

## **Elder / Shepherd Selection Process**

1. Objectives for a new Meadowlark Church of Christ Elder / Shepherd Selection Process.
  - a. Provide a starting place for the clear definition and long term development of a superior process for selecting new / additional elders / shepherds for ML.
  - b. Provide a written process that describes all activities in a clear step-by-step format. Necessary forms will be included.
  - c. Identify men that desire to serve ML as elders / shepherds and are gifted for this role.
  - d. Define the mechanism that would give the ML congregation the opportunity to periodically re-affirm the elders / shepherds that are presently serving.
  - e. Identify a way for presently serving elders / shepherds to step down from that role.
  - f. Have a written process that all ML members can understand.
  - g. Clearly identify the Biblical qualifications as well as the “task specific” skills that candidates should possess.
  
2. This process will normally be initiated by the elders / shepherds in the spring, every three years.
  - a. If there is a special need for additional elders / shepherds before the three year cycle occurs, the elders / shepherds or congregation can propose that the process be started at any time.
  - b. The elders / shepherds and congregation will meet to discuss the schedule for initiating the elder / shepherd selection process. This meeting will have a major portion of time allotted to prayer.
  - c. If any elder / shepherd wishes to step down from this role, it is suggested that he do so before the start of this process. The congregation is aware of the reduction in elders / shepherds, and this elder / shepherd does not go through the re-affirmation process.
  
3. At least three months before the elder / shepherd selection process is to be started, there will be an announcement from the elders / shepherds that the current roster needs to be updated. Elders / shepherds should decide if the roster is a list of “members” or of those who consider themselves to be “a part of the ML family.”
  
4. Start the process with a special prayer service.
  
5. The ML elders select the Selection Committee
  - a. Committee will oversee the process.
  - b. The committee will be made up of people best suited for this process as determined by the current elders / shepherds after extended time in prayer.
  - c. The elders will determine the size of the committee and select alternates in the event they are needed. The elders will also specify the minimum number of committee members (quorum) required to make decisions in the implementation of this process.
  - d. Committee reviews this process document for possible changes and makes recommendations to the elders / shepherds.
  - e. Suggested changes are reviewed and approved by the elders / shepherds, the previous Selection Committee (from last selection process cycle), and the congregation before modifications are made to this process document. All document modifications should be completed within 2 to 3 weeks of the Committee selection.

- f. The newly established Selection Committee will submit a detailed time schedule for completing the selection process to the elders / shepherds and publishes it to the congregation. The total time for the selection and installation of new elders / shepherds should be approximately 3 to 4 months.
6. The current elders / shepherds and ministerial staff will provide a structured program of Biblical teaching on elders / shepherds.
    - a. The structured program may include sermons, classes, seminars, and Small Group lessons
    - b. Elders / shepherds share experiences and thoughts on role
    - c. Role of Fasting and Prayer during this process
    - d. Teach the need for kindness, patience, and love during this process.
    - e. Review the ML selection process with the congregation.
    - f. This program of lessons will be completed in approximately 3 to 6 weeks.
  7. The Selection Committee will oversee mailing the Nomination Forms and cover letter to each adult over 18 years old listed on the newly updated ML roster.
    - a. A listing of the scriptures that describe the qualifications for being an elder / shepherd and a summary of the job description will be provided in the cover letter.
    - b. The names of the current elders / shepherds will be provided in the cover letter. Those that have notified the congregation that they plan to step down will be identified.
    - c. Since the nominee's signature is requested and confidentiality is important, only one person can be nominated on each form.
    - d. Clear instructions for completion and the required return date will be provided.
    - e. Attach other supporting information to the cover letter (e.g. Sibert's paper).
  8. Current Elders / shepherds review nomination forms
    - a. Biblical qualifications
    - b. Task specific qualifications
    - c. Style, profile, compatibility, balance
    - d. Any member of the Elder / Shepherd Selection Committee that is nominated will resign from the committee.
    - e. Nominations must be signed by both the nominating person and the nominee to be valid. A check box will be provided for the nominating person if they talked to their nominee and received approval, but were unable to get their signature for identifiable, extraordinary reasons.
    - f. To become a Nominee, nomination forms from people on the ML roster representing at least 3 different households must be received.
    - g. The current elders / shepherds must endorse each nominee. If, after reviewing his qualifications, a nominee does not receive the elders' / shepherds' endorsement, the Nominee will be contacted and receive an explanation for the lack of elder / shepherd support.
  9. Nominees and their families meet with current elders and families to discuss job.
    - a. Role
    - b. Expectations
    - c. Time

- d. Nominees are allowed at least one week to consider their interest in continuing with the process before their name is submitted to the congregation.
  - e. After this step, leadership responsibility for elder / shepherd selection passes to the Selection Committee. Elders / shepherds are now subject to the process at this time.
10. Final candidates announced to the congregation on a Sunday morning and in a mail-out bulletin or letter with brief Biographical sketch.
- a. Current elders / shepherds included as candidates.
  - b. Congregation given a period of time (from 2 to 4 weeks) to talk to candidates.
  - c. Congregation is encouraged to meet and talk to candidates.
  - d. Other special meetings arranged for private visits
11. Congregation votes their support for current elders / shepherds and new elder / shepherd candidates.
- a. Ballots and return envelopes are mailed to same list used for Nomination Forms.
  - b. Ballot can be voted: Yes or No for each candidate.
  - c. The ballot will encourage the voter to discuss any “NO” vote with the candidate receiving that “NO” vote before the ballot is submitted.
  - d. Unsigned ballots are returned in signed envelope to committee for counting.
  - e. Unsigned envelopes and envelopes containing multiple ballots will be discarded.
  - f. The minimum level of support from the congregation is 66%. This percentage will be calculated by dividing the total number of “YES” votes received by the candidate by the sum of all ballots received for all candidates.
  - g. Current elders / shepherds who do not receive a 66% level of support (as defined in item 11. f. above) will continue to serve until the installation of the new and re-affirmed elders / shepherds.
12. Committee shares level of congregation support with each candidate.
- a. Candidate accepts results.
  - b. Each candidate is told the level of support they received. They are also told what level of support the other candidates received without attaching candidate names to the level of support.
  - c. Selection Committee (and elders / shepherds, if appropriate) visits with each candidate not meeting the required 66% support level.
13. The names of the candidates receiving at least 66% support are announced to the congregation by the committee and a date set for a special service to install new elders / shepherds and ask God’s blessings on them. The previous elders / shepherds will be recognized and thanked for their contribution to Meadowlark.
14. Update process document
- a. Committee critiques process and reviews with congregation.
  - b. Committee meets with elders to review results and discuss the need for any process adjustments.
  - c. Process document updated by the committee.

End.