

## 1.1 Elder and Deacon Responsibilities

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### **ELDERS (Elected)**

#### **Mission**

To shepherd the flock of God (1 Peter 5), which He bought with His own blood, in the areas of doctrine, discipline and direction.

#### **Vision**

We will feed, guard, and lead the people God has entrusted to our care by:

- providing sound teaching to establish them in God's truth (doctrine)
- affirming what is good and correcting errant or divisive behavior (discipline)
- seeking prayerfully God's will for the church, including the people in the process, and casting a clear vision for the future (direction)

#### **Goals**

##### **Doctrine (Feed)**

- Establish a preaching plan with the Senior Pastor that addresses the whole counsel of God.
- Purposefully develop a continuing understanding of basic and important doctrines.
- Oversee and protect the teaching ministry of the VCB in cooperation with the staff pastors.
- Prayerfully, assess the spiritual progress of the body as they grow in the knowledge of the truth.

##### **Discipline (Guard)**

- Pray regularly for the flock and let them know this is happening.
- Monitor attendance and involvement of members to address potential problems as early as possible.
- Encourage positive Christian behavior and activity through public testimony and personal praise.
- Confront errant or divisive behavior quickly with love and humility, admonishing the straying person with a view toward correction, reconciliation, and restoration.
- Provide teaching and training in matters of holiness and purity.
- Model the walk worthy of our high calling, holding each other accountable.
- Exercise church discipline on those who disregard the faith with a goal of restoration to the body

### **Direction (Lead)**

- To constantly, and prayerfully seek the Lord's direction for the church.
- Work closely with the pastoral staff to:
  - o Assess the needs of the congregation.
  - o Develop a high level strategic plan for the church.
- Cast a clear vision for the future through strategic planning and leadership events.
- Develop a communications process to communicate to the congregation

### **Evaluation**

- Self assessments and growth plans will be required for all elders
  - o Each elder must do a self evaluation annually
  - o Each elder will develop a personal growth plan with the Senior Pastor and chairman of the elders
- Semi-annual "assessment" meetings will be held to ask the questions:
  - o How are we doing in terms of the goals, steps and time frames established?
  - o What has happened that only God could have done?
  - o Is the congregation involved in the manner intended?
  - o Make changes and/or fine tune plans based on these evaluations.

### **Principles of Church Leadership**

1. The model is Christ not the Gentiles who lorded over, but the servant leader.
2. The goal is equipping the saints for the work of ministry. (They must own the ministry, be convinced of the vision, and empowered for action).
3. The four main tools are clarity, instruction, exhortation, support.
4. The local church was led by plurality of elders / deacons.
5. It is not top down control, but bottom up empowerment
6. The New Testament leaves room for flexibility in defining structures and leadership styles (*Moses was a spiritualist leader where Paul & Nehemiah exhibited a strategist leadership style*).

## **DEACONS**

### **Mission**

To provide servant leadership in a specific ministry area, including program planning, budget management, staff support and encouragement. Deacons are also members of the church board which proposes the annual budget, gives input to the elders on direction, approves church policies, cares for the body, and manages the facilities.

### **Vision**

We will serve the Village Church with a humble heart and a faithful heart by:

- Overseeing an area of ministry providing leadership and support as needed.
- Supporting the staff pastor if our area has one.
- Watching over the facilities and resources of the body
- Being faithful stewards in giving and in providing oversight of all financial matters.
- Caring for the hurting with both care and a benevolent ministry
- Caring for the careless by following up on absentees

### **Goals**

- Approve and propose the annual operating budget and provide financial reporting to the board and congregation.
- Provide and manage the ongoing maintenance of the church property and building.
- Give input and support to the strategic plans of the church
- Oversee all benevolent and care ministries.

### **Strategy**

- In support of the above vision and in considering each of the goals above, the deacons will develop detailed plans for accomplishing them, with special emphasis upon providing support for church ministry teams.

### **Evaluation**

- The church board will meet not less than quarterly to review and report on all ministry areas. The church board will report not less than two times to the congregation a year, one being the annual report.

