

### Process Notes

PROJECT this slide while participants are entering the workshop.

### Content Notes



The logo for the OPC Diaconal Summit II, featuring the letters 'opc' in a stylized font with a blue and green background.

### Agenda

- ☐ The Two Leadership Bodies
- ☐ The “Why?” of Cooperation
- ☐ The “How?” of Cooperation
- ☐ Case Study Exercises
- ☐ Case Study Debriefing
- ☐ Summary

06/07/12      Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation      2

### Process Notes

INTRODUCE the agenda.

### Content Notes

We will recognize first that there are ordinarily two leadership bodies in every Presbyterian church: the Session and the Diaconate.

Under the heading “The Why of Cooperation” we’ll be considering the biblical basis for elder deacon cooperation, and why it’s so important

Under the heading “The How of Cooperation,” we’ll be looking at what this cooperation looks like in the ongoing ministry of elders and deacons

The Cases Studies will give us opportunity to evaluate real-life diaconal situations and determining the level of session-deacon cooperation needed.

Before we’re finished, we’ll seek to sum up our findings so that you can put them to work in your own churches.



Diaconal  
Summit II

## Workshop Overview

*Helping deacons  
develop  
strategies for  
working in  
concert with  
their elders in  
diaconal  
ministry.*

**Objectives**  
By the end of this workshop you will be able to:

- ☐ Describe the *nature* of diaconal ministry in relation to the Session
- ☐ Describe the biblical *basis* for elder-deacon cooperation
- ☐ Identify *formal structures* of elder-deacon cooperation
- ☐ Identify *informal patterns* of elder-deacon cooperation
- ☐ Recognize *levels of cooperation* required by various situations

06/07/12      Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation      3

### Process Notes

DESCRIBE the overall intent of the workshop.


CLICK to reveal the specific learning objectives.

BRIEFLY introduce each objective.

### Content Notes

Here's how we hope this workshop will be of help to you as deacons in your local church.







## Presbyterian Church Leadership

Two leadership bodies

- Session
- Diaconate



 What can happen if these two bodies don't work well together?

06/07/12      Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation      4

### Process Notes

### Content Notes

In historic Presbyterianism, there are two bodies of leadership:

- The Session (the pastor and elders)
- And the Diaconate

The name Presbyterian refers to the fact that elders (presbuteros) are the ultimate authorities over the church; however, the elders share their leadership and ministry with the diaconate.

Failing to think about and act intentionally on this results in a couple of common scenarios. Some sessions and diaconates “do their own thing.” Other sessions and diaconates constantly “get in each other’s lanes.”





## Workshop Focus

- **Why** elders and deacons **must** cooperate.
- **How** elders and deacons **can** cooperate.



06/07/12      Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation      5

### Process Notes

Briefly REVIEW the slide.

TRANSITION to the next section – the Basis for Cooperation.


### Content Notes

Our first question is “Why must elders and deacons cooperate?,” so let’s talk first about why a close working relationship between elders and deacons is so important

To do that, we’ll need to consider three things:

- why deacons exist
- what deacons do
- who deacons help





Diaconal Summit II

## Why Cooperate?

**#1 - Because of why deacons exist:**

To be assistants to the elders.

*"Deacon" comes from the Greek word diakonos meaning "servant."*

<sup>1</sup> In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. <sup>2</sup> So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. <sup>3</sup> Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them <sup>4</sup> and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

<sup>5</sup> This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. <sup>6</sup> They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

**Acts 6: 1-6**

06/07/12

Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation

6

### Process Notes

REVIEW the slide.

REQUEST that people turn to Acts 6: 1-6.  
MENTION that this is likely a familiar passage for them.

CLICK to reveal the verse. Then READ (or ask a volunteer to read it).

EXPLAIN/DISCUSS the "growing pains" the church was experiencing and how they solved the problem.

ASK/DISCUSS: What does this imply about the need for cooperation between elders and deacons?

### Content Notes

In early part of Acts, the young Church is experiencing "growing pains": you recall that many in the church were donating large amounts of money to church leaders. This apparently gave rise to a situation in which the apostles were regularly distributing to widows.

### Content Notes, *continued*

This is good! The Church is taking care of the needy, as God had always required, but there were apparently some cracks in the system: certain widows were left out.

It's possible this was due to certain prejudices – certain widows thought this.

It's also possible it was simply due to honest men becoming overwhelmed.

