

BY-LAWS

of the

LAKE TAPPS COMMUNITY CHURCH

"Let all things be done decently and in order." (1 Corinthians 14:40)

"Let all things be done in love." (1 Corinthians 16:14)

"Let all be done for the strengthening of the church." (1 Corinthians 14:26)

"Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." (Colossians 3:17)

ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 CHURCH MEMBERS

All who are born again and attend Lake Tapps Community Church are recognized as the church, the body of Christ, the Body, the flock, and the congregation. Membership in a local church, however, is a confession before God and men of a living commitment to a group of believers. As such it is a commitment of responsibility for and to the other members of the church. (Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:24-25)

Lake Tapps Community Church is under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, administered by the elders and deacons, and accountable to its members.

Section 2 ADMISSION OF MEMBERS

- A. To be a member of Lake Tapps Community Church, one must be born again by the Spirit of God having personally received Christ as his/her Savior, be in substantial agreement with the Statement of Faith and Constitution, and without reservation, sign the "Membership Covenant." (see appendix A for Membership Covenant)
- B. Candidates for church membership may apply for membership by completing a membership application after attending a church membership class. The Lead Pastor and at least one Elder will interview the nominee with regard to his/her spiritual life, then confer with the Elder Team before accepting the candidate into membership.

Section 3 REMOVAL FROM MEMBERSHIP

- A. Any member asking to be removed from membership will be given a letter acknowledging their removal from membership.

- B. Members who are no longer attending after three months will be contacted, and if not returning soon, will be removed from membership. In special situations, he/she may request consideration. (Hebrews 10:24-25)
- C. If a member is living contrary to the pattern of Christian behavior as given in Scripture and in the Membership Covenant and is unresponsive to church discipline per Matthew 18:15-20, he/she will be removed from membership.

Section 4 VOTING PRIVILEGES

- A. Voting privileges shall be extended to all members 18 years of age and over.
- B. Voting by proxy is not allowed.
- C. Members will vote upon fundamental transactions such as, but not limited to:
 - affirmation of new Elders and Deacons
 - annual budget
 - accumulation of debt
 - purchase and sale of real estate
 - constitutional or by-laws amendments

ARTICLE II: CHURCH GOVERNANCE

Section 1 GOVERNING BODIES

Lake Tapps Community Church is led by TWO governing bodies:

- 1) the Elder Team, composed of the Lead Pastor and all other Elders, and
- 2) the Church Council, composed of at least three Deacons, the Lead Pastor and one Elder.

They shall serve together in humility, cooperation, and collaboration, to effectively lead and care for the church.

The Elder Team and the Church Council, together, shall constitute the Board of Trustees of this church and shall be entrusted with such responsibilities as civil law assigns. They shall be the legal church representatives in buying and selling of all church property but shall not purchase real estate or incur any debt without the approval of the members.

A. Elder Team Responsibilities and Composition

The Elder Team shall be composed of no fewer than five (5) Elders. Led by the Lead Pastor, who is also an Elder, the primary focus of the Elder Team (Elders) will be to oversee the spiritual needs of the Body of Christ at Lake Tapps Community Church. Affirmed by the members, they will provide the pastoral oversight as those God has raised up to shepherd the flock. With shared equality and mutually humble submission, the Elders honor and biblically consider one another's gifts, responsibilities, and competence in church oversight (1 Timothy 5:17, 1 Peter 5:2-3), and give an account for souls (Hebrews 13:17).

The Elders will be responsible for:

1. **Doctrine** – Elders are to spiritually feed, care for, and protect the flock (Acts 20:28-31; 1 Timothy 3:5). As such, Elders are responsible to teach sound doctrine and refute false teaching (Titus 1:9). They must be able and willing to participate in the teaching ministry of the church such that the members are equipped, and the Body is built up (Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Timothy 3:2).
2. **Discipleship** – Elders are to engage in the life of the church Body with the intention of baptizing believers, making disciples, and teaching them to observe the Word of God (Matthew 28:19-20). They are to replicate themselves as followers of Christ and live as examples before the church Body (1 Peter 5:3). They are to train others to lead and to teach in the church (2 Timothy 2:1-2). They are to ensure the Body is equipped and building itself up towards Christian maturity (Ephesians 4:12-13).

