

DEACON HANDBOOK

The Deacon Ministry of
University Baptist Church
Charlottesville, Virginia

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This Handbook shall be made available to all Active Deacons, and any member of the congregation who requests a copy.

This Handbook should be reviewed at least every two years and updated as needed.

Mission of University Baptist Church

God has called University Baptist Church to minister to the University Community and to the residents of the Greater Charlottesville-Albemarle Community serving as agents of Christ's love and justice for those in need and offering a vital family of faith.

WE ACTUALIZE OUR MISSION THROUGH

- seeking spiritual renewal through worship which is reverent, warm and orderly, and which follows aspects of the Christian calendar;
- maintaining a tradition of sacred music as an essential part of worship, with attention to integrity and quality;
- affirming our unique identity and mission in the university community;
- ministering to area residents and the larger community through age-graded and needs-based ministries;
- ministering to students, teaching them the Christian faith and training them in the vocational Christian ministry through their personal lives and professional careers;
- involving all members in Team Ministry to care for the needs of the congregation;
- being a church that equips persons of all ages and backgrounds with biblical and theological knowledge, Baptist heritage and the resources and methods needed for living effectively as Christians in the world;
- finding ways to become involved in justice issues in our community and to minister to the needs of all of God's children;
- deepening our spiritual effectiveness through small group prayer and an Intercessory Prayer ministry;
- engaging the unchurched through intentional outreach;
- enlarging and strengthening networks of fellowship, and caregiving;
- supplying the necessary leadership, facilities, and financial resources through greater stewardship

INSIGHT INTO UNIVERSITY BAPTIST CHURCH

- We are an ecumenical church. In spirit, UBC is Christian first and Baptist second. While most of our members come from a Baptist background, many have joined UBC from other Christian traditions.
- We practice “open membership.” While we observe baptism by immersion for new believers, we accept other forms of baptism for Christians desiring membership.
- We believe God has gifted and called women and men equally.
- We believe God desires for us to live out our faith in all aspects of life.
- We are affiliated with the Central Virginia Baptist Association, Baptist General Association of Virginia and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.
- Our theology and polity are grounded in the classic Baptist distinctives: Bible Freedom, Individual Freedom, Church Freedom, and Religious Freedom. Of the various Baptist faith messages, we are most closely aligned with the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message.

Bible Freedom affirms that the Bible, under the Lordship of Christ, should be central in the life of the individual, and Christians are both free and obligated to study it.

Individual Freedom, often referred to as the "priesthood of the believer," affirms that each person has the freedom and responsibility to deal with God without being interfered with by creed, clergy, or government.

Church Freedom, often referred to as the "autonomy of the local church," affirms that churches are free, under the Lordship of Christ, to determine their membership and leadership, to ordain whom they see fit, to order their worship and work, and to participate in the larger Body of Christ worldwide.

Religious Freedom affirms freedom of religion, freedom for religion, and freedom from religion, all of which is accomplished best through the separation of church and state.

Role of Deacons

“Deacons are elected and ordained to be the lay ministerial leaders of the congregation. The Active Deacons will be the group with primary responsibility for areas of lay ministry, including ministries to the congregation, evangelism, outreach, discipleship, denominational relations and matters of faith. Together with the Staff Ministers and the Church Council, they will establish the general direction and focus of the church’s life and work. They will be primarily concerned that the congregation be spiritually healthy and fulfill its mission according to its understanding of the will of God.” (Article III 2. of the By-Laws of University Baptist Church)

As a Deacon, you are expected to support the mission of the church and to lead in the achievement of this mission in partnership with the Staff Ministers. You are to lead by presence and example.

