



LEADERSHIP MANUAL **INSIDE** GRACE CHURCH OF MENTOR

Leadership Manual

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LEADERSHIP MANUAL

OF GRACE CHURCH OF MENTOR

I. GENERAL COMMENTS ON SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

Scripture is clear that qualified, effective leadership is essential for the health of the church. Hence, it is essential that leaders meet the biblical descriptions and qualifications for spiritual leaders.

In Mark 10:42-45, Jesus Christ contrasted spiritual leadership with secular leadership. Whereas the unsaved use leadership positions for personal prestige and power, Christians are to use leadership positions for service. Christ was the supreme example of a servant-leader: "For even the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many." Christ's servitude was displayed in dramatic fashion on the eve of his trial and crucifixion. In the words of Ken Collier, "Jesus laid aside his crown, picked up a towel and began to wash the disciples' feet." His message to the disciples must be heeded by all Christians, especially those who would lead:

**"The Christian's motto is
'He who dies with the
dirtiest towel wins.'"**

Ken Collier

"You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. ¹⁶Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater

than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.” (John 13:13-17)

Christian leaders do not ascend the ladder of ambition. Rather, they descend the ladder of humble service. J. Oswald Sanders has said, “At the outset of any study of spiritual leadership, this master principle must be squarely faced: True greatness, true leadership is found in giving yourself in service to others, not in coaxing or inducing others to serve you.”¹

The New Testament teaches that there are two formal offices within the local church—the elder and the deacon.

II. THE ELDER

A. Definitions

In one of the most important New Testament passages relating to church polity, Acts 20:17-35 addresses the same group of men as *elders* (verse 17—*presbuterous*), *overseers* (verse 28—*episkopous*, also translated as *bishops*), and as carrying out the ministry of *shepherds* (verse 28—*poimaino*, the root of which is also translated as *pastor*). Hence, the titles *elder* and *bishop* are used interchangeably. Further, elders actively *shepherd* the local church. (These titles are used in the same manner in 1 Peter 5:1-4). Some definitions of words are necessary to clarify the various roles and responsibilities of each:

“The pastor is not merely a big sheep. He is a shepherd.”

Bruce McAllister

“[The pastor’s] top priority...is to get the work of ministry done through others.”

*Bill Hull*²

“Every man, woman or child who is in our churches should be set to work for the Lord.”

*C.H. Spurgeon*³

ELDER (*presbuteros*) signifies first the idea of a senior or elderly man. It emphasizes the maturity and wisdom which are associated with age. Thus, it denotes the dignity and authority of the elder. Although Paul did not specify a particular age, it is incumbent upon this Church to appoint only elders who possess a mature knowledge of Scripture and a proper understanding of how to apply it.

BISHOP (*episkopos*) means overseer and signifies the oversight of the local church in the office of the elder. The term was used for the office of supervision in the Greco-Roman world. It carried the idea of commissioner, inspector, or superintendent, and was used this way in the cultures of Greece, Ionia, Ephesus, and Rome.⁴ The use of this term stresses the administrative function of an elder in the local church. He is superintendent of the local church in its capacity as a working force (Acts 20:28).

SHEPHERD (*poimen*) Elder vs. Pastor. This word emphasizes the protective watch-care of the pastor. The thought goes back to Israel where God was their shepherd (Psalm 23). This word also stresses guidance, provision, warning, encouraging, admonishing, feeding, and overall tending of the members of the local assembly (1 Peter 5:2).

“Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”

Acts 20:28

“The Eternal would never use dirty tools.... The thrice-holy Jehovah would only select holy instruments for the accomplishment of His work.... God will not go to work with instruments which would compromise His own character.”

C.H. Spurgeon⁵

“Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.”

