Report to Deacons meeting on April 25, 2016

Pursuant to action taken at the March Deacons Meeting tabling further discussion and action on the Deacon Emeritus issues, Chairman Crane appointed a Special Committee to study the issues as follows: Fred Davis, Chairman; Robert Christianson, Richard Naylor, Kirk Kriegel, and Ron Mullen. That Committee met with all members present, joined by Chairman Crane and Dr. Gary Dyer.

The following matters were discussed and voted on unanimously:

1. The position of Deacon Emeritus is not intended to be awarded posthumously; it is instead a position of retirement or semi-retirement whereby a Deacon may request to be relieved of the normal responsibilities placed upon active Deacons, such as attending Deacon Meetings, serving on Committees, and other matters of active service.

2. The awarding of Deacon Emeritus to Lewis Timberlake was discussed, including the facts that Lewis did not request the Emeritus status during his lifetime, but that it was awarded posthumously. It was apparent from the discussion that however well intended that award to Lewis was, recognition of him should have been accomplished in some other manner since it did not fit the existing policy.

3. The Policy itself was evaluated and the Committee RECOMMENDS that the last two paragraphs be removed in their entirety, and that the Policy otherwise remain as is. The reason for the removal of the last two paragraphs is that they state or imply that the designation of “Deacon Emeritus” confers some special title beyond a simple retirement or inability to carry out the normal duties. That was not the original intent of the policy and is not consistent with the definition of the word “Emeritus”.

4. Finally, the issue of recognizing deceased Deacons was discussed, and it was a consensus that all deceased Deacons, both Emeritus and non-Emeritus, should be recognized at the annual Deacon Banquet occurring at the end of the year of the Deacon’s death. Furthermore, the wives of all Deceased Deacons are to be invited to attend all Deacon Banquets.

Action required:

Act on the Committee’s recommendation to eliminate the last two existing paragraphs of the present Deacon Emeritus Policy (as attached).

Respectfully submitted,

Fred E. Davis, Ch. (for the Committee)
DEACON EMERITUS

Let the servants who perform the duties of their office well be considered doubly worthy of honor, especially those who labor faithfully in the word and teaching. 1 Timothy 5:17

Many SBC churches have a way to honor those who have faithfully served the office of deacon by giving those deacons the title of “Deacon Emeritus.” These deacons retain the respect and privilege of the office, including voting, but they don’t have the responsibilities of the office. They may attend all Deacon activities at their own discretion according to their own abilities.

Deacon Emeritus status shall be open and available to any current Deacon who has actively served as a deacon. Deacon Emeritus status is totally voluntary. Any Deacon, who by reason of age, health, personal or otherwise wishes to discontinue servicing as a fully active deacon may, by his written request to the Deacon Body, be moved to the Emeritus status. It shall be the responsibility of the Deacon meeting these criteria to request this status. Deacon Emeritus status shall continue for the lifetime of the requesting member, unless his condition or desire changes at a later time, and he wishes to become fully active again. He may make his request known to the Deacon Body asking that his status be changed. The request will be recognized by the Deacon Body at the next scheduled meeting.

The designation of “Deacon Emeritus” is a conferred title. It is intended to recognize long and distinguished service through the Church in the capacity of Deacon as well as service to the church through a number of other responsibilities and positions of service.

After approval by the Deacon Body, the recognition and title conferal process will proceed. The recognition should include a special listing in the appropriate Deacon records.