

CUYAHOGA VALLEY CHURCH

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ELDER CANDIDATES



1. Have you carefully and prayerfully read the CVC "Profile of an Elder" position paper?
 - Yes

2. Please share a short summary statement about your life as it relates to each of the characteristics listed in I Timothy 3:1-7.

As the passage begins, "If anyone sets his hear on being an overseer, he desires a noble task." It appears to me that aspiring to the task/ministry of an overseer is commended, but the aspiration to a position is inconsistent with the being "above reproach." As I reflect about the several qualifications listed about elders/overseers (episcopoi) for my life several comments may be made:

- *I have been married to Donna 46 years. We have never had any serious marital difficulties. Our three children are all believers.*
- *My friends, employees, employers, work colleagues and non-believing friends would likely describe me as "temperate" in all matters. Regarding alcohol, while my wife and I would occasionally (two or three times a year) have a glass of wine with a meal, when I went to work for IWU, we agreed because of the lifestyle requirements of IWU to consume no alcohol and not to smoke. (I have never smoked.) For more than two years we have not even had one drink!*
- *While not my choice, I have over the years found myself in the midst of numerous instances of serious conflict where I have been called to serve as the mediator—e.g., between missionaries and their employees in Ethiopia, between the African Inland Church and the Christian Missionary Fellowship, among the congregation of Christ's Church of the Valley in W. Covina, CA, or within Hope International University when some extension faculty were discovered selling grades and taking bribes. "Self-control" / "sensibility" were what were required. Currently, I work with problem-solving with faculty and students at IWU.*
- *I would like to say I am well-disciplined, but it might be wise to inquire of those who know me well. In my work I often deal with anger among students who are caught with plagiarism or who are angry because of other reasons. To work with them requires some self-control because they often use profanity and try to manipulate the situation. I have to be careful with co-workers when we are faced with a common problem not to be too critical of the person who has cheated, plagiarized or manipulated his/her team or faculty member. I need to be careful about self-control when it comes to sexuality. I have never been unfaithful to my wife, but occasional lustful thoughts arise.*
- *Violence, contentiousness, quarrelsomeness, brawling, fighting, and arguing would not characterize who I am. One passage that has been important to me since I was in jr. high school is Mt 5:9 "Blessed are the peacemakers...." This same characteristic is what has come to the fore in the items I mentioned above.*

- *“Quick-tempered” would not be used to describe who I am or how I respond to situations or people.*
- *“Respectable” “Well-ordered” is an area where I have been fortunate to have others’ help over the years. My wife is well-organized and helps me. Recognizing that I tend to see things in more “global” terms, I have purposely over the years found colleagues and/or administrative assistants to help with this order. For example, while in Ethiopia I had a gifted assistant, Wakayo, to assist. While directing the leadership training program for church leaders in Kenya, engaged in Bible translation, supervising a relief operation that was feeding 20,000 Maasai, I had able assistants to help with the details. At IWU I have an assistant (her title: Regional Sites’ Manager) helps me with details. I could give more examples, but recognize this continuing need.*
- *“Able to teach” This gift has been recognized on several levels—small groups pre-literate through professional in 4 languages, progression to “tenured, full-professor” at Fuller Seminary in less than 10 years, and, seeing the ones I have had the privilege to teach now teaching in many countries.*
- *“Not a lover of money.” When we were first married, we made a decision to at least be tithers and have continued with that commitment ever since. We have sought to help others along the way having chosen to work with church-related organizations ever since we were married. Even when we lost everything except some clothes in Ethiopia, the Lord has provided for us.*
- *“Good reputation with outsiders” I am confident that no one in either the Independence Chamber of Commerce Board or the Business Networking International organizations where I am a member would express any surprise about my engagement in a church leadership role. Within these two organizations are numerous non-believers.*
- *Hospitality. We have over the years had many people who have been in many different kinds of situations stay with us. Some who were expelled from their families because of their faith. Others who did not have a place to stay came to stay with us. Others were students—including internationals and one with ADHD. We had one young woman live with us for about a year. Previously, she had been in 16 foster homes. While staying with us, she came to know the Lord and has since graduated from a Christian University and works as a teacher. The first year we were at KIRAMU—a remote station in Ethiopia—we counted 256 nights we had overnight guests in our little 3 bd rm house (650 sq ft).*
- *Our children are grown and married. All three are believers. Two are very active in church as are their children. Our youngest son is not active in church, but regularly asks us to pray with/for him. His wife who was raised in church and has rebelled against God. (She suffers from reactive attachment disorder. She was abandoned as an infant, then abandoned by her adoptive parents when they divorced and raised by an adoptive grandmother.) Our children have been respectful and continue to be respectful.*

