

VCOB ELDER/DEACON APPLICATION & VALIDATION PROCESS

"to see all people complete in Christ" - Col 1:28



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THE OFFICE OF ELDER

Below is the description of the Elder ministry at the Village Church and questions to ask yourself and those who know you well before applying:

Elders: *Men devoted to shepherding our body through prayer and the ministry of the Word of God (leading, teaching, protecting, caring). At the Village Church we recognize “ruling elders” and “teaching elders” from 1 Tim 5:17.*

Questions to ask before applying:

1. How are you presently functioning as an Elder? Elders are generally recognized, not made.
2. Would your appointment as an Elder be a natural and expected transition for some or many in the body?
3. After reading the description of the Elder Ministry at the Village Church below, does this office interest you?
4. Are you willing to step down from your other ministry commitments in order to take on the Elder Ministry as your primary and sole ministry.

At the Village Church, Elders are specifically responsible for:

1. Attending regular scheduled Elder meetings.
2. Ministering the Word of God on a regular basis to the body through either teaching, counseling, ruling/leading, or ensuring each ministry is consistently aligned with and upholding the Word of God.
3. Weekly and consistently being in prayer for the flock at the Village Church
4. Exercising church discipline when necessary
5. Visitation Ministry as appropriate
 - In conjunction with the Deacons, ministering to those in need of care in the hospital, nursing homes, shut-ins, anyone in crisis, and/or anyone in-firm **when needed and appropriate.**

Below is the description of the Deacon ministry at the Village Church and questions to ask yourself and those who know you well before applying

Deacons: *Men devoted to serving the Elders and body through benevolent shepherding/care & assistance to the Elders where needed.*

Questions to ask before applying:

1. How are you presently functioning as a Deacon? Deacons are generally recognized, not made.
2. Would your appointment as a Deacon be a natural and expected transition for some or many in the body?
3. After reading the description of the Deacon Ministry at the Village Church below, does this office interest you?
4. Are you willing to step down from your other ministry commitments in order to take on the Deacon Ministry as your primary and possibly sole ministry.

THE OFFICE OF DEACON

At the Village Church, Deacons are specifically responsible for:

1. Attending Elder meetings once per month for prayer and ministry updates
2. Attending regular scheduled Deacon meetings
3. Ensuring the needs of the poor, widows, and needy in the Village Church are attended to through:
 - Overseeing & Distributing the Benevolent Fund
 - Overseeing and mobilizing the body to come around those in need at the Village Church
4. Visitation Ministry
 - When needed, Deacons should be available to make hospital visits
 - It is the responsibility of the Deacons in connection with the Staff Secretary to ensure that all of the Elders are made aware immediately of any physical need.
5. Home visit
 - Assisting the Elders in visiting people in their homes who are in need of prayer, encouragement, and/or a check-in.
6. Elder Tasks
 - Deacons will be tasked with a number of various responsibilities from the Elders to ensure the Elders are able to focus on their primary responsibilities.

In accordance with the Word of God and the Village Church of Bartlett Constitution, protocol for a man to become an **Elder** or **Deacon** in the Village Church of Bartlett is as follows:

1. “Elder/Deacon Initiation Form”:

The process of a man pursuing either office is officially initiated by a current member of the church (By-Laws, Article 1; Article 3, Section 1; Article 4; Section 3F), by turning in the “Elder/Deacon Initiation Form” on page 7 of this document to a Staff Elder or to the church office. This initiative reflects the heart of qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:1:

“The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task.”

2. Meeting with Pastoral Staff:

An assigned Elder of the VCoB will follow-up with a personal meeting with the aspiring man. This assigned Elder will be the liaison between the applicant and the Elder board. During this initial meeting, the applicant:

- a. communicates his desires, qualifications, and expectations personally.
- b. has the basic biblical qualifications for the offices communicated to him (1 Tim 3, Titus 1, Article 4; Section 1 & 2C).
- c. is given the Elder/Deacon application (Article 4, Section 2B.)
 - i.

THE PROCESS

There is a one-month maximum time-limit on this application. After that one month period the applicants request will be nullified if no response is given via written or verbal communication.

3. Application Submission:

The aspiring man will turn in his application via email (if possible) to his Elder liaison within one month of receiving it. The Staff Elder will ensure distribution exists to each Elder & Deacon for review. As soon as it is received, the staff Elder liaison will respond immediately communicating:

- a. Excitement for the LORD's will in the applicant's life
- b. A maximum two-month waiting period for both the Elder and Deacon Council to review the application
- c. Expectation for a follow-up meeting initiated by a Staff Elder within the next two months.