1 Timothy 4:16

1 Timothy 3:1-7

¹It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. ²An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, apt to teach, ³not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. ⁴He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity; ⁵(but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), ⁶and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. ⁷And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Titus 1:5-9

⁵For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, ⁶namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. ⁷For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, ⁸but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, ⁹holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

PREACHER (*kerux*) Elder vs. Pastor/Preacher. The pastor is not the only one who can preach, but he is the formal and official declarer of the message of God to the local church (1 Corinthians 1:21).

TEACHER (*didaskalos*) The pastor is not the only one who can teach, but he is the official explainer of the doctrines of the local church. He is responsible for the teaching ministry to the believers in the assembly (1 Timothy 5:17).

“Selection of kingdom leaders must not be influenced by worldly wisdom, wealth, or social status. The prime consideration is spirituality.”

*J. Oswald Sanders*⁶

B. The Elder’s Office

A plurality of elders is clearly taught throughout the New Testament. Scripture repeatedly speaks of the *elders* (plural) of a local *church* (singular) (Acts 14:23; 20:17; Titus 1:5; James 5:14). Both the gift and authority are given by the Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, do not emanate from natural birth. The local church which elects its own pastor simply confirms and accepts the gift and authority of the pastor given from the Lord in their behalf. Thus, the church does not confer the gift or authority, as they are inherent in the office. No New Testament pastor has ecclesiastical authority outside his own New Testament church that elected him as pastor.

“Giving no cause for offence in anything, so that the ministry will not be discredited.”

2 Corinthians 6:3

The recognition that the pastor is both an elder and a bishop deals a death blow to the concept of an ecclesiastical hierarchy in which a bishop oversees a number of local church congregations. Hence, Scripture preserves the autonomy

of the local church. There is no mention of such a thing as a “pastor’s pastor” in the sense of a superintendent, archbishop, or ecclesiastical executive not immediately connected with the local church.

C. The Elder’s Responsibilities

The elder’s responsibilities are primarily spiritual in nature. The primary difference between the elder and deacon is not *spirituality*, but *giftedness*; that is, the elder must be “apt to teach” (1 Timothy 3:2). Although the office of apostle has passed, the principle established in Acts 6 is still applicable today; that is, deacons deal primarily (though not exclusively) with physical matters, enabling elders to “devote [themselves] to prayer and to the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:4).

The pastor and elder are placed into their respective offices by the vote of the church body, but only in recognition of the Holy Spirit’s appointment (Acts 20:28). Both are positions more of responsibility than privilege, and Scripture repeatedly warns those in both positions to be faithful in carrying out their ministries. Both positions are responsible for spiritual oversight and care of the church. Of primary importance is their handling of the Word of God, a ministry which carries strict accountability (James 3:1). It is significant that their first responsibility is to take heed to themselves and to biblical doctrine (1 Timothy 4:16).

The pastor-teacher is given the particular responsibility of equipping the church for ministry and edification (Ephesians 4:11-16). Hence, the pastor must be constantly transferring the work of the ministry from his hands to the hands of the entire church body.

“Dead flies make a perfumer’s oil stink, so a little foolishness is weightier than wisdom and honor.”

Ecclesiastes 10:1

“The Lord’s bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged,²⁵with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition.”

2 Timothy 2:24-25

Augustus Strong’s statement on this matter is profound: “That minister is most successful who gets the whole body to move, and who renders the church independent of himself. The test of his work is not while he is with them, but after he leaves them. Then it can be seen whether he has taught them to follow him, or to follow Christ; whether he has led them to the formation of habits of independent Christian activity, or whether he has made

them passively dependent upon himself.”⁷

Leaders within the church are to be gentlemen in every respect.

List of Responsibilities of an Elder

- Teach discipleship and membership classes
- Teach Sunday school
- Assist in biblical counseling
- Oversee membership and visitors
- Oversee church planting
- Pulpit-fill church plants

D. The Elder’s Qualifications

The foremost qualification of spiritual leadership is godly character. The qualifications for an elder do not make him deserving with God, but credible with people. They are set up as a standard for which all men should

“And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.”

