



Chapel Eldership, Governance and Vision

In Brief

Inspiring One Another to Follow Jesus

Eldership

Overview

The Chapel Elders provide spiritual vision, leadership, oversight and direction for The Chapel. The implementation of that direction involves the eldership working with staff, ministry leaders and other active participants of the Chapel.

Tasks and Responsibilities:

At The Chapel, Elders carry the ultimate responsibility and authority to see The Chapel remains on a true, biblical, kingdom course. Their tasks and responsibilities vary greatly and require discernment to achieve this. This includes:

- Leading by:
 - naming the present and sensed call of The Chapel
 - providing clear direction on Chapel finances
 - ensuring risk-management processes are in place

- Shepherding by:
 - creating policies to define Chapel values and biblical operating procedures
 - ensuring The Chapel's teaching and practices reflect accurate biblical kingdom theology
 - overseeing that the life of The Chapel is being well managed with the assistance of competent and godly leaders
 - providing accountability to the pastor, so The Chapel grows according to its sensed call determined by the Elders
 - working in partnership with the TAPCT

- Overseeing by:
 - shepherding The Chapel by being an example and role model and by guarding The Chapel against harmful influence
 - confronting those who are contradicting biblical, kingdom truth, or continuing in a pattern of sinful or destructive behaviour
 - caring about the spiritual and physical well-being of its participating congregation
 - praying regularly for the sick and anointing them with oil for healing
 - providing avenues for pastoral care, conflict resolution, discipline and restoration

Some Specific Duties:

The Elders of The Chapel, while responsible for the following, may delegate to qualified others in the body so that these duties are carried out effectively:

- Provide Spiritual Oversight
 - Confront false teaching and behaviour contradictory to biblical truth and implement appropriate church discipline
 - Review and evaluate teaching and curriculums for biblical accuracy
 - Implement and monitor compliance with policy
 - Mandate ministry to the poor and distressed
 - Provide wise and biblical counsel
- Shepherd the Flock
 - Participate in church discipline when necessary
 - Direct people into appropriate processes for guidance, assistance, and problem resolution.
 - Visit the sick at home or in hospital in special circumstances for private counsel.
 - Pray for the sick
- Govern the Church
 - Affirm the annual budget.
 - Encourage the Senior Pastor, his staff, and volunteers.
 - Oversee management of employment and disputes.
 - Conduct annual review of Pastor.

Elder Selection Process and Criteria

Process:

- As a body and as individuals, the Elders serve as representatives of The Chapel. Prospective Elders can be approached by either current Elders or nominated by an active participant of The Chapel.
- Approached or nominated prospective Elders are then presented to the Congregation who have two weeks to express any concerns to the Eldership.
- After two weeks if there are no valid concerns the Eldership may confirm the appointment of the Prospective Elder.
- To maintain continuity, it is suggested Elders serve a three-year term on appointment.
- A new elder may, with the agreement of the other elders, serve up to 6 months as an interim elder. This is intended to give the new elder opportunity to evaluate their fit within the Eldership.
- At the conclusion of each 3-year term of service, should the elder be willing to serve a further term, and if the other elders are in agreement, their name will again be placed before the congregation on the same basis as with the nomination of a new elder. (excluding any need for a trial period.)

Criteria for Prospective Elders:

- They must have attended The Chapel for at least three years.
- They must be active participants in the life of The Chapel.

- They must have participated in and generally led a small group or served in a volunteer role at The Chapel.
- They must be known and approved for consideration by a member of the Eldership Team.

Essential Components of an Elder:

1. Character

- Above reproach
- Devout
- Temperate and respectable
- Prudent
- Not pugnacious or quick-tempered
- Hospitable
- Good reputation with outsiders
- Manage own household well
- Free from the love of money
- Loving what is good

2. Competence

Defined as specific gifts and abilities that are Holy Spirit endowed combined with skills acquired through training and life experience.

