

DEACON MINISTRY

The Deacon Ministry completed its third year of service in 2009 with a full complement of 24 Deacons (actually 26 including two Deacon Couples). We continue to have 13 clusters in Black Mountain, five at Highland Farms, three in Montreat and two in Swannanoa. Our clusters were rearranged this year to place them in tighter geographical settings. This was done at the request of our Interim Pastor, Karen Haak, so the cluster groupings might be available for church wide small group meetings whenever needed. We know this separated some Deacons and members who had become good friends through their visits and contacts over the past two years and we apologize for that.

We continue to meet every other month on the second Tuesday evening at 7:00 PM. We meet to ensure cluster groupings are accurate (keeping additions and deletions up to date), to discuss concerns of Deacons, to share meaningful contacts and, especially, to discuss those in our congregation who have special needs. It allows a Deacon to share information with the Pastor and for the Pastor to make a Deacon aware of information concerning a cluster member. This is done within the group or privately, as appropriate. At some meetings we are able to have special training on topics such as Hospital Visitation and Crisis Ministry. Also, at the meetings, Deacons have an opportunity to grow closer as a unit realizing the special service they provide to members of the congregation.

As mentioned last year, we no longer maintain statistics of the numbers of visits and contacts made by the group. These numbers became so large they were meaningless, especially in Highland Farms, where some Deacons make weekly contacts. We continue to have the policy of making one home visit per year (though we have found this is not desired or necessary in all cases) and to visit homebound members once per quarter. In addition, the Deacons often send birthday cards or notes to their groups and many visit together regularly at church services.

We now have established a three year rotation and, for the first time, had eight members rotate off the Diaconate this year. Some inactive Deacons still assist in special situations where their association with a member can provide a valuable service.

The Deacons have one charge: to provide care for our membership. Our desire is to be the conduit between the members of the church and our Pastor and staff. We hope to maintain good, open communication and to become that person with whom the member will feel comfortable discussing any concern or area of special interest.

The Deacons wish to thank all members of the church for helping us serve you in what we feel is Christ's calling for us at this time at Black Mountain Presbyterian Church.