***1 Timothy 3:8-13 Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, 9holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. 10But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. 11 Likewise, their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. 12Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. 13For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.***

When the church considers a man to be ordained as a deacon, we depend upon the Bible as our guide. We depend upon Acts 6:1-6, 1 Timothy 3:8-13, Titus 1:5-9, Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4:1-16. The Biblical example of deacons comes from Acts 6:1-6. In this scripture, men were set apart to minister to the needs of the church, so the apostles could focus on the Word. Deacons are to help the Pastor, allowing the Pastor to focus on the Spiritual needs of the flock. Deacons are to be peacemakers, preserving harmony, order, unity, and administering the physical needs of our church.

Deacons are to set an example of Christian love and service. They’re not perfect. They’re not here to please everyone. They’re called to serve the church with love and gentleness of spirit, always looking to build up and never tear down. Acts 6 tells us that a deacon is a man of honest report, with a good reputation among those in the church. He’s full of the Holy Spirit, with a pure character. His outlook is spiritually based, and he demonstrates personal dedication to those he serves. He is wise and has the ability to discern God’s will and stand firm in his beliefs. He is Faithful to God and shows his love for God by loving God’s church.

1 Timothy 3 adds that a deacon has a strong Christian purpose, great reverence for spiritual matters, and speaks in a way that is respected. He’s not double-tongued. He’s honest and dependable, showing respect, acting no differently in private than he does in public. He’s not a drunkard, temperate in the way he lives, always seeking to be a Christian influence, and doing everything for the glory of God. He’s not greedy, but generous. He’s not prone to outbursts of anger, but self-controlled. He holds fast to the Faith, bringing strength to the church fellowship. His spiritual integrity is beyond reproach and, having been tested, his commitment to Christ is evident to the church. No one is surprised when he’s nominated to be a deacon. He’s a person of high personal integrity. He leads and provides for his family, setting an example for the church in the way that he loves his wife and his children. He models faithful devotion to his spouse and rules his household well. He loves and cares for all family members, as Jesus models. Finally, he is bold in the faith, holding firmly to what he believes, taking every opportunity for ministry, faithful to Christ and to his calling. He’s called, along with the pastor, to minister to the church members, modeling the love of Jesus through his care for the congregation.

Today, we ordain Kenny Hagler. The nominating committee selected, and the church affirmed that we see the characteristics of a deacon in Kenny. We see his ministry growing. We see Amanda growing as well. God’s hand is at work in their walk. As he steps forward, the church steps forward with him. The church must pray for him and encourage him. We have a duty to uplift him as he serves, through prayer, but also through physical help. Kenny is called to serve God, he is called to serve Christ, by serving this church. Let us be eager to uplift him and his family with our prayers and Christian support.

Kenny, will you join me now?