

DEACON SENIOR CHRISTMAS EVENT 2011

There is a red binder which has a good history of both the Senior events that the Deacons put on each year. This is great reference for party decorations, food, and the entertainment.

The first thing I did was to check the church master calendar and reserved a time slot. This should be done in September because it gets very busy especially in December. I selected Saturday, December 10th. There were no other events for that day when I put this on the calendar. Later the choir decided to have their Christmas party at 5:00 that same day. This was a bit of a problem because the other Deacon assigned to this event was a choir member and needed to leave right after our party was over.

I blocked out the Social Hall from 11:00 until 5:00. The actual event was from 2:00 until 4:00, but you have to allow for set up and clean up. Next I decided on a theme and made up an invitation to handout to seniors during the coffee hour. I did mail invitations to shut-ins and to the seniors who don't come to church often or who now live out of town. I started posting a notice in the bulletin the first Sunday of November-to Save the Date. Other options to try would be postcards or to have a sign-up sheet in the social hall with a reminder form for each sign-up. I asked Ken to mention the event during his Sunday morning announcements and say we were handing out invitations during social hour. I got the list of seniors from Jennifer in the church office. It is an incomplete list because some people refuse to give their age or specifically have asked not to list them as seniors. I figured that they would know about the event and come if they so chose. I basically wandered around during social hour handing out the invitations. I did keep a list of people that I handed an invitation to and tried to get a firm yes or no. About a week before the event I called everyone on the list that I wasn't sure about. My copy of the list and the invitation are in the red binder for reference. We did ask that people let us know if they needed transportation to the event. This is necessary so you can plan for help from the Deacons.

I decided to serve a simple dessert, tea, and punch, unlike some of the former events where sandwiches and cookies were served. I made the dessert myself, purchased Peppermint tea, and made a Pointsettia punch (cranberry juice, vanilla ice cream, and ginger ale). I passed around sign up sheets at the October and November deacon meetings for the various jobs that needed to be done. I passed it around several times to fill in empty spots. I emailed the deacons the week of the event with a reminder of what they had signed up for. Be sure to get a good crew for clean-up!!!

I set up 8 round tables with 6 chairs at each table. I used my own Christmas decorations for the table decorations. I bought Christmas napkins and used the glass buffet trays and cups from the church kitchen. We served the dessert in

the kitchen and had deacons take the plates to the seniors at their tables. They would ask if they wanted tea or punch and then serve that to them. I set up the tea service and punch bowls on a rectangular table. I had cream, sugar, sweetener, and lemon on each table. We had two people pouring refills during the program.

You may choose any kind of program you want. This year Bob and Karen Johnson played background music while the guests arrived and the dessert was served. At 2:30 Barbara Roberts sang a couple of beautiful sacred pieces of music with Karen Johnson accompanying on the piano. Next John Aney, our seminary intern, gave a dramatic reading from "A Christmas in Wales". Then we had some time for conversation. Then Mary Burfine sang a French carol with Donald Foster playing the piano. We finished with a carol sing. This is always a big hit. The seniors love to sing the Christmas carols. Donald picked the usual favorites and just played one verse of each carol. We used the portable microphone in the social hall. I made a short welcome speech, introduced and thanked the deacons who were there helping, and announced each "act".

Be sure you get enough Deacons for each job. You can give Jennifer the office manager a work order with how you want the tables and chairs set up in the social hall. This should be done the week before the event. The Deacons have their own tablecloths that fit the round tables. These are kept downstairs locked up with the other Deacon materials. They need to be returned clean and ready for the next use.