



CrossCulture Church of Christ

Process for Selecting and Appointing Elders

Detailed process steps from identification of potential candidates to endorsement by congregation

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Summary

This document describes the process for selecting and appointing new elders. It describes each process step in detail and includes a diagram showing the sequence of steps and decision points. Two key steps in the process involve reviewing candidate against specific criteria, which have been specified in the sections “Pre-Interview Questions” and “Interview Questions”.

The Statement of Faith of CrossCulture has also been included as this is referenced by one of the Interview Questions.

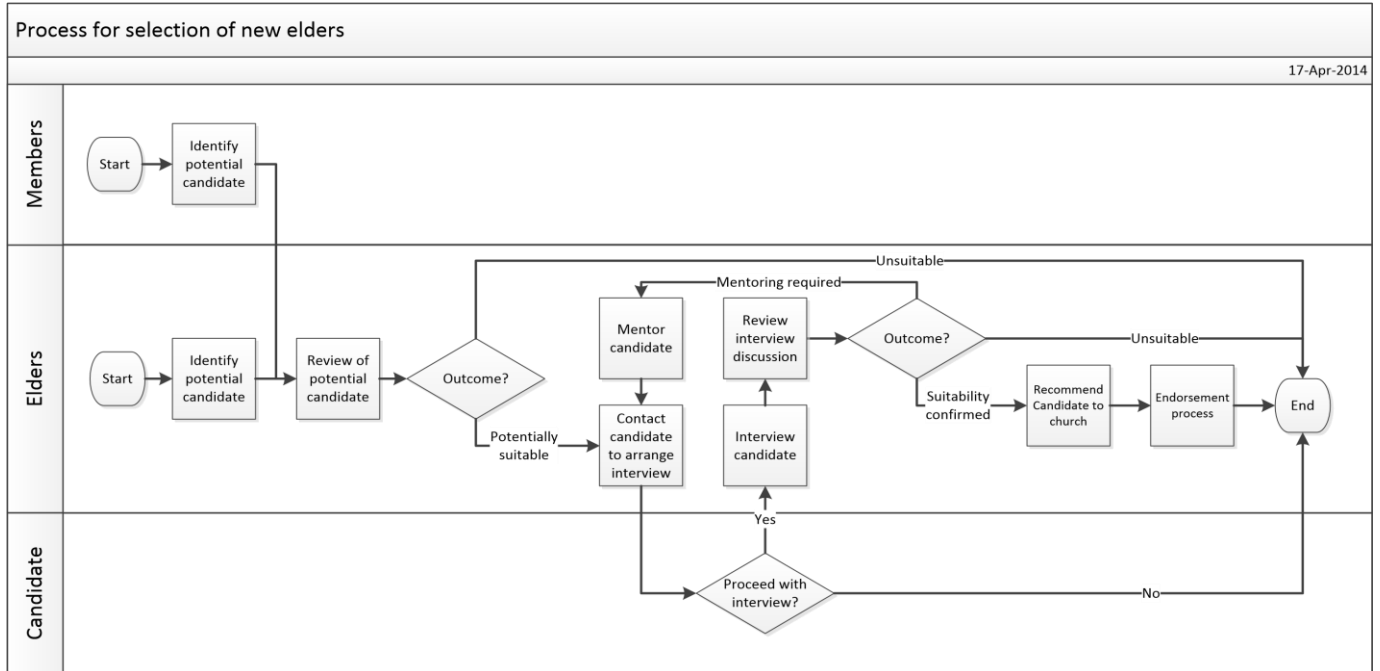
“...it seems to me that the process of identifying those who are truly called to eldership is at least as important—and certainly a prerequisite to—whatever formal training process we put in place to equip young men to be pastors and shepherds. If I’ve learned anything *the hard way* over the years, it is that the best way to identify potential elders is in the normal flow of church life. They are evident by their response to what’s being taught; by their willingness to serve; by the abundance of spiritual fruit in their lives; and by the many ways their giftedness is manifest in the church before they are ever singled out for leadership.” – John MacArthur

