



M U L T I P L Y

ELDERSHIP

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T R A D E R S P O I N T C H R I S T I A N C H U R C H

1. **How did we come into leadership at TPCC?**

2. **How do my duties at TPCC fit into the overall mission of the church?** In addition to our roles as shepherds, our oversight duties include setting vision, measuring progress toward the vision and hiring, supervising and setting compensation for the lead pastor. We'll talk more about our duties in a bit.

3. **What are some key lessons we've learned along the way?** The elder team makes decisions by consensus and we rarely vote. Knowing when we have consensus and when we don't takes time and can sometimes be difficult to discern. Consensus is not as efficient as voting...but we think the benefits of it outweigh the cost.
 - a. We define consensus as the agreement of the vast majority if not all voices with the direction, or can support, defend and advocate for the direction as if it is their own. For example:
 - i. If one person strongly opposes a direction, and cannot agree to support the decision as his own, then we likely do not have consensus
 - ii. If all but 2 of us agree, and the two who disagree can support, defend and advocate for the decision as if it were their own, then we may have consensus.
 - b. What we've learned about decision making with this group is that the facilitator of our discussions needs to make sure everyone has had a chance to speak and that there are no unspoken concerns. It's easy for people remain silent if they disagree and the facilitator's job is to read body language, read between the lines of what is said, listen to tone to ensure that all views have been heard. Example: lead pastor search 2006: 3 were opposed and 10 were in favor of forming a search subcommittee of 3 or 4 elders to do most of the traveling. The 2 hour discussion resulted in all 13 elders committing to travel for the search. The three of us will elaborate on this.

4. **What are some mistakes we've made and what did we learn?** Example of by-law revision in 2007, decided to pull off the table because of some mild push-back; revised by-laws finally were approved in 2012. Old by-laws required congregational vote on annual budget, elder appointment, expenditures exceeding 20% of budget, buying and selling real estate, incurrence of debt and lead pastor calling. New by-laws changed the congregational vote to congregational input in each area and provided a means to inform the congregation on matters formally voted upon. The three of us will elaborate on this.

5. **How do elders govern at TPCC?**

Elder Responsibilities	Staff Responsibilities
Vision and Mission	Strategies to achieve vision by executing mission
Measure progress toward vision	Achieve progress toward vision
Employ, supervise, evaluate performance of lead pastor	Lead pastor responsible for operating church
Establish limitations or boundaries policy	Lead pastor operates within limitations policy
Establish, maintain high level policies	Implement high level policies
Legal representatives of church	Establish, maintain operating policies
Buy, sell real estate; incur new debt	

- a. Policy Governance - Method of board governance that focuses the elder team on matters of policy, rather than operational matters and clearly defines elder and staff responsibilities: assigning operating duties to staff; vision and lead pastor supervision duties to elders
- b. Benefits of Policy Governance –
 - i. elders know more about what’s going on with less time and effort;
 - ii. staff is freed up to operate ministries of the church without elders second-guessing their decisions or looking over their shoulders
 - iii. leadership structure prepared for growth and is scalable
- c. Elders meet twice most months: business meeting the first week of the month and a study and fellowship meeting later in the month. Time spent in meetings for most elders is 5 hours or less each month.

6. How are elders selected?

- a. Individuals can be nominated by church staff, church membership or by current elders
- b. Candidates are evaluated against qualifications found in Titus 1, 1 Timothy 3, 1 Peter 5
- c. Year-long selection and mentoring process
 - i. Application and interview process early in the calendar year
 - ii. Those initially selected begin joining current elders at certain elder meetings in the spring
 - iii. Each candidate meets monthly with an assigned elder mentor
- d. Candidates selected by elders in October and presented to congregation in December for feedback
- e. Three year term begins in January
- f. Elders serve consecutive 3 year terms at the pleasure of the elder team. No automatic break between terms is required.
- g. We have 9 directional and 4 shepherd elders; two of the directional elders are lead pastor Aaron and executive pastor Jim.

7. What do TPCC elders actually do?

- a. All elders are shepherd elders and perform the duties in the shepherding column; directional elders are additionally responsible for items listed in directional elder column

Shepherd	Directional
Ordain & commission ministers	Determine church vision and measure progress toward vision
Pray for, anoint with oil individuals upon request	Lead pastor selection, support, evaluation, compensation
Spiritually care for staff in leadership roles	Legal representatives of church
Assist staff in development of ministry content when requested	Approve new/increase in debt; buy, sell, lease real estate
Lead 3rd Sunday elder discussions; serve in areas of spiritual giftedness	Approve pastoral staff housing allowances
Participate in alter prayer team	Maintain Elder Policy Document
Facilitate church discipline as described in policy manual as needed	Oversee TPCA; ensure TPCA is independent, fiscally healthy organization

Ensure TPCC's mission is aligned with vision

Identify and help onboard new elders

Maintain all elder qualifications and described in Elder Policy

Protect unity of body and sound doctrine

Protect against false teaching

Lead & participate in groups

- b. Elder qualifications: Titus 1, 1 Peter 5, 1 Timothy 3
- c. Unity: There aren't really any unimportant elder duties, but among the list of elder responsibilities, protecting unity is among the most important things we do. If the elders are unified, the church staff and congregation are more likely to be unified.
 - i. Unity does not mean uniformity of opinions and views.
 - ii. Unity depends on
 - 1. In spite of our varied opinions and views, our focus being solely on Jesus Christ and being concerned with nothing other than pleasing and glorifying Him; personal egos are not allowed.
 - 2. Being willing to submit to each other using Jesus as our example, putting others needs ahead of our own
 - 3. Recognizing we each play vital, different roles as part of the body of Christ;
 - 4. Being constructively frank with one another;
 - 5. Saying what's on your mind at the appropriate time and in a graceful way and not letting any concerns go unspoken
 - 6. Our hearts being humble – a daily, hourly, minute by minute struggle
 - iii. Unity means being of one mind in our corporate goal to please and glorify Jesus Christ in everything that we do as elders and in everything that occurs in His Church

8. How do elders interact with the staff?

- a. Elders have no authority over any staff member other than Aaron, then only as a group at our elder meetings.
- b. We expect each elder will serve in his area of spiritual giftedness and will be subject to the authority of the staff member responsible for that area of ministry.
- c. Decisions on how each ministry is operated are the responsibility of church staff under Aaron's direction, and not the responsibility of an individual elder who may be serving in that area.

9. Helpful resources

- a. Biblical Eldership, Alexander Strauch
- b. Leadership and Church Size Dynamics, Timothy Keller
- c. Nine Marks of a Healthy Church, Mark Dever
- d. Gaining by Losing, J.D. Greear
- e. Humility, Andrew Murray
- f. Boundaries for Leaders, Dr. Henry Cloud