2 Timothy 2:2

strive. However, those chosen for the office of elder should already be demonstrating them. One must avoid the temptation to place a man into the office with the hope that he will then be motivated to conform to the standards. As Charles Bridges comments, "It is not supposed, therefore, that such an office can be easily filled. It demands not merely some, but many, nay, all excellences, in happy combination."⁸ The qualifications are high, as should be expected of one who would administer the Word to others. He who considers such an office would do well to consider "how high a level of life is demanded of those who have been called to leadership in the ways and things of God."⁹

1. Personal Life

a. **"Blameless" (1 Timothy 3:2)**

Literally, "unable to be taken hold of." He has no glaring faults upon which critics may seize to discredit his ministry. He is above reproach in his character and conduct. This qualification is illustrated by the words of Daniel's enemies, who concluded, "We shall not find any ground of accusation against this Daniel unless we find it against him with regard to the law of his God" (Daniel 6:5).

"Do not lay hands upon anyone too hastily and thus share responsibility for the sins of others; keep yourself free from sin."

1 Timothy 5:22

"May we never be priests of God at the altar, and sons of Belial outside the tabernacle door."

*C.H. Spurgeon*¹⁰

b. **"Blameless" (Titus 1:6-7)**

Literally, "not called in [to question]." He is not able merely to justify his actions if accused, but he is so far above suspicion as never even to be called into question. In the words of J. Oswald Sanders, "The spiritual leader should be a man of unchallengeable morality."¹¹ As God's "steward," he is given particular responsibility in carrying out his

Lord's work. Hence, the qualifications address his character, not merely his ability. He is in every way "an example of those who believe" (1 Timothy 4:12).

Note: This first qualification is of utmost importance. It is the umbrella which covers all of the qualifications which follow it. Homer Kent wrote: "His conduct should be of such a nature that no handle is given to anyone by which to injure his reputation. The following list explains the various aspects of conduct involved. Of course, this does not mean he must be perfectly sinless. But it does refer to consistent, mature Christian living which gives no occasion for public reproach."¹²

2. Family Relationships

- a. *"The husband of one wife" (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6)*
Literally, a "one-woman man." He has not been divorced. He is loving and loyal to his own wife. He has not been unfaithful to her. He does not give inappropriate attention to ladies other than his wife, nor does he receive it. This does not disqualify a widower who has lived in a godly manner (Romans 7:1-3; 1 Timothy 5:14; 1 Corinthians 7:7,8,14).

Note: The qualifications of church officials are to be matched by the qualifications of their wives (1 Timothy 3:10). Hence, it is also expected that his wife has not been divorced and has not been involved in infidelity.

This qualification regarding divorce will disqualify many people from official leadership positions. Yet, many other ministry opportunities exist for them. Such contributions of service to the Lord are both needed and appreciated in this Church.

b. *“One who manages his own household well” (1 Timothy 3:4)*

He is the unrivaled leader of his home. Also, the business affairs of his home are carried out in a dutiful and orderly manner. He treats family members in a loving fashion.

c. *“Keeping his children under control with all dignity” (1 Timothy 3:4)*

He so superintends his household that its members are “arranged under” his leadership in a way that is worthy of others’ respect (“dignity” means “worthy of respect”). He is dignified in his treatment of his children. In the words of Homer Kent, “The kind of father who cuffs his children around will usually treat church members in a similar fashion.”¹³ His leadership in his home demonstrates his capacity for leadership in the church, “but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?” (1 Timothy 3:5).

d. *“Having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion” (Titus 1:6)*

It is not required that a leader have children, but if he does, they must be submissive to his leadership and the practice of his faith. They must not be “accused of dissipation,” literally “incorrigible” (indulging in unrestrained physical desires; the same word is used of the “riotous living” of the prodigal son in Luke 15:13) as in 2 Peter 2:10 or “rebellion” (independent or not subject to parental authority).