Solution? The apostles acknowledged "We've been trying to do too much, and we need to stop. Our main calling is to preach, pray and pastor men's souls, and we need to get back to that. So let's make arrangements for other men to take on this ministry of "serving tables" (vs. 2).

Note: word is "serve" from which we get "deacon." Don't think of "waiters" – but probably those at "money tables." (i.e., to distribute money and/or food to those in need.)


Thus, we are right to think of these 7 men as the first deacons of the NT church. And they came into existence in order to assist the elders in their work.

The elders recognized that the Church's care of widows was ultimately their responsibility, but they needed help in carrying out this work.

**Point:** Consider the implications of this for cooperation between elders and deacons:

if the whole purpose of the diaconate is to provide assistance to the elders, then there needs to be a close working relationship to maximize that assistance.





Diaconal Summit II

## Why Cooperate?, *continued*

**#1 - Because of why deacons exist:**

To be assistants to the elders.

*"Deacon" comes from the Greek word diakonos meaning "servant."*

<sup>1</sup> In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. <sup>2</sup> So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. <sup>3</sup> Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them <sup>4</sup> and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

<sup>5</sup> This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. <sup>6</sup> They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

**Acts 6: 1-6**

06/07/12

Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation

7

### Process Notes

REVIEW the slide.

REQUEST that people turn to Acts 6: 1-6.  
MENTION that this is likely a familiar passage for them.

CLICK to reveal the verse. Then READ (or ask a volunteer to read it).

EXPLAIN/DISCUSS the "growing pains" the church was experiencing and how they solved the problem.

ASK/DISCUSS: What does this imply about the need for cooperation between elders and deacons?

### Content Notes

In early part of Acts, the young Church is experiencing "growing pains": you recall that many in the church were donating large amounts of money to church leaders. This apparently gave rise to a situation in which the apostles were regularly distributing to widows.

### Content Notes, *continued*

This is good! The Church is taking care of the needy, as God had always required, but there were apparently some cracks in the system: certain widows were left out.

It's possible this was due to certain prejudices – certain widows thought this.

It's also possible it was simply due to honest men becoming overwhelmed.

Solution? The apostles acknowledged "We've been trying to do too much, and we need to stop. Our main calling is to preach, pray and pastor men's souls, and we need to get back to that. So let's make arrangements for other men to take on this ministry of "serving tables" (vs. 2).

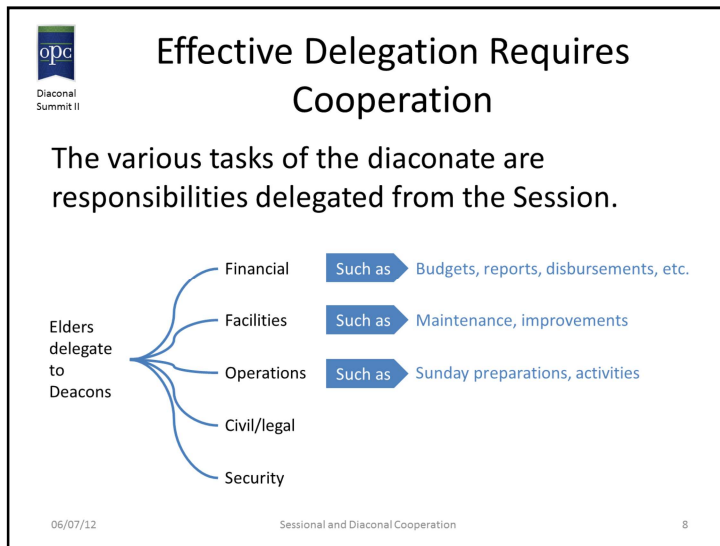
Note: word is "serve" from which we get "deacon." Don't think of "waiters" – but probably those at "money tables." (i.e., to distribute money and/or food to those in need.)

Thus, we are right to think of these 7 men as the first deacons of the NT church. And they came into existence in order to assist the elders in their work.

The elders recognized that the Church's care of widows was ultimately their responsibility, but they needed help in carrying out this work.

**Point:** Consider the implications of this for cooperation between elders and deacons:

if the whole purpose of the diaconate is to provide assistance to the elders, then there needs to be a close working relationship to maximize that assistance.



### Process Notes

EXPLAIN that diaconal responsibilities are not specifically detailed in the NT.

