



New Elder Selection Process at Fellowship Dallas

At Fellowship, our church is governed by a board of elders that consists of at least 7 but no more than 11 men who meet the requirements for elders set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 and in the board's policies. The board collectively (as opposed to any one individual member or group of members) is the final human authority over all matters of our church, subject to Scripture and Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. This form of church polity is called "elder ruled."

In an elder ruled church, new elders are selected by the existing elders. While the congregation does not have an official vote in choosing elders, the board has established a means for the congregation to give input on any man who the board has decided to add to the board before that decision becomes final. Even though the board does the best that it can to evaluate and vet every candidate for elder, it is wise and prudent to allow the congregation to give input on him to either confirm the elder's decision or, in the event of disqualifying input or even enough negative input generally, withdraw that candidate from consideration.

The process for selecting new elders occurs annually as follows:

1. First, the board determines whether to add any new member(s) in the coming year.
2. Once the board determines that it should add one or more new elders, existing board members submit names of men who they believe would likely be qualified. Each of those individuals is discussed by the entire board and a list of potential candidates to move forward with is created.
3. The chairman of the board then appoints a three-man nominating committee of existing board members. Their responsibility is to screen the list of potential candidates and bring a final list of names to the board.
4. Next, the board determines the number of elders to be selected from the names on the final list. Typically, if one or more existing elder's term is up and they are leaving the board, it is customary for the board to add a new elder to replace each elder who is leaving, though this is not required. The board could decide to add less or more than the number of existing elders leaving the board or none at all. The only requirements are that the board must have at least 7 but not more than 11 members under the current policies of the board.
5. Next, the nominating committee meets with each potential candidate to determine their willingness to serve as elders, and to discern if any biblical disqualifications exist. Candidates are contacted in a predetermined order as decided by the elder board and must complete a questionnaire. Once the designated number of candidates has agreed to serve and has been successfully vetted, no further candidates are contacted.
6. Each of the candidates then comes before the entire elder board for an interview. After the interview, the candidate leaves the meeting and the board votes. The vote must be unanimous in order to approve the candidate as a new elder. If a candidate fails to receive the unanimous approval of the board, he is removed from further consideration and the nominating committee would contact the next man on the list and go through the same steps with him.
7. If the board unanimously votes to approve the candidate(s) to become a new elder, the individual(s) are presented to the congregation for 3 weeks for consideration and input.
8. After the expiration of the 3-week period and assuming no disqualifying or otherwise sufficiently negative input has been put forth from the congregation and verified, the new elder(s) are officially installed on the board and begin serving.