3. General Character

a. *“Temperate” (1 Timothy 3:2)*

He is self-protecting so as to be free from every form of intoxication. He is calm, free from impulsive passions. He practices prudent thinking and sound judgment. He is clear-headed and alert, not mentally lazy (1 Thessalonians 5:6).

- b. ***“Prudent” (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)***
 He is self-controlled mentally. He is not long-faced, but rather he is serious-minded. He saves levity for its appropriate time and place. One who follows sound reason.
- c. ***“Respectable” (1 Timothy 3:2)***
 Literally, “honorably and modestly.” His life is characterized by modest living. His affairs are respectable. God’s work is respectable, and He demands that His work be carried out in an respectable fashion (Titus 1:5; 1 Corinthians 14:40).
- d. ***“Hospitable” (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)***
 Literally, “loving strangers.” An early Christian text describes an elder as “a man who gladly and at all times welcomes into his house the servants of God.”¹⁴ He is a man with an “open heart and an open house.”¹⁵
- e. ***“Gentle” (1 Timothy 3:3)***
 He is “kind.” He is willing to *yield* in personal matters. Guy King describes it as “a quality of mind and heart that makes allowances for slownesses, awkwardnesses, even rudenesses, of others.”¹⁶
- f. ***“Loving what is good” (Titus 1:8)***
 He is loyal to all that is good and opposed to all that is not (Romans 12:9). He is able to love what is good because self-love, the opposite of this word, no longer grips him.
- g. ***“Just” (Titus 1:8)***
 He meets his obligations, both to God and men. He is upright—a man of integrity. Spurgeon showed good wit and good sense when he instructed his students that “he is too delicate a teacher who persuadeth others to fast with a full belly.”¹⁷

h. “Devout” (Titus 1:8)

He gives reverence to what is sacred. This is the opposite of a light, flippant, profane spirit toward sacred things. He is “set apart” from all that would pollute him and hinder his service (1 Chronicles 23:13; Psalm 24:3-4). Spurgeon taught his students who were preparing for the ministry that “holiness in a minister is at once his chief necessity and his goodliest ornament.”¹⁸

i. “Self-controlled” (Titus 1:8)

He holds himself in control. He is self-contained. He has self-mastery over powerful passions and keeps them held in check.

j. “Not addicted to wine” (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)

Literally, “not given to wine.” He is not a drinker. The Apostolic verdict is, “It is not good to eat meat, or to drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles” (Romans 14:21).

k. “Not... pugnacious” (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)

Literally a “bully.” He is not a combative person ready with physical or verbal blows.

l. “Uncontentious” (1 Timothy 3:3)

He is not given to fighting. He does not aggressively demand his rights. He is always a gentleman, even when wronged.

m. “Free from the love of money” (1 Timothy 3:3)

Literally, “not greedy.” He will not govern for gain. Further, he does not have monetary gain—*even by legitimate means*—as a major priority and passion. He has learned the blessedness of contentment (1 Timothy 6:6, 8).

n. *“Not fond of sordid gain” (Titus 1:7)*

He is not eager for gain obtained in *base* ways. He is free from ulterior motives for ministry (1 Peter 5:2). He will not follow the example of Judas who pilfered the Lord’s account to increase his own (John 12:4-6).

o. *“Not self-willed” (Titus 1:7)*

Literally, “not self-pleasing” (the Greek word is the source of the English word “hedonism”). He does not arrogantly and stubbornly demand his own way. He is humble and considerate.

p. *“Not quick tempered” (Titus 1:7)*

He is “slow to anger” (James 1:19), and he knows that “the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God” (James 1:20).

4. Giftedness

a. *“Able to teach” (1 Timothy 3:2)*

He is able to instruct others doctrinally. This includes both the ability to understand Scripture and the ability to communicate it effectively. Although this is a God-given talent (Romans 12:7), it should be honed by careful preparation and study. His teaching ministry can be carried out publicly or privately (Acts 20:20), but does not require that he labor full-time in the Word (1 Timothy 5:17). This gift is the major distinction between the elder and the deacon.

b. *“Holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.” (Titus 1:9)*

He has an unshakable commitment to the Scriptures; he cleaves to them. He is skillful (“may be able”) in handling the Word, both for the encouragement of God’s people and

the refuting of those who speak against sound doctrine (“those who contradict”).

