

ELDER SELECTION PROCESS

*Summary of Requirements
Riverwood Church Community
Elder Selection Process*

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Summary of the Requirements of a Riverwood Church Community Elder

Elders at Riverwood Church Community will be water-baptized members who have leadership giftedness, the skills to do what is required of them according to their biblical job description, and who have a solid track record of service. They will evidence a personal character consistent with the qualification given by God in the New Testament for such a leader. They will agree with and fully support the distinctions God has marked Riverwood Church Community with as spelled out in the statement of faith, mission, vision, values, goals and conduct.

1. DETAILED REQUIREMENTS

GIFTEDNESS & TRACK RECORD

1. Elders throughout the Bible are understood as those who are gifted by God and used by God for leadership of the community of God (Ex. 3:16; Ex. 12:21; Deut. 19:12; Deut. 21:18f; Ruth 4:9; I Sam. 8:4-5).
2. In Numbers 11:10-17, God assigned 'elders' to help Moses in the ministry and leadership of the nation of Israel. God chose those who were already leading, who already had ministry responsibility, and who were 'doing' eldership without the position or title. God simply affirmed their work by calling them to a recognized place with an identifiable title.
3. In Romans 12:8, we are told that the gift of leadership is a spiritual gift, and that those who have it are to lead diligently. This spiritual gift was obviously given so that those who lead the church would do so with God's empowering.
4. The elder demonstrates the gifts and skills to
 - Manage the Church of God: Elders are to oversee, guide and direct the life of the church with the assistance of other godly leaders. They must be people who can 'rule well' (I Tim. 3:5; I Tim. 5:17).
 - Shepherd the Flock: Elders are servants of the flock who are to diligently see to it that the needs of the flock are met and who provide assistance where needed. They are to warn against harmful influences and guard against false teachers (Acts 20:28ff / I Peter 5:1-3).
 - Lead through Example: Elders are to provide a spiritual role model and are to set a pattern of a rightly ordered life before the flock (I Peter 5:3).
 - Teach and Exhort: Elders are to teach and ensure that the flock receives insightful and accurate biblical instruction (I Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9).
 - Refute Those Who Contradict the Truth: Elders are to confront those who are teaching falsely or living in a pattern of behaviour contradictory to biblical truth (Acts 20:29-31; Titus 1:9).
 - Pray for the Sick: Elders are to pray for the spiritual and physical well-being and healing of people (James 5:14).

CHARACTER

The character qualifications for those who will lead God's church are listed in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1:

1) Be of Good Reputation:

- Above reproach and blameless
- A good reputation with outsiders
- Respectable

2) Be Self-Controlled:

- Free from addiction and undisciplined appetites (not given to much wine)
- Not quarrelsome, not quick-tempered, not overbearing or self-willed
- Disciplined

3) Have Godly Values:

- Free from the love of money
- A lover of what is good
- No dishonest gain

4) Have a Loving Heart:

- Gentle (gracious, kind, considerate)
- Self-controlled / not violent
- Hospitable (generous with resources and willing to share)

5) Have a Healthy Home (if married, with or without children):

- Faithfulness to one marriage partner of the opposite sex
- Parent their children to be obedient and respectful
- Children are believers

6) Be of Mature Faith:

- A mature believer (well established track record demonstrating faithfulness)
- Holding fast to the Word

- Able to exhort and confront (discerning falsehood and able to correct)

7) Have a Teachable Mind:

- Able to teach (instruct others in biblical truth)
- Temperate (stable, steadfast and balanced)
- Sober-minded (sensible, wise and balanced in judgments)
- Just (committed to what is right and fair in all situations)

CONVICTIONS

Those who serve as elders at Riverwood Church Community will whole-heartedly sign on and affirm God’s distinct thumbprint on Riverwood as defined in our statement of faith, mission, vision, values and goals.