1. Deacons should be the lay spiritual leaders of the church
 - a. Support the ministers as servants to the congregation
 - b. Encourage and plan for spiritual growth of the congregation
 - c. Involve the congregation in ministries
2. Deacons should strive to set an example of Christ’s love and teachings
 - a. Participate in the activities and ministries of the church
 - b. Encourage and pray for our ministers
 - c. Greet all who come to worship service, with awareness of those who are visitors
3. Deacons are responsible for the Circle of Caring Teams
 - a. Be team leaders as needed
 - b. Provide training to teams as needed
 - c. Serve on at least 1 team
 - d. Evaluate teams vs. needs of the congregation
 - e. Encourage team participation among the congregation
4. Deacons should be ambassadors for UBC in the community
5. Deacons should support the budget of the church and be attentive to the business of the church without being the business leaders of the church
6. Deacons should be involved in and support the missions and ministries of UBC

Another expectation of Deacons is that they attend a monthly meeting, the day and time of which are set at the August or September meeting to fit best with the most schedules.

Specific Deacon Responsibilities

Circle of Caring

*Deacon Lead Team Ministry

OPERATION

- Members of the congregation will be encouraged to contact the Church Office during regular business hours, use the Circle of Caring email address, or contact the Coordinator at any time to make known various needs. Information will then be shared with all appropriate persons (Team Leaders, ministers etc.).
- Team members from the congregation will have flexibility to serve on a team for whatever time they choose.
- Active Deacons will serve on at least one team each year for no less than a one-year term. Team leaders will coordinate team rosters and add or remove members as needed. Any changes should be communicated to the Coordinator.
- Active Deacons will be asked to lead teams whenever a team leader resigns.
- Teams will be sufficiently large to meet the needs of the congregation and avoid heavy time demands on individual team members.
- A new team may be added when a need is identified, and an existing team may be discontinued when it is no longer needed.
- Training and administrative support will be given to new teams as they are formed.

* For situations where no Team is in place, Deacons will respond as appropriate.

DEACON CIRCLE OF CARING COUNCIL

- The Deacon Circle of Caring Council will consist of three Active Deacons. From the three members the Coordinator will be chosen.
- Deacons who serve on the Council will serve three-year terms. One member of each incoming group of Deacons (who has been elected for a 3-year term) will be selected by the Deacon Nominating Committee to serve on the Deacon Circle of Caring Council.
- The Deacon Circle of Caring Council will meet as needed or as situations arise.
- The Deacon Circle of Caring Council is charged with the overall coordination of the Circle of Caring Teams and, with the concurrence of the Deacons, will modify the charge to various teams, add new teams as appropriate, and discontinue teams as needed.
- The Circle of Caring Council will serve as a resource for team leaders, help troubleshoot problems, serve as coaches, enablers, etc. In addition, the Coordinator will ensure all incoming requests are addressed and follow up with team leaders.

- As Teams are established the Deacon Circle of Caring Council and the team will collaboratively develop the scope of the team's ministry. Teams will organize and define their own operational plans.
- The Deacon Circle of Caring Council will contact team leaders in August and recruit new leaders as needed.
- The Coordinator will summarize team activities and report at the Deacons' meetings and maintain a list of all team members and provide a copy to the Nominating Committee each year.
- The Deacon Circle of Caring Council will establish a budget for the Circle of Caring and present it to the Finance Committee each year.
- The Deacon Circle of Caring Council will be responsible for providing calling cards for team members and a new card design for the Celebrations Team as requested.
- The Deacon Circle of Caring Council will annually evaluate the effectiveness of the Circle of Caring and report their findings to the Active Deacons and to the congregation.

Circle of Caring Teams Active as of March 2015:

Celebrations - To acknowledge special days and significant accomplishments of our members.

Comfort Food - To provide meals for those dealing with issues.

Bereavement - To offer support to our church family in times of grief or loss.

Congregational Care - To stay in touch with UBC members and provide support as needed.

Homebound - To serve the needs of our confined members.

Hospital Visitation - To contact or visit our members in the hospital and other health care facilities.

Small Jobs - To supply helping hands for small projects.

Transportation - To provide rides to church activities and other important places.

