

## ***What Are We Looking For In An Elder?***

Our Board of Elders serve Eucharist for terms of 3-6 years. Because of that, every few years at Eucharist we have elders move on to other roles and we look to add a few new elders to our existing team.

**The elders are a group in our church who help care for and pastor people in our community, and who discern what God is doing in our community through listening and prayer.** This discernment also helps us set direction for our congregation. This model of elders is seen throughout scripture, and we think it is a critical role for the church today.

We are looking for two or three new elders who can help us care for this community, listen well to what God is up to in our midst, provide vision and direction for our church, and generally keep their finger on the pulse of what is happening at EC.

**So we are asking everyone who is a part of Eucharist to consider people who they think would be a good fit for this role.** Anyone who has someone in mind for this role can email [elders@eucharistchurch.ca](mailto:elders@eucharistchurch.ca), with the name of who they think would be a good fit for the elders team, and why they think they would be a good fit for the elders team in this time and this place.

**Some people asked: what should we be looking for in an elder? I'm glad you asked, here are a few characteristics of an elder!**

We are looking for people who are committed to Eucharist, and are interested in helping us grow in the direction God is calling us to. We also want to know that they are servants of the church, which means we want them to be people who have attended pretty regularly for at least a year, and who demonstrate engagement and commitment to serving our congregation.

There are two places in scripture where qualifications for elders are listed, in **1 Timothy 3** and in **Titus 1**. While these texts are not written gender neutral (“husband of one wife”), we believe that scripture points to women’s full involvement in every role in the church, so we are open to men or women who you feel would be a fit for this role.

You can look up the verses yourself, but some of the descriptions of an elder are that they:

Should be beyond reproach, married to one person or living with integrity as a single person, temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, a good teacher, not a heavy drinker or violent, but gentle. Not quarrelsome and not in love with money. If they have a family they must be good at managing their family life. They should not be a recent convert but someone who has been following Jesus for a while. They should also be respected in the broader community outside of the church. A few other descriptors are that they should not be stubborn or hot-headed, they should not be eager for selfish gain or a bully. They should love goodness, be sensible, just, holy, and self-controlled. And they must hold firmly to the good news of Jesus!

**No problem right?** Of course this is an intimidating list, and no one can perfectly fulfill it, but it gives us a general direction for what kinds of people should be trusted to shepherd a community.

Lastly, there are “three C’s” that we think define the person we are looking for; **character, competency, and chemistry!**

**Character:** Does this person look like Jesus? Have they refined and grown in their character last few years? Do they build others up or tear them down? How do they respond to crisis? Are they emotionally and spiritually healthy? Are they quick to forgive? Are they gracious? Is the Fruit of the Spirit evident in their life?

This is one of the most important things we can look for in an elder. A mentor once said: “A person with high competency, but low character, has an unlimited potential for destruction!” - nothing is more important to an elder than having good character.

**Competence:** Has this person developed their spiritual gifts? Are they capable of giving the time and energy necessary to help lead a congregation? Have you seen their gifts grow and develop over the years? What sorts of gifts do you see in them?

**Chemistry:** Finally, does this person have chemistry with others in our congregation, and with the existing elders and pastor? This doesn’t mean they need to be best friends with everyone, but they are going to spend a lot of time with the other elders, and in a role of listening to the various voices in the church, so having chemistry is obviously important.

And that’s it. Do you have in mind a person who is a mature believer, who you respect, and is in line with the biblical qualifications for elders? Do they have character, competency, and chemistry? If so, we would love to hear from you.

**Please write an email to [elders@eucharistchurch.ca](mailto:elders@eucharistchurch.ca) with your name, the name of the person/people you are thinking of, and, person by person, why you think they should be people we pray for and talk to this about.**

We trust God will guide this process as he has before, and we look forward to joining you all in this discerning process!

Thanks everyone. Grace and peace.

The Staff and Elders of Eucharist Church