

**Fairmount Presbyterian Church  
Care Council - Deacons' meeting  
Wednesday 5/6/26 at 5:30pm**

Attending: Steph Washlock, Carol Adrienne, Lisa Cameron, Walter Cha, Nate Kruse, Nikkie Monah, Amy Seekely, Julie Egge, Gary Maddox, Oona Moorehead, Pastor Lindsay, Jim Dakins  
Absent: Mia Faxon, Ginny Greggor, Sunday Uka

\*Opening Prayer - lead by Carol Adrienne

\*Round the Table

**\*Meeting schedule for 2026**

Wednesday February 4<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-6:30 pm, and with All Councils and Session from 6:30-7:30  
Wednesday April 1st, 5:30-6:30 pm  
Wednesday May 6<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-6:30 pm  
Wednesday August 5<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-6:30 pm  
Wednesday October 7<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-6:30 pm, and with All Councils and Session from 6:30-7:30 pm  
Other meetings if needed can be called

**\*Event schedule for 2026**

Breaking Bread - Feb. 1, March 1, May 3 (nothing in April - Easter)  
Mardi Gras - Tues. Feb. 17  
Honor Lunch - May 3 (during Breaking Bread)  
Strawberry Festival - June 7th after worship  
Celebrate Sunday - September 13

\*Theology and hospitality- lead by Pastor Lindsay, see page 3-6. Homework due at the August 5th meeting.

\*Deacon for the Day - Steph reviewed responses ranged from highly uncomfortable to ready to go. Carol, Lindsay and Steph discussed. The program is something for the Deacons to work towards, but we are not there yet.

\*Budget Review -Steph reported, did not have the report pulled. Did spend about \$600 on Honor Brunch

\*Benevolence Fund Use - 2 requests filled 1. \$200 in Giant Eagle gift cards, helped get rent covered by another means. 2. UHCH group \$400 for programming. Request made to have a way to share with congregation when funds are used. Will need to be discussed.

\*Nominating Committee - Lisa and Oona had emailed interest in joining the Nominating Committee. Walter willing to be on committee if needed. Lisa and Oona are still interested. Motion by Steph to elect Lisa and Oona to represent the Deacons on the Nomination Committee. Motioned seconded by Carol Discussion - none. All in favor. None opposed, none abstained.

\*Updates from ministry areas - Lisa reviewed her report, see page 7. Julie reported May Birthday cards were completed. Personnel Committee is looking at a PT (10 hours/week)

Pastor to assist with pastoral care. Reminder of assisting with summer communion - sign up will be emailed to Deacons. Link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A054CA4AF2CAAFC1-62494703-2026#/>

\*Honor Dinner - Thank you. Noted that with all the servers, the food line filling the plates got behind.

\*Strawberry Festival - plan. Oona will reach out for ice cream from Mason's Creamery. If they are not able to help, will get ice cream from GFS. Steph to check on supplies, and cake ordering. Time for Strawberry cutting on Saturday and set up of tables/chairs/ bouncy house. Rocket car has been ordered. Youth will be doing face painting.

\*Closing Prayer - Carol

\*Picture time :) - please head to the Sanctuary for Tyler to take picture for the shadow box in hall.

## The Theology of Party Planning

May 6, 2026

### Deacon's meeting

Several folks have asked for more Deacon training opportunities, so tonight we're going to do some theological training. Now I know that can sound daunting to some folks, but you are spiritual leaders in the congregation, and theology is something that everyone can do.

I've also heard some folks talk about how the Deacons are "just party planners" in a dismissive sort of way, which I find very challenging, and I want to give some context on that, as much of this meeting will also be spent planning our congregation's next party – Strawberry Festival.

The primary theological concept that is the foundation of party planning, at least how we want to do it here at the church, is hospitality. In the New Testament the word "hospitality" is translated from the Greek word *philoxenia*, which means love of strangers. As we see time and time again in scripture, hospitality is a way of offering an invitation and deep caring for the needs of both strangers and friends.

Take for example the wedding at Cana in John's gospel. (have someone read John 2:1-11) This is Jesus' first miracle in this gospel. Jesus' mother seems to know that Jesus has a sort of supernatural ability, and she is concerned about the wedding party. She teaches Jesus, or perhaps models or reminds him, of the importance of community gatherings and celebrations, and supporting the family who is providing hospitality for all these people. She instructs him to help this celebration continue. And he goes an additional step by making the wine is good. He's showing honor and care.

(have someone read Matthew 14:13-21 – Feeding of the 5,000) Here is another example of Jesus offering hospitality. Not only does Jesus welcome people to him, and heal those who are sick. When night falls the disciples want to send everyone away to find their own food. But Jesus shows them another way. Jesus instructs them to tend to all the needs of these strangers by finding a way to feed them. Here is another one of Jesus' miracles. But I can't help but wonder if the real miracle of this story is the way that 5,000 people shared the resources they had and were given. That perhaps it's not so much about Jesus magically multiplying a few fish into a million more fish, but the people understanding that they had been formed into a community, and so bring out whatever they had to share among this crowd so that all would be cared for.

