



sacred city church elder application process

Applicants to the Elder Candidacy process either self-nominate themselves to the elders after sensing a call to pastoral leadership (1 Tim 1:1), or are approached by the elders who have observed the godly life, pastoral heart, and unique giftedness of the individual which can indicate a man's fit within the leadership of the church.

Men accepted into the candidacy process will be announced to the congregation prior to beginning their training. During a man's candidacy members of the church can raise any questions or concerns they have concerning his life and character.

The candidacy is a twelve month discovery and development process where men walk and work along side the elders, while being educated and tested concerning their calling and spiritual gifts. Candidates are invited to our elders meetings (twice a month) for prayer, planning, and education, and will be personally coached by Pastor Justin.

The office of pastor/elder is a high calling in the New Testament church and requires godly men under the controlling power of the Holy Spirit for the direction of God's people into His purposes for His glory. At Sacred City we take seriously the requirements for and the expectations of the office and consider anyone desiring the office to approach it with much sober judgment and cautious consideration.

After a man successfully completes the twelve-month process he will be questioned by oral exam concerning his character, competency, and compatibility with Sacred City's philosophy of ministry. With the unanimous affirmation of the elders he will then be considered an official elder at Sacred City Church.

In holding the office of elder we would expect our new elder(s) to shepherd at Sacred City for the remainder of their life unless God clearly calls him to His purposes elsewhere. They, and their families, would be obligating their time, energy, and money to the service of Sacred City which will require a great personal cost.



Summary Qualifications of an Elder

The elder qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:5–9 are the essential marks expected of any man being considered for eldership.

1. The Man's Character

- A man — masculine leader, not a female
- Above reproach — demonstrates a consistent godly life
- Able to teach — effective Bible communicator
- Not a new convert — mature Christian
- Temperate — mentally and emotionally stable, not prone to overindulgence
- Self-controlled — disciplined life of sound decision-making
- Not given to drunkenness — without addictions
- Not a lover of money — financially content and upright

2. The Man's Family

- Husband of one wife — a one-woman man, faithful to his spouse
- Has obedient children — effective father
- Manages family well — provides for, leads, organizes, loves

3. The Man's Relationship with Others

- Respectable — worth following and imitating
- Hospitable — welcomes strangers, especially non-Christians for evangelism
- Not violent — even-tempered
- Gentle — kind, gracious, loving
- Not contentious — peaceable, not quarrelsome/divisive
- Good reputation with outsiders — respected by non-Christians

The Duties of an Elder

The duties of the elders are many according to Scripture, and must be carried out by faithful, competent men who rely fully on the grace of God and empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

- Prayer and Scripture study (Acts 6:4)
- Ruling/leading the church (1 Timothy 5:17)
- Managing the church (1 Timothy 3:4–5)



- Caring for people in the church (1 Peter 5:2–5) Living exemplary lives (Hebrews 13:7)
- Rightly using the authority God has given them (Acts 20:28)
- Teaching the Bible correctly (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:2)
- Preaching (1 Timothy 5:17)
- Praying for the sick (James 5:13–15)
- Teaching sound doctrine and refuting false teachings (Titus 1:9)
- Working hard (1 Thessalonians 5:12)
- Rightly using money and power (1 Peter 5:1–3)
- Protecting the church from false teachers (Acts 20:17–31)
- Disciplining unrepentant Christians (Matthew 18:15–17)
- Practicing evangelism (2 Tim. 4:5)

The elders will give an account to God for the church (Hebrews 13:17), so it is critical that we not only strive to be faithful to our calling, but do so in the strength God alone can provide (Col. 1:28, 29).

What We Are Looking For

While no man is perfect, but in fact is still corrupt in heart and life, those who will serve as elders in the church are to be men of good character with an evident love for God and his people. Therefore:

- We want men of sound doctrine, who have a love of Scripture and biblical insight.
- We want men who understand their calling and spiritual gift(s).
- We want men who can teach well and refute error with courage.
- We want men who can discipline with strength and shepherd with tenderness.
- We want men who have a heart for people both lost and found.
- We want men who are already leading others as they follow Christ.
- We want men who are responsible, hard working, and self-governing.
- We want men whose wives demonstrate maturity and wisdom.
- We want men who are Christ-like heads of their homes.
- We want men who the other elders see as a peer.
- We want men who are both humble and passionate.



Required Reading and Homework

Ecclesiology, Mission, and Community

- When the Church Was a Family, by Joseph Hellerman
- Center Church, by Tim Keller
- The Mission of God, by Christopher Wright (Summary available)
- Desiring the Kingdom, by James K.A. Smith
- Saturate, by Jeff Vanderstelt (3-5 page book review required)

Pastoral Ministry

- Biblical Eldership, by Alexander Strauch (3-5 page book review required)
- On Church Leadership, by Mark Driscoll
- Brothers We Are Not Professionals, by John Piper
- The Christian Ministry, by Charles Bridges (3-5 page book review required)

Personal Life and Godliness

- Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life, by Donald Whitney
- Dangerous Calling, by Paul Tripp
- Prayer, by Tim Keller (3-5 page book review required)

Theological Foundations

- Systematic Theology, by Wayne Grudem (Podcasts available)
- The Justification of God, by John Piper (3-5 page book review required)
- Dynamics of Spiritual Life, by Richard Lovelace

Preaching

- Preaching, by Tim Keller

Articulation of Gifts and Calling

Each candidate will take a self-analysis of his gifts and present in writing the reason God has called him to be an elder at Sacred City, including any long-term desires they may have for full-time ministry, church planting, etc.

Elder Exam and Assessment

Each candidate will take a written biblical/theological exam testing their understanding of the scriptures and will also take part in a two hour assessment with their wife, conducted by the current Elders.