“One of the most significant human dynamics in the church’s continuing spiritual growth and health is the kind of leadership it is following. When biblically qualified men are leading a church with character and skill, it is a deep and wide blessing for the unity, holiness, and spiritual growth of the church. Put somewhat negatively, so many potential mistakes and heartaches can be avoided simply by ensuring that only those men who are biblically qualified become elders.” – Mark Dever

Process Description

Flow Diagram

The sequence of tasks and decisions in the process are shown in the diagram below:



Description of Tasks

The details of each task, and potential outcomes of each decision step, are listed in the table below:

Step Name	Actioned by	Description	Possible Outcomes
Identify potential candidate	Members (any member)	<p>We must always watch out to see who is already exhibiting the characteristics of elders described in scripture. In particular, who already takes initiative in evangelism, discipleship and teaching God's Word? Who already serves as a model in leading and loving his family? Who has good pastoral sensitivities and highly values God's Word?</p> <p>Communicate to the elders the names of church members that appear have leadership gifts, are actively using those gifts within the church, and exhibit the characteristics of elders described in scripture.</p> <p>Note: This should be done discretely so that the elders can then assess the candidate before putting them forward as nominations (to protect the candidate from public embarrassment as the elders may be aware of sensitive pastoral issues in a person's life that may disqualify them from the office of elder).</p>	

Step Name	Actioned by	Description	Possible Outcomes
Review of potential candidate	Elders	<p>Prior to inviting the candidate to an interview, the name of the candidate should be circulated to all elders (including pastors). The elders should meet to consider what is known about the candidate to determine whether there is (a) sufficient reason to consider the candidate for the role of elder and (b) any substantive reason not to proceed. At least one of the pastors should be present at this meeting.</p> <p>Each of the questions listed under “Pre-Interview Questions” should be considered. If not enough is known about the candidate to answer these questions, then it is probably premature to consider them for the role.</p>	Potentially Suitable; Unsuitable
Contact candidate to arrange interview	Elders	Contact the candidate to (a) determine whether they are willing to be considered for the role of eldership and (b) agree on the suitable time and place for the interview.	
Proceed with interview?	Candidate	Respond to the invitation from the elders to attend an interview regarding eldership.	Yes; No
Interview candidate	Elders + Candidate	<p>Review each of the characteristics of elders/pastors specified in scripture and ask for evidence;</p> <p>Assess the candidate’s performance at work, relationship with people outside the church, service in the church, spiritual gifts, leadership gifts, ministry passions, humility, and anything else related to his character, courage, and competency.</p> <p>Confirm that the candidate is in agreement with the Statement of Faith of CrossCulture.</p> <p>Ask for evidence that potential candidates are already “eldering”. For example, helping others, leading others in their walk with God, and sacrificing self.</p> <p>Assess the candidate in terms of both unity of purpose and diversity of gifts.</p>	
Review interview discussion	Elders	<p>Review the evidence provided at the interview, by both the elders examination and reference with others.</p> <p>Ask God to help us see what he sees rather than being impressed with what first catches the eye. People skills, persuasive speech, and worldly success may endear someone to us for fleshly reasons, but we must ask the Lord to help us see not as man sees, but as he sees.</p> <p>Spend time in prayer and fasting to seek God's will and affirm that he is in the decision (Acts 14:23: "When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed").</p>	Suitability confirmed; Mentoring required; Other: either [a] recommend other areas of further service, [b] maintain a watch and re-consider at a later time, or [c] other).
Mentor candidate	Elders + Candidate	Invest your lives into theirs: Eat meals with them. Talk about Scripture with them. Pray with them. Help them grow as teachers of God’s Word by allowing them to give communion devotions and lead training sessions. Help them grow as counsellors of God’s Word by having them set in counselling sessions that you are leading, or allow them to counsel people while an elder sits in. Help them grow in understanding how elders think through difficult matters by allowing them to observe elders’ meetings.	
Recommend candidate to church	Elders	Publish recommendations and profiles of candidates.	