Specific Deacon Responsibilities - Continued

Harvest Luncheon

1. At the beginning of the church year the Deacons will set the date for the Harvest Luncheon.
2. The Deacons will design and send invitations to the congregation.
3. All Deacons are expected to help with a luncheon (set up, serve, clean up, etc.) and host a table.
4. It is the Chair of Deacons responsibility, in conjunction with the senior minister, to set the program for the luncheon. This should last no more than 20 to 30 minutes.

Establishing the general direction and focus of the church's life and work

Together with the Staff Ministers and the Church Council, the Active Deacons will review the annual budget, slate of nominees from the Nominating Committee, and other major proposals or initiatives for recommendation to the church before such items are presented for action.

At the beginning of each church year the Deacons will recruit and recommend three people from the church at large to serve on the Nominating Committee and recommend one member of that committee to be the Chair. The Active Deacons will also recommend at least three church members to serve on the Ministerial Relations Service Team. Following approval by the Active Deacons, these names will be presented to the Nominating Committee for inclusion on the Nominating Committee Report.

The Active Deacons, in conjunction with Church Council and Ministers shall be responsible for the development and maintenance of a strategic planning document which establishes goals and priorities for the church during the coming year(s). The plan shall also address and identify priorities which reflect longer term initiatives, plans, ministries and visions for the church. Once prepared/revised, it shall be presented to the congregation for review and approval. Responsible parties are encouraged to use a variety of approaches to develop/revise the plan such as retreats, outside resources, etc.

Fire Safety and Evacuation Plan

Fire safety and evacuation procedures will be reviewed at least once each year at a Deacons' meeting. If you miss this presentation, familiarize yourself with the plans (located in the church office and on the web site). You should know

1. How to use the fire extinguishers and which one to use.
2. The evacuation routes from all parts of the building.
3. The specific duties of Deacons should an emergency evacuation be needed during a Sunday morning worship service – **A card detailing these duties is located under the cushion on the front center pew in the Sanctuary.**

Receiving the Offering and Serving Communion During a Worship Service

1. Check the schedule for collection (this includes service of communion once a month) and note the dates you are scheduled to serve.
2. If you are scheduled and cannot serve on a particular Sunday, make arrangements for another Deacon to substitute for you.
3. On Sunday morning, assemble in the Conference Room at 10:45 am.
4. On Sunday morning, the Lead Deacon (marked with an asterisk [*] on the list) will
 - a. Check to see that the collection plates are in place.
 - b. Check to see that the correct number of Deacons are in attendance and recruit additional Deacons as needed.
 - c. Assign “positions” for offering collection/communion service. Be prepared to give information about what the person in each position does – note that position 1 or 2 will use the microphone to do the “people” part in responses. Use a copy of Deacon Handbook **Attachment 1** for help in making assignments (Copies are located in the top drawer of the small cabinet in the Conference Room).
 - d. Lead the group in prayer before leaving the Conference Room to line up to enter the Sanctuary through the “piano side” door.

Organization

The Active Deacons are to be composed of twenty-one church members, selected as specified in the By-Laws of University Baptist Church, each serving for a three-year term. The Active Deacons will elect their own Chair and other officers.

Deacons' Meetings

1. Meetings will be scheduled once a month. Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed.
2. The Day and Time and Location of the regularly scheduled meetings will be determined by the group of Active Deacons each September for the coming year.
3. Meetings will begin promptly at the designated time and should be concluded in a timely fashion.
4. The August meeting will include all current Active Deacons and the Newly-elected Deacons.

Officers

1. The officers of the Active Deacons shall be a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary.
2. After church-wide Deacon elections are held and the new Deacons are elected, the outgoing Chair of the Active Deacons will appoint a Deacon Officer Nominating Committee of three members from the Deacons rotating off of the Active Deacons. This committee will recommend new officers to the Active Deacons by August of each year. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor.
3. The slate of officers will be voted on at the August meeting each year.
4. Officers will assume their duties effective September 1 following their election in August.