SUMMARIZE the diaconal office as viewed in Presbyterianism.

CLICK to reveal the first section of the graphic. You may wish to describe the financial responsibilities.

CLICK to reveal the “facilities” responsibilities.

CLICK to reveal the rest of the diagram.

DISCUSS how these responsibilities align with participants’ roles.

*(Transition)* Acts 6: 1-6 not only reveals “why deacons exist” (because elders need help), this passage also reveals what deacons (primarily) do: they lead in mercy ministry.

### Content Notes

Note: In the rest of the NT there is comparatively little specific information about diaconal responsibility (especially compared to that of the eldership).

Why? Diaconal responsibilities are very broad: they must do what is necessary to enable the elders to focus on the Word and prayer.

It’s for this reason that Presbyterianism views the diaconal office as including a very broad range of practical, administrative functions that the elders would otherwise be involved with


- of financial matters: budgeting, reports, disbursing funds, etc
- of buildings and facilities: maintenance and improvements
- of Church operations and activities: Sunday preparations, etc.
- of civil and legal matters affecting the church
- of the security of the property:

Geneva: one of the deacons responsible to “remove from the place those who loiter.”

Therefore, there must be a close working relationship in order for elders to delegate things to deacons. The most effective delegation comes in a close working relationship.







## Why Cooperate?

#2 - Because of what deacons do:

Lead in a ministry of **deed** that is inseparable from a ministry of **Word**.

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:  
<sup>11</sup> whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies.  
**1 Peter 4:10-11**

06/07/12
Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation
9

### Process Notes

INTRODUCE the focus of the deacon (caring for material needs – “mercy ministry”)

CLICK to reveal the scripture verse. READ (or ask for a volunteer to read it).

DISCUSS the two “arms” of Christian ministry (“word” and “deed”).

### Content Notes

Mercy ministry = caring for the material needs of the members of the church, and beyond.

The diaconate is particularly concerned for the physical needs of people.

The offices of Elder and deacon represents the two basic kinds of ministry: word and deed.

Scripture often speaks of our ministry as Christians this way, and even divides our gifts. (See 1 Peter 4:10-11)

The two “arms” of Christian ministry are word and deed; thus, the two offices of elder and deacon.

The office of elder embodies the church’s responsibility to preach and teach the gospel

The office of deacon embodies the church's responsibility for compassion and generosity.



## Effective Ministry Requires Cooperation

### Word & Deed Ministry Go Together!

Primary Focus	
<b>Elders</b>	Address spiritual needs
<b>Deacons</b>	Address physical needs

<sup>17</sup> But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? <sup>18</sup> Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

**1 John 3:17-18**

06/07/12
Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation
10

### Process Notes

EXPLAIN that word and deed ministry can be distinguished but not separated.

REVIEW the “typical” or primary roles of elders and deacons.

CLICK to reveal the balance/relationship between the two.

ASK what this means for elder-deacon cooperation.

### Content Notes

But this is important: Though word and deed ministry can be distinguished, they can't be separated in true Christian ministry.

Elders must also demonstrate their love in tangible ways, with concern for material needs

Deacons must also give words of encouragement and counsel along with material provisions.

(See 1 John 3:17-18)

Point: Consider the implications of this for cooperation between elders and deacons:

If the ministry of word and deed must go together, then the ministry of elders and deacons must work closely together.

Many (most?) people who need diaconal assistance also have deeper spiritual needs; thus, diaconal ministry usually calls for ministry of both word AND deed. (See the book *When Helping Hurts* for more on this.)





## Focus of this Workshop

- **Why** elders and deacons **must** cooperate.
- **How** elders and deacons **can** cooperate.



06/07/12

Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation

11

### Process Notes


Briefly REVIEW the slide.

### Content Notes

We've considered the "Why" of elder and deacon cooperation.

Our second question is "How can elders and deacons cooperate?," so let's talk now about what a close working relationship between elders and deacons looks like.






## Cooperate How?

# Formal

- Regular Diaconal reports to the session
- Sessional liaison at all deacon meetings
- Joint meetings of elders with deacons



*In what ways (formal or informal) does your current diaconate work with your session?*

06/07/12
Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation
12

### Process Notes

INTRODUCE the difference between formal and informal.

CLICK to reveal levels of formal cooperation. INTRODUCE the level briefly (but keep in mind that the following slides will explore each in more detail).

