

POLICIES GOVERNING THE ELDERS

The Elders' Function

Job Description

1. The elders will pray for the congregation, the pastoral staff, the board and each other.
2. The elders will assist the pastor(s) in shepherding the church, which could include:
 - Discipling and mentoring
 - Leading a small group
 - Visitation and prayer
3. The elders will monitor (oversee) the church in several areas:
 - The church's spiritual condition
 - The church's essential biblical doctrines
 - Assuring that the church's beliefs agree with the essential doctrines of the Bible
 - Assuring that those who teach agree with the doctrinal statement of the church
4. The elders will serve as spiritual responders to emotional, physical, or spiritual needs in the lives of people.
5. The elders will meet regularly to pray together and discuss their ministry and the spiritual condition of the church.
6. The elders will pray for the healing of the sick for those who directly request it of the elders. (James 5:14)
7. The elders will monitor the care and well-being of the pastors and their families.
8. The elders will protect the pastor(s) from those who would seek to undermine them or their ministries.
9. The elders will continually monitor the attendance of the church and contact individuals who have not been attending and seek to restore them to fellowship if appropriate.
10. The elders will encourage baptized believers who are regular attendees to consider membership.
11. The elders will interview candidates for baptism and membership as per *The By-Laws*.
12. The elders will review the Membership List annually, prior to the AGM, to see if any:
 - "Active Members" need to be moved to the "Inactive Members" list
 - "Inactive Members" should withdraw membership or be terminated from membership(as per the "Membership Role and Termination of Membership" section in *The By-Laws* of the church.)

13. The elders will be responsible for discipline of membership as per *The By-Laws* of the church.
14. The elders will adhere to the church's *Constitution* and *By-Laws*.
15. In times of vision renewal within the church, the elders will act in conjunction with the board and the pastor.
16. When the church is selecting a new elder, the current elders will act in conjunction with the board and the pastor.

Elders' Qualifications

Elders will be men chosen and acknowledged by the church possessing the qualities of 1 Tim 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ heart of a servant ▪ temperate ▪ self-controlled ▪ respectable ▪ hospitable ▪ able to teach ▪ not given to drunkenness ▪ not violent but gentle ▪ not quarrelsome ▪ not a lover of money ▪ one who manages his own family well ▪ not recent converts ▪ has a good reputation with outsiders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ humble ▪ not overbearing ▪ not quick tempered ▪ loves what is good ▪ upright ▪ holy ▪ disciplined ▪ above reproach (blameless) ▪ children are believers, not wild and disobedient ▪ does not pursue dishonest gain ▪ keeps hold of the deep truths ▪ husband of but one wife |
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1. Elders should be reliable, trustworthy and teachable persons who display spiritual discernment and godly character.
2. They should be "Active Members" of the church (as defined in *The By-Laws*) who are involved in its ministry.
3. They should have been in the church long enough to have proven themselves.
4. Elders may serve as ministry staff or on the board, but may not serve on both concurrently, because ministry staff persons are ineligible to serve on the board.
5. They must agree with the church's core values, mission, vision, and strategy.
6. They must agree with and fully support the church's doctrinal statement.
7. They need to be loyal to the lead pastor and his leadership and also objective enough to both challenge and support his ministry.
8. They should not always be preservers of the status quo or tradition but open to new ways of doing ministry.
9. If married, their spouses must be supportive of their service as elders.
10. They should be team players and emotionally healthy people.
11. They should be actively growing in their relationship with God.
12. They must hold firm to the gospel and be biblically knowledgeable.

Elders' Conduct

The elders commit themselves to ethical, biblical conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as elders.