- *In April of 1952 I recognized my need for Christ and decided at that time to follow him. I was baptized at that time and have sought to be a faithful follower since that time.*
3. What are your top three strengths when it comes to the characteristics listed in I Timothy 3:1-7?
 - Teaching
 - Peacemaking
 - Hospitality
 4. What are your three greatest weaknesses when it comes to the characteristics listed in I Timothy 3:1-7?
 - As noted above, I do not feel that I am as “well-ordered” as I would like to be.
 - At times I may be too critical.
 - I am not sure what the third one is.
 5. What do you feel are your top three spiritual gifts?
 - Teaching
 - Leadership
 - Administration
 6. What evidence can you share that these gifts are indeed your top three gifts?
 - Teaching—May be seen with the community group I currently lead, my teaching with IWU, my mentoring of graduate students, consulting with organizations, designing curriculum for/with several institutions
 - Leadership—Led Christ’s Church of the Valley through a the termination of a pastor, the re-establishment of their eldership, and the selection of a new pastor. Led in the design of a strategy for church planting among the Turkana. Led in the design of church leadership development for both the Oromo and Maasai that contributed to the planting of more than 200 churches....
 - Administration—I have served as the chair of the elders in two churches, administered 12 elementary schools in Ethiopia, a literacy program, a leadership development program for non-literate church leaders (enrollment about 600), directed doctoral programs for the School of World Mission/School of Intercultural Studies to have a 30% world market share in doctorates in missiology, directed adult programs at Wm. Jessup University, faculty recruiting for the College of Adult and Professional Studies of IWU, and currently serve as the Regional Dean for the Cleveland Region for IWU.
 7. What is your greatest passion for ministry? In other words, what causes your heart to beat fast or your tears to be shed?
 - My greatest joy is to see men & women equipped for ministry that influences people for Christ inter-culturally and multi-generationally (2Tim 2:2).
 8. Please share with us helpful information about any personality profiles, success style profiles, or Myers-Briggs type inventories that you have taken in the past.
 - From the DiSC test I am a high S and high I

- With the LEAD Profile based on Hersey & Blanchard's *Management of Organizational Behavior* I am high in "Participation" and "Selling."
 - I cannot remember the outcomes for the StrengthsFinder instrument except for being strong in the ability to "focus."
9. How do you see yourself impacting CVC with your top three character qualities, your gifts, and your passion?
- I would hope to help with the development of leaders, church planting, inter-cultural mission and working in managing community development.
10. Have you read though CVC's mission statement, vision statement, focus statement, goals, and objectives?
- I have read the mission and vision statement.
 - I have not seen the focus statement, goals or objectives.
11. Are you in agreement with the overall direction of the church?
- Yes
12. What parts of the overall direction of the church give you the greatest joy?
- The engagement of people in community groups
 - The focus on training / discipleship
 - The focus on a variety of missional activities both in the community and more broadly
13. What parts of the overall direction of the church give you the greatest concern?
- We are not engaging / empowering many people who are willing and able as volunteers to lead as we could/should.
 - Understanding the implications of giving aid as relief without moving toward long term development.
14. Complete the following: "If I could change three things about CVC, they would be..."
- Engage more volunteers who could be involved in ministry development across the church.
 - Develop a wider range of leadership development programs to equip at least four different types/levels of leaders, e.g., small group leaders--non-professionals, leaders departments—para-professionals, associate staff—semi-professionals and church planters/missionaries—professionals (See any one of my books—*Developing Leaders for Urban Ministry*, *Home Grown Leaders*, *Christian Relief and Development: Developing Leaders for Effective Ministry*, *Teaching Obedience in All Things*, *Missiological Education for the 21st Century...* for a fuller description of these types of leaders.)
 - Encourage a wider range of elders who are not employed by the church.
15. Who are references from previous churches who can give us an idea about your character and ability to work well with people?
- Dr. E. LeRoy Lawson, former president, Hope International University and pastor of one of our major supporting churches while we were missionaries--
e12000lawson@yahoo.com, ellawson@bigfoot.com
 - Dr. Mike Chase, Associate Vice President, Indiana Wesleyan University
Michael.Chase@indwes.edu
 - Mr. Mike Boon, (member of my former Bible Study) mikdebx@yahoo.com and work college at two universities

