

---

# QUALIFICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DEACONS AND TRUSTEES

---

*This statement is the report of the committee to study eligibility criteria for deacons and trustees in Assemblies of God churches. The report was adopted by the Assemblies of God General Presbytery, August 17, 1976.*

---

## **Deacons and Trustees**

### **Introduction**

God's method by which the church of Jesus Christ has moved forward down through the centuries is that God selected a person to be the leader (the pastor) and then gave the leader others (deacons) to serve as support to the leader and as fellow servants to the congregation.

It is understood that God has always chosen to give the leadership the vision for the work of the Lord. For a pastor and board to work together for the enlargement of the kingdom of God is a beautiful experience.

### **Terminology Used With Church Boards**

#### *Deacons*

The deacons are chosen from among the congregation to "serve the church" in the practical, spiritual, and temporal matters of that body of believers.

#### *Trustees*

The trustees are chosen from among the congregation to be custodians of the church property and serve as signatories.

#### *Board of Advisors*

The Board of Advisors shall be chosen to assist the pastor in those churches which have an insufficient number of adults to qualify as deacons.

#### *Official Board*

The pastor and deacons shall be the official board of the local church. In the event a church does not have a Board of Deacons, the official board shall be that board elected to serve with the pastor.

---

## Qualifications

### *Deacons*

A person's life and character must pass certain criteria before qualifying one to serve. The Scriptures dictate the qualifications.

1. The deacon must be chosen from "among you" (Acts 6:3), a lay member of the local congregation for at least 1 year.
2. The deacon must be of good reputation, "of honest report" (Acts 6:3, KJV). The confidence and trust of the congregation and community are essential.
3. The deacon is in a spiritual ministry, "full of the Spirit" (Acts 6:3), according to Acts 2:4, and continuing to be "filled" (Ephesians 5:18).
4. The deacon is required to make decisions in practical and temporal matters as well as giving support to the pastor in spiritual matters, so sound direction and wise counsel need "wisdom" (Acts 6:3).
5. The deacon must be willing to be involved in the work of God through the church; the deacon is to "serve" (Acts 6:2, KJV).
6. The deacon is to be "sincere" (1 Timothy 3:8), i.e., steadfast and serious.
7. The deacon is "not double-tongued" (1 Timothy 3:8, KJV), i.e., must be as good as one's word, dependable.
8. The deacon is "not indulging in much wine" (1 Timothy 3:8), but is temperate, not depending on physical stimulants.
9. The deacon is "not pursuing dishonest gain" (1 Timothy 3:8), but faithful with the tithe, generous, and not motivated by money.
10. The deacon is proper in doctrine, keeping "hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience" (1 Timothy 3:9), fully subscribing to the tenets of faith of the Assemblies of God.
11. The deacon is a mature believer, "and let these also first be proved" (1 Timothy 3:10, KJV).
12. The deacon has not experienced matrimonial mix-ups, but is in a faithful, monogamous marriage (1 Timothy 3:12).
13. Deacons lead their homes in Christ, "ruling their children and their own houses well" (1 Timothy 3:12).
14. Spouses of deacons (or deaconesses) must be an example of the Christian life, "not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything" (1 Timothy 3:11).
15. At the discretion of the local congregation, a female meeting other stated qualifications may be selected to serve as a deaconess.

---

### *Trustees*

Trustee boards in churches are frequently granted capacities similar to that of a Board of Deacons. If the Board of Trustees is granted such capacities, it is recommended that the qualifications shall be the same as a Board of Deacons.

### *Board of Advisors*

Members of the Board of Advisors shall subscribe to the tenets of faith of the Assemblies of God, support the local church in attendance and finances, and shall have been approved by the district officary.

### *Official Board*

If the official board is other than a Board of Deacons or Board of Trustees, the qualifications shall be determined by the constitution and bylaws of the local congregation as long as the scriptural standards of leadership are maintained.

## **Relationships of All Boards**

### *To the Pastor*

The board member is the pastor's advisor, helper, and prayer partner, a loyal supporter of the pastor, assisting in fulfilling the vision and goals God has given the pastor for the church.

The pastor is the chairperson and a voting member of the church boards.

### *To Each Other*

Board members are a team, working together within the scope of their assignment with the view to achieving the successful advancement of the church.

Board members should seek to develop a close relationship through mutual prayer, worship, and cooperative co-laboring with the pastor and staff.

### *To the Congregation*

Board members should promote goodwill in the congregation and should strengthen the people's confidence in the pastor's leadership. The spiritual interest and welfare of the congregation are their concern and responsibility.

### *To the Community*

Board members should be the church's public relations people in the community. Their lives should be a testimony of true Christianity, conducting themselves in a manner that will honor Christ.

---

## **Responsibilities of Boards**

It is generally understood that the pastor, by virtue of office, is president of the corporation and chair of the board.

### *Deacons*

The deacons shall act in an advisory capacity with the pastor in all matters pertaining to the assembly in its spiritual life and in the administration of the ordinances. They shall act in the examination of applicants for membership and also in the administration of church discipline.

At the discretion of the pastor, individual board members may be assigned portfolios of responsibility in the functioning of the local church.

It is expected that the official board shall serve as the nominating committee for selection of a pastor.

### *Trustees*

The trustees serve as the official, legal servants in matters of business. Normally the president (pastor) and the secretary of the Board of Trustees sign legal documents in behalf of the church, particularly as property and financial contracts are involved. The trustees, serving as custodians of the church property, shall include its proper maintenance and insurance, etc., and shall act on behalf of the church in selling and acquiring property.

### *Board of Advisors*

Inasmuch as the district officary serves as the official board of the local assembly when a Board of Advisors serves, this board shall act in an advisory capacity to the pastor in the routine functioning of the local church.

### *Official Board*

The official board shall serve as it has been defined in the above guidelines.

## **Appendage**

### *Elder or Eldership*

After research, we conclude, because of the use of the word in the original Greek (Acts 20:17,28; 1 Timothy 5:17; James 5:14, etc.), that the words “elder” or “eldership” refer to the office of pastor, bishop, or overseer. It is beyond the scope of our assignment to speak to this office.

---

*Process by Which Eligibility Is Determined*

- A. When a nominating committee is provided for in the local constitution and bylaws, the following procedure is recommended:
  - 1. Spiritual qualifications shall be considered as stated under “Qualifications.”
  - 2. The nominee shall be one who faithfully supports the local church in attendance and finances.
  - 3. The nominee should understand the Assemblies of God church government.
  - 4. Before a nominee is presented, the pastor should discuss philosophy and vision and determine the nominee’s willingness to serve.
- B. The selection of board members shall be by a vote of the local congregational membership after nominees have been approved.

**Conclusion**

The pastor is God’s gift to the church; board members are the church’s gift to the pastor.

©1976 by the Assemblies of God  
Gospel Publishing House  
Springfield, Missouri 65802  
Printed in the United States of America

Gospel Publishing House Catalog # 34-4171

Web site: <http://www.ag.org> E-mail: info@ag.org Phone: (417) 862-2781