Responsibilities of the Deacon Officers

Chair

1. Moderate at regularly scheduled and other called meetings of the Active Deacons.
2. Serve as a member of Church Council.
3. Furnish the church office with a yearly calendar of all Deacon activities which involve use of the UBC facilities.
4. Put the dates and time of the monthly Deacons' meetings on the church's Master Calendar.
5. Complete a budget-request form distributed by the Finance Committee.
6. Oversee all Deacon projects and ministries (including but not limited to)
 - a. Circle of Caring
 - b. Harvest Luncheon
7. Plan retreats, training sessions, guest speakers, orientations, etc. as needed.
8. Cooperate with the UBC Staff Ministers in leading the Deacons to fulfill the mission of University Baptist Church.

Vice-Chair

1. Moderate at Deacons' meetings in the absence of the Chair.
2. Assist the Chair as needed in all Deacons' meetings.
3. Make up the monthly schedules for Offering Collection and Service of Communion. Distribute the schedule to all Deacons who are scheduled (active and inactive) and give a copy to the church office.
 - a. Active and Inactive Deacons (with their permission) can be put on the schedule.
 - b. At least one Deacon from the choir should be scheduled to help serve communion.
 - c. The Lead Deacon each week should be an Active Deacon and designated with an asterisk (*).
4. Make copies of the Offering and Communion Procedures (Attachment 1 of the Deacon Handbook) and keep a supply of them in the small cabinet in the Conference Room.

Secretary

1. Moderate at Deacons' meetings in the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair.
2. Keep accurate minutes of all meetings. Furnish the Chair with a copy prior to the next meeting.
3. Keep the roll of Deacons present and absent at each meeting. Include this in the meeting minutes.

Nomination, Election, and Ordination of Deacons

Composition of Active Deacons

The Active Deacons will consist of twenty-one church members currently elected to serve for a three-year term. Annually one third of the Deacons will rotate off and be replaced by others elected by the congregation. The election process should be completed in May each year. A Deacon who rotates off the board is not eligible to serve as Deacon again for at least one year.

1. Nomination and Election

All active church members who are at least 18 years of age and living in the central Virginia area are eligible for nomination except those who have served as Deacon within the current organizational year and those who have been designated Deacon Emeritus.

2. In April, the Active Deacons will announce the upcoming election of Deacons. A list of all active members who have not requested to be permanently removed from consideration for active Deacon will be made available to the congregation as well as information on the role of Deacons in the church.

3. There will be a two week window including two Sundays for anyone who feels they have been left off the list by mistake to make that known to the church office. That person's eligibility will be reviewed and a decision made by the Chair of Deacons in conjunction with the Senior Minister.

4. During this two week window, active members may request their name be removed from consideration for active Deacon either for the coming term or permanently by informing the church office of such. The church administrative assistant will remove that person's name from the eligibility list. Anyone who requests to be permanently removed from consideration can reverse that decision at any time other than the current election process.

5. Following this two week period, the church administrative assistant will finalize and publish the Deacon Election Ballot for the coming term. The names on the ballot will be in alpha order by last name on odd years and reversed (z – a) on even years.

6. A letter explaining the qualifications and duties of Deacons, a ballot, and instructions for voting for seven eligible and qualified members will be sent to all active members.

7. Ballots will be collected for no less than two weeks, including two Sundays. Additional ballots will be available during the worship services and may be returned by placing them in the offering plate, dropping them by the church office, calling the church office, by email or by voting online. The ballots are to be counted by the church secretary and verified by the Chair of Deacons.

8. The seven members receiving the largest number of votes and who are willing to serve shall be elected. In the event two or more members receive an equal number of votes for the seventh position, the active Deacons will break the tie. If one of the first seven should decline to serve,

the eighth highest vote getter would be asked to serve. Those elected shall begin duties September 1.