5. Spiritual Maturity

“Not a new convert” (1 Timothy 3:6)

He is not a neophyte (literally, “newly planted”; that is, one newly come to the faith). He has been a Christian sufficiently long enough to have been tested and experienced in the demands of living the life of a believer. The issue is spiritual maturity more so than physical age (1 Timothy 4:12).

6. Testimony before the world

“He must have a good reputation with those outside the church” (1 Timothy 3:7)

He receives a good “witness” from those outside the Christian assembly. This refers in particular to his reputation subsequent to his conversion. His character before the world is the same as his character within the church. He has done nothing which gives “occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme” (2 Samuel 12:14).

1 Timothy 3:8-13

“Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine, or fond of sordid gain, but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing, and great confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

III. THE DEACON

A. The Deacon's Office

As demonstrated in 1 Timothy 3, the office of deacon is to be distinguished from the office of elder. The office of deacon was established in the early Jerusalem church as a help to the Apostles (Acts 6), and it continues in the local church as a help to pastors and elders. The Greek word *diakonos* means servant, or one who waits tables. Hence, the deacon is known for his humble, joyful service.

B. The Deacon's Responsibilities

Although a deacon is to be active in carrying out spiritual ministry (as exemplified by Stephen and Philip in Acts 6-8 and intimated by “confidence” in 1 Timothy 3:13), his primary responsibilities are the temporal and physical aspects of the Christian ministry (Acts 6:1-3). The ministry of the deacon includes assistance to the pastors and elders in keeping regular

and personal contact with church members to insure that their needs are being met (Acts 6:1).

Also, deacons are to assist the pastors and elders in overseeing the financial, physical, and benevolent ministries of the church. The deacon's service is rendered to the Lord for His glory and pleasure, to the pastors and elders to enable them to devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word, and to the congregation for their undistracted edification and ministry.

“But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. But we will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.”

Acts 6:3-4

List of Responsibilities of a Deacon

- Maintenance of Church facilities (interior, exterior, vehicles)
- Organization of work days
- Ministry to basic, daily needs of membership
- Ministry to visitors
- Aid in benevolent ministry
- Oversight of counting and depositing of monies

C. The Deacon's Qualifications

1. General Character

a. *“Likewise” (1 Timothy 3:8)*

As with elders, the qualifications for deacons are spiritual in nature. Acts 6:3 describes them as “men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom.” They are no less spiritual than the elders. The difference between the offices is giftedness, not godliness.

b. *“Men of dignity” (1 Timothy 3:8)*

He is dignified and deserving of respect. His character commands honor.

c. *“Not double-tongued” (1 Timothy 3:8)*

He is not one who says one thing and means another or says conflicting things to several different people. He is a man of his word (unlike John Bunyan’s character, *Mr. Two-Tongues*).

d. *“Not addicted to much wine” (1 Timothy 3:8)*

Like the elder, he is not a drinker. Hiebert notes, “[The Greek words] mean not only not paying attention to but not giving assent to.”¹⁹ According to Earle, this prohibition is “longer and stronger” than the one given for elders in 1 Timothy 3:3.²⁰

e. *“Not... Fond of sordid gain” (1 Timothy 3:8)*

(See description under “General Character of the Elder.”)

2. Spiritual Maturity

a. *“Holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience” (1 Timothy 3:9)*

He has experienced regeneration and is obedient to what has been revealed in Scripture. His practice is consistent with his belief, and hence, his conscience is pure.

b. *“And let these also first be tested” (1 Timothy 3:10)*

He has been put to the test and approved, not by an official examination, but by observation over time.

“He who would commend the truths of the Gospel to others must conscientiously exemplify it in his own conduct.”

