



### **Elders at LCBC – An Important Leadership Role**

According to the New Testament, elders are responsible for the primary leadership and oversight of a church. The function and role of an elder is well summarized by Alexander Strauch in his book *Biblical Eldership*: "Elders lead the church [1 Tim 5:17; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 5:1-2], teach and preach the Word [1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:9], protect the church from false teachers [Acts 20:17, 28-31], exhort and admonish the saints in sound doctrine [1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 3:13-17; Titus 1:9], visit the sick and pray [James 5:14; Acts 20:35], and judge doctrinal issues [Acts 15:16]. We are grateful for the men and women that God has used to give leadership to our church over the past 30 plus years.

### **Responsibilities of an Elder**

An elder must:

- Carry the responsibility and authority to see that the church remains on a true biblical course; that its members are being appropriately shepherded, that the body is being fed through insightful biblical teaching, and that the life of the church is being well managed with the assistance of competent and godly leaders.
- Guard the body of Christ against harmful influences, confronting those who are contradicting biblical truth or continuing in a pattern of sinful behavior. When necessary, they implement appropriate church discipline.
- Shepherd the church by being an example and role model.
- Care about the spiritual and physical well-being of members and adherents; pray regularly for the sick.
- Maintain the administration of Baptism, Communion, and Membership.
- Implement and monitor compliance with board policy.
- Participate in the biblical process of conflict resolution (Matthew 18)
- Respond to letters/phone calls from the church body, staff, or public.
- Prepare and present the annual budget recommendations to the congregation.
- Encourage the senior pastor, staff, and volunteers.
- Conduct annual review of the senior pastor.
- Delegate to qualified assistants, staff, and/or outside experts as needed.

### **Character of an Elder**

The biblical teaching on church leadership begins and ends with the character of the individuals. The characteristics below are found in 1 Timothy 3:2-7, and Titus 1:6-9

- **Above reproach**—Elders must lead by example and demonstrate a lifestyle free from patterns of sin.

- **Devoted Spouse**—Elders, if married, must be devoted spouses. As a church we believe that both men and women can serve on our elder’s board. We believe that in Christ we are all equal, and that God has gifted and called women to use their abilities in his service, including roles of leadership. This belief is also affirmed by the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada.
- **Temperate**—Elders must be self-controlled, and free from excesses.
- **Prudent**—Elders must be sober, sensible, wise, balanced in judgment.
- **Respectable**—Elders must demonstrate an ordered life and honorable behavior.
- **Hospitable**—Elders must be unselfish and generous, willing to share with others.
- **Able to teach**—Elders must be able to communicate truth in a non-argumentative way.
- **Not addicted to wine**—Elders must be free from addictions and willing to limit their liberty for the sake of others.
- **Not quick-tempered**—Elders must be gentle, patient, and able to exercise self-control in difficult situations.
- **Uncontentious**—Elders must not be argumentative or stubborn.
- **Free from the love of money**—Elders must not be greedy, or preoccupied with material things.
- **Manage own household**—Elders must have their priorities straight in respect to family life. Intentional living and a visible desire for a healthy family life, are demonstrated by Christian character, sacrifice and a servant heart.
- **Not a new convert/not a new believer**—Elders must not be new believers. They must have been a Christian long enough to demonstrate the reality of their conversion and a maturing faith.
- **Good reputation with outsiders**—Elders must be well-respected in their spheres of influence.
- **Not self-willed**—Elders must not be stubborn, or prone to forcing their opinions on others.
- **Loving what is good**—Elders must desire the will of God in every decision.
- **Just**—Elders must desire to be fair and impartial. Their judgments must be based on scriptural principles.
- **Devout**—Elders must be devoted Christ followers, seeking to be conformed to His image. They must be committed to prayer, worship, the study of Scripture, and the guarding of their spiritual walk.
- **Holding fast the faithful Word**—Elders must be stable in the faith, obedient to the Word of God, and continually seeking to be controlled by the Holy Spirit.

#### **Other important considerations for Elders:**

Elders should:

- Be servants by nature; with a desire to see the church prevail in the world.
- Allow Scripture and prayer to inform their decision-making process.
- Assess significant past events and their potential for impact on the present and future.
- Be able to think creatively and apply ideas and concepts in new ways.
- Desire accountability in fulfilling their responsibilities and meeting the needs of those they serve.