CLICK to reveal levels of informal cooperation. INTRODUCE the level briefly (but keep in mind that the following slides will explore each in more detail).

OPTION: ASK how these levels fit the participants' current ministry. You may wish to briefly discuss which level is most often employed.

### Content Notes

Cooperation between elders and deacons should be both formal and informal:

- There should be formal, structured ways in which the two bodies regularly communicate with each other in order to coordinate their ministry efforts: I'm calling this "formal cooperation," and we'll look at three examples of this.
- There should also be a pattern of more informal, spontaneous communication between individual elders and deacons in response to specific ministry situations: I'm calling this "informal cooperation," and we'll look at three examples of this as well.



## Formal Cooperation:

### A. Regular Reports to Session

**Purpose:** To keep Session informed

**How**

Share Deacon meeting minutes

**In-person reports**

- Recent ministry activities
- Financial disbursements
- Potential pastoral needs

[Sample report](#)

06/07/12
Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation
13

### Process Notes

EXPLAIN two approaches for keeping the session updated.

EXPLAIN the importance of keeping and sharing meeting minutes.

CLICK to reveal the “in-person” options and DISCUSS the importance of briefing the session in –person (to allow additional discussion/dialog).

REFER to the sample report document.  
Option: CLICK the link to display the report.

### Content Notes

A most basic way to promote cooperation between elders and deacons is for deacons to bring regular reports to the Session on the work of the diaconate.

If the whole reason for the existence of the diaconate is to assist the session in their ministry leadership, then the Session should be regularly updated on the work of the deacons. This is a key responsibility of the diaconate. One very basic mechanism of reporting is for the diaconate to maintain minutes of all of its meetings, and to provide copies of those minutes to the Session after each meeting.

An even more intentional mechanism for reporting is for the diaconate to send a representative from its number to each Session meeting, for the purpose of bringing a report on the work of the diaconate.

Such a report should include a summary of the recent ministry activities of the diaconate, the financial disbursements that have been made and to whom, and particularly an indication of those diaconal situations that also entail pastoral needs.

Delivering this report in person allows the Session to ask questions of and provide input to the diaconate through its representative. An example of such a diaconal report to the Session is included in the notebook.





## Formal Cooperation:

### B. Sessional Liaison to Diaconate

**Purpose:** To provide ongoing communication

*How*

Regular participation in deacon meetings by a designated session member





06/07/12
Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation
14

### Process Notes

EXPLAIN how the session liaison can facilitate communication both ways between the deacons and the session.

REFER to the sample report document.

Option: CLICK the link to display the report.

### Content Notes

Another way to facilitate cooperation between the Session and diaconate in a structured way is for a member of the Session to attend all deacon meetings.

The origin of the diaconate in Acts 6 indicates that in an ongoing way the Session will, in the pursuit of its business, need to delegate to the diaconate certain ministry needs. This in itself will call for ongoing communication from the Session to the diaconate, which is best done through a personal representative of the Session.

Additionally, such a liaison can serve to update the diaconate on the broader work of the Session about which all the officers of the church should be aware. It is particularly ideal for maximizing the communication between the two bodies if the Sessional liaison to the diaconate is the pastor.





## Formal Cooperation:

### C. Joint Elder-Deacon Meetings

**Purpose:** Prayer, planning, problem-solving

**How**

Periodic meetings  
(at least once/year)

- Prayer
- Presentations
- Book discussions
- Brainstorming
- Etc.



06/07/12
Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation
15

### Process Notes

EXPLAIN the importance of holding periodic joint meetings between the session and deacons.

DISCUSS some of the agenda items/activities or areas of focus.

TRANSITION to the next section – Informal Cooperation. POINT OUT that the formal cooperation was within/between the elders and deacons. The informal cooperation will address ministry to specific individuals.

### Content Notes

One other way to facilitate cooperation between Sessions and Diaconates in a structured way is simply to schedule joint meetings on some regular basis.

At some regular intervals of time, it is extremely valuable for elders and deacons to meet together for prayer, and to discuss the broader ministry of the church.

The format for such meetings can range from occasions for formal presentations or reports to informal book discussions and brainstorming sessions.

Such “officer meetings” serve to promote the camaraderie necessary to ongoing cooperation in leadership, and also provide excellent opportunities to grow together in leadership.

Joint meetings of this kind should be held at least once a year, and preferably more often.