D. Edmond Hiebert²¹

3. Personal Life

“Beyond reproach” (1 Timothy 3:10)

(See description under “General Character of the Elder”)

4. Family Relationships

Note: Although some believe that 1 Timothy 3:11 refers to the office of a deaconess, the context proves otherwise: the qualifications of a deacon are listed before and after verse 11. Although women do serve in the church (for example, Phoebe, Romans 16:1), they are not given an official position of service. Here is another indication that the entire family must understand the structure of biblical leadership.

a. *His wife must be “dignified” (1 Timothy 3:11).*

This is the same word which describes the deacon in 1 Timothy 3:8. She is deserving of respect. Nothing in her testimony or conduct would hinder her husband’s ministry.

b. *His wife must “not [be a] malicious gossip” (1 Timothy 3:11).*

She is not a false accuser (*diabolos*). The word *diabolos* typically is used as a title for Satan.

c. *His wife must be “temperate” (1 Timothy 3:11).*

This is the word translated as *vigilant* in 1 Timothy 3:2 and described previously.

d. *His wife must be “faithful in all things” (1 Timothy 3:12).*

She is trustworthy and true to her responsibilities.

“Inasmuch as the deacons have to do with the temporal affairs of the church, their wives are likely to cause endless trouble unless they are wise, godly women.”

H.A. Ironside²²

- e. *He must be the “husband of only one wife” (1 Timothy 3:12).*
(See description under “Family Relationships of the Elder.”)

- f. *Deacons must be “ruling their children and their own houses well” (1 Timothy 3:12).*
(See description under “Family Relationships of the Elder.”)

IV. DISTINCTION BETWEEN OFFICES AND GIFTS

Gifts are special endorsements bestowed by God’s sovereignty either providentially or miraculously. The local church cannot grant or confer such gifts; it may, however, recognize and employ them in the ministry (Ephesians 4:8-11). With such gifts, such as the communication gifts of Ephesians 4:11, comes authority from the Lord to exercise those gifts with the office for which the gift is designed (for example, the office of pastor-teacher). Such gifts and accompanying authority can only be exercised at the local church level when the qualifications for the office are met (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9) and confirmed by local church congregational vote after proper ordination procedures for those gifts that require ordination. Exercising gifts other than those requiring ordination still requires the qualifications of a consistent Christian walk and adherence to the doctrinal, practical, and philosophical beliefs of this ministry.

V. LIST OF ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS

A. Elders

1. Authority and Responsibility:

- To remove any or all of the officers, agents, pastors, staff and employees of this Church by a majority vote of all elders at the time of dismissal of any of the above stated positions;
- To establish and execute the policies and practices for the Church consistent with the purposes of this Church's Constitution, doctrinal statement, and governing documents;
- To assist in the administration of the ordinances of baptism and communion;
- To pulpit supply whenever necessary;
- To assist in the planting of branch churches;
- To assist in the ministry of personal, biblical counseling;
- To maintain an active personal and corporate presence at church-sponsored evangelistic outreaches; and
- To maintain regular visitation and oversight of members of this Church.

2. Election Process:

- Any man may be nominated to the office of elder if he has met the spiritual and ministerial guidelines set up by the elders and the governing documents of this Church.
- Recommendations to fill the office of elder may be requested once a year from all Church members. A nominating committee shall be appointed according to the committee standards in this Constitution. This committee shall review all nominations and determine each nominee's qualifications.
- Upon nomination all elder nominees shall fill out a questionnaire prepared by the elders. The elders will review this questionnaire, have an interview with the nominated

elder, and determine whether a nominee fulfills the spiritual requirements necessary for the office of elder.