A. STATEMENT OF FAITH

1 - God	There is one God, ¹ who is infinitely perfect, ² existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. ³
2 - Jesus	Jesus Christ is true God and true man. ⁴ He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. ⁵ He died upon the cross, the Just for the unjust, as a substitutionary sacrifice, and all who believe in Him are justified on the grounds of His shed blood. He arose from the dead according to the Scriptures. ⁶ He is now at the right hand of the Father on high as our great High Priest. ⁷ He will come again to establish His kingdom of righteousness and peace. ⁸
3 - Holy Spirit	The Holy Spirit is a divine Person, sent to indwell, ⁹ guide, teach and empower the believer, and to convict the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. ¹⁰
4 - Bible	The Old and New Testaments, inerrant as originally given, were verbally inspired by God and are a complete revelation of His will for the salvation of people. They constitute the divine and only rule of Christian faith and practice. ¹¹
5 - Sin	People, originally created in the image and likeness of God, ¹² fell through disobedience, incurring thereby both physical and spiritual death. All people are born with a sinful nature, are separated from the life of God, and can be saved only through the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. ¹³ The destiny of the unrepentant and unbelieving is existence forever in everlasting destruction, separated from God, but that of the believer is everlasting joy in the Father’s presence. ¹⁴

6 - Freedom from Sin	Salvation has been provided only through Jesus Christ. Those who repent and believe in Him are united with Christ through the Holy Spirit and are thereby regenerated (born again), justified, sanctified and granted the gift of eternal life as adopted children of God. ¹⁵
7 - Christian Living	<p>It is the will of God that in union with Christ each believer should be sanctified thoroughly¹⁶ thereby being separated from sin and the world and fully dedicated to God, receiving power for holy living and sacrificial and effective service toward the completion of Christ's commission.¹⁷</p> <p>This is accomplished through being filled with the Holy Spirit which happens at Salvation, in distinct moments subsequent to salvation and progressively through the life of the believer.¹⁸</p>
8 - Healing	Provision is made in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ for the healing of the mortal body. Prayer for the sick and anointing with oil as taught in the Scriptures are privileges for the Church in this present age. ¹⁹
9 - Church	<p>The universal Church, of which Christ is the Head, consists of all those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, are redeemed through His blood, regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and commissioned by Christ to go into all the world as a witness, preaching the Gospel to all nations.²⁰</p> <p>The local church, the visible expression of the universal Church, is a body of believers in Christ who are joined together to worship God, to observe the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, to pray, to be edified through the Word of God, to fellowship, and to testify in word and deed to the good news of salvation both locally and globally. The local church enters into relationships with other like-minded churches for accountability, encouragement and mission.²¹</p>
10 - Life after death	There shall be a bodily resurrection of the just and of the unjust; for the just, a resurrection unto life; ²² for the unjust, a resurrection unto judgment. ²³
11 - Second Coming of Christ	The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is imminent and will be personal and visible. ²⁴ As the believer's blessed hope, this vital truth is an incentive for holy living and sacrificial service toward the completion of Christ's commission. ²⁵

References

- 1. Isa. 44:6; 45:5-6
- 2. Matt. 5:48; Deut. 32:4
- 3. Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19
- 4. Phil. 2:6-11; Heb. 2:14-18; Col. 2:9
- 5. Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:35
- 6. 1 Cor. 15:3-5; 1 John 2:2; Acts 13:39
- 7. Heb. 4:14-15; 9:24-28
- 8. Matt. 25:31-34; Acts 1:11
- 9. John 14:16-17
- 10. John 16:7-11; 1 Cor. 2:10-12
- 11. 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21
- 12. Gen. 1:27
- 13. Rom. 8:8; 1 John 2:2
- 14. Matt. 25:41-46; 2 Thes. 1:7-10 15. Titus 3:5-7; Acts 2:38; John 1:12; 1 Cor. 6:11
- 15. Acts 2:41-47; Heb. 10:25; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8, 11:19-30; 15
- 16. 1 Thes. 5:23
- 17. Acts 1:8
- 18. Rom. 12:1-2; Gal. 5:16-25
- 19. Matt. 8:16-17; James 5:13-16 20. Eph. 3:6-12; 1:22-23
- 21. Acts 2:41-47; Heb. 10:25; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8, 11:19-30; 15
- 22. 1 Cor. 15:20-23
- 23. 2 Thes. 1:7-10
- 24. 1 Thes. 4:13-17
- 25. 1 Cor. 1:7; Titus 2:11-14; Matt. 24:14; 28:18

"I understand and wholly affirm this Statement of Faith."

X: _____ Date: _____

B. RIVERWOOD CHURCH COMMUNITY DISTINCTIVES

Each elder must wholeheartedly affirm Riverwood Church Community's distinctives as expressed in the Mission, Vision, Values, Cultural Distinctions, Goals, and Governance Model.