Essential Spiritual Gifts for Elders - The following three gifts are considered foundational gifts for those who serve as elders, however, the presence of other gifts such as leadership, administration, encouragement, mercy, etc., in addition to the following gifts, greatly enrich Elder functioning.

- Discernment
- Wisdom
- Teaching

3. Chemistry

The intangible quality of being able to "fit" within the existing team. The ability to blend and enrich the current circle of community and relational harmony within the Eldership.

Some of the qualities we expect to see are:

- Integrity
- Service
- Commitment
- Preparation
- Participation
- Good role model

4. Courage

The ability, when properly called for, to enter into difficult exchanges and defend the faith, the church, and individuals in ways that preserve and maintain the community. The ability to speak the truth in love without destructive results.

5. Calling

"I think God has called me to this."

Chair of Eldership:

- The Chair must be an Elder.
- The Chair of the Eldership is appointed by agreement of the Elders in consultation with the Pastor and is to be reviewed annually.
- The Chair works closely with all the Elders and Pastor.
- The Chair prepares a draft agenda in consultation with the Pastor and Elders. Recurring agenda items are always considered (ie health and safety, financial update, personal accountability check in, missional living update, hot topics, etc).
- The Chair will seek to:
 - o Guide Elders' meetings by striking a balance between keeping the Eldership on task and leaning on the Spirit's direction.
 - o Ensure all participants have opportunity to be heard.
 - o Ensure necessary decisions are made.

The Culture of Eldership:

- We love each other.
- We pray for each other.
- We support each other.
- We respect each other.
- We defend each other.
- We discuss, we debate, we don't argue.
- We can disagree but we are unified.
- We have a unified voice.
- We respect privacy.
- We don't discuss elder's business outside of elders.
- We maintain clear and appropriate lines of communication.

Mission

From our beliefs, with significant influence from our values, comes our sense of mission, purpose or calling; answering the question, "Why are we here". Mid-2015 the elders agreed to a minor rewording of the existing Mission Statement with the new wording being, " ... *to inspire one another to follow Jesus*".

If Jesus Christ is this world's only hope, then there can be nothing more important.

to inspire - We cannot 'get people saved' and we cannot 'make them' into followers of Jesus.

However, while it is true that 'you can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink', if you give him salt, you can make him thirsty. We are the salt of the earth. We want to make people thirsty for Jesus and then give them opportunity to follow Him.

one another - This is not what 'we' do to 'others'; rather there is a mutuality of our need and responsibility for this.

follow Jesus - We are not looking to get people to simply, 'make a decision' for Jesus, or even to, 'join our church'. What we want is for them to follow Him. If we are not strengthening, making and multiplying disciples for Jesus then we have missed our calling.

Vision

If we are able to inspire one another to follow Jesus, then what we will see, our Vision, is a growing community of people who are following Him! In looking to put this into a little more detail, we believe that we should increasingly see ...

... *the people of God, in loving community:*

Worshipping and glorifying Him

Seeking His will

Revealing His nature

and

Serving His purposes

thereby extending His Kingdom on the peninsula and beyond.

This aligns with the sense that we are called, as a church, to be Missional (or Movement) rather than Mega (or Attractional). Our focus is on growing people, on making disciples. The growth, or multiplication, of congregations may be a by-product of our disciple multiplication strategies but it is not our primary objective.

While we may refer to this as our 'Vision Statement', it is more correctly a 'Vision Summary Statement'. It is an introduction to what we believe God has revealed as His desire for our future.

Strategy Development

The Chapel is an elder lead church. Rather than having to refer every decision to the elders, one of the role of the elders is to create, or give sign-off to, various agreements. The implementation, and monitoring, of these agreements is then entrusted to the pastor who is, in turn, held to account by the elders.

The pastor will engage staff, and other key ministry leaders in discussions with the intention of shaping individual ministries and the collective Chapel strategy.