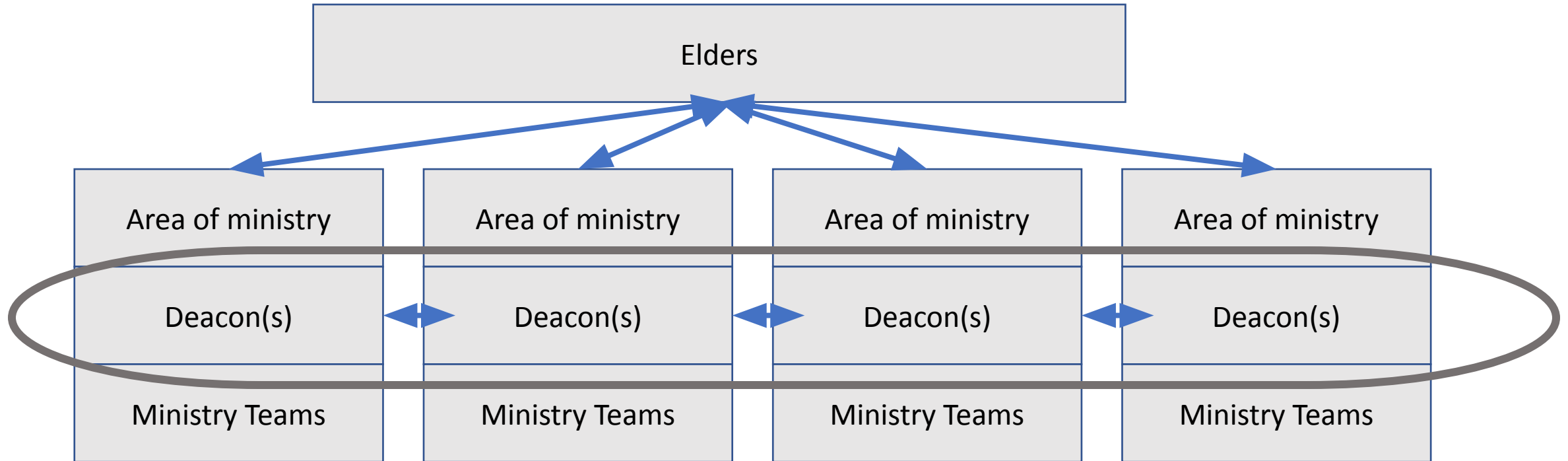
What do we want to achieve?

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- Provide a forum for the elders to communicate practical needs of the body
- Provide a structure to enable area of ministries to organize those who are involved in their areas of ministry
- Work together to support each other's area of ministry where activities have multiple needs
- Encourage each other
- Minimize bureaucracy rather than create another layer
- Not to organize and manage like a business



# Governance Structure



# Areas of Ministry

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- Worship
  - Worship
  - Logistics
- Fellowship
  - Event Coordination
  - Kitchen Maintenance
- Support
  - Service for the body
  - Service for facility
- Discipleship
  - Coordinate Bible studies and growth groups
- Communication / Administration
- Local Outreach
  - Local
  - Glocal
- Global Outreach
  - Field Staff
  - Long Term Workers
  - National Workers

# Role Distinctions

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- Elders
  - Spiritual leadership shepherding
  - Must be able to teach
- Pastors
  - Teachers and shepherds
  - In the future, there may be a pastor to provide shepherding and leadership to an area of ministry and the deacons would serve in conjunction with them.
  - Typically a paid position
- Staff
  - Paid positions

# Selection Process / Term

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- Selection Process
  - Elders recommend candidates
  - Approval of the body
- Terms of Service
  - Three year terms
  - Renewable with assessment
  - Mentor transition

# Next Steps

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- Keep the plane flying
- Start small and adjust as needs arise
- Refine the Deacon Handbook