



Deacon nomination frequently asked questions:

Over several years of engagement with this process at Lima Baptist Temple, the following constitutes a compiled list of questions and answers that the leadership has encountered and responded to.

Why does LBT ask the congregation to submit names for the process?

The purpose of the deacon process is to increase congregational involvement in the designation and equipping of the church's servant leaders. Current deacons are aiming for congregational involvement, not just approval. All members are encouraged to be engaged in this process from the early stages of prayer through church-wide affirmation of these leaders.

What do we do with the names that are received?

Prioritization of consideration will be given to those who are nominated multiple times. People whose names are submitted for consideration for deacons will be engaged in some way by the current deacons or pastoral staff. This engagement will have three points of focus: encouragement, equipping, and election.

Current deacons will encourage the people whose names are submitted for their current work of ministry. Congregational members have been blessed by the ministry of these people as they have led in service (as deacons do). These people will be encouraged to know that members have been encouraged by their ministry. Furthermore, some of the submitted names could benefit from additional resources and training to enhance their current ministry. Current deacons lead in equipping church members for ministry. Being aware of ministry that is happening within the body or community already enables the deacons to support and to enable collaboration.

Finally, the names submitted by individual members will lead to some of those people being elected by the whole body to serve as deacons. The election process will also allow the nominees to weigh the expanded scope of potential ministry.

How can members prepare for this nomination process?

As church members engage in this process, there are three activities of preparation:

Read the biblical qualifications of these leadership positions. The offices of deacons are not new developments but instead are central to God's instructions to the church from the beginning. Passages such as 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 (along with others) are good texts to meditate upon to allow God's guidance to shape our thinking.

Pray for wisdom from the Lord. As a church, our desire is to discern the Lord's will and purposes in identifying and affirming our leaders.

Consider the servant leaders who are already impacting you. Observing those who are currently serving and leading in venues where you interact is a good way to identify possible names that would be suitable for church-wide service. This is part of the reason that one qualification of a deacon is guiding their home/family faithfully. Having served, led, and been observed in that setting could demonstrate a preparedness for church leadership.



Is it okay to talk with others about people that could be nominated?

Yes! Feel free to contact current deacons to discuss current ministries that are being led by deacons or elders to see if that helps you identify people that could serve in those areas. It may be helpful to seek out others in your small group and/or your Adult Bible Fellowship for feedback on people that are demonstrating servant leadership already. Talk to the person(s) that you want to nominate. See if they would be willing to have their name put forward in this process. If the timing is not right for them to serve in these roles, then you would at least have an opportunity to encourage them in the servant leadership that you have observed from them.

What happens to the names that ultimately do not come to the church membership for affirmation?

As mentioned above, all people who have their names submitted in this process are engaged by current deacons or pastoral staff for encouragement and potentially further equipping. Some of the names submitted do not want to be considered for the official roles but intend to continue serving in the capacities that they are already doing. Second, people who are nominated become a great list of people resources for ministry expansion from within the church. Identifying key leaders and their skills expands the scope of ministry that the church can attempt. Third, current deacons may establish a mentoring relationship with these servant leaders for ongoing development and mutual encouragement.

Why is it better for the entire church membership to be involved in this process from the beginning instead of just having deacons bring a slate of names to the church for approval?

Calling is a function of the church membership in recognition of the Lord's work in and through an individual. As the church receives ministry from individuals in the church, there is an increased awareness of particular gifting and relevant training (including mentoring) that a person has. God uses that exercising of gifts and the effectiveness of building up the church body to affirm the calling of people to leadership roles.