



Ruling Elder Expectations

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Introduction

Being a Ruling Elder in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) is a high calling. Once affirmed by the congregation the individual is ordained by oath and commissioned by the laying on of hands.

One affirmed by the Ministry Partners (by vote) a Ruling Elder will serve on the top leadership team – “The Session” for a period of three (3) years. Then after rotating off for at least one (1) year – the Ruling Elder may, or may not be called back to server on the Session at a later time. BUT REGARDLESS – the Ruling Elder is called to continue to be a role model servant leader within Lake Forest as long as he or she is a Ministry Partner!!!

Biblical Requirements

Here are the key verses in the bible referring to the attributes of an Elder.

I Timothy 3:1-7

- V1: An aspiration and calling
- V2: Above reproach, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach
- V3: Not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money
- V4-5: Manage his own household well
- V6: Mature in his faith, not a new convert
- V7: Good reputation outside the church

TITUS 1:5-9:

- V6: above reproach, children who believe – not rebellious
- V7: not self-willed, quick-tempered, sober, fond of worldly power (sordid gain)
- Hospitable, lover of good, sensible, devout, self controlled
- V9: faithful to the word and able to teach – able to exhort and refute w/ sound doctrine

I Peter 5:1-7: An Elder GOES

- Guardian – protects from error
- Overseer – leads
- Example – role model
- Shepherd – cares for the flock

Denomination Requirements

From our Book of Order (the "Blue Book"), here are some essential instructions regarding Ruling Elders.

EPC Book of Government

§10-5: "...those who bear this office should exhibit certain characteristics of life. This includes being blameless in life, sound in the faith, wise in the things of God, and discreet in all things.... exhibiting a lifestyle that is an example to all, both in and outside the Church..."

§10-6: "...a Ruling Elder should study and learn the Word and become equipped to teach that Word...adept at leading worship and at leading in prayer...visit the sick, the bereaved, the lonely, the aged, the shut-in, and all those who have a pastoral need."

Also referenced in the Book of Order:

- Active member of the church (LFC)
- Affirms EPC Essentials w/out exception
- Affirms the Westminster Confessions – with limited, noted exception

LFC Guidelines

As a Ruling Elder of Lake Forest, it is important to be committed to our particular calling in ministry. Here are some guidelines to consider.

Clear Commitment to LFC's Calling

Presbyterian / Reformed

Culturally relevant worship forms

Missional Focus/Calling

Drawing the seeker

Strong Bible-based teaching and worship content

Clear Commitment to Core Values

Grace emphasis

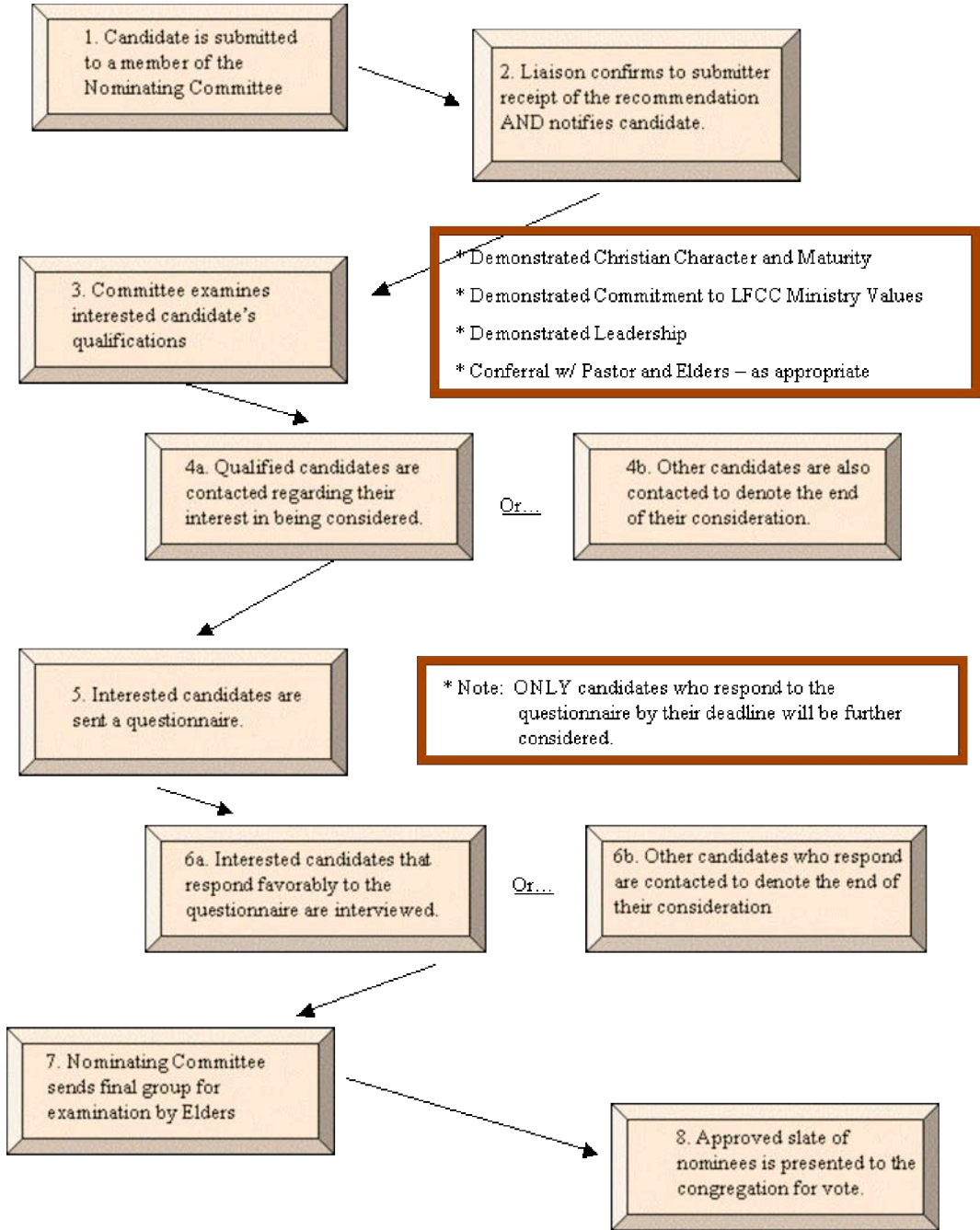
Everyone a minister ("Priesthood of all believers")

Children's Ministry as a core competency in ministry

Dot-Com / Small group participation as a key component of health

Nomination Process

This flowchart gives an overview of how Ruling Elders are identified and submitted as Nominees to LFC Members for affirmation by vote.



EPC Governing Structure

Our Denomination executes Church Government using a "Bottom up" approach.