1. Elders must work together in the best interests of the entire church.
2. They must be courageous and make decisions in the best interests of the church no matter how unpopular or controversial.
3. They must trust, respect and care about one another.
4. They must deal quickly and properly with any disagreements among themselves.
5. They will operate proactively rather than passively or negatively.
6. They must commit to regular attendance of elders' meetings.
7. They will not condone or voice criticism of the board, the lead pastor, a fellow elder or a staff member beyond the board, the lead pastor, the elder or the staff member involved.
8. They will respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature.
9. They must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to their elder positions.
10. They will enforce on themselves whatever discipline is needed to lead with excellence.
11. They should be actively involved in the life of the church through regular small group and church service attendance.

Elders Monitoring and Evaluation

The board will both monitor and evaluate the elders' ministry performances for compliance with the *Policies Governing the Elders*.

1. The elders are accountable to the board.
2. The elders will informally, regularly monitor each others' performances.
3. The board will facilitate a formal, annual evaluation of the elders' performances.

Elders' Training

Because leaders are learners, elders will participate in training as appropriate.

1. All new elders will go through an orientation that informs them of the elders' functions and the policies that govern the elders, the lead pastor, and the board-lead pastor relationship, the board and the mission.
2. All elders will have opportunity to add to their knowledge and hone their skills as members involved in the leadership process. (This could include such opportunities as reading books together, attendance at conferences and workshops, working with a church consultant, and other valuable training experiences.)

Elder Selection Process

1. Candidates' names may be brought forward by church members to the board or the current elders. The board and elders will meet to discuss the qualifications of the candidate for compliance with the *Policies Governing the Elders*. At this time the candidate is unaware of the nomination. Upon a 75% majority vote of the board and elders, the process will continue.
2. The candidate will be contacted and given a copy of the *Policies Governing the Elders* to review. The candidate will be given 2 weeks to consider, consult, and pray and will decide if he would like to let his name stand.
3. Next the candidate will have an interview with the board and elders. Upon a 75 % majority vote of the board and elders the process will continue. This process should be completed within 60 days of the candidate letting his name stand.
4. The candidate's name will be posted and brought forward to the congregation for consideration. Over the next 60 days, the candidate should provide opportunities for the congregation to become more familiar with him which could include things such as a congregation Q & A meeting, a meet the staff night, a visit to different small groups for discussion etc. Any concerns about the appropriateness of the candidate can be brought to the board chair and the pastor together, who can relay the concerns back to the board and elders who will prayerfully consider them.
5. At any time in the process the candidate may withdraw his name and/or the board and elders may withdraw support of a candidate.
6. An extraordinary congregational meeting should take place as soon as is reasonable following the 60 days described in step 4. Only names recommended to the congregation by the board and elders will be considered. The congregation will vote by secret ballot and a 75% majority vote is required to bring in an elder.
7. Elders will serve for three year terms which are renewable.

Process for Renewal of an Elder

1. Elders wishing to continue into another term should inform the board or other elder(s) at least 2 months prior to the end of their terms.
2. The board and elders will meet to review the elder's annual evaluations, the needs of the congregation, the future needs of the church, the well-being of the elder etc. The renewing elder should excuse himself from this process. Upon recommendation from the board and elders (75%vote), the renewing elder's name is posted for the congregation.
3. The congregation has 30 days to bring any concerns to the board and elders. Any concerns about the appropriateness of the candidate can be brought to the board chair and the pastor together, who can relay the concerns back to the board and elders who will prayerfully consider them.

4. At any time in the process the candidate may withdraw his name and/or the board and elders may withdraw support of a candidate.
5. Only names recommended to the congregation by the board and elders will be considered.
6. The elder will be re-affirmed as an elder upon a 75% majority vote of the congregation by secret ballot in an extraordinary meeting.
7. Elders will serve for three-year terms (which are renewable).

Dismissal of an Elder

Dismissal of an elder before the end of his term may be considered for the following reasons:

- Moral failure
- Improper fiduciary disclosure
- Irregular meeting or worship attendance
- Failure to meet elder qualifications, responsibilities and conduct as per the policies
- Change in doctrinal views that deviate from the church's doctrine.

Dismissal of an elder must be done at an extraordinary meeting as per The By-Laws 6. c.iii.