Elders shall actively disciple men in order to manage an intentional elder succession plan, and to ensure that the Elder Team shall continually be composed of no fewer than five Elders. In the event the number of elders falls below five, the remaining elders will endeavor to rectify that situation as soon as it is reasonable to get someone through the training and vetting process.

3. **Direction** – Elders are responsible to lead and manage the local church (1 Timothy 5:17, 1 Timothy 3:4-5), as those who will give an account (Hebrews 13:17). They are to ensure that the direction of the church is consistent with its stated Mission and Statement of Faith, seeking unity through prayer, application of Scriptures, and open communication.

The Elder Team should focus on the big-picture mission, doctrine, ministry principles, and vision of the church, rather than the details of implementation. The Elder Team's authority over the whole church rests in the Team as a whole, and decisions are represented as team decisions, not individual members. Individual team members do not have authority over the whole church, though at times, they will have authority over their specific areas of ministry.

4. **Discipline** – For the restoration of wayward church members, for the protection of the church Body, and for the glory of God's Name, as occasion arises, Elders must administer in love and humility, the process of church discipline as outlined in Matthew 18:15-20, Galatians 6:1-4, Titus 3:10, 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15, 1 Timothy 5:17-25, 1 Corinthians 5, 2 Corinthians 2:5-11, and Romans 16:17.

B. The Church Council Responsibilities and Composition

The Church Council is composed of at least three (3) Deacons, the Lead Pastor and one other Elder. Under the direction of the Elders, the primary focus of the Church Council will be to provide oversight for the operational needs of the Body of Christ at Lake Tapps Community Church.

Affirmed by the members to lead, the Church Council will ensure:

- 1) that ministries to the church, the community, and missionaries are carried out, and
- 2) that the finances and physical assets of the church are managed and stewarded appropriately.

Responsibilities of the Church Council will include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. They shall be responsible for all church property and may use designated funds for maintenance or improvements.
2. They shall exercise supervision and control of the general operation of the church, its programs, and its ministries.
3. They shall set the meeting agenda for all church member meetings.
4. They shall decide on the use of the church buildings for unscheduled meetings by organizations within or outside the church.
5. They shall oversee all financial stewardship, including the use of general funds and compensation packages.
6. Deacons shall actively disciple other men and women, intentionally growing leaders who can replace them in the future.

There shall be no fewer than five people serving on the Church Council: the Deacon positions outlined below, the Lead Pastor, and one other Elder. The Church Council may also include additional Deacons, including but not limited to, leaders of ministries.

Regular Church Council meetings will include all Deacons, the Lead Pastor and one other Elder. Guests, including other Elders, ministry leaders, or church members, may be added to the agenda and welcomed when the Chairperson is notified in advance, but they may not vote.

The following Deacon positions shall be filled before additional Deacon positions are added to the Council:

1. Chairperson – The Chairperson will preside over all meetings of the Church Council and have overall accountability for the effective ministry of the Church Council. In addition, the Chairperson, or his/her designated alternate, shall preside as moderator of all church member meetings.
2. Treasurer – The Treasurer is responsible for overseeing the receipt, deposit and disbursement of all monies received by the church. The Treasurer is responsible for ensuring that the church's general ledger and financial records are kept in order and related forms and reports are prepared as necessary.

The Treasurer shall ensure that a monthly statement is prepared for each Church Council meeting, and that a written financial statement is prepared for each Annual Members Meeting. In addition, the Treasurer shall ensure that the books are prepared for an audit, to be performed annually.

The Treasurer will ensure ethical handling of all church funds, oversee management of church banking accounts, and will ensure that the church's finances are in accord with legal, ethical, and biblical standards. The Treasurer will oversee all appointed ministry treasurers.*

3. Clerk – The Clerk is responsible for keeping the minutes of all Church Council meetings and all members meetings.

* Any ministry having its own treasurer who oversees a separate ministry bank account must be represented by a Deacon on the Church Council.

Section 2 APPOINTMENT OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

A. Core Requirements

Before someone can serve as an Elder or a Deacon, they must have attended Lake Tapps Community Church for at least one year and be a member of the Body. The time requirement may be waived by unanimous vote of the Elders.