TRANSITION to INFORMAL



Diaconal Summit II

## Cooperate How?

Informal

- Conferring in ministry
- Pairing up for ministry
- Teaming up for ministry

*In what informal ways does your current diaconate work with your session?*

06/07/12

Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation

16

### Process Notes

REVIEW the difference between formal and informal and TRANSITION to discussion of informal.

### Content Notes

We've been talking about formal cooperation thus far.

For all the benefits of the structured forms of cooperation, it is frequently necessary for there to be specific cooperation between individual elders and deacons in ministry to persons with both pastoral and diaconal needs. This is the "nitty-gritty" of elder-deacon cooperation, and it is utterly indispensable for timely, effective ministry to needy people. This is the cooperation that counts!!!







## Informal Cooperation:

### A. Conferring in Ministry

**Purpose:** Awareness, advice

**How**

Designated elder for each need case

- Provide updates
- Discuss actions
- Obtain guidance



See Appendix B "The Ingredients of a Successful Oversight Program" for a fuller explication of this model.

See Appendix C for an example of working principles for Sessional-Diaconal cooperation.

06/07/12
Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation
17

### Process Notes

EXPLAIN the importance of having an elder available to confer with deacons on specific situations.

MENTION that some churches divide the congregation into shepherding groups (along with the included article).

DISCUSS how specific cases may need more or less involvement by the elder.

### Content Notes

The first and most basic form of informal cooperation between Sessions and Diaconates is found in the ongoing private consultations that should take place between individual elders and deacons.

It is important that every member of the congregation who is receiving diaconal assistance have a designated elder who is at least aware of the diaconal assistance administered from the beginning.

Many Sessions have provided for effective shepherding through a division of the congregation into shepherding groups, each overseen by a designated elder.

### Content Notes, continued

*(See the article "The Ingredients of a Successful Oversight Program" in the notebook for a fuller explication of this model.)*

When such a shepherding model is in place, the diaconate is able, as each diaconal need arises, to confer with the appropriate shepherding elder about the best course of action.

This is extremely valuable in two ways: it enables elders to consider and address from the beginning the pastoral needs that may be present, and it provides deacons the guidance they need in addressing sometimes rather complex situations of need.

There are, of course, diaconal needs that arise that are quite unrelated to pastoral needs, such as those caused by providential calamity. In such cases the involvement of a shepherding elder may be minimal: the deacons may simply report to him on assistance given. In other cases, however, deacons will be wise to consult with shepherding elder before any diaconal assistance is given, in order to have at least some level of pastoral involvement from the beginning.





## Informal Cooperation:

### B. Pairing Up in Ministry

**Purpose:** Address complex spiritual and material needs together

**How**

Elder-deacon team working collaboratively

- Meetings
- Plans
- Instruction



06/07/12
Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation
18

### Process Notes

EXPLAIN how elders and deacons can team up to minister in complex need situations.

MENTION the example situation of someone with chronic indebtedness that requires both stewardship help and possibly also Christian discipleship and accountability.

DISCUSS whether participants have worked in this manner. ASK about challenges or “lessons learned.”

### Content Notes

A second and more robust form of informal cooperation between Sessions and Diaconates takes place when an elder and a deacon team up to address a complex material and spiritual need.


Many situations of deep and even chronic diaconal need have very complex pastoral needs lying behind them. When deacons encounter such situations, it’s important for them to enlist the involvement of an elder responsible for those involved from the outset.

Such pairing up by elders and deacons is important for ongoing meetings with the ministry recipients, planning of long term assistance, and especially for overseeing the specific kind of instruction that is called for.

For example, chronic indebtedness may call for stewardship training on the part of the deacons; however, it may also call for basic Christian discipleship and accountability on the part of an elder.

Between the Session and the diaconate there should be a “culture of cooperation” that makes for such ad hoc, informal teaming up of elders and deacons very common.





## Informal Cooperation:

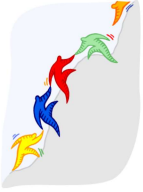
### C. Teaming Up For Ministry

**Purpose:** Leverage gifts in the congregation for specific situations

**How**

Elder-deacon team augmented by other members

- Service
- Encouragement
- More resources



06/07/12
Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation
19

### Process Notes

EXPLAIN how the role of deacons and deacons is, in part, to lead others in ministry as well as provide direct ministry.

