**The Elder as Church Leader**

***Religious Leaders of the Church***—Elders must be recognized by the

church as strong spiritual leaders and must have good reputations both in the church and community. In the absence of a pastor, elders are the spiritual leaders of the church and by precept and example must seek to lead the church into a deeper and fuller Christian experience. Elders should be able to conduct the services of the church and minister in both word and doctrine when the assigned pastor is unavailable. However, elders should not be chosen primarily because of social position or speaking ability, but because of their consecrated lives and leadership abilities. Elders may be reelected, but it is not advisable for them to serve indefinitely. The church is under no obligation to reelect and may choose others whenever changes seem advisable. Upon the election of new elders, the former elders no longer function as elders but may be elected to other church offices.

**Pastors and Elders are Partners in ministry.**

Each should be able to say of the other:

 *“I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.”* ***Philippians 1:3-5.***

**Difference between pastors and elders:**

* **Pastor**: assigned and ordained by the local conference for a pastoral district.
* **Elder**: assigned and ordained by the local congregation.
* **Elder’s** **ordination**: valid for that congregation.
* **Pastor’s** **ordination**: has worldwide validity.

**Similarities between pastors and elders:**

* Both are leaders over the congregation.
* Both coordinate the church’s activities.
* Young ministers who have not been ordained to

 the ministry should be ordained as local elders.

**Pastor’s part:**

1. Train, equip, and motivate elders in all their churches.
2. Call elder’s meetings regularly.
3. Provide resources

**Pastor’s part:**

3. Curriculum

* + Church organization and administration / leadership.
	+ Church growth.
	+ Care of new converts.
	+ Worship leadership.
	+ Preaching and visitation.
	+ Function and chairing of committees.
* 4. Respect and support them in their function.
* 5. Invite them for special pastoral visitation.
* 6. Spend time together.
* 7. Support the elder’s family.
* 8. Special attention to elder’s children.
* 9. Help them in their spiritual life.
1. **DELEGATE**
	* Pastoral stress comes as a failure to delegate responsibility, especially to their elders.
	* Along with responsibility, pastor’s must also delegate authority.
2. C**OMMUNICATE**
	* Get reports from elders on their assignments
	* Personal spiritual growth should always be emphasized
	* Schedules for preaching in written form
	* Distribution of relevant material

**3. EVALUATE**

* + It is important for the elder’s performance.
	+ The church members will be well served.

**Elder’s part:**

1. Find time to do the work
	* Elders should probably not be elders if they see their work exclusively as a Sabbath morning responsibility.

2. Maximize pastor’s strengths:

* + Pastoral private personality: Contemplative - Introverted -Theologian - Preacher - Spouse and parent - Administrator.
	+ Pastoral public personality: Gregarious - Extroverted - Soulwinner - Trainer - Visitor - Counselor - Promoter.

3. Pastor your Pastor:

* + Pastors are subject

 to stress and thus sometimes need help.

4. How can elders give pastoral assistance to their pastor?

* + Accept their humanity.
	+ Be a loyal friend like Barnabas to Paul.
	+ Be a minister of encouragement.
	+ Be a good listener.
	+ Publically support.

5. Pastor the pastoral family

* + Have an annual pastor’s day.
	+ Offer yourself to do some work.
	+ Resolve congregational conflicts.
	+ Insist on pastoral spiritual renewal
	time.
	+ Insist on pastoral family and recreational time.
	+ Encourage provision of pastoral
	anonymous counseling.
	+ Pray for them and encourage them
	by letting them know it.

6. Support pastor’s children

* + Do not idolize them, neither criticize their misbehavior. Expecting them to live the life of an accomplished saint is too heavy a load for anyone to carry, especially children.

7. Empathize with hurting pastoral parents:

* + All parents hurt when their children go astray, but probably none more than pastoral parents.

8. Special attention to new pastoral family:

* + Showing too much loyalty to the pastor that left may
	prejudice the integration of the one that just came in.

**The counsel of Paul**

* *“Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you.
Hold them in the highest regard, in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other.”* **1 Thessalonians 5:12-13.**