- Ms. Judy Huffman judy.huffman@collegewes.com Congregational Life Minister, College Wesleyan Church
- Rick Steadman, Sr. Pastor Adventure Christian Church, Rocklin, CA
rstedman@adventurechurch.org

16. Describe some conflicts that you have experienced at previous churches and how you worked to resolve them.

- I will describe two, but could describe others.... When we moved to S. California from Kenya, we joined with Christ's Church of the Valley. Shortly after becoming a member, the senior pastor was terminated because of an affair with his administrative assistant. This decision was made on a Tuesday evening. I had no position in the church at the time. At that time the church had 12 full time pastoral staff members. Before the subsequent Sunday 10 of the other staff members had resigned. The only person left was the Worship Pastor. I was asked to meet with the elders and the "former" staff members. Within the week all of the elders also resigned but agreed to stay in the congregation to assist "where possible." I arranged for three elders from a neighboring congregation to come in to provide supervision for a time. Over the next few months I led in the selection of an interim pastor and his orientation, formation of a search committee for a new pastor, a re-orientation of the elders, addressing a petition generated by one Sunday school class that would have split the church, and serving as the principal contact person for the church for several months. When all of this occurred the church had an average attendance of about 800. Attendance dropped somewhat, but after the appointment of the interim and re-orientation of elders the church recovered. Since that time, it has grown to be a congregation of more than 4,000.

I served as the principal negotiator between the Christian Missionary Fellowship and the Africa Inland Church in Kenya. The conflict arose when a missionary medical doctor with CMF who had a theological education was working with a patient over time and the patient was converted. The patient asked to be baptized and the doctor could not find an "ordained pastor" in the region to baptize him, so he went ahead and baptized him before he died. The physician was then put under discipline with the church where he could not speak, pray or have any public ministry except serve as a chauffeur for AIC evangelists. The issue finally came to where I was in conversation with the Bishop of the AIC. The issue came down to the authority of the scripture as compared with the church constitution. The Bishop defended the constitution by saying, "We prayed when we wrote it." This case of negotiation failed because I held that the scriptures were more authoritative than a church constitution.

17. How do you intend to support and encourage the others on the elder team?

- Listen and learn the inside story / corporate culture of CVC.
- Pray for the elders, staff and congregation
- Aim to become personally acquainted with everyone on the elder team and his wife. As I have done in the past, Donna and I would seek to have meals with all of the

elder team to become personally acquainted to learn how / what to pray for with this team.

18. Will you have time to develop relationships with the other elders?
 - Yes.
19. Share how you have reacted in the past when a group you were a part of made a decision that you felt was wrong.
 - While at Wm Jessup University, the VP in charge of marketing saw the success of the radio advertising we were having with our adult programs. We were seeing about 35% of our lead coming from this advertising. He directed that we change the advertising to include traditional programs we well. This approach was discouraged by our media consultants, but he insisted. I complied. The result was the lead generation declined by about 30% and I was forced to leave WJU. My response was not to criticize or complain. The result was that the traditional faculty called a meeting with the President of the University and insisted that I be brought into their faculty at least as long as it would take for me to find another position. They volunteered to reduce their personal salaries to pay mine.
20. What do you anticipate will be your greatest joy in serving as an elder?
 - Seeing people come to the Lord and become effective as leaders using their spiritual gifts through the congregation as it grows.
21. What is your greatest concern about serving as an elder?
 - Being accepted by the existing elders.
22. What things do you think might be distractions for you to keep you from serving effectively as an elder?
 - I will continue to serve as the Dean for the Cleveland region for IWU.
23. What do you feel will be your greatest contribution to CVC as an elder?
 - Hopefully, I can help with leadership development and the empowerment of new leaders.
 - I would hope we can help our congregation gain a broader vision for reaching our communities for Christ not only through our congregation but through the wide range of professions represented in our church. We more fully need to see mission to, in and through the market place.
24. Please share what each member of your immediate family feels about your serving as an elder at CVC.
 - Donna, my wife, would be very supportive---as she has been for the last 46 years.
 - Our grown children expect that I would be involved in church leadership. They have never known a time when I was not.
25. Share anything else that you feel would be helpful for the elders to know.
 - Both my master's degree and Ph.D. focused on the equipping of leaders for ministry.
 - I have written items for publication about church leadership development in English, Amharic, Oromo, and Maasai languages.
 - I have mentored master's level and doctoral level students from about 80 countries whose research and writing have focused on church leadership.