9. Any vacancy in membership in the Active Deacons shall be filled immediately by the next highest vote receiver from the most recent election. A deacon elected to fill a vacancy will be elected for the unexpired term of his/her predecessor in office.

Ordination and Installation

All newly elected Deacons who have never been ordained, either as a Minister or Deacon, by laying on of hands will be so ordained in a service of ordination. The laying on of hands may be done by all ordained Ministers and Deacons. After ordination, all newly-elected Deacons will be installed into the office. A church member elected to be a Deacon, who has been ordained by a church of like polity, may be installed without ordination.

DEACON EMERITUS GUIDELINES

In order to recognize Deacons whose service and contributions have been exemplary, the Active Deacons may recommend to the congregation inactive Deacons who should be distinguished through the designation of Deacon Emeritus.

Guidelines for the position of Deacon Emeritus include:

Qualifications:

Those under consideration by the Active Deacons for the designation of Deacon Emeritus will have:

- A. Expressed a desire to withdraw his or her name from any future elections to the Active Deacons.
- B. Served a minimum of three terms as a Deacon for UBC.
- C. Provided significant service to UBC in his or her capacity as a Deacon.

Implementation:

- A. Nominations for this office shall be made by the Active Deacons and presented for approval to the church conference.
- B. Appropriate recognition will be given to bestow this designation.
- C. A Deacon who is designated Deacon Emeritus may perform duties (e.g. receiving of the offering) on a voluntary basis and may attend Active Deacons' meetings as a non-voting member.
- D. The church clerk will maintain a list of members eligible for Deacon Emeritus status. This list should be reviewed by the active Deacons annually.

DEACON YEARLY CALENDAR

January	Review church budget
February	Review Deacon Handbook and update as needed
March	Deacon nomination process begins
April	Deacon election process continues
May	Deacon election completed for coming church year
June	Chair – Appoint Deacon Nominating Committee for new Deacon Officers and Circle of Caring Council member
July	Deacon Nominating Committee selects nominees for new Deacon Officers and CCC member
August	Newly-elected Deacons attend meeting with current Active Deacons Distribute copies of Deacon Handbook Vote on slate of new officers for upcoming year Ordination/Installation Service can be held Decide on date for Harvest Luncheon All Deacons sign up for at least one Circle of Caring team
September	Assign subgroup to plan and carry out Harvest Luncheon Select three (3) people to serve on the Nominating Committee; designate the Chair
October	Recruit for Circle of Caring Teams as needed Potential Deacon/ Church Council retreat
November	Harvest luncheon
December	Provide the Deacon Ministry budget request to Finance Committee Christmas party

Attachment 1

Deacon Procedure for Receiving the Offering During Worship

1. Six Deacons enter through the door on the piano side of the sanctuary. (Figure 1)
2. Remain standing in front of the front center pew until seated by the Worship Leader.
3. Deacon #1 or #2 holds the microphone and reads during responsive readings.
Microphone switch always stays in "ON" position.
4. When the Hymn of Commitment begins, move to the side pews.
#1, #2 and #3 to the left, #4, #5, #6 to the right (piano side)
5. During the last verse, Deacons #3 and #4 distribute the offering plates to the Deacons on their side.
6. Following the Offertory Prayer, move to the aisles and proceed to pass the offering plates. (Figure 2)
Ushers will collect from the balcony.
7. Deacons #3 and #4 will gather the collection plates at the back of the sanctuary, walk together to the front, and place the collection plates on the communion table.