In Luke we hear Jesus teach about hospitality in another way. (have someone read Luke 14:7-14) You cannot truly offer hospitality unless you do so with humility. We don't host church parties with the expectation of receiving something back. We invite guests, both long time members of

our church and folks who are more peripheral to enjoy these gifts and celebration together. And in that, experience the presence of the Holy in our midst.

There are lots of stories about hospitality in the Bible. Can anyone think of another example?

- o Sarah and Abraham offering hospitality to the angels

- o Hebrews 13 Let mutual affection continue. 2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.

- o God providing manna in the wilderness to all the complainers!

We could go on all day! Hospitality, loving the stranger, is a foundational biblical way of being.

When we were in COVID, we weren't allowed to be together. We had to think of new ways to be community and show hospitality. At some point I started realizing we needed to start celebrating things, almost anything – to remind us that God was with us, we were still a family even in diaspora. And so I, along with the Deacons at the time, started to figure out how we could do things like drive through communion, and drive through strawberry festival. How to make videos and send encouraging mail. Jessie and I would joke that my new title was going to be the Associate for Party Planning.

And as we began to emerge from COVID, our priority as spiritual leaders of the congregation, was on bringing people back together. And so we planned for the events we had done in the past like Strawberry Festival and Celebrate Sunday, and we started new gatherings like Breaking Bread meals. Through those gatherings we were able to practice not only hospitality, but many other theological concepts, which continue today. Things like joy, marking of milestones, acknowledging the full range of emotions, including grief. We practice vulnerability and caring for one another. We've made strangers from friends, and welcomed a whole host of new members and regular attenders to our midst.

Because of that emphasis and the work that several classes of Deacons and others from the congregation have done, we are now in a place where we're starting to ask questions about what else we might be doing to care for the community. We're asking those questions because we are more ready for them. But also, we have work to do as spiritual leaders to prepare ourselves for it.

There's a saying attributed to Dorothy Day – "Everybody wants a revolution, but nobody wants to do the dishes." In many ways Deacons are the ones who do the dishes. Behind the community events and meals we offer is a whole lot of logistical work and dishes. And that is important work! Let me tell you that the only reason I ate dinner tonight was because 50 some years ago Nan Pfeifer came up with a recipe for Hot Chicken Salad, and a team of folks made it, served it, and wrapped up the leftovers and put them in the fridge downstairs – and I love a 1950's chicken

casserole like I can't even tell you! And in the midst of a busy day and night, there was a meal down there at the ready.

But what makes our logistical planning and hospitality different from that of the "hospitality industry" is our biblical foundation, and understanding that through those acts, we come to know and experience Jesus more closely and share God's love with those in our midst.

So that's why we do so much of what we do. But it isn't all that we do. There are many ways for us to share God's love in our church community and beyond. And so over the course of the next few months we'll be exploring more of those ideas and practicing the spiritual side of it so that we each become more comfortable in

this role of Deacon that you have been asked to take on, and find the ways that your gifts can be lived out in this role of spiritual leader.

So.... I have an assignment for you. (explain homework handout)

We're going to make time in our meetings going forward for more of this kind of theological conversation and training. Some topics I've got in mind are around communion and the practice of coming to the table (not an altar), prayer, visitation. If you have ideas, please let me know! I'd love to hear from you more about the things you'd like more information about or to talk about together.

## Theology of Party Planning: Hospitality in Action

Deacon's meeting May 6, 2026

Homework!

Between now and our next Deacon's meeting, look for places where you have seen or experienced some of the theological concepts we talked about within hospitality.

Things like:

showing love for the stranger

finding joy

naming gratitude

marking milestones in community

honoring one another

caring for people (including yourself) experiencing grief

doing the dishes

Take some time to make note of these experiences. You might do that by answering questions such as:

- What experiences did you have where these theological concepts showed up?
- What did it feel like when I offered hospitality/joy/gratitude/care?
- What did it feel like when someone did these things for me?
- Is there a Bible story, or passage from scripture that comes to mind when you think of this experience – either in the context of the experience itself, or as instruction/encouragement for engaging in this experience?

At our next meeting we'll take some time to talk about your observations, as together we practice thinking and talking theologically!

May 6, 2026

Care Council

Member Care Report (Meals / Cards / Follow-Up)

Get Well Cards were mailed to four church members and a sympathy card sent to the family of one church member.

Meal train was set up for one member by Rev. Lindsay on May 3rd who underwent surgery last week. As of 5/5/26, one meal had been delivered with five dates available for additional meals. Emails were sent to the Deacons and an ad-hoc church member team with the Meal Train link requesting sign up for meals if able.

Total Meals Provided: 14

Total Cards Sent: 14

Member /Deacon Follow Up: 5

Submitted by,

Lisa Cameron