

CVC Elder Team Summarization

As taken from the Operating Guidelines of Cuyahoga Valley Church

General

The Elder Team is comprised of a maximum of 12 men, including the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor is a permanent member of the Elder Team.

The model from the New Testament is that churches be led by a plurality of elders. (See Biblical Eldership by Alexander Strauch for a thorough biblical study of this issue.)

Qualifications

A candidate for Elder must have been a member of the church for at least one year prior to his election to office. Candidates for the Elder Team must be non-staff members of CVC.

Those men who have been called of God serve the church through leading (Titus 1:7), ruling (I Thessalonians 5:12), shepherding (Acts 20:28), teaching (I Timothy 3:2), equipping (Ephesians 4:12), and being examples (I Peter 5:3) are called elders, pastors, or overseers. These are three interchangeable names designating one office in the church (Acts 20:17, 28; Ephesians 4:11, 12; Titus 1:5, 7).

Anyone desiring the office of an elder must evidence to God's people the personal, domestic, and ministerial qualifications that are set forth in scripture (I Timothy 3:1-7; II Timothy 2:24-26; Titus 1:5-9). (For further explanation of an Elder's qualifications, see "Portrait of a Godly Elder.")

Election of elders

Any member may nominate in writing a man for consideration to become an elder by submitting an Elder nomination form to the Elder Team. A questionnaire will be filled out by the candidate and sent to the Elder Team for review prior to an interview. If the candidate is worthy of consideration, he will be interviewed by the existing Elder Team to determine his qualifications for the office. If the candidate is worthy of further consideration, he will serve alongside the Elder Team for a trial period of six months. During that time period, evaluation from each member of the Elder Team and input from the Leadership Team and other pertinent ministry leaders will be considered in determining if the candidate is qualified for the position. The Elder Team will then recommend qualified candidates to the church for election at a regularly scheduled members' meeting.

Responsibilities

The Elder Team is responsible as a group to give overall spiritual direction to CVC. They are not expected to oversee specific projects or ministry areas in their capacity as elders. Instead, they function as overseers for the entire church. They guard and lead the church in three primary areas:

1. The church's mission and vision
2. The church's doctrine
3. The church's pastoral care including church discipline

The Elder Team delegates day-to-day operations of the church to the Leadership Team and staff. The Elder Team also delegates management of the church's resources to the Stewardship Team and the Leadership Team. This delegation of responsibilities occurs so the elders can be free to devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word (Acts 6:4).

(Over)

The Elder Team receives proposed budgets developed by the Leadership Team with assistance from the Stewardship Team. The Elder Team evaluates the proposed budgets, approves a proposed annual budget and any capital budgets, and then recommends the budget(s) for final approval by the congregation.

Salaries

The Elder Team selects a non-staff elder to serve on the Compensation and Benefits Team to determine all staff salaries.

Terms of service

Elders serve for a 3 year term. After three years, they may take a year off. No elder may serve more than two consecutive terms. After the second term, an elder is required to take at least a year off the Elder Team. Former members are eligible to serve again after being inactive for one year.

Inactive elders will continue to have spiritual influence at CVC through their strength of character and trusted counsel. They will trust and support the decisions made by the Elder Team. If an inactive elder has concerns and issues about the church, he will request opportunity to meet with the Elder Team to discuss them thoroughly.

Accountability

Elders are mutually accountable. Each elder shall be reviewed annually by his peers to encourage personal spiritual growth and competence in carrying out his role as an elder.

The Senior Pastor is accountable to the Elder Team and will be reviewed annually by a sub-group of 2-5 non-staff elders. For the purposes of the annual review, these non-staff elders will receive feedback from the Senior Pastor's direct reports.

The Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor has a distinct role in that he is engaged in the full-time vocational work of preaching, teaching, and leading. The Senior Pastor's leadership gift is carefully appreciated and affirmed by the Elder Team. The Elder Team delegates to the Senior Pastor the authority to make decisions and provide leadership in planning and leading worship services, in leading the Leadership Team and staff, and in seeking God for vision for the church.

Dismissal of an Elder

1. When an elder fails to meet the necessary scriptural qualifications, he disqualifies himself from being an elder.
2. An elder may be removed by a unanimous vote by all other members of the Elder Team
3. An elder also may remove himself by submitting a written resignation.

Any elder practicing sin is to be rebuked publicly by his fellow elders so that others may take warning (1 Timothy 5:20).