B. Qualifications of Elders

Men who obey the call of God to shepherd the flock of God, and are willing to serve as elders, shall be members of Lake Tapps Community Church who:

- a) Evidence a gifting and calling on their lives to shepherd God's people (Romans 12:4-8).
- b) Desire the office of elder (1 Timothy 3:1).
- c) Meet the biblical qualifications of an elder (1 Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:5-9).
- d) By the grace of God, are prepared to be an example to the flock (1 Peter 5:3).

C. Selection Process of Elders

Elders may be nominated and affirmed through the Selection Process below.

Nomination Phase:

- The Elder Team, as well as all members of the church, may nominate men whom they think meet the biblical qualifications of being an elder listed in 1 Timothy 3:2-7, and Titus 1:5-9. Nominees should exhibit an observable track record of serving, leading, and giving at Lake Tapps Community Church, as well as exhibit fruit in ministry, marriage, and family life.
- Barring any disqualifying reasons, a member of the Elder Team will approach the nominee to prayerfully consider being an elder.
- When the nominee senses an internal call from the Holy Spirit to serve as an elder, he should make his desire known to the Elder Team. The Elder Team will confirm the calling through discussion and prayer.
- With the approval of all the Elders, and the mutual agreement of the nominee, he enters the Interviewing Phase.

Interviewing Phase:

- The nominee will be interviewed by the Elder Team, to hear the nominee's personal testimony, ask, and answer questions.
- The Elder Team will assign the nominee a supervising elder who will be available to answer additional questions and be the primary point of contact for the nominee.
- With the approval of all the Elders, and the mutual agreement of the nominee, he enters the Candidate Phase.

Candidate Phase:

- The candidate will enter a time of study and preparation for the specific work of eldership, examining the roles, responsibilities, and functions of an elder.
- The candidate will be assessed for compatibility, character, and competence.
- The candidate may also be asked to:
 - Attend Elder Team meetings for observation and participation, being excused for any confidential discussions.
 - Participate in a variety of conversations and interactions to assess the candidate's "fit" within the Elder Team, as well as the broader ministry context of Lake Tapps Community Church.
- With the approval of all the Elders, and the mutual agreement of the candidate, he enters the Affirmation Phase.

Affirmation Phase:

- The Elder Team will present the candidate to the members of Lake Tapps Community Church at least 4 weeks before a vote is held.
- Members will be urged to evaluate the life and conduct of the elder candidate, and if aware of any disqualifying sin or character flaw, must make the matter known to the current Elder Team, who will investigate the claim.
- A vote may be held at the Annual Members Meeting, or at a special members meeting convened by the Elders at any time throughout the year.
- Members will vote to either affirm or deny the elder candidate to serve as a new elder. Acceptance requires an 80% affirmative vote of members voting, assuming quorum is met. His service will begin immediately upon approval.

D. Qualifications of Deacons

Men and women who are led by the Lord to practically minister to the church Body and to steward Lake Tapps Community Church's material assets, and are willing to serve in the office of Deacon on the Church Council, shall be members of Lake Tapps Community Church who:

- a) Evidence a gifting and calling on their lives to practically serve God's people (Romans 12:4-8).
- b) Desire to serve the Body by providing leadership in operational and stewardship aspects of church ministries.
- c) Are recognized by the congregation as people who are "of good repute, full of the Spirit, and of wisdom" (Acts 6:3).
- d) Meet the biblical qualifications of a deacon (1 Timothy 3:8-12).

E. Selection Process of Deacons

Deacons may be nominated and affirmed through the Selection Process below:

• Nomination Phase:

- The Elder Team, as well as all members of the church, may nominate men and women whom they think meet the biblical qualifications of a deacon listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-12. Nominees should exhibit an observable track record of serving, leading, and giving at Lake Tapps Community Church, as well as exhibit fruit in ministry, marriage, and family life.
- Barring any disqualifying reasons, a member of the Council will approach the nominee to prayerfully consider being a deacon.
- When the nominee senses an internal call from the Holy Spirit to serve as a deacon, he or she should make his/her desire known to the Council. The Council will confirm the calling through discussion and prayer.

- With the approval of all members of the Council, and the mutual agreement of the nominee, he or she enters the Assessment Phase.

· **Assessment Phase:**

- If the nominee is replacing an existing Deacon, he or she will ideally have a time of shadowing the departing Deacon.
- If the nominee is filling a new deacon position, the nominee will be assigned a current Deacon to answer questions and be the primary contact for the nominee. He or she may be asked to help prepare a proposed job description for the new role.
- With the approval of all members of the Council, and the mutual agreement of the nominee, he or she enters the Affirmation Phase.

