



ELDER

DEACON

SELECTION WORKBOOK

WHAT GUIDES US...

***Acts 6:2-6** 2 And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. 3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. 4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” 5 And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose... 6 These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.*

Gashland Family,

Acts 6 gives us a great picture of the offices of Elder and Deacon, as well as how officers are selected. Notice that the office of **Elder** is devoted to shepherd through “prayer and the ministry of the word,” while the office of **Deacon** is devoted to service and care for the church. This short pamphlet is to remind you of the key role you play as a member of Gashland in the *Biblical* process of selecting our officers. Please prayerfully consider your part in this process as we seek to call those whom God has chosen to lead our church family. God bless you all!

Michael Morefield

Associate Pastor of Discipleship | Gashland Evangelical Presbyterian Church

OFFICER SELECTION PROCESS

- Between October 1st and October 22nd, the congregation will put forward members, **after speaking with them**, who meet the Biblical qualifications for the office of Elder and Deacon.
- The Session will then vet the selections on the basis that the individuals put forward meet the biblical qualifications for elder/deacon. This is accomplished via the Session led Nominating Team made up of two elders, two deacons and four at large members.
- The Nominating Team will take the names given to them by the congregation and go through the process of interviewing potential candidates. These candidates will fill out an online questionnaire and interact with the Nominating Team.
- The Pastor and current Elders will train these individuals for their respective office.
- A Congregational Meeting will be held to elect the class of 2024.
- New elders and deacons will be installed in January of 2024.

WHO SHOULD I NOMINATE?

The remainder of this pamphlet is to help you discern what type of individual you should nominate for the position of Elder/Deacon. A couple of quick words before we get to that:

- Please do **not** put forward a name simply to honor someone.
- Please do **not** put forward a name because everyone should have a chance to serve.
- Put forward a name because you believe that person has the **biblical** traits and qualifications for Elder/Deacon as described in God's Word.

If your name is put forward:

Please do **not** accept the position out of obligation. Remember that both offices are a calling that God places on the individual who serves.



The Elders are the leaders of the church, however, while our society focuses on getting the *greatest* to lead in an organization, the office of Elder is a call to lead by being the *least* (Matthew 23:11-12). It is a call to sacrifice. The office of Elder at Gashland is a call to be a shepherd of the sheep of Gashland.

This office focuses on **4** things:

- 1. Shepherds Know the Sheep** – The Elder is relational with the flock. Corporately they know the church’s strengths and weaknesses, but personally they have regular personal contact with the individual members of the Gashland family.
- 2. Shepherds Feed the Sheep** – The Elder teaches the Word of God in some form or fashion as well as participating in the discipleship process of the individuals of the Gashland family.
- 3. Shepherds Lead the Sheep** – The Elder participates on a ministry team and also helps inform the mission/vision of the church. The Elder also leads the flock by modeling authentic faith in their own personal life.
- 4. Shepherds Protect the Sheep** – The Elder guards the sheep from the external and internal influences that wish to destroy the flock, as well as engaging with members personally about areas of sin and repentance.

*This four-fold description of office of the shepherd elder is adapted from Timothy Z. Witmer’s book *The Shepherd Leader*.*

BIBLICAL FOUNDATION:

While considering the office of Elder, please consider:

1 Timothy 3:1 The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. **2** Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, **3** not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. **4** He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, **5** for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? **6** He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. **7** Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

BIBLICAL FOUNDATION:

While considering the office of Elder, please consider:

Titus 1:5b-9...appoint elders in every town as I directed you— **6** if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. **7** For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, **8** but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. **9** He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.



Case Study Exercise | Scenario One

Please consider the scenario below and consider who you would want in these types of situations.

Each elder selects and has spiritual oversight of a handful of families who are part of the body of Christ at Gashland. Imagine one of those families is having great difficulty in raising their teenage child. This is creating stress on the marriage of the husband and wife. What member of Gashland would be good at meeting with the family and listening to their frustrations and pain? What member of Gashland would also feel comfortable praying with the family? What member of Gashland could speak with the husband and wife and listen to hurts in their marriage and direct them from God's Word and continue over time to walk with them through this trial?



Case Study Exercise | Scenario Two

Please consider the scenario below and consider who you would want in these types of situations.

The Pastor is out of town. A long time member of Gashland, has been taken to the hospital and is nearing death. The spouse of the sick member sits at their bedside. They have been married for 60 years. The dying individual asks for an elder to come and read scripture and to pray with them as a couple during this difficult time. What member of Gashland do you hope they call?



DEACONS

Deacons are called to serve and coordinate the ministries of mercy within the church. The role of the Deacon is to serve in such a way that “prayer and the ministry of the word” can continue in the church unhindered.

BIBLICAL FOUNDATION:

While considering the office of Deacon, please consider:

1 Timothy 3:8-13

8 Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. **9** They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. **10** And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. **11** Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things.

12 Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. **13** For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.



Case Study Exercises

- 1.** Pipes burst in the Ministry Center kitchen on Saturday night at 2:00 a.m. A plumber has stopped the leak, but a team of individuals is needed to sweep out the water and clean up before service at 11:00. What member would be willing and able?
- 2.** A homeless person attends worship on Sunday and asks for help regarding their situation. Which member of Gashland could sit down, talk to them, and communicate the resources the church has available (food and clothing) and also help them uncover any spiritual conditions that may be relevant in addressing their situation?
- 3.** A family within the church is in financial need. What person could sit down with this family, pray with them and administer help to them (i.e. distribution from the Mercy Fund) in a gracious, loving and helpful way?



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