

Elder Team Application 2020

Deadline to turn in paperwork: April 2, 2020

MERCYhouse
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CONFIDENTIAL

We are aware that the following questions are personal and very sensitive. Jesus is in the business of redeeming sinners and changing lives, so we do not expect anyone's past to be perfectly "clean". Rather, our concern is with unresolved issues from the past. These issues are sensitive precisely because, unless properly dealt with, they have the power to undermine and destroy you even as you seek to lead a church. Therefore, we ask these questions both for your protection and ours, but especially for those among whom you intend to minister.

Your answers on this form will only be read by the MERCYhouse elder team. It will be kept in a confidential and secure file. You will be consulted in the event there is need for further clarification. We would request a response from the applicant and his wife on all relevant questions. We appreciate your honesty. If you need additional space in order to adequately respond, please use a separate sheet of paper.

Names

Lead Team Applicant:

Spouse:

Section 1: Personal History

This Section To be Filled Out By Elder Team Applicant and Spouse:

1. Do you (or other family members) have any health concerns which could create a significant challenge for you and your family?
 - a. If yes, please explain:

2. If you have children, do you have any special concerns for your children's needs (i.e. health, education, physical needs, emotional, etc.)?
 - a. If yes, please explain:

3. Have you ever been charged with a felony?
 - a. If yes, indicate dates and please explain:

4. Do you or have you used illegal or narcotic drugs (including abuse of prescription medications)? Do you or have you abused alcohol?
 - a. If yes, indicate what type, how recently and in what quantity:

5. Have you or your spouse ever been involved in any Eastern Religions or occult activities (i.e. tarot cards, Ouija boards, witchcraft, Wicca, new age, etc.)?
 - a. If yes, please explain:

6. Have you ever been a victim of abuse, molestation, or rape?
 - a. If yes, please explain:

7. Have you ever raped or sexually abused anyone?
 - a. If yes, please explain:

8. As a legal adult (18 plus), have you ever been sexually involved with a minor?
 - a. If yes, please explain:

9. To what extent have you been involved with pornography, including cable channels, soft-core porn (e.g. HBO, Cinemax, etc.).

10. Have you ever had same-sex desires and/or had a same-sex experience?
 - a. If yes, please explain:

11. Are you now or have you been under a physician's care for mental or emotional treatment?
 - a. If yes, please explain:

12. Have you or your spouse ever participated in a 12-Step Program or another type of recovery program for addiction or codependency issues?
a. If yes, please explain:

13. Have you told the truth about all of the above statements?
a. If yes, please explain:

14. If any of these areas are unresolved at this time, are you open to receiving help in order to move toward resolution? Explain.

14. Additional Comments:

I hereby certify that all information submitted in connection with my Confidential Questionnaire/Background Check is true and correct. I agree that the MERCYhouse may verify any of the information submitted in support of my application, and I understand that I am under a continuing obligation to advise MERCYhouse of any changes which may occur after the Confidential Questionnaire submission.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Signature of Spouse

Date

Section II: Marriage History

- 1) What is your marital status?

- 2) If divorced, separated, or remarried, please describe the circumstances of such.

- 3) If never married, do you anticipate marriage, or have marriage plans?

- 4) If married, how long have you been married?

- 5) Please describe briefly how you and your wife met, your courtship experience, and how long you dated before marriage.

- 6) Do you have any children? If so, list their names and ages.

- 7) How has having children affected your marriage?

- 8) Do you have a regular date night with your wife? If so, describe a typical date night.

- 9) Do both you and your wife work outside of the home?

- 10) Have you and your wife always been faithful to each other—emotionally and physically?

- 11) Please describe the circumstances of any unfaithfulness.

- 12) Have you given an honest and candid answer?

- 14) How does your wife feel about your ministry and about your desire to become an elder? In what way will she participate with you?

15) Describe a disagreement that you had with your wife and how you resolved it.

16) Describe a time when the demands of ministry put strain on your marriage or family life and how you and your spouse worked through these demands.

To be filled out by the wife (if applicable):

- Share the story of how you met Jesus. In your answer, describe what your life was like prior to meeting Jesus (including a very brief description of your family of origin), the key factors that led you to Jesus, and how your life changed after meeting Jesus.
- Give a candid narrative of your marital history.
- Describe how your husband has led you spiritually and contributed to your growth throughout your time together.
- Describe how your husband has functioned as head of the home, and how he has taken responsibility to teach, train, and pastor your children.
- Please tell us what you believe your husband's primary spiritual gifts are, and why you believe your husband would be a good elder.
- Describe a time when the demands of ministry put strain on your marriage or family life and how you and your husband handled it as a couple.

Section III: Testimony and Calling to Eldership

Personal Testimony

- 1) Share the story of how you met Jesus. In your answer, describe what your life was like prior to meeting Jesus (including a very brief description of your family of origin), the key factors that led you to Jesus, and how your life changed after meeting Jesus.

- 2) Describe your spiritual disciplines and what it looks like for you to daily walk with God.

Calling to the position of Elder

- 1) Do you believe God has called you to be an elder at MERCYhouse? Explain why.