· **Affirmation Phase:**

- The Elder Team and Church Council will present the candidate to the members of Lake Tapps Community Church at least 4 weeks before a vote is held.
- Members will be urged to evaluate the life and conduct of the Deacon candidate, and if aware of any disqualifying sin or character flaw, must make the matter known to the current Elder Team or Church Council, who will investigate the claim.
- A vote may be held at the Annual Members Meeting, or at a special members meeting convened by the Elders or Church Council at any time throughout the year.
- Members will vote to either affirm or deny the Deacon candidate to serve as a new deacon. Acceptance requires an 80% affirmative vote of members voting, assuming quorum is met. His or her service will begin immediately upon approval.

Section 3 TERMS

Elders and Deacons may remain in their office indefinitely or until such time as they:

- voluntarily resign.
- are removed via the process outlined in Article II Section 5.

An Elder, with the approval and/or encouragement of the Elder Team, may choose to take a sabbatical of up to one year for a time of rest, spiritual restoration, and/or study. Sabbaticals will be granted under the condition that the five Elder minimum is maintained.

Section 4 ANNUAL REVIEW OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

In order to encourage the Elders and Deacons, as well as communicate any room for improvement, a review of each Deacon and Elder, including the Lead Pastor, will be conducted annually.

Members will complete a detailed review, based on biblical qualifications of each Elder and Deacon. An opportunity for general feedback will be available via the review as well. Reviews may not be anonymous.

Elders will assess the reviews submitted by members and provide a synopsis to the members, examining and addressing concerns as a team. Any concerns expressed regarding biblical qualifications, or errors in doctrine or morality will be investigated and addressed by the Elder Team immediately. Elders may contact the member submitting the concern and help guide the member through a biblical process for resolution using Matthew 18:15-20 in general, and specifically 1 Timothy 5:19-21 for Elders.

Section 5 REMOVAL OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

All disciplinary proceedings in this church shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance with a view toward reconciliation and restoration, and biblical processes per 1 Timothy 5:17-21 and Matthew 18:15-17.

At any time, members who have concerns or evidence regarding biblical qualifications, doctrine, and/or morality of an Elder or Deacon are encouraged to take the following steps, in order:

1. go to the Deacon or Elder to discuss the issue. If the person bringing this concern is not satisfied with the outcome in terms of innocence or repentance,
2. go to the Deacon or Elder together with one or more witnesses of the issue. If the persons bringing this concern are not satisfied with the outcome in terms of innocence or repentance,
3. take the matter to the Elder Team for counselling and assistance. If the Deacon or Elder is unresponsive to elder discipline, or if necessary, church discipline (1 Timothy 5:20), he or she will be removed from their office by a unanimous vote of the remaining elders.

ARTICLE III: OTHER ROLES AND COMMITTEES

Section 1 OVERVIEW

The Elders or the Church Council may formally recognize individuals to act in specific roles within the church Body, or on formally recognized committees in support of vital church ministries which are deemed necessary for the effective and orderly operation of the church.

Section 2 FORMAL MINISTRY ROLES

The Elders may appoint men and women to serve in specific on-going ministry roles deemed necessary to support the mission of the church. Once appointed, oversight and support for their ministry will be provided by the Church Council.

Before a person can be appointed to a formal ministry role, they must have attended Lake Tapps Community Church for at least one year and be a member of the Body. The time requirement may be waived by unanimous vote of the Elders.

In addition, those serving in a formally recognized ministry role within the church Body must be marked by the biblical character qualities of a deacon (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-11).

Section 3 COMMITTEES

The Church Council may appoint men and women to serve on formally recognized committees that are deemed necessary to achieve a specific task. Oversight and support for these committees will be provided by the Church Council.

Before a person can be formally appointed to serve on a committee, they must have attended Lake Tapps Community Church for at least one year and be a member of the Body. The time requirement may be waived by unanimous vote of the Elders.

In addition, those serving on a church committee must be marked by the biblical character qualities of a deacon (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-11).