MENTION the possibility of creating ministry teams, lead by an elder-deacon pair, but also consisting of additional members of the congregation.

DISCUSS potential situations in which this model would be appropriate.

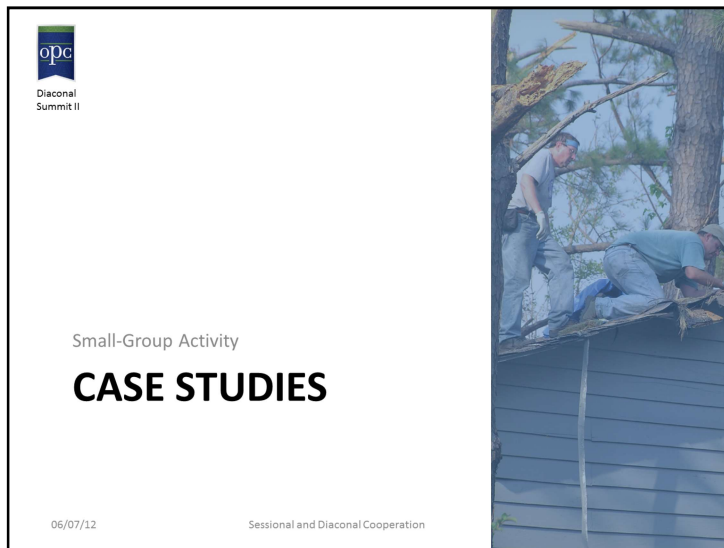
### Content Notes

The third kind of informal cooperation between Sessions and Diaconates takes place when elders and deacons together recruit church members to assist in particularly challenging ministry situations.

Both elders and deacons should consider themselves leaders in ministry, not the sole conductors of ministry. Gifts for ministry of word and deed are found in the whole congregation, and officers in the church should have an eye to enlisting the members of the church in ministry.

In the case of obvious material or financial hardship, deacons will often be the first to respond to needs in peoples' lives. However, it sometimes becomes apparent, not only that there are spiritual needs requiring pastoral assistance, but also that the total magnitude of the needs goes beyond the capacities of the officers of the church.

In such situations, the deacons and elders together will need to facilitate a larger team of willing and spiritual church members to provide ongoing, multi-faceted assistance to the needy. The plans and progress of such ministry teams should be overseen by the elder and deacon pair, but much of the assistance in word and deed should be carried out by the broader body of Christ.



## Process Notes

INTRODUCE the case studies.

EMPHASIZE that the intent will be to apply the principals we have been discussing.

## Content Notes



Diaconal Summit II

## Session-Deacon Case Overview

- Breakout into groups of 5 to 7 people
- Imagine you are a group of Deacons at a local church
- For each of the cases, determine the level of session-deacon cooperation needed (and your rationale)
  - “How much cooperation is called for, and what should it look like?”

Choose from the five suggested levels of cooperation in the case hand-outs. Refer to the presentation for key principles.

**Cases**

- ❑ **Case 1:** Scott
- ❑ **Case 2:** Tom
- ❑ **Case 3:** Jake
- ❑ **Case 4:** Frank
- ❑ **Case 5:** Cheryl

*Your group will receive a hand-out with information on each of the cases. You will need to return the hand-out at the completion of the workshop.*

06/07/12

Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation

21

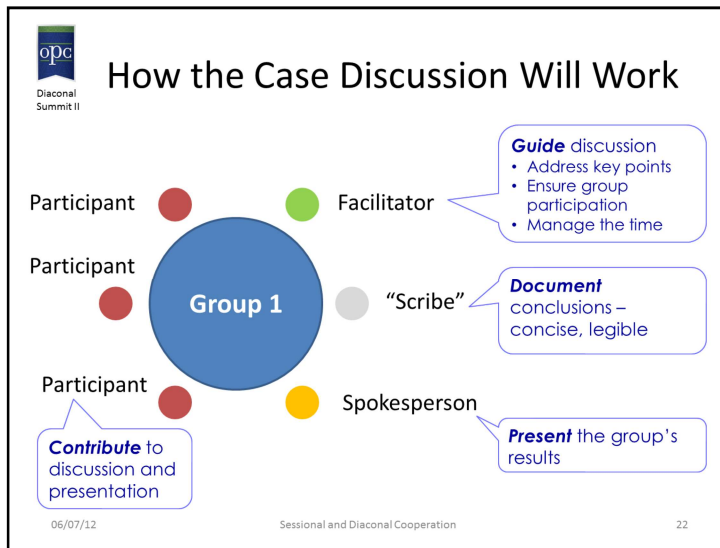
### Process Notes

Provide an overview of the cases they will be working on.