- 2) If yes, how has God specially called and equipped you to serve in that role?

- 3) Is your spouse confident of a call to be in partnership with you as you minister as an elder? Explain.

- 5) Read MERCYhouse's CHURCH COVENANT which includes a basic belief in the gospel and the practices that our church has devoted itself to. How are you currently experiencing these beliefs and practices in the context of our congregation and what specifics in that covenant are areas where you need to grow.

Section IV: Theology and Pastoral Care Questionnaire

General Theology:

1. Who have been your primary theological teachers, or influences? In other words (apart from the Bible), what authors, theologians (either living or dead), movements, denominations, or schools of thought have most influenced your theology?
2. Outside of the Bible, what is the most theologically-intensive book you have read cover-to-cover?
3. In your own words, briefly describe the gospel message:
4. List 3 core convictions that you hold (as a Christian and a church leader), that you will never back down on (i.e. closed handed issue). Reference at least 1 scripture to back up each conviction. Also list 3 core convictions that you would say are a matter of conscience for the individual believer and should not be insisted upon (i.e. open handed issues).

Please indicate which of the following doctrinal beliefs you hold to be true. Please provide a brief explanation for any "no" answer:

Scripture

1. Yes / No - I believe that the words of the Bible are God's words. That those who wrote the Bible were inspired by God to write each word and that this makes the Bible authoritative in matters of belief and practice in the church. (2 Tim 3:16,17, 2 Peter 1:21)
2. Yes / No - I believe that all of the Bible points to Christ and that right teaching of the Bible will always include a Christ-centered approach. (Luke 24:25-48; 1 Cor 1:23; 2 Cor 1:20)

God

3. Yes / No - I believe that God is triune. That he is one God and three persons which are Father, Son and Holy Spirit. That each of these persons is fully God. (Matthew 28:19, 2 Cor 13:14, John 8:58, Acts 5:1-4)
4. Yes / No - I believe that God created all things both seen and unseen. (Genesis 1, 2)
5. Yes / No - I believe that humans are created by God in the image of God. (Genesis 1:26,27)

Human Beings

6. Yes / No - I believe that every human being has been created by God and as such should be treated with dignity and respect. (Genesis 1:26,27; 9:5,6; 1 Peter 2:17)

7. Yes / No - I believe that every human being has been created by God as either male or female and that God's original design for gender identity is that it be consistent with their biological sex. (Genesis 1:26,27; Matthew 19:1-12)
8. Yes / No - I believe that marriage is intended by God to be between one man and one woman until the death of one of the spouses. (Matthew 19:1-12)
9. Yes / No - I believe that sexual intercourse is to be experienced only inside the marital relationship of husband and wife. (Exodus 20:14, 1 Cor 6:12-20)
10. Yes / No - I believe that husbands and wives have been given different roles in marriage. The husband is to lovingly lead his wife and the wife is to submit to her husband. These roles communicate the relationship between Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18,19; 1 Peter 3:5,6) This biblical principle is never to be used as a way to justify abuse in the home. If a wife experiences abuse or is being forced to disobey her biblical convictions, she is not expected to submit in such a situation and should appeal to church leadership for help.
11. Yes / No - I believe that because of Adam's sin, all humans are born sinful and worthy of eternal death. (Psalm 51:3-5, Ephesians 2:1-3)

Christ and Salvation

12. Yes / No - I believe that Jesus is fully God and fully human and that there is no mixture of these two natures. (Isaiah 9:6,7; John 1:1,2, 14; Colossians 1:15,16; Philippians 2:6-11)
13. Yes / No - I believe that a human's only hope for salvation from sin is Jesus' provision of salvation through his death on the cross. (Acts 4:12, John 14:6)
14. Yes / No - I believe that Jesus literally rose from the grave and that his resurrection proves that Jesus' atoning work on the cross is sufficient for saving sinners from sin and its effects. (4 Gospels, 1 Corinthians 15)
15. Yes / No - I believe in the literal return (or second coming) of Jesus who will reverse all of sin's effects and reign over heaven and earth forever. (Matthew 24:29-31; Revelation 21)
16. Yes / No - I believe that Christ's salvation is accessed by faith alone (in Christ's atoning work) and not through any good work that we perform (baptism, righteous living, etc.). (John 6:28,29; Ephesians 2:1-9)
17. Yes / No - I believe that without God's gracious intervention, human beings cannot respond to the gospel with saving faith. (John 3:3; Colossians 2:13; Titus 3:5)
18. Yes / No - I believe that if a person has exercised genuine/saving faith in the work of Christ on the cross, they cannot lose their salvation. (John 10:28,29; Ephesians 1:3-14)
19. Yes / No - I believe that a person that has exercised genuine/saving faith in the work of Christ on the cross will produce good fruit (transformed character, ministry to others . . .) and will persevere in their faith until death. In other words, if they are

truly justified, they will show the fruit of sanctification and will reach a promised glorification in eternity. (Romans 8:30; 1 John 2:9-11; Galatians 5:16-26)