- Any nominated individual for the office of elder shall have completed or agreed to complete the academic requirements necessary to hold the office of elder at this Church, as these courses are offered and available. For a list of these academic requirements, please see the revised *Great Lakes Bible Institute Catalog*. Upon election, each elder is required to take one Great Lakes Bible Institute class of his choice per year. Each time the class *Issues in Fundamentalism* is offered, the elder must take this class. (The issues covered will vary from trimester to trimester.)
- In order to be nominated, any candidate for the office of elder must first have completed a formal ordination process and have been ordained, or have committed to do so (Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23).
- Upon election of the elder nominee by congregational vote in accordance with Article VI, each elder and his wife will be reviewed annually as to their walk with the Lord and work in the ministry. An elder's active service is at all times conditional on his faithfulness to the pursuit of ordination and continuing education.
- If any ministerial position becomes available within the ministry at this Church, an offer will be made to our elders to accept the full-time opportunity. Any elder maintains the right to discern for himself whether any ministerial opportunity is the will of God for his life and family.
- For the first year of his tenure as an elder, each elder who has no previous elder experience at this Church will serve under the guidance of a personal mentor for one year. This personal mentor shall be an experienced elder.

3. Tenure:

- The appointment to the office of elder shall be a lifetime appointment.

- A letter of resignation may be offered to the elders for approval anytime during the ministry of an elder.
- Any elder may be removed from office at any regular or special meeting of the elder board if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified (according to pertinent Scripture, including 1 Timothy 3:1-12; Titus 1:5-9), after thorough corroborating investigation by the elders in accordance with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15-18 and 1 Timothy 5:19. When an elder is removed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him from shepherding, and if he refuses to repent from that sin, the removal shall be accompanied by a public rebuke, and notice shall be made before the Church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service as prescribed in 1 Timothy 5:20.

4. Place of meetings:

The elders will decide the time and place for their own monthly, emergency, or annual meetings.

5. Special meetings:

Special meetings of the elders may be called at any time by order of the chairman, vice-chairman, or by a quorum of the members of the elders.

6. Quorum for the purpose of elder meetings:

- Normal Procedure:
 - ◆ A majority of the elders currently serving shall constitute a quorum.
 - ◆ A majority of the elders present, whether or not a quorum is present, may adjourn any meeting to another time and place. Whenever the matter to be considered concerns calling or dismissing a pastor,

or buying or selling real estate, a quorum shall consist of not less than two-thirds of the elders.

- Exceptions to normal procedure:
 - ◆ Members of the elders may participate in a meeting through use of conference telephone or similar communication equipment, so long as all members participating in such meeting can hear one another.
 - ◆ Any action required or permitted to be taken by the elders may be taken without a meeting if all members of the elders shall consent in writing to a duly prepared resolution to such action. Unanimous written consent shall have the same effect as a unanimous voice vote of the elders and shall be documented by attaching their written responses which will function as the minutes of the elders' proceedings.

7. Committees:

The elders may appoint committees by resolution passed by a majority vote. In its delegation of powers, the elders are restricted by this Church's governing documents.

B. Deacons:

1. Authority and Responsibilities:

- The deacons shall serve under the elders and shall have the responsibility for the physical and financial oversight of the ministry at this Church.
- There shall always be a pastor who is appointed to be the head of the deacons.
- There shall always be a chairman of the deacons.
- The deacons shall be primarily responsible for the setting of an annual budget for this Church.
- The deacons shall confer with the elders and the advisory committee regarding the salaries of any pastors or staff.

2. Election Process:

- Recommendations for the office of deacon shall be requested once a year from all church members. The nominating committee shall review congregational recommendations for the office of deacon. All nominated individuals for the office of deacon must have completed or committed to complete the course requirements at Great Lakes Bible Institute that have been outlined in the *Leadership Manual* by the elders and the revised *Great Lakes Bible Institute Catalog*.
- Upon nomination all deacons shall fill out a questionnaire prepared by the elders. The elders will review this questionnaire, have an interview with the nominated deacon, and determine whether a nominee fulfills the spiritual requirements necessary for the office of deacon (Acts 6:1-7; 1 Timothy 3:1-11).
- Upon nomination and vote by the congregation in accordance with Article VI, a nominated individual will be elected to a one-year deacon-in-training program under the oversight of the elders of this Church. Following this year of training and approval by the elders, the congregation will vote again in accordance with Article VI on the deacon candidate at the annual meeting for a lifetime position of deacon.
- For the first year of his tenure as a deacon, each deacon who has no previous deacon experience at this Church will serve under the guidance of a personal mentor for one year. This personal mentor shall be an experienced deacon.

