

SCC Leadership & Governance

ELDERS

Seven Cities Church (SCC) shall be led by a plurality of Elders/Overseers/Pastors (these terms will be further defined in this document). The term “*Elder*” will be used to speak of all three moving forward. This plurality of elders is known as the board of elders. The Bible speaks of the office of Elder in the following places:

Acts 20:28

Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

1 Timothy 3:1-7

^[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.*

Titus 1:5-9

^[5] *This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and 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.*

1 Peter 5:1-4

^[1] *So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed:* ^[2] *shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly;* ^[3] *not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.* ^[4] *And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*

Terms:

It is our belief that the three terms (Elder/Overseer/Pastor) speak of different aspects of the same role.

- **Elder** – (*presbyteros*) indicates the required spiritual maturity of the individual.
- **Overseer** – (*episkopos*) indicates the focus/responsibility of the individual
- **Pastor** – (*poimen*) indicates the required duties of the individual

SCC uses two of these terms regularly, Elder and Pastor.

- **Elder** - Ordained by the church as a shepherd/overseer of the church
- **Pastor** - Ordained as an elder and a member of the church staff

***** The roles are equal in authority. Individual duties are determined by spiritual gifting. The pastor(s) will naturally carry more responsibilities as they are paid by the church to do so. *****

Qualifications:

Role for biblically qualified men only (1 Timothy 2:12 – 3:7).

Biblical qualifications are (1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9):

- Above reproach
- Husband of one wife (a one-woman man)
- Sober-minded
- Self-controlled
- Respectable
- Hospitable
- A lover of good
- Upright
- Holy
- Disciplined
- Able to teach
- Hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also rebuke those who contradict it.
- Not a drunkard
- Not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination
- Not violent but gentle
- Not quarrelsome
- Not a lover of money

- Manage his own household well
- Keeping his children submissive

Elder Appointment Process

A candidate for eldership may be presented in three different ways:

1. The individual expresses a desire to become an elder
2. The board of elders asks the individual to consider eldership
3. The individual may be nominated for candidacy by other members (Owners) of the church

A candidate may be appointed as an elder at the conclusion of the following process:

1. The candidate is examined by the board of elders. If the candidate passes the examination, the candidate will move to #2. The examination will do a deep dive into the following:
 - a. Character. Does the candidate meet the biblical character qualifications of an elder (1 Timothy 3, Titus 1, 1 Peter 5)?
 - b. Calling of a Shepherd. Does the candidate believe they are called to the role of elder and have a desire to shepherd the flock under the headship of Christ?
 - c. Competency in Sound Doctrine. Does the candidate demonstrate the requisite competencies required of an elder (1 Timothy 3, Titus 1)?
 - d. Chemistry. Does the candidate have a willingness to work with the team of elders, or does the candidate seem to have an agenda other than the mission of Christ fulfilled through SCC?
 - e. Capacity. Does the candidate have the time to serve as an elder and fulfill all required duties?
2. The candidate is examined by the members of the church (Owners). If the candidate passes this examination, the candidate will move to #3
 - a. This is an open forum where Owners are given an opportunity to ask questions of the candidate and the candidate's spouse.
 - b. The Owners are given 30-days to pray and present feedback to the board of elder regarding the candidate.
3. The candidate is installed as an Elder.

Additional Information:

Elders at SCC will serve in perpetuity but may ask to step down at any time by providing a written notification to the board of elders.

Accusations against elders shall be presented to the board of elders in accordance with **1 Timothy 5:19-20**:

¹⁹ Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. ²⁰ As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear.

DEACONS

The Elders of SCC shall be assisted by a team of deacons. Deacons do not possess the same oversight authority as elders and thus shall report to the elders. The primary functions of deacons are:

- To allow the elders to focus on the spiritual health of the flock by caring for the day-to-day physical/practical needs of the flock,
- To handle most administrative matters of the church, and
- To assist in ministerial functions as directed by the elders.

The Bible speaks of the office of Deacon in the following places:

Acts 6:1-6 (although this passage does not use the term “deacon” many scholars believe this is the first appointment of deacons mentioned in Scripture)

^[1] Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. ^[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 Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. ^[6] These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

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.

Term:

- **Deacon** (diakonos) – literally means *servant*

Qualifications:

Role for biblically qualified men and women.

Biblical qualifications are (1 Timothy 3:8-13):

[Men]

- Dignified
- Not double-tongued
- Not addicted to much wine
- Not greedy for dishonest gain
- Hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience
- Be tested first - serve as deacons and prove themselves blameless
- Husband of one wife (one-woman man)
- Managing children and household well

[Women] – Greek word, “gyne” which means “women” – 1 Timothy 3:11

- Dignified
- Not slanderers – aligns with “not double-tongued”
- Sober-minded – aligns with “not addicted to much wine and not greedy for dishonest gain.”
- Faithful in all things – aligns with “holds the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience and be tested first, serve as deacons and prove themselves blameless.”

Deacon Appointment Process

A candidate for deacon may be presented in three different ways:

1. The individual expresses a desire to become a deacon
2. The board of elders asks the individual to consider becoming a deacon
3. The individual may be nominated for candidacy by other members (Owners) of the church

A candidate may be appointed as a deacon at the conclusion of the following process:

1. The candidate is examined by the board of elders. If the candidate passes the examination, the candidate will move to #2. The examination will do a deep dive into the following:

- a. Character. Does the candidate meet the biblical character qualifications of a deacon (1 Timothy 3)
 - b. Calling of a Servant. Does the candidate believe they are called to the role of deacon and have a desire to serve the flock under the leadership of the elders?
 - c. Chemistry. Does the candidate have a willingness to work with the elders and deacons, or does the candidate seem to have an agenda other than the mission of Christ fulfilled through SCC?
 - d. Capacity. Does the candidate have the time to serve as a deacon and fulfill all required duties?
2. The candidate is examined by the members of the church (Owners). If the candidate passes this examination, the candidate will move to #3.
 - a. This is an open forum where Owners are given an opportunity to ask questions of the candidate.
 - b. The Owners are given 7-days to pray and present feedback to the board of elders regarding the candidate.
 3. The candidate is installed as a deacon

Additional Information

Deacons at SCC will serve for a term of two-years but may ask to step down at any time by providing a written notification to the board of elders. Deacons may serve multiple terms consecutively or may take a break between terms.

As a ministry model, SCC prefers to have men minister to men and women minister to women. We believe this is the best way to live above reproach, avoid the appearance of evil, and ensure that our flock and the reputation of Christ and His church remain untarnished. This is not to say brothers and sisters in Christ cannot pray for one another or minister to one another in public settings. Our desire is to ensure everyone is ministered to effectively while protecting the flock God has entrusted to us.

CHURCH STAFF

In addition to elders and deacons, SCC has paid employees commonly referred to as the staff. The staff are individuals who serve in specialized capacities, under the leadership of the elders, in fulfilling the mission and vision of the church. Current staff positions are:

- Music and Media Director

- City Kids Director
- Student Director
- Assistant Student Director
- Engagement Director

Future staff positions could include but are not limited to:

- Operations Director
- Creative & Social Media Director
- Production Director
- Executive Director

Although paid by the church, staff positions are not considered in line with biblically-ordained positions mandated in the Church, that of elder and deacon, except for the pastor(s).

Staff members are Subject Matter Experts (SME's) in particular areas of ministry required for the day-to-day function of the church.

SCC's mission is to glorify God as we guide people to life in Christ by making disciples and planting churches. All staff members are focused on fulfilling this mission by guiding the people in their area of expertise to life in Christ as they lead teams to fulfill the day-to-day operations of SCC.

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