Holy Spirit

20. Yes / No - I believe that the Holy Spirit primarily works in the life of an unbeliever to convict them of sin and show them the truth of the gospel. (John 16:8-10; 1 Thess 1:4-6)
21. Yes / No - I believe that every genuine believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit upon their conversion and that it is not necessary for a believer to have a subsequent "baptism of the Holy Spirit" after conversion. (1 Cor 6:19; 2 Cor 13:14; 2 Tim 1:14)
22. Yes / No - I believe that the Holy Spirit can work in the life of a believer in ways that include but are not limited to conviction of sin, unity with other Christians, encouragement, comfort, empowerment for Christlike living, giving of spiritual gifts, giving of divine wisdom, giving of words to speak, and the producing of Christlike character. (John 14-16; Galatians 5:16-24; Romans 8:1-11)

The Church

23. Yes / No - I believe that every believer should join a local church and use their gifts to build up other believers and participate in the mission of the church. (Matthew 16:13-19, 18:15-20, 28:16-20; Acts 2:42; Romans 12:1-8; 1 Peter 2:1-12; Philippians 1:1)
24. Yes / No - I believe that a person who has exercised genuine/saving faith in the work of Christ on the cross, should express their belief by being baptized by immersion. (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:41; Ephesians 4:5)
25. Yes / No - I believe that baptism symbolizes the gospel we believe, the new believers death to sin and new life in Christ, and the joining of the new believer to the fellowship of the church. (Matthew 28:19, Ephesians 4:5; Romans 6:3; 1 Cor 12:13)
26. Yes / No - I believe that communion (or Lord's Supper) symbolizes the gospel we believe and is used by God as a means for building up the believer and the local church. (Luke 22:14-20; 1 Cor 11:17-34)
27. Yes / No - I believe that the three biblically sanctioned offices in the church are members, deacons, and elders. (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-15)
28. Yes / No - I believe that members are the highest human authority in the church and should have the right to confirm and/or remove their elders and deacons. (1 Timothy 5:17-25; Ephesians 3:10)
29. Yes / No - I believe that church members have a biblical mandate to submit to their leaders. (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Peter 5:5)
30. Yes / No - I believe that every church member should give financially to the church in a way that is proportional, generous, and sacrificial. (Luke 6:32-36; 2 Cor 8:1-15; 1 Timothy 5:17,18)

31. Yes / No - I believe that elders have a biblical mandate to teach, shepherd, and oversee the local church that they serve. (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-15; 1 Peter 5:1-4)
32. Yes / No - I believe that the office of elder should be held by more than one person in any local church. In other words, there should be a plurality of elders. (1 Peter 5:1; 1 Timothy 4:14, 5:17; Titus 1:5)
33. Yes / No - I believe that the Bible teaches that only men can be elders. (Luke 6:12-16; 1 Timothy 2:11-15)
34. Yes / No - I believe that deacons have a biblical mandate to serve the church in practical ways under the oversight of the elders and that this protects elders from neglecting the ministries of word and prayer. (Acts 7:1-7)
35. Yes / No - I believe the primary mission of the church is to make disciples which includes but is not limited to establishing disciples in gospel doctrine and equipping them in the practices of worship, scripture study, prayer, fellowship, and making disciples of others. (Matthew 28:16-20; Ephesians 4:12-14, Acts 2:42, 1:8)
36. Yes / No - I believe that the church should be on a mission to not only make disciples in their immediate context but also in other areas of need extending to the nations of the world. (Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 1:8)

Pastoral Theology:

- 1) How would you respond to a couple in the church that just miscarried 9 weeks into pregnancy? What scriptures would you take them to?
- 2) A new member reaches out to you to meet up and in the conversation reveals he doesn't understand why MERCYhouse puts so much emphasis on discipleship groups. What would you say to him to explain our vision for these groups?
- 3) A college kid brings two friends to you to talk more in depth about Jesus. They are confused because of what they've heard in their religion class at UMass, and they want to understand the biblical answer of who Jesus is and what he did. How would you talk with these truth-seekers about Jesus Christ and his work?
- 4) You are counseling an unmarried couple who profess to be Christians. They tell you that they are having sex and believe it's okay because they are "married in their hearts". They also would like to become members of the church. Describe how you would handle this couple, including how you would address the issue of being "married in their hearts"?

- 5) You are praying with folks up front after a Sunday Service and a married man asks you to pray for him in regard to an addiction to pornography that his wife knows nothing about. What would you do and how would you counsel this man?

- 6) A church member confides in you that they experience attraction to the same sex. They want to follow God and his word in this area, but have heard conflicting messages from other Christians about whether or not they should act on these desires. How would you counsel them?

- 7) A group of people are talking after a service on Sunday and wave you over to answer a question that they have been discussing - Why do we pray if God is sovereign over all things?

- 8) A person who is struggling with finances is wondering about what they should be giving to the church offering. They ask you if they should continue tithing or give less or quit giving all together. What would you tell them and what scriptures would you point them to?

- 9) An attendee asks if you think people of other religions go to hell. How would you reply?

- 10) An attendee who is interested in joining the church hears about our church's beliefs regarding the baptism of professing believers by immersion and is wondering why we do baptism this way. How would you answer his inquiry?