ARTICLE IV: LEAD PASTOR

Section 1 QUALIFICATIONS, DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS

- A. The Lead Pastor is recognized as the spiritual leader of the church Body, and is considered the First Among Equals (see Appendix B) on the Elder Team. He is honored as spiritual leader; however, he has one vote in Elder Team decisions. (1 Timothy 5:17-18)
- B. He must meet the biblical qualifications of an elder (see Article II, Section 2B).
- C. He must be in agreement with the Lake Tapps Community Church Statement of Faith and Mission Statement.
- D. The Lead Pastor will be an ex officio member of all committees and ministry teams.
- E. The Lead Pastor will perform all duties as designated in his job description.
- F. The Lead Pastor will conduct reviews and performance plans of staff.
- G. The Lead Pastor will be responsible for ensuring that the Elder Team and Church Council review the By-Laws and Constitution annually.

Section 2 PROCEDURES FOR SELECTING A LEAD PASTOR

In the event that Lake Tapps Community Church needs to replace its Lead Pastor, the Elders will form a Search Committee.

Under the direction of the Elders, the Search Committee will determine the process to search for, vet, and recommend a qualified candidate(s) to the Elder Team.

Upon Elder Team approval, the Elders will present the candidate to the membership for affirmation. Acceptance requires a 90% affirmative vote of voting members, assuming quorum is met.

Section 3 REVIEW OF LEAD PASTOR

See Article II Section 4 Annual Review of Elders and Deacons

Section 4 REMOVAL OF LEAD PASTOR

In addition to what is laid out in Article II Section 5 Removal of Elders and Deacons, the Lead Pastor may be placed on paid administrative leave for cause by a unanimous vote of the remaining Elders until the process described in Article II Section 5 can resolve the matter.

ARTICLE V: ADDITIONAL MINISTRY STAFF

Section 1 OVERVIEW

In order to support the work of the ministry at Lake Tapps Community Church, the Elders, in conjunction with the Church Council, may determine the need for additional staff positions to support the Lead Pastor in achieving the ministry goals of Lake Tapps Community Church.

These positions may include, but are not limited to, such roles as ministry director, assistant treasurer, office administrator, and other targeted ministry oversight positions as deemed necessary.

Section 2 QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES

- A. Staff positions will be selected and hired by the Church Council under the direction of the Elders.
- B. These positions will report to the Lead Pastor or his designate.
- C. Those serving in staff positions related to ministry must be marked by the biblical character qualities of a deacon (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-11).
- D. Those in staff positions must be members of Lake Tapps Community Church.
- E. Hiring of staff positions may not result in the Elder Team being composed of more than 40% paid Elders.

Section 3 TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

- A. The employment of any staff member may be terminated by the Church Council under the direction of the Elders.

ARTICLE VI: MEMBERS MEETINGS

Section 1 LOCATION OF MEETINGS

All Member Meetings will be held at Lake Tapps Community Church.

Section 2 FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

- A. An Annual Members Meeting shall be held with the purpose:
 - 1. To receive and approve annual financial reports and budget proposals for ministries of the church and the church as a whole for the upcoming fiscal year.
 - 2. To affirm any new Elder and Deacon candidates.
- B. Additional meetings may be scheduled by the Elders or the Church Council as needed.
- C. Special Members Meetings may be called by one tenth of the total members eligible to vote.

Section 3 RULES GOVERNING MEETINGS

- A. 51% of the members entitled to vote, represented in person, shall constitute a quorum at a meeting of the members.
- B. Quorum must be met in order to approve any motion or vote on any church business.
- C. A simple majority vote of the members present shall be sufficient to decide any matter presented, unless otherwise provided for in the by-laws or the constitution.
- D. All Members Meetings shall be announced at a regular worship service and via email at least 20 days prior to the meeting date.
- E. In general, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the business procedure of Lake Tapps Community church.

ARTICLE VII: ORDAINING AND LICENSING

Section 1 ORDAINING

- A. It shall be within the power of the church to ordain into the Gospel ministry, those men whom God has called and equipped.
- B. The Elders and Church Council shall have the authority to call an ordination council for the proper examination of the candidate. Upon favorable report of the ordination council, the Elders and Church Council shall arrange an ordination service and issue proper credentials.

Section 2 LICENSING

- A. It shall be within the power of the church to issue an annual license for the Gospel ministry to those whom God has called and equipped.
- B. Said license shall be granted after unanimous approval by the Elders. It may be renewed by a unanimous vote of the Elders and Church Council.

ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS

Members may propose By-laws amendments to the Elder Team at any time.

If the Elder Team finds that the proposed amendments are profitable (1 Corinthians 10:23), proposed amendments will be announced, posted and copies made available at least 20 days prior to a scheduled member meeting for the adoption of amendments.

Amendments to these By-Laws may be adopted by a 75% majority vote of eligible members present at any regular or special Members Meeting at which quorum is met.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

Having received Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, and being in agreement with Lake Tapps Community Church's Purpose, Core Values, Statement of Faith, and Constitution, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Lake Tapps Community Church family.

In doing so, I pledge myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

**I will seek to "Preserve the unity of the Spirit" in our church
by acting in love toward other members
by refusing to gossip
by following the leadership**

"Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."
(Ephesians 4:3)

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs." (Ephesians 4:29)

"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be no advantage to you." (Hebrews 13:17)

**I will assume responsibility to share in the outreach of our church
by praying for growth
by inviting the unchurched to attend
by warmly welcoming those who visit**

"To the church – We always thank God for you and pray for you constantly." (I Thessalonians 1:1,2)

"The Master said to the servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes, and urge the people there to come so my house will be full.'" (Luke 14:23)

"So, warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly

welcomed you; then God will be glorified.” (Romans 15:7)

**I will serve the ministry of my church
by discovering my gifts and talents
by being equipped to serve
by developing a servant’s heart**

“Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you.” (I Peter 4:10)

“God gave some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. (Eph. 4:11,12)

“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus... Who (took on) the very nature of a servant.” (Philippians 2:4,5,7)

**I will support the testimony of my church
by attending faithfully
by living a Godly life
by giving regularly**

“Let us not give up meeting together – but let us encourage one another.” (Hebrews 10:25)

“Whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the Gospel of Christ.” (Philippians 1:27)

“Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for the offering.” (I Corinthians 16:2)

APPENDIX B: FIRST AMONG EQUALS

THE INTERACTION OF THE LEAD PASTOR WITH THE ELDER TEAM

The Lead Pastor and other elders act jointly to form the Elder Team that shares equal authority and responsibility, but as his title suggests, the "Lead" Pastor naturally stands out among the other elders as a leader and teacher within the team. This "first among equals" concept is derived from 1 Timothy 5:17-18:

¹⁷ Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. ¹⁸ For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages."

"FIRST"

For leadership to be effective, the Elder Team must be led. As we see the pattern of God using individuals throughout the Old Testament to lead His people (Noah, Abraham, Moses, etc), it is also evident in the New Testament that, even among the disciples, Peter appeared to function as their leader. According to 1 Timothy 5:17-18, those among the elder team whose primary work is in preaching and teaching are worthy of special honor, specifically in terms of compensation. This will be true of the Lead Pastor being paid as his full-time vocation. Because the Lead Pastor is full-time, both practically and functionally, it follows that he has more time to devote to direction and proposals for action. In these senses, the Lead Pastor is thus considered first among his equal peers.

"AMONG"

Among the Elders, the Lead Pastor organizes, prioritizes, and unites the Team. The Elders recognize the necessity of being led, while the Lead Pastor understands that he needs the gifts and unity of the Team to glorify God and carry out the mission of the church. The Lead Pastor and Elders operate in humble, mutual submission among one another.

"EQUALS"

The offices of Lead Pastor and Elder are equal in their calling to shepherd the flock, as the Scriptures do not make a formal distinction between the two (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Tim 3:1-2; 1 Tim 4:14; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1). The Lead Pastor has one vote among the elders; he is an equal. Their qualifications for leadership are equal (1 Tim 3:3-7, Titus 1:5-9), and the scope of their responsibility to lead the flock is the same in the areas of *Doctrine* (Titus 1: 9), *Direction* (1 Tim 5:17) and *Discipleship* (2 Tim 2:1-2). They have both received gifts by the Holy Spirit to enable them to effectively lead (Eph 4:11-13). Both are accountable for the souls of the flock (Heb 13:17).

The tension in a “first among equals” relationship is well recognized without an exact prescription given in Scripture to direct. However, the Lead Pastor and Elders model the humble and self-sacrificing love of Jesus, our Chief Shepherd, for the flock of God’s people at Lake Tapps Community Church.