

## 5. ELDER SELECTION PROCESS

Summary of Requirements  
Riverwood Church Community  
Elder Selection Process

1. **Detailed Requirements**
  - a. **Giftedness & Track Record**
  - b. **Character**
  - c. **Convictions**
    - i. **Statement of Faith**
    - ii. **Riverwood Church Community Distinctives**
  - d. **Code of Conduct**
2. *New Elder Nomination, Selection and Appointment Process*
3. *Current Elder Review, Affirmation and Re-Appointment Process*
4. *Elder Candidate Questionnaire*
5. *Elder Requirements & Signed Affirmation*

### 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

### A. 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 behavior 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).

## **B. CHARACTER**

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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)

## C. 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.

### I. STATEMENT OF FAITH

1 - God	There is one God, <sup>1</sup> who is infinitely perfect, <sup>2</sup> existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. <sup>3</sup>
2 - Jesus	Jesus Christ is true God and true man. <sup>4</sup> He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. <sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> He is now at the right hand of the Father on high as our great High Priest. <sup>7</sup> He will come again to establish His kingdom of righteousness and peace. <sup>8</sup>
3 - Holy Spirit	The Holy Spirit is a divine Person, sent to indwell, <sup>9</sup> guide, teach and empower the believer, and to convict the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. <sup>10</sup>
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. <sup>11</sup>
5 - Sin	People, originally created in the image and likeness of God, <sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup>
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. <sup>15</sup>
7 - Christian Living	It is the will of God that in union with Christ each believer should be sanctified thoroughly <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup>  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. <sup>18</sup>
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. <sup>19</sup>
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.<sup>20</sup></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.<sup>21</sup></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; <sup>22</sup> for the unjust, a resurrection unto judgment. <sup>23</sup>
11 - Second Coming of Christ	The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is imminent and will be personal and visible. <sup>24</sup> 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. <sup>25</sup>

## References

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

## II. RIVERWOOD CHURCH COMMUNITY DISTINCTIVES

Each elder must whole-heartedly affirm Riverwood Church Community's distinctives as expressed in the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals.

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.

#### D. LEADER, COVENANT COMMUNITY & VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

Riverwood Church is an open, faith-community where people from all walks of life, demographics, nationalities and personal histories can come to explore the Christian faith, be accepted where-they-are-at and get connected to a faith community. At Riverwood, those who step up to becoming part of the Covenant Community and/or function in a role of leading, influencing or teaching are expected to function by a higher code of ethics, upholding the New Testament standards in all aspects of their life and ministry. Applicants and existing Covenant Community members and/or ministry volunteers of Riverwood Church will disqualify themselves from the Covenant Community and/or ministry if they do not adhere to the Code of Conduct.

- Those who are part of the Covenant Community and/or ministry volunteers have agreed to live by faith and life commitments including tithing, life-priorities and conflict processing.
- Those who are part of the Covenant Community and/or ministry volunteers agree to the Riverwood Statement of Faith and will refrain from advocating doctrines not in alignment with Riverwood doctrinal position or contrary to the Statement of Faith.
- Those who are part of the Covenant Community and/or ministry volunteers will be committed “champions” of Riverwood’s mission, vision, values and purposes, and will encourage others to assist in the implementation of these foundational principles.
- Those who are part of the Covenant Community and ministry volunteers are loyal to the leaders God has put in place at Riverwood:
- Concerns or personal conflicts will be dealt with on a personal level with the person(s) involved, following the Matthew 18 principle of first going to the source and incrementally taking the issue to higher levels as warranted.
- Those who are part of the Covenant Community and/or ministry volunteers are to avoid conduct that is unethical or deemed immoral by our interpretation of Scripture.

The following is a list of behaviors and activities that we believe compromises an individual’s morality and/or effectiveness as a fully-devoted follower of Christ’s:

- *substance abuse including addiction to tobacco or alcohol, and/or any use of illicit drugs*
- *theft or fraud*
- *physical aggression*
- *abusive behavior*
- *harassment*
- *profanity*
- *lying, deceit or dishonesty*
- *sexual relationships outside of marriage (including pre-marital or extra marital,*
- *heterosexual or homosexual, sexual activity)*
- *reading or viewing pornographic materials*
- *homosexual relationships*
- *sexual assault or abuse*

- *criminal activity*
  - *immodest dress*
- Riverwood's Leaders are not moral police. Those who are part of the Covenant Community and/or volunteer at Riverwood should self discipline. This means they should avoid these behaviors for the sake of Christ and the church or withdraw their Covenant Community and/or volunteer role if they are in constant violation of this code.
- Behaviors and sins that violate Biblical and moral values also reflect poorly on the cause of Christ and the reputation of this church. Such violations could result in correction or dismissal from Covenant Community and/or volunteer ministry.
- Those who are part of the Covenant Community and/or serve as a ministry volunteer recognize that a good attitude is invaluable to church morale and church momentum. Those with negative or damaging attitudes will be coached and encouraged towards a healthier attitude.
- Those who are part of the Covenant Community and/or ministry volunteers will be asked to 'sign-on' to this Code of Conduct and the Statement of Faith with periodic renewals as determined by our leadership.