3. Tenure:

- The office of deacon shall be a lifetime position.
- One academic course of instruction must be taken at Great Lakes Bible Institute per year in order to maintain a deacon status at this Church. This course may be taken for audit in person. Additionally, the course "Issues in Fundamentalism" will be required each time it is offered in

any given year. Other than this course, a deacon may choose what course(s) he desires to take in any given year.

- If physically or mentally incapacitated, or spiritually unqualified as determined by the elders, any deacon may be removed from office by the elders of this Church.
- Any deacon may request a sabbatical for personal reasons. To avoid any deacon disguising spiritual problems with the “mask” of a resignation or sabbatical, the resignation or request for sabbatical is given final approval by the elders. If the chairman offers a resignation and it is approved by the elders, then a new chairman will be elected by the elders. If a request for sabbatical as made by the chairman of the deacons is approved by the elders, then the elders will select an interim chairman of the deacons until the chairman on sabbatical is able to return to his position.
- A letter of resignation may be offered to the elders for approval anytime during the ministry of a deacon. Any deacon may be removed from office at any regular or special meeting of the elder board if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified (according to pertinent Scripture, including 1 Timothy 3:1-12; Titus 1:5-9), after thorough corroborating investigation by the elders in accordance with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15-18 and 1 Timothy 5:19. When a deacon is removed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him for the position of deacon, and if he refuses to repent from that sin, the removal shall be accompanied by a public rebuke, and notice shall be made before the Church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service as prescribed in 1 Timothy 5:20.

V. CONCLUSION

This Church is committed to the nurture of spiritual leaders from among our own men. Therefore, this Church will provide a comprehensive discipleship ministry and intensive Bible training opportunities to help prepare men to fill the positions of elder and deacon.

Those who serve in these particular offices are not the spiritual elite of this Church, but they are the spiritual leaders of this Church. The words of H.A. Ironside provide instruction for the entire congregation: "We may not all hold official position, but we are all to serve according to the gift given by the grace of God, and we are responsible to be faithful in whatever place the Lord has set us."²³

Notes:

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- ¹ J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, p. 15.
 - ² Bill Hull, *The Disciple Making Pastor*, p. 88.
 - ³ C.H. Spurgeon, *The Soul Winner*, p. 129.
 - ⁴ J.B. Lightfoot, *Philippians*, pp. 95-99.
 - ⁵ C.H. Spurgeon, *The Soul Winner*, p. 40.
 - ⁶ J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, p. 80.
 - ⁷ Augustus Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 908.
 - ⁸ Charles Bridges, *The Christian Ministry*, p. 31.
 - ⁹ Guy King, *A Leader Led*, p. 63.
 - ¹⁰ C.H. Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students*, p. 13.
 - ¹¹ J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, p. 41.
 - ¹² Homer Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 125.
 - ¹³ *Ibid*, p. 134.
 - ¹⁴ *The Shepherd of Hermas*
 - ¹⁵ William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible Commentary on 1 Timothy 3*.
 - ¹⁶ Guy King, *A Leader Led*, p. 61.
 - ¹⁷ C.H. Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students*, p. 15.
 - ¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 14.
 - ¹⁹ D. Edmond Hiebert, *First Timothy*, p. 69.
 - ²⁰ Ralph Earle, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*.
 - ²¹ *Ibid*, p. 69.
 - ²² H.A. Ironside, *Timothy, Titus and Philemon*, p. 81.
 - ²³ *Ibid*, p. 83.

Some of the content of this manual was taken from the leadership manual of Mount Calvary Baptist Church in Greenville, SC.