Step Name	Actioned by	Description	Possible Outcomes								
Endorsement process	Organised by elders, all members invited to participate	As per constitution. Note the recommendation that this be updated to allow more time for members to get to know the candidate(s). <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>"yes" vote</th> <th>Outcome</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>>= 90%</td> <td>Carried</td> </tr> <tr> <td>> 65% and < 90%</td> <td>Elders decision</td> </tr> <tr> <td><= 65%</td> <td>Not carried</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	"yes" vote	Outcome	>= 90%	Carried	> 65% and < 90%	Elders decision	<= 65%	Not carried	Carried; To be decided by elders; Not carried.
"yes" vote	Outcome										
>= 90%	Carried										
> 65% and < 90%	Elders decision										
<= 65%	Not carried										

Appendix A: Pre-Interview Questions

Introduction

Prior to inviting the candidate to an interview, the name of the candidate should be circulated to all elders (including pastors). The elders should meet to consider what is known about the candidate to determine whether there is (a) sufficient reason to consider the candidate for the role of elder and (b) any substantive reason not to proceed. At least one of the pastors should be present at this meeting.

Each of the questions listed below should be considered. If not enough is known about the candidate to answer these questions, then it is probably premature to consider them for the role.

Biblical Qualifications

Family

1. Is the candidate utterly single-minded in his devotion to his wife (1 Timothy 3:2,12; Titus 1:6)?
2. Is the candidate's wife dignified, sober-minded, faithful and does not misrepresent other people (1 Timothy 3:11)?
3. Does the candidate run his own affairs properly, showing good judgment and discipline in his daily life (1 Timothy 3:4)?
4. Does the candidate manage his children and his own household well (1 Timothy 3:12)?
5. Do the candidate's children attend church regularly and are they involved in church programs appropriate to their age-group (Titus 1:6)?
6. Are the candidate's children open to any charge of insubordination or immoral behaviour (Titus 1:6)?

Role Model

7. Is the candidate a model of godliness; is he a person who understands and applies the precepts of Scripture; is he a person who has humility, love, compassion, and self-control like our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 3:2)?
8. Does the candidate live in such a way that even those outside the church think highly of him (1 Timothy 3:7)?
9. Is there any evidence of past failures; do the candidates' words and conduct conform to the commandments of God in Scripture (1 Timothy 3:9-10)?
10. Can any criticism (not already covered in answers to the preceding questions) be made of the candidate (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:7)?
11. Does the candidate show evidence of an exaggerated sense of his importance or abilities (Titus 1:7)?

Self-Control

12. Does the candidate demonstrate self-control, remaining calm even when faced with difficulty or uncertainty (1 Timothy 3:8)?
13. Does the candidate demonstrate an ability to control his anger; not have outbursts of anger, or lash people with his tongue (or any other part of his body) (1 Timothy 3:3, Titus 1:7).
14. Does the candidate demonstrate an ability to use emotion as a tool to accomplish a good outcome rather than simply in reaction to events (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8)?
15. Does the candidate demonstrate a sound mind and wisdom in order to exercise good judgment (1 Timothy 3:2)?

Honesty

16. Has the candidate shown any evidence of deceptiveness by pretending one set of feelings whilst acting under the influence of another (1 Timothy 3:8)?

Maturity

17. How does the candidate demonstrate sufficient maturity in their faith to be eligible for the role of elder (1 Timothy 3:6)?

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Biblical Qualifications

Teaching

Questions	Review Criteria
Can you give us examples of how you encourage Christians to believe and live according to the Bible?	An elder must be able to encourage and exhort God's people to believe and live according to the Bible (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:9).
Can you give us examples of how you give biblical counsel to Christians in matters of faith and life	An elder must be able to give biblical counsel to the people of God in matters of faith and life (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:9).
How do you use biblical principles to guide your decision making?	An elder must be able to make decisions at meetings and judge matters according to biblical principles (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:9).
Can you give us any other examples of how to put the Word of God into practice in your daily life?	An elder must live by the Word of God, taking every opportunity to put it into practice (Titus 1:9).

Role Model

Question	Review Criteria
Can you give us examples of how you seek to serve others?	An elder should actively seek the well-being of others (Titus 1:8).
Can you give us examples of how your moral principles affect the decisions that you make?	An elder must have strong moral principles (Titus 1:8).