4. Council Review:

During this two months and in accordance with Article 4, Section 2, both the Elder and Deacon council will meet together to discuss each applicant's qualifications and readiness for their respective office. The Elder liaison will take content from these meetings and put together a development plan for each applicant reflective of the feedback received from both Elder and Deacon councils.

5. Follow-Up Meeting:

Within two months of receiving the application, the Elder liaison will set up a follow-up meeting with the applicant to review their plan for development, the feedback of the Councils, and a realistic time-frame that one could attain either office.

- If the aspiring man is unfit or unready for the office in the foreseeable future, then the process is halted and regular counseling may ensue if there is a need to address any character or personal development concerns.
- If the aspiring man is found ready to continue in the process, then he will enter into the "waiting period".

6. Waiting Period:

After the "follow-up meeting", there will be a waiting period as determined by the Elders and Deacons for the purpose of testing (1 Timothy 3:10 *"And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless."*). This period of time will vary from person to person. During this time and in accordance with Article 4, Section 2B:

- The applicant may attend up to two meetings per month of the office they are pursuing at the respective council's preference.
- The applicant can continue to discern if this is a ministry he desires and still feels called to as he engages these ministries from a distance.
- The applicant may be asked to read through and study books on biblical eldership, Deacon ministry, shepherding, and pastoral ministry at the council's discretion & choosing.

- In accord with Scripture and the Constitution, and for the protection of both the church and the applicant, the applicant will undergo realistic personal, spiritual, and Biblical examinations necessarily including but not limited to:

A theological, biblical, and doctrinal interview with the Staff Elders searching the applicant's ability to Biblically defend our statement of faith. (*Titus 1:9-10*⁹ *He (Elder) 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.* ¹⁰ *For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers;* *1 Timothy 3:9* *They (Deacons) must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.*)

An interview with the applicants spouse to assess the applicants leadership in the home and accountability needs (*1 Timothy 3:4-5*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?;* *1 Timothy 3:11*¹¹ *Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things.;* *1 Timothy 3:12*¹² *Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well.*)

If appropriate and at the discretion of the Elders, an interview with their children to assess the applicants familial qualifications (*Titus 1:6*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.;* *1 Timothy 3:12*¹² *Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well.*)

A maximum one page typed reference from at least two people outside of the church – Christian or non-Christian (*1 Timothy 3:7* *Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.*).

A maximum one page typed reference from at least two people inside of the church. These people may be present Elders or Deacons (*Titus 1:7* *For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach.*).

7. Final Review:

The Elder liaison will set up a final interview to review part # 6 of the process, give candid feedback, and come to a decision.

If the applicant is not ready for the office, but can be within a reasonable amount of time, the Elders will work together on a plan of development for the applicant.

If at any point during step # 6 the applicant is disqualified or deemed unready for the office, a meeting will be set up and a plan for development will be worked through to promote the applicant's spiritual growth.

8. Affirmation by the Body:

If #'s 1-7 have been successfully completed, the decision will be joyfully brought before the body. The body will have a designated period of time to bring forward any concerns. If no measurable disqualifying concerns are exposed, there will be an installation service during either the Sunday morning or evening service in due time.

ELDER /DEACON APPLICATION FORM

"to see all people complete in Christ" - Col 1:28

Turn this form into a staff member or the church office to officially initiate the Elder/Deacon application process.

Name:

Signature:

Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Check one:

I aspire to be: An Elder _____ ***A Deacon*** _____

Organizational Chart Description

Jesus

We believe that Jesus is the head of the church (Ephesians 1:22). At Village Church all things are for Christ, by Christ and through Christ. All of the church leaders are first and foremost submitted to Jesus and are led by their relationship with Him and their calling to lead others to Him.

Elders/Deacons

Jesus calls qualified men to lead His church as Elders. The Village Church is “Elder governed.” Elders are responsible to govern in four key areas: leadership, teaching, shepherding, & protecting. The Elders oversee and ensure that the church has clear vision, right doctrine, personal care, and vigilant protection. The Elders are not as a team responsible for the implementation of ministry, but that the ministry of the Village Church is executed through our staff led by the Lead Pastor.

"Elder governed, staff led" also means that we do not hold congregational votes (see exception below under "members") but have trusted Elders who govern the major affairs of the church (doctrine, discipline, vision, money, and general oversight). Elders exist to serve the staff and body through these functions.

The Deacons exist to serve and support the ministry of the elders with a special focus on ministering to those most in need.

Staff

Our Board of Elders have appointed and hired as staff capable men and women to lead the ministry of the church and execute their vision. Our staff consists of two major categories: The Core Leadership Team (CLT) and the Ministry Directors (MD's).