EMPHASIZE that each group will be working on all five of the cases.

### Content Notes

The intent is NOT to develop a detailed plan for each case, but instead, to evaluate the level of session deacon collaboration or cooperation needed and to articulate the reasons why.



### Process Notes

REVIEW the potential roles above.

RECOMMEND that the group select one or more people to fill the roles above.

### Content Notes

One person may serve as a combination facilitator, scribe, and spokesperson.

The roles are identified *for convenience only* – all participants should participate freely in the discussion and debrief.



*Case Debrief*

**Scott (Case #1)**

- Which level of session-deacon cooperation is appropriate for the case? Why?

**Level of Support**

- ☐ Reporting to a shepherding elder on assistance given
- ☐ Conferring with a shepherding elder prior to and during assistance
- ☐ Pairing up with a shepherding elder in ongoing financial and pastoral counseling
- ☐ Assembling a team of members, in addition to an elder-deacon team, to provide assistance (overseen by an elder and deacon)
- ☐ Referring a need to the Session as one primarily pastoral in nature

06/07/12
Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation
23

### Process Notes

Select a group and ASK the spokesperson for the group to review the situation, their decision, and their rationale.

DISCUSS some of the alternatives they considered and their rationale for their eventual decision.

INVITE input (i.e., questions or comments) from the rest of the workshop participants.

CLICK to reveal the correct/intended response.

SUMMARIZE some of the key principals.

NOTE: There are rarely “right answers” to these cases – allow for differences of opinion on the results. Emphasize the importance of considering the individual situation, gaining consensus across the board of deacons, and basing decisions on Biblical principles.

### Content Notes

<TBD>



*Case Debrief*

**Tom (Case #2)**

- Which level of session-deacon cooperation is appropriate for the case? Why?

**Level of Support**

- ☐ Reporting to a shepherding elder on assistance given
- ☐ Conferring with a shepherding elder prior to and during assistance
- ☐ Pairing up with a shepherding elder in ongoing financial and pastoral counseling
- ☐ Assembling a team of members, in addition to an elder-deacon team, to provide assistance (overseen by an elder and deacon)
- ☐ Referring a need to the Session as one primarily pastoral in nature

06/07/12
Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation
24

### Process Notes

Select a group and ASK the spokesperson for the group to review the situation, their decision, and their rationale.

DISCUSS some of the alternatives they considered and their rationale for their eventual decision.

INVITE input (i.e., questions or comments) from the rest of the workshop participants.

CLICK to reveal the correct/intended response.

SUMMARIZE some of the key principals.

NOTE: There are rarely “right answers” to these cases – allow for differences of opinion on the results. Emphasize the importance of considering the individual situation, gaining consensus across the board of deacons, and basing decisions on Biblical principles.

### Content Notes



*Case Debrief***Jake (Case #3)**

- Which level of session-deacon cooperation is appropriate for the case? Why?

**Level of Support**

- ☐ Reporting to a shepherding elder on assistance given
- ☐ Conferring with a shepherding elder prior to and during assistance
- ☐ Pairing up with a shepherding in ongoing financial and pastoral counseling
- ☐ Assembling a team of members, in addition to an elder-deacon team, to provide assistance (overseen by an elder and deacon)
- ☐ Referring a need to the Session as one primarily pastoral in nature

06/07/12

Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation

25

**Process Notes**

Select a group and ASK the spokesperson for the group to review the situation, their decision, and their rationale.

DISCUSS some of the alternatives they considered and their rationale for their eventual decision.

INVITE input (i.e., questions or comments) from the rest of the workshop participants.

CLICK to reveal the correct/intended response.

SUMMARIZE some of the key principals.

NOTE: There are rarely “right answers” to these cases – allow for differences of opinion on the results. Emphasize the importance of considering the individual situation, gaining consensus across the board of deacons, and basing decisions on Biblical principles.

**Content Notes**

*Case Debrief***Frank (Case #4)**

- Which level of session-deacon cooperation is appropriate for the case? Why?