Self-Control

Questions	Review Criteria
Can you give us an example of how you demonstrate patience toward all, even in the midst of disputes and opposition, seeking to avoid strife, not incite it?	An elder must be gentle (1 Timothy 3:3).
How do you go about prioritising what you need to do and actually getting it done?	An elder must be able to prioritise activities, set a schedule and stick to it. (Titus 1:8)

Hospitality

Questions	Review Criteria
How do you use your home and other things that God has given you to share with other people for their benefit?	Hospitality is one way we are to express our love for the people of God. It is something we are to do cheerfully and willingly. It is a means through which we can use our gifts to minister to others, whatever they may be, to others in the body of Christ. In the broadest sense, hospitality is sharing what God has given us with other Christians for their edification and mutual encouragement. It is friendly, generous reception and treatment of guests or strangers (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8).

Motivation

Questions	Review Criteria
What is your motivation for wanting to become an elder?	A person's motivation to be an elder should not be some advantage that he can get by this office. Rather, a person's motivation should be an eager desire to serve Jesus Christ and further his kingdom (1 Timothy 3:3, 1 Timothy 3:8 & Titus 1:7).

Wife

Question	Review Criteria
Does your wife support the concept of you becoming an elder?	An essential aspect of the requirement for an elder to manage his own household well (1 Timothy 3:12) is to live and serve in harmony with his wife.

Attitude towards Alcohol

Question	Review Criteria
What is your attitude to, and use, of alcohol?	An elder should be aware that alcohol can impair judgement and therefore must be consumed with caution (1 Timothy 3:3,8 & Titus 1:7).

Additional Questions

Beliefs

1. Do you agree with everything in this church's statement of faith?
2. Is there anything missing from this statement of faith that you would like changed or added?
3. Of all the beliefs and doctrines that you know, could you tell us which two are most precious to you?
4. What are some issues that you think are especially important for Christians to get right in this time and place?
5. What is the gospel?
6. What is your understanding of biblical church leadership?

Personal

7. How did you become a Christian?
8. How do you regularly pursue holiness and communion with God?
9. Tell us about your family. How does your wife feel about being an elder's wife? What are your children like?
10. What are some things we might not like about you if we knew them (theological views, personal weaknesses)?

Practical

11. How do you cultivate a sense of biblical, godly community in a local church?

Vision

12. We hope that a new elder would make a difference to the team. What difference would you like to make?
13. Can you suggest other areas in which we, as a church and also as an eldership, need to improve?
14. How can you help reach out to the entire church?
15. What areas do you see as requiring attention?

Appendix C: Elder Vows

Introduction

Once a candidate has been endorsed by the local congregation, then the following vows should be recited during the Sunday morning service between an elder, the elder(s) being confirmed, and the congregation. These vows will also be printed in the church bulletin in their entirety.

Vows

[To the elder(s) being confirmed]

1. Do you reaffirm your faith in Jesus Christ as your own personal Lord and Saviour?
I do.
2. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, totally trustworthy, fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, the supreme, final, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
I do.
3. Do you sincerely believe that the Statement of Faith of this church contains the truth taught in the Holy Scripture?
I do.
4. Do you promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with any of the statements in the Statement of Faith you will on your own initiative make known to the pastors and other elders the change which has taken place in your views since your assumption of this vow?
I do.
5. Do you subscribe to the governance of CrossCulture Church of Christ, and promise to submit to your fellow elders in the Lord?
I do.
6. Do you accept the office of elder as an expression of your love of God and your sincere desire to promote His glory in the Gospel of His Son?
I have.
7. Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in promoting the Gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever opposition may come as a result?
I do, with God's help.
8. Will you be faithful and diligent in doing all your duties as elder, and will you strive to be an example of living in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ?
I will, by the grace of God.
9. Are you now willing to take personal responsibility in this congregation, as an elder, to oversee the ministry and resources of the church, to devote yourself to prayer, the ministry of the Word and to love and care for God's flock, relying upon the grace of God, in such a way that CrossCulture Church of Christ, and the entire Church of Jesus Christ will be blessed?
I am, with the help of God.

[To the congregation]

Will the members of the church please stand?

1. Do you, the members of CrossCulture Church of Christ, acknowledge and publicly receive _____ as an elder, as a gift of Christ to this church?

We do.