1. Mission: "Helping people journey towards full devotion to Jesus Christ."
2. Vision: A faith community characterized by L3 living:
 - L1 – People Living Intimate with God
 - L2 – People Living in Deep Community
 - L3 – People Living Lives of Influence
3. Values:
 - Evangelism: Reaching far from God people with the good news of Jesus Christ in culturally relevant ways.
 - Worship: Intimate and Spirit-filled
 - Community: Growing together in caring, honest relationships.
 - Prayer: Seeking God's guidance in our individual and corporate lives.
 - Teaching: Declaring the whole counsel of God through effective Bible teaching.
 - Discipleship: Growing people through small groups and systematic training programs.
 - Mobilizing: Training, equipping and mobilizing lay people for ministry.
4. Goals: To develop fully devoted followers of Christ as evidenced by the Six G's:
 - G race: Having received God's salvation by grace and now living daily in that grace.
 - G rowth: A life dedicated to growing on in Christ.
 - G roup: Committed to living life in relationship and life-changing, biblically functioning community.
 - G ifts: Using God's unique mix of gifts, passion and personality to build His kingdom.
 - G ood Stewardship: Honoring God in what one gives and in what one keeps.
 - G ospel: Committed to building relationships with lost people and sharing a verbal witness of God's Good News.
5. Cultural Distinctions:
 - Sexuality We believe physical intimacy is a gift from God, intended to be shared between a man and a woman in the context of a sacred covenant of marriage. As pastors, elders and ministry staff, we will live in accordance with this ideal. However, beyond our role as pastor, elder or ministry staff, we also recognize that not everyone believes this or is able to live in accordance with this ideal.

That's why we believe everyone deserves the utmost dignity and respect, acceptance, inclusion and love, regardless of orientation or identity.

Women In Leadership We believe the evidence of Scripture is that God has called, gifted, empowered and commissioned women and men into leadership equally. We believe Paul's limits on women were spoken to solve a specific problem in a specific time and context.

About Justice The Church has both the unique ability and unparalleled capacity to confront the staggering crisis of poverty, homelessness, addiction and abuse in our community and around the world. We are called to respond with restorative solutions for communities and victims who are made vulnerable.

- We believe...justice flows from God's very character, and the works of God's hands are faithful and just;
- We will...treat every human being as a person made in God's own image, with a life worthy of respect, protection, and care;
- We will...foster just relationships between God, fellow human beings, and property, which will lead to human flourishing;
- We will... take up the cause of the poor and vulnerable, ensuring fair access to education, economic opportunity, the social safety net, and, for those accused of crimes, the instruments of justice;
- We will...preach the good news of the gospel and proclaim that true freedom in Christ is available to all,
- We will...celebrate redemption in our congregations and communities, welcoming people into fellowship and providing opportunities for all persons to reach their God-given potential.

6. Governance Model:

The Elder Board supports the Policy Governance model as part of its commitment and responsibility to excellence in the governance of Riverwood. This requires that Elders will be individuals who have characteristics that will enable them to govern, not to manage, Riverwood. These characteristics include:

- Commitment to linking with the ownership. Understanding that they stand in for an ownership of diverse people; willing to actively seek to access and understand that diversity.
- Ability to think in terms of systems and context — to see the big picture.
- Interest in and capability to discuss the values underlying the actions taken in Riverwood, and to govern through the broader formulations of these values.
- Willingness to delegate the operational detail to others.
- Ability and willingness to deal with vision and the long term, rather than day- to-day details.
- Ability and willingness to participate assertively in deliberation, while respecting the opinions of others.
- Willingness and commitment to honour Board decisions.
- Commitment not to make judgments in the absence of previously stated criteria

“I believe these distinctions are God’s thumbprint on our church. Based on these, I have a clear understanding of where Riverwood Church Community is going. I support each statement and our overall direction, without reservation.”

X: _____ Date: _____

PASTOR, ELDER & MINISTRY STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Riverwood Church Community is an open, welcoming faith-community where people from all walks of life, economics, ethnicities, orientations and personal histories can come to explore the Christian faith, be accepted where they are at and get connected to a faith community.