**Level of Support**

- ☐ Reporting to a shepherding elder on assistance given
- ☐ Conferring with a shepherding elder prior to and during assistance
- ☐ Pairing up with a shepherding elder in ongoing financial and pastoral counseling
- ☐ Assembling a team of members, in addition to an elder-deacon team, to provide assistance (overseen by an elder and deacon)
- ☐ Referring a need to the Session as one primarily pastoral in nature

06/07/12

Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation

26

**Process Notes**

Select a group and ASK the spokesperson for the group to review the situation, their decision, and their rationale.

DISCUSS some of the alternatives they considered and their rationale for their eventual decision.

INVITE input (i.e., questions or comments) from the rest of the workshop participants.

CLICK to reveal the correct/intended response.

SUMMARIZE some of the key principals.

NOTE: There are rarely “right answers” to these cases – allow for differences of opinion on the results. Emphasize the importance of considering the individual situation, gaining consensus across the board of deacons, and basing decisions on Biblical principles.

**Content Notes**

*Case Debrief***Cheryl (Case #5)**

- Which level of session-deacon cooperation is appropriate for the case? Why?

**Level of Support**

- ☐ Reporting to a shepherding elder on assistance given
- ☐ Conferring with a shepherding elder prior to and during assistance
- ☐ Pairing up with a shepherding elder in ongoing financial and pastoral counseling
- ☐ Assembling a team of members, in addition to an elder-deacon team, to provide assistance (overseen by an elder and deacon)
- ☐ Referring a need to the Session as one primarily pastoral in nature

06/07/12

Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation

27

**Process Notes**

Select a group and ASK the spokesperson for the group to review the situation, their decision, and their rationale.

DISCUSS some of the alternatives they considered and their rationale for their eventual decision.

INVITE input (i.e., questions or comments) from the rest of the workshop participants.


CLICK to reveal the correct/intended response.

SUMMARIZE some of the key principals.

NOTE: There are rarely “right answers” to these cases – allow for differences of opinion on the results. Emphasize the importance of considering the individual situation, gaining consensus across the board of deacons, and basing decisions on Biblical principles.

**Content Notes**






Diaconal Summit II

## Session-Deacon Case Summary

- The level of cooperation is always a judgment call – but the question can only be answered if it is first raised!

“Does this case call for elder involvement? If so, how much?”



06/07/12      Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation      28

### Process Notes

REVIEW the slide briefly to wrap up the case discussion.

TRANSITION to the next slide – addressing what we can do to initiate or improve session-deacon cooperation.

### Content Notes





Diaconal Summit II

## Next Steps

- Since your elders aren't here to participate in this discussion – what can you do to initiate or improve sessional-diaconal cooperation?

**Ideas**

- ☐ **Report** on the summit
- ☐ **Share** this workshop information
- ☐ Develop **proposals** for
  - Diaconal reports
  - Sessional liaison
  - Joint meetings
- ☐ **Seek assistance** from individual elders as specific case needs emerge



06/07/12
Sessional and Diaconal Cooperation
29

### Process Notes

#### Content Notes

We have been emphasizing and illustrating in this seminar the need for elder-deacon cooperation in ministry. It's too bad your elders have not been here to hear all this! This means that if cooperation between your Session and diaconate needs to improve, that initiative may fall to you.

### Content Notes, *continued*

Suggestions for moving ahead with this vision of elder-deacon cooperation:

1. Bring a report to your Session on this summit, and this specific seminar. Distribute the materials from this seminar to your Session.
2. Bring a proposal (or several, over time, if necessary) to your Session regarding increased formal cooperation, such as:
  - a) Regular diaconal reports to the Session.
  - b) A Sessional liaison at all deacon meetings.
  - c) Joint meetings of elders and deacons.
3. Begin to solicit input and assistance from individual elders in the many informal ways outlined in this seminar. This is the kind of cooperation that counts!!!



## References and Resources

Appendices	Description
A: Sample Session-Deacon Report	Example of a summary report of diaconal activities to the session
B: The Ingredients of a Successful Elder Oversight Program	Article by Nathan Trice (published in <i>Ordained Servant</i> ) describing the role of the elder in shepherding individuals in the church
C: Joint Ministry by Elders and Deacons, <i>A Statement of Matthews Orthodox Presbyterian Church</i>	An example document containing a series of guidelines and directives regarding the scope and practice of diaconal ministry.