Figure 1. Entering Sanctuary and Seating during service

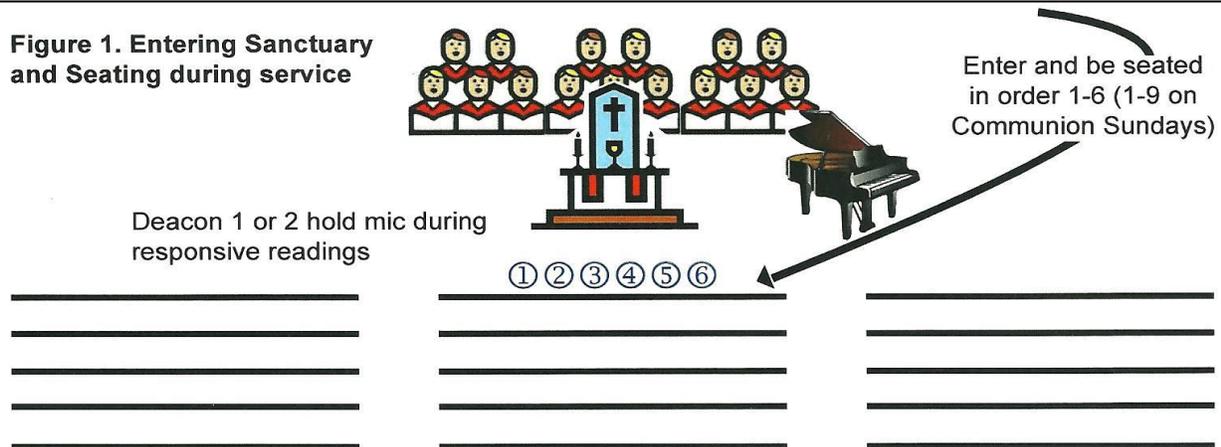
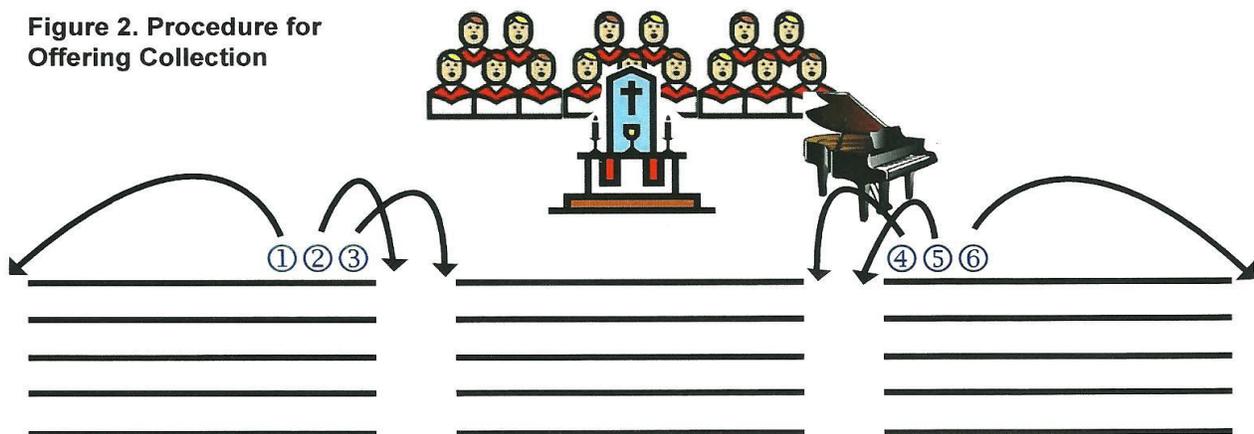


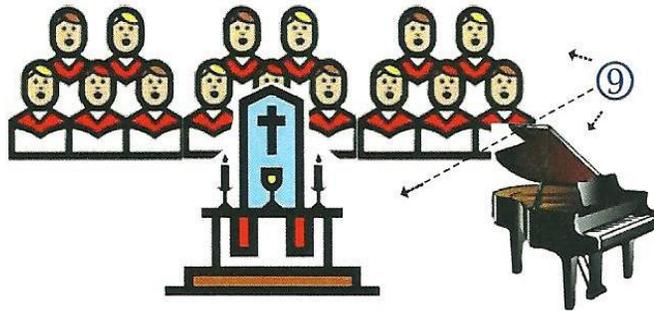
Figure 2. Procedure for Offering Collection