## 1.2 Biblical Eldership

Biblical Eldership  
Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
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### Comparison of Elder Qualifications

<u>1 Timothy 3:2-7</u>	<u>Titus 1:6-9</u>	<u>1 Peter 5:1-3</u>
1. Above reproach	1. Above reproach	1. Not under compulsion, but
2. The husband of one wife	2. The husband of one wife	2. Not for sordid gain, but with eagerness
3. Temperate	3. Having believing children	3. Nor yet as lording it over...but proving to be examples
4. Prudent	4. Not self-willed	
5. Respectable	5. Not quick-tempered	
6. Hospitable	6. Not addicted to wine	
7. Able to teach	7. Not pugnacious	
8. Not addicted to wine	8. Not fond of sordid gain	
9. Not pugnacious	9. Hospitable	
10. Gentle	10. Lover of what is good	
11. Not contentious	11. Sensible	
12. Free from the love of money	12. Just	
13. Manages his household well	13. Devout	
14. Not a new convert	14. Self-controlled	
15. A good reputation with those outside the church	15. Holds fast the faithful word-both to exhort and to refute	

### Servant Leadership

“Elders must be committed to working together, by the power of the Holy Spirit, in humble, Christ-like love.” The twelve apostles put the principles of love, humility, oneness, prayer, trust, forgiveness, and servanthood into practice by working together humbly and lovingly as a leadership team.

Of course, elders will disagree, argue, get angry, and at times think badly of one another. In our own strength we would destroy our eldership team in short order. But Christ’s principles practiced by the apostles should ultimately govern our attitudes and behavior toward one another. When they fail to act toward one another as Christ-like disciples, they repent, confess, and start anew. Eldership will never work if the elders don’t understand or fall short of a total commitment to Christ’s principles of self-sacrificing love and humble servanthood.

In addition to shepherding others with a servant spirit, elders must humbly and lovingly relate to one another. They must be able to patiently build consensus, compromise, persuade, listen, handle disagreement, forgive, receive rebuke and correction, confess

sin, and appreciate the wisdom and perspective of others – even those with whom they disagree.

When we consider Paul's example and that of our Lord's, we must agree that biblical elders do not dictate, they direct. True elders do not command the consciences of their brethren but appeal to their brethren to faithfully follow God's Word. Out of love, true elders suffer and bear the brunt of difficult people and problems so that the lambs are not bruised. They bear the misunderstanding and sins of others so that the assembly may live in peace. They lose sleep so that others may rest. They make great personal sacrifices of time and energy for the welfare of others. They see themselves as men under authority. They depend on God for wisdom and help, not on their own power and cleverness. They face the false teachers' fierce attacks. They guard the community's liberty and freedom in Christ so that the saints are encouraged to develop their gifts, to mature, and to serve one another.

The New Testament provides a consistent example of shared leadership as the ideal structure of leadership in a congregation where love, humility, and servanthood are paramount. When it functions properly, shared leadership requires a greater exercise of humble servanthood than does unitary leadership. In order for an eldership to operate effectively, the elders must show mutual regard for one another, submit themselves one to another, patiently wait upon one another, genuinely consider one another's interests and perspectives, and defer to one another. Eldership then enhances brotherly love, humility, mutuality, patience, and loving interdependence - qualities that are to mark the servant church.

In summary, using Paul's great love chapter, we can say that a servant elder "is patient...is kind, and is not jealous...[a servant elder] does not brag...[a servant elder] is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly...does not seek [his]...own...[a servant elder] is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; [a servant elder] bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (1 Cor. 13:4-7).

## **Bible Doctrines**

1. **BIBLIOLOGY**, the doctrine of the Bible: general and special revelation; the inspiration, infallibility, canonicity, illumination, and interpretation of the Bible.
2. **THEOLOGY PROPER**, the doctrine of God' the existence, attributes, and decrees of God; the Trinity.
3. **CHRISTOLOGY**, the doctrine of Christ; the divine-human natures of Christ and the hypostatic union; the offices and present ministry of Christ; the theophanies and prophecies of Christ.
4. **PNEUMATOLOGY**, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit; the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit; the Spirit's work in relation to Christ and in regenerating, baptizing, indwelling, gifting, and helping others.
5. **SOTERIOLOGY**, the doctrine of salvation; the death of Christ, substitution, propitiation, reconciliation, justification by faith alone, regeneration, election, free will, grace, faith, perseverance.
6. **ANTHROPOLOGY AND HARMARTIALOLOGY**, the doctrines of man and sin; the origin, fall, and nature of man; the definition of sin and imputation of sin.
7. **ECCLESIOLOGY**, the doctrine of the church; the relationship between Israel and the church; the local church and the universal church; imagery used to describe the church (body, bride, priesthood, temple, flock); the government of the church; the ordinances of the church; evangelism, spiritual gifts, and ministry.
8. **ESCHATOLOGY**, the doctrine of last things; heaven, hell, return and rule of Christ, resurrection, judgment, and man's eternal state.