As a church, we are here to love, inspire and serve people with dignity and respect, regardless of our differences. At the same time, we know that we are here to fulfill God’s purpose for His church and order our lives according to His Word, the Bible. This means, while we love, respect and accept all, making room for everyone to participate, worship and serve, we also hold those who are given greater influence and responsibility to higher levels of accountability as representatives of Riverwood and its doctrine.

As a Riverwood PASTOR, ELDER OR MINISTRY STAFF MEMBER I will:

- Treat all people with dignity and respect! This includes avoiding:
 - Abusive behaviour
 - Physical and verbal aggression
 - Sexual assault or abuse
 - Harassment
- Conduct myself with integrity! This includes avoiding:
 - Criminal activity (including the use of prohibited substances)
 - Theft or fraud
 - Lying, deceit or dishonesty
 - Immodest / provocative dress
- Communicate in a healthy manner! This includes:
 - Avoiding profanity and/or blasphemy
 - Speaking positively about other staff members or staff decisions to anyone on staff or in the church. We value healthy dialogue and debate in decision-making. Once a decision has been reached, it can be processed further, however, to protect staff and church unity, it

should be supported publicly. (Note: this is not meant as a discouragement from reporting abusive or otherwise inappropriate behaviour through the Complaints Mechanism Policy.)

- Refrain from the use of substances (illegal drugs / alcohol / recreational cannabis / misused prescription medication) on site or prior to working, which could result in my being in a compromised state or under the influence of said substance.
- Be aware of the risks and exercise a healthy caution and responsible use of any legal but addictive substances and activities.
- Refrain from disclosing confidential information to anyone (including my spouse) without the consent of the person providing the information. This includes delicate and personal issues that are addressed in staff meetings and staff conversations. (Note: There is an exception where there is a legal obligation or duty of care issues.)

Additionally, as a Riverwood PASTOR, ELDER OR MINISTRY STAFF MEMBER, I will:

- Recognize that my leadership position within the church calls me to a higher standard and greater scrutiny as laid out in scripture.
- Make my own spiritual and professional growth a priority.
- Act with sexual integrity, recognizing that sexuality is a gift from God to be expressed within biblical boundaries. This includes:
 - Only pursuing romantic and sexual relationships within the context of a biblical 'one-woman with one-man' model.
 - Avoiding exposure to and use of pornographic materials.
 - If I am a single staff member in leadership, I will be aware of potential power dynamics in the development of romantic relationships with someone under my care or leadership. In such a case, full disclosure and accountability with my supervisor should be established to ensure transparency and the avoidance of power imbalance. It is never appropriate to have both a pastoral/leadership and romantic relationship at the same time.
- Will operate with healthy boundaries:

I will treat everyone as individuals created in the image of God, worthy of honour, dignity, and being treated with respect and will create boundaries to maintain healthy interactions with those I am working with, caring for, and serving.

Boundary #1 – Be aware that my position as a church leader carries power!

Boundary #2 – Be aware, as a spiritual leader, I must be an agent of safety and healing!

I will acknowledge my limitations when I do not possess the skills or professional qualifications to handle a situation and will refer to those who do.

Boundary #3 – Be aware that others are watching! This comes with responsibility!

Boundary #4 – Be aware that I am not beyond testing or temptation! I will avoid situations and places where I can be tempted or compromised!

I will keep my work-related meetings and engagements with others transparent (i.e.: meetings are documented / others are aware / etc.).

Boundary #5 – Be quick to identify danger and be honest about listening to the warning signs!

Boundary #6 – Recognize that the responsibility to establish limits and keep them intact always falls to the person with the greater power!

Boundary #7 - Maintain staff interactions that are respectful and professional!

We often are in situations where we will meet one-on-one, be in the office outside of normal hours, and have other work-related engagements (travel, etc.). I will be mindful of my boundaries, self-aware, and ensure I am considering other's boundaries in our engagements with one another. Married staff should avoid having lunch or off-site coffee meetings with staff of the opposite sex alone.

This is my declaration that I have read, understand, and signed the “Serving Engagement 5 – Pastor, Elder & Ministry Staff Commitment¹” and identify it as being a condition of the covenant and serving as an Elder at Riverwood:

X: _____ Date: _____

¹ *Serving Engagement 5 – Pastor, Elder & Ministry Staff Commitment:*
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_wKh2VNiH_5u9nXZktGjfDPDUtysr4HM/view?usp=sharing