Deacon Procedure for Serving Communion and Receiving the Offering

1. Deacons will enter through the door on the piano side of the Sanctuary. Deacons in the choir will come down from the choir loft after the Anthem and be seated on the front pew.
2. Remain standing in front of the front center pew until seated by the Worship Leader.
3. Deacon #1 or #2 holds the microphone and reads during responsive readings. Microphone switch stays "on."
4. On the Pastor's signal, Deacons rise to receive the Bread. Each Deacon will receive one tray.
5. On the Pastor's signal, Deacons will serve from the positions noted in Figure 1. Deacons #3 and #6 will serve the balcony and the A/V Room and then begin serving from the back of the center section if needed.
6. When all have been served, Deacons will assemble at the rear of the Sanctuary and walk to the front (#1, #2, #3, and #4 down the left aisle; #5, #6, #7 and #8 down the right aisle; #9 will join the group at the front), resuming their positions on the front pew.
7. The Pastors will collect trays from the Deacons, signal for them to sit, and serve the Deacons before inviting the Congregation to participate in partaking of the Bread.
8. Repeat Steps 4-7 for The Cup.
9. When the Hymn of Commitment begins, move to the side pews. 1, #2, #3 and #4 to the left, #5, #6, #7, #8 and #9 to the right (piano side). Deacons #1, #8, and #9 will not participate in offering collection.
10. During the last verse, Deacons #4 and #5 distribute the offering plates to Deacons #2, #3, #6 and #7.
11. Following the Offertory Prayer, move to the aisles and proceed to pass the offering plates. (Figure 2)
12. Deacons #4 and #5 will gather the collection plates at the back of the sanctuary and walk together to the front, placing the collection plates on the communion table.

Figure 3. Positions for serving Communion



#9 Should be a Choir Deacon. Serve choir, instrumentalist(s), and others on the platform.
*IMPORTANT: ALBA, BARBARA, GUEST SPEAKERS

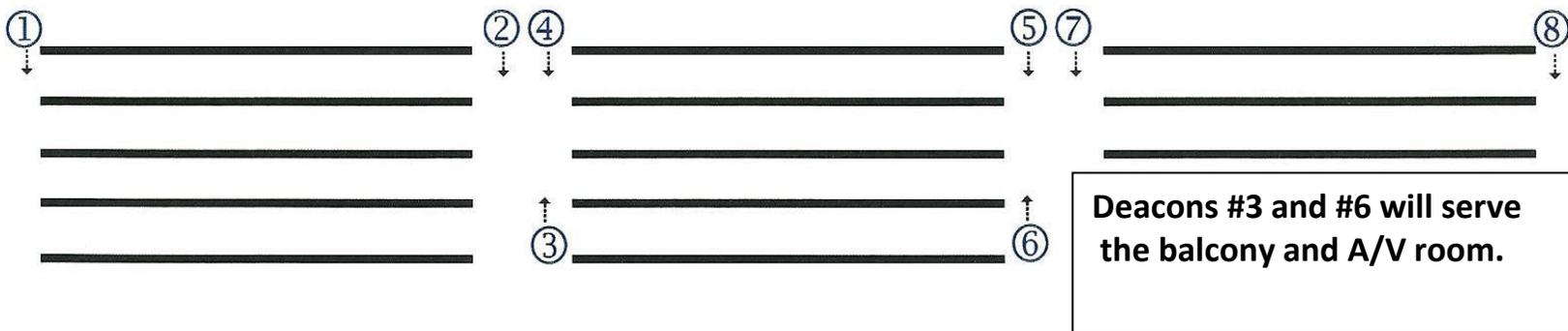


Figure 4. Procedure for Offering Collection on Communion Sundays