2. Will you love them and pray for _____ in his ministry, and work together with him humbly and cheerfully, giving him all due honour and support in their leadership to which the Lord has called him, that by the grace of God we may all accomplish the mission of the church, to the glory and honour of God?

We will.

[Close in prayer]

Appendix D: Statement of Faith

One God

There is one God, infinitely perfect, eternally existent, in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit who created all things, sustains all of life, is the Father of all humankind and is our Redeemer and Judge.

Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is 'God with us' truly God and truly Man, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin, Mary. He is the 'human face of God,' teaching us by his words and works what God is like; dying for us to demonstrate his love for us, to defeat the power of death over us, and to atone for our sins; and is now seated in heaven praying for us. We await His second coming from heaven to judge the world and redeem His people. (Matthew 1:18; Luke 2:52; Hebrews 1:3;4:15;8:1;10:10; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; John 14:1-6)

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is 'God in us,' empowering us to live in the church and in the world. He gives spiritual gifts to all Christians to enable us to glorify Christ and serve one another. All the spiritual gifts mentioned in the New Testament are available to the whole church until the second coming ('when the perfect comes' - 1 Corinthians 13:10). Christians are to defer to one another, allowing only those with proven giftedness to exercise public ministries, without denying all Christians are gifted by God to minister in various ways.

The Bible

The Old and New Testament Scriptures are inerrant and given by inspiration of God. Like Jesus, the living Word of God, the Scriptures are both divine and human documents so we interpret the Bible humbly, always open to the Lord to shed more light and truth from His holy Word. The Bible is the final authority for all our beliefs and practices concerning the salvation of people and of faith and of the Christian life. They are a sufficient and clear revelation of God's will for all of God's people, everywhere, at all times. (2 Timothy 3:16; John 1:1; 2 Pet 1:19-21).

Humans

Humans are created in the image of God, and although this image is tarnished by sin, our 'God-likeness' is reclaimed and restored through love and forgiveness 'in Christ.' Every person is born under judgement because of the sin of Adam and Eve and are unable to save themselves from the penalty of sin, (eternal separation from God). People, however, are precious to God and are redeemed by believing in (meaning to trust in and rely on) Jesus Christ alone for salvation. (Gen 1:26,27; Col 3:10; Rom 3:21-26).

Worship

Worship means Jesus is to be Lord of everything we do, whether together in 'corporate worship' or in our homes, jobs, schools, leisure activities etc., doing it all for the glory of God. Our worship acknowledges three biblical models: The sacramental (baptism & communion); the centrality of the Word; and 'charismatic' (exercising our spiritual gifts). We pursue excellence in all we do because we want to honour God. (Rom 12:1,2).

Community of Believers

Believers are a Community who follow Jesus Christ together, sharing in a bond of love which transcends race, culture, nationality, sex and age. We bring together in the Body of Christ, the fruits and gifts of the Spirit to bear on human need. The aim of all ministries is to encourage the church to minister, both to itself and those outside. Pastor-teachers empower the church to mature in Christ, acknowledging that ministry belongs to all (Col 1:28-29; Eph 4:11-16). The whole church is pastoral, priestly and prophetic. We are to love the whole church – all the family of believers (1 Pet 2:17). We are Christians first and Church of Christ

second. We wish to cooperate with all other individuals and churches who 'acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures'.

Spiritual formation is the dynamic process whereby the Word of God is applied by the Spirit of God to the hearts and minds of the children of God so they become more like the Son of God. Every Christian is encouraged to belong fully to the life and ministry of the church.

Our Mission

Our mission is to continue the ministry of Jesus in our world through His strength and enabling; doing works of justice (serving the powerless and rebuking oppressors), healing (providing physical and spiritual reconciliation as signs of the Kingdom of God); mercy (ministering to others at the point of their need) and evangelism (calling people to faith, and to walk humbly before their God) - John 20:21, Mat 23:23, Lk 4:18-19, Lk 11:42, Mic 6:8.

Affirmations

We affirm:

- the Lordship of Christ over His church;
- the authority of the Bible over human precedents and traditions;
- the baptism of believers only (practised in our church by immersion);
- a regenerate church membership;
- freedom of conscience in matters unclear;
- love which covers all action and motivation.