The Lead Pastor has direct oversight of the CLT. The CLT consists of the Lead Pastor, Discipleship Pastor, and Director of Communications & Connection. The primary role of the CLT is to collectively oversee all Ministry Directors and every church program. The CLT ensures that the vision of the Village Church is present in all our efforts.

Ministry Directors are men and women who oversee and execute major ministries in the church through teams. All staff seek to serve and equip.

Members

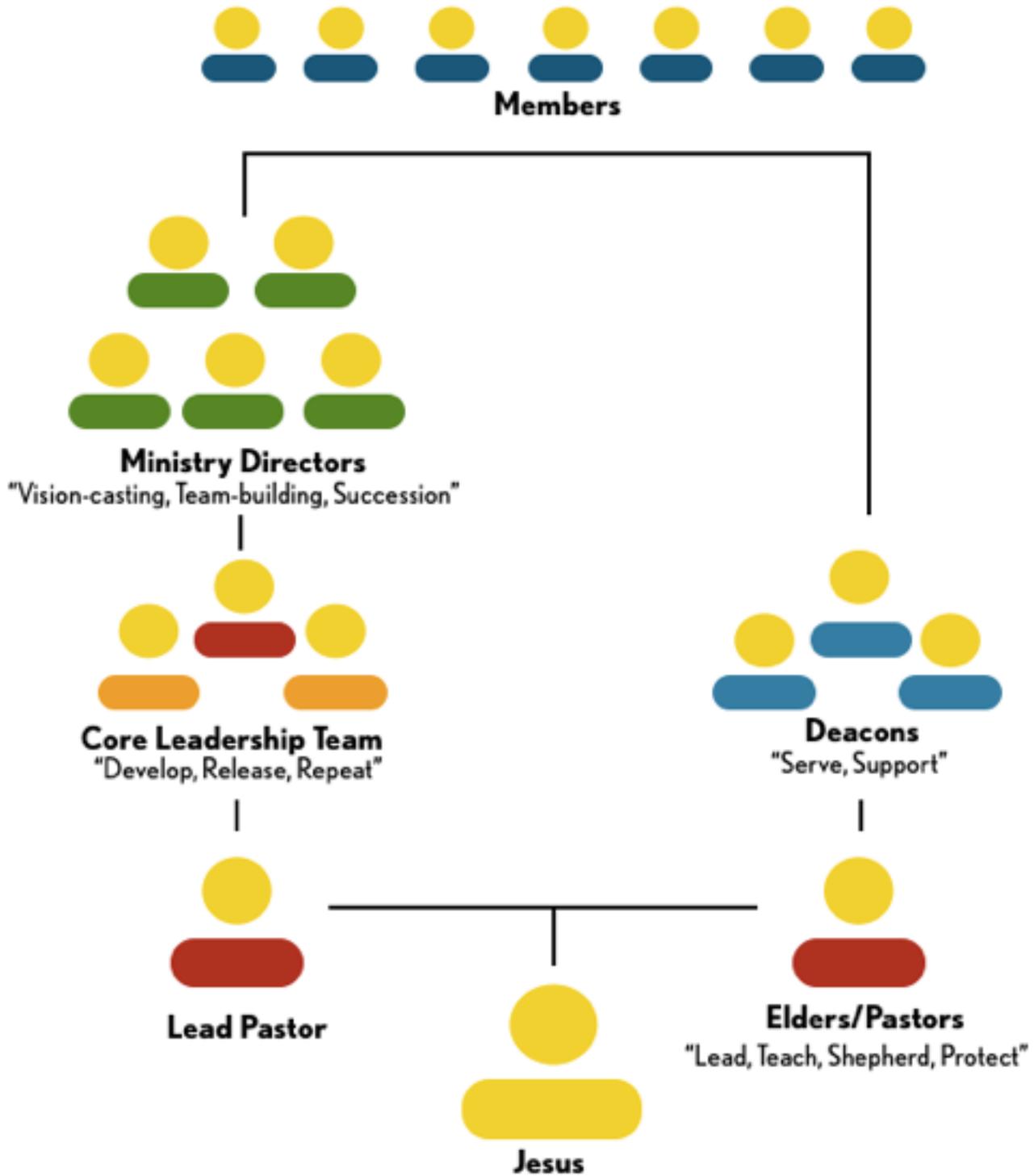
The church is a body made up of many different working parts and we rely on members to support our ministry and to carry out our mission. It is a high calling that takes hard work—but it is also the most rewarding work. Our members are the front lines of

ministry as we make disciples who go, grow, and overcome. All teams exist to serve the members in their mission.

As stated above, we do not hold congregational votes, with the exception that a congregational majority vote is required to change any part of our Constitution. In this way there is a circle of accountability and protection in our organizational model.

Organizational Chart

"Elder Governed, Staff Led"



We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.