

Deacon Hospital Visitation Ministry Procedures

First Baptist Church Trussville

PURPOSE

These procedures provide a structured Deacon Hospital Visitation Program that enable participants to understand the expectations of this ministry.

PARTICIPATION

All ordained deacons are strongly encouraged to participate in the program. By agreeing to participate, a deacon commits to continue to serving in the ministry regardless of his status ("Active", "Inactive", or "Emeritus").

DEACON VISITS

Deacons participating in the program are asked to visit FBCT members only. Visits to members having out-patient procedures or to non-members are optional.

SCHEDULE

The program coordinators will develop a six-month visitation calendar that schedules participating deacons for one visit every 4 weeks. As more or fewer deacons participate in the program, the frequency of visits may be adjusted accordingly. Three separate visitation panels are provided: St. Vincent's East; Trinity/Brookwood; and Downtown (St. Vincent /UAB/Children's). Each deacon will visit on his scheduled visit date, and only the hospital for which he is scheduled.

The church receptionist sends a daily e-mail ("Ministers Hospital List" or "Hospital/Prayer List") identifying FBCT members and loved ones in the hospital. Deacon's participating in the program will be included in the distribution. On his scheduled visit date, the deacon should refer to the receptionist's e-mail or call the church office (655-2403) after 9:00 am to see if there are any FBCT members in the hospital. (Note: Deacons are encouraged to call the receptionist because she may be able to share information that could be important for the visit.) He will visit all FBCT members who may be patients in this hospital. If there are no FBCT members in the hospital for which he is scheduled to visit, then he has no visit.

Any deacon who knows in advance that he will not be able to meet his scheduled visit date is asked to find a replacement.

BACKUP PANEL

The Backup Panel consists of Coordinators and any other deacons not on the three main panels. Coordinators and Backup's are all listed on the Hospital Visitation List of deacons currently participating in the visitation program.

COORDINATORS

Coordinators are responsible for administering the program. Each coordinator serves for a month. During that time he will:

- Send weekly e-mail reminders to participants who are schedule to visit the following week. The reminders should be sent by Thursday of each week. Participating deacons who do not use e-mail will be notified by telephone or by other personal contact.
- Find substitutes when a deacon is unable to find a replacement on days when he cannot make his scheduled visit.
- Provide monthly reports for deacons meetings. As a minimum these reports will include the number of visits made and the number of deacons who made visits.
- Deal with any other administrative issue that may arise.

REPORTING

Deacons are not required to provide reports of their visits, but are encouraged to do so especially when there is significant change in the patient's status or a need for special prayer intervention.

Deacons making visits to members having out-patient procedures or non-members whose names appear on the hospital list are asked to notify the coordinator so that their visits may be included in the monthly totals. In addition, deacons are also encouraged to notify the coordinator when they make an unscheduled visit (e.g., one of the deacon's Sunday School Class members may be admitted to the hospital and even though it is not his day to visit, he makes a visit anyway.).