



THE EXAMINATION AND AFFIRMATION PROCESS FOR ELDERS AT CHESAPEAKE CHURCH

The affirmation of Elders within the Chesapeake community is a tremendous opportunity for men who feel the call of God on their life to submit themselves to examination by the Session (Board of Elders) and examination as well as affirmation by the members.

As it was in the early church, a man who feels God's call should meet the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 (see attachment.) Men who feel called to the office are considered to already be performing as Elders by attending to the spiritual needs of the Chesapeake community.

Nominations are made at a Congregational Meeting called by the Session. Once nominated, the Session will then examine the men to establish whether they meet the qualifications as set forth in the Scriptures. This examination will take place within two weeks following the Congregational Meeting. After prayer and discernment of God's direction, the names of those continuing in the process will be posted in the bulletin.

After posting the names of those considered qualified for the office, the community begins its examination. This is an important time for the members of Chesapeake to discern God's call on the nominee to serve as an Elder at Chesapeake. The best way to examine candidates is in small groups. Small groups are encouraged to make their examinations known and to be open to having others attend.

Concurrent with the community's examination, the nominees will begin to attend all regularly scheduled Session meetings as well as an in-depth study of Biblical Eldership. The purpose is to expose these men to the process, topics and discussions that regularly come before the Session. These men will be excused during any confidential discussions, the same as any guest who attends Session meetings.

Others who are interested may also begin a study of Biblical Eldership using the same curriculum. The goal of this discussion-focused class is to identify the role and responsibilities of the office of Elder in the Chesapeake community. Another goal is to give those who feel a leading in this ministry an opportunity to examine the role without having to be nominated as an Elder.

Typically the process will take up to nine months from the initial Congregational Meeting to a Congregational Meeting where additional or returning Elders are affirmed. Returning Elders are those who have been inactive from the Session for more than a year.

An ordination service for new Elders will take place at a service after a candidate has been examined and approved by the Session, examined by the community and affirmed by the members at a Congregational Meeting. Elders who have been re-affirmed by the members to return to active Session work need not be ordained again. The ordination as Elder is for life unless the Elder has been removed for disciplinary causes. Elders are subject to self-review and affirmation every three years.



**CHESAPEAKE
CHURCH**

QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELDER | 1 TIMOTHY 3:1-16 & TITUS 1:5-9

"I am the good shepherd; and I know My own, and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they shall hear My voice; and they shall become one flock with one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."

John 10:14-18

- It is a noble task. An excellent occupation. A position worthy of aspiration.
- An example to the flock. Elders are shepherds. (Overseer)
- A witness to Christ's sufferings.
- Above reproach. (Not liable to public criticism)
- Married only once: Husband of but one wife. (No non-biblical divorce, no current sinful relationship)
- Sensible. (Poised, balanced, self-controlled)
- Dignified. (Well behaved/unruffled)
- Hospitable. (People should feel welcomed to and comfortable in your home.)
- An apt teacher.
- Not a drunkard, indulging in wine. (This will evidence itself by affecting the other traits: "sober minded, not blustering or abusive.")
- Not violent or quarrelsome, but gentle. (When we are struck, do not strike back; when you are reviled, do not revile in return; when you suffer, do not threaten.)
- Not a lover of money. (Store up not earthly treasures, but treasures in heaven.)
- Must manage his own family well, children obey with proper respect. (Your ability to manage your home speaks directly to your ability to manage a house of God; also includes financial management & tithing.)
- Not a recent convert. (Literally: newly planted)
- Good reputation with outsiders.



SUGGESTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

READ 1 TIMOTHY 3:1-16 & TITUS 1:5-9

- Why do you feel called to the Office of Elder?
- Is your spouse/family supportive of you becoming an Elder?
- How long have you been a Christian?
- How did you come to faith in Jesus?
- Have you ever led someone to faith in Jesus?
- Do you tithe fully (10% of your gross household income)?
- Are you familiar with the Westminster Confession?
- Do you have any reservations regarding the Westminster Confession?
- Do you currently find yourself in conflict with any of the teachings or doctrines of Chesapeake Church?
- How will having the position of Elder effect your family and other commitments?
- Describe your prayer life and the importance of prayer in a Christian's life?
- What unique gifts or talents do you bring to the Session?
- How can I pray for you?