

Elder Selection and Appointment Process

Murrieta Church of Christ (MCoC)

July 9, 18

Objective: To define an orderly, systematic and effective process to Nominate, Vet, Select and Appoint **Elders** to serve as Overseers of the spiritual health of the Body of Christ in Murrieta; to manage the Functions and Operations of the MCoC and to perform the duties of the Board of Trustee for the Murrieta MCoC. This process shall be utilized when it is determined, by the current Elders, that an additional elder(s) are needed to serve the congregation.

Process owner: The current Elders shall oversee this process and may revise it as needed. The Elders, in their sole discretion, will determine whether or not the Nomination Process will be used. When the Nomination Process is not used, the members will not be allowed to nominate a candidate for the office of Elder. The Elders will develop a list of candidates from which the candidates will be interviewed by the Elders only. Upon completion of the Elders' interviews, the final list of candidate(s) selected by the Elders will be presented to the Membership for consideration in accordance with the Consideration Process. Except as stated within this paragraph regarding the Nomination Process, all other stipulations of the Elder Selection and Appointment Process will apply.

Process participants: The Members who are in good standing of the MCoC shall be the core Participants in Nominating, Vetting, Selecting, and Appointing Elders.

*A “**Member**” of the Murrieta church of Christ is any person who: (a) has willingly confessed that Jesus Christ is the son of God (Rom. 10:9); (b) has been baptized (immersed in water) in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19); (c) lives a life that is worthy of being called an Ambassador for Christ (2 Cor. 5:20), and who willingly accepts the leadership and authority of the appointed Elders of MCoC. (Acts 20: 28-31). It is expected that a Member worship, contribute, study, and fellowship regularly with the MCoC church body (John 4:24).*

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Nomination process period: The process for nominating Male Members for the office of Elder shall begin on a date specified by the current Elders and shall end on a specified date, not to exceed a period of 30 days. The Elders shall continually publish these dates (and this process) in the weekly church Bulletin and on the MCoC website at least 30 days prior to the designated start date and continue to publish until the specified period ends.

Who may Nominate: Any Member of this congregation may nominate any Male Member for the office of Elder, provided:

1. Any Male Member may place his own name in nomination for the office of Elder by communicating to any current Elder (orally or in writing) his willingness to serve as an Elder, or
2. Any Member may nominate any other Male Member provided: the potential nominee has, first, agreed to have his name placed in nomination for elder. The nominating Member may then communicate (orally or in writing) the name of that nominee to any current Elder. In this case, both the name of the nominee and the name of the one nominating him shall be provided to a current Elder.
3. It shall be the policy of the MCoC elders to consider current deacons first and then other Members second for candidate for the position of elder.

Nominee qualifications: It is incumbent upon all nominees to examine themselves to determine if they **desire** to serve and are **qualified** for the office of Elder in accordance with Titus 1: 4-16, I Timothy 3: 1-7 and Acts 20: 28-33 (NAS). Note: All Nominees shall be subject to the judgment of the Elders and, if selected, the consideration by the Membership for their measure of confidence in the nominee's qualifications and competence to serve as an Elder. (See Attachment for **Clarification of Terms.**)

Qualifications: (NAS)

Titus 1: 4. To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.5. For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you,6. {Namely,} if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.7. For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain,8. but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled,9. holding fast the faithful

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*word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.*¹⁰ For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision,¹¹ who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not {teach} for the sake of sordid gain.¹² One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."¹³ This testimony is true. For this reason reprove them severely so that they may be sound in the faith,¹⁴ not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth.¹⁵ To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.¹⁶ They profess to know God, but by {their} deeds they deny {Him,} being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.

1 Timothy 3: 1. It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires {to do.} 2. An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3. not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. 4. {He must be} one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity 5. (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), 6. {and} not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. 7. And he must have a good reputation with those outside {the church,} so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

I Tim 3: 11. *Likewise their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.*

Acts 20 28. "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. 29. "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30. and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31. "Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

Selection Process: Following the Nomination Period, The Elders shall interview each nominee to verify that each nominee meets the qualifications. The results of this process shall be a final Selection of candidates. The number of candidates shall be determined, in part, by the immediate and long-term need for elders. This Selection Process period will be expedited to present the Final List of candidates to the Members of the congregation, as soon as possible. The final list of candidates for the office of elder shall be determined by the Elders. The men whose names were not selected to be candidates, for reasons other than lack of qualifications, will be given first consideration for the next elder selection cycle. It shall be the policy of the MCoC elders to consider, first, elder candidates from

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among the current MCoC deaconship, for they are a known quantity and should possess the qualities expected of an elder (*of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom*, See Acts 6: 3). Other current MCoC Members will be considered but all must meet the Scriptural qualifications specified above.

Consideration Process: After the Elders have determined the final list of elder candidates, these candidates shall be publicly recommended to the Membership for their considerations. The Membership's consideration process will be no longer than two weeks. The following consideration is to be made by the Membership: Is there any personal knowledge that would give Scriptural reason why a candidate should not serve as an elder, based on qualifications above.

Member's Objection: If a Member has reason to believe that a candidate is not Scripturally qualified, that objection shall be made, in writing and signed, to the Elders. The Elders shall consider the objection(s), discuss the details with the objecting Member first, and then with the candidate. The Elders shall make a final determination and either decline the objection or remove the candidate from further consideration. This will be done privately between the affected Members only.

Appointment of Elders: Once the two-week period for membership consideration has passed and no objections are raised, then the Elders will set a date for the Appointment of Elder(s). The appointment process shall be conducted during a Sunday AM service period and after all objections, if any, have been addressed and resolved.

1. Each selected elder and his wife (and children, if available) shall appear before the congregation for the Appointment.
2. The current Elders will introduce each selected elder candidate and wife, giving a short family biography.
3. Prayer and laying-on-of-hands will culminate the Appointment of the new elder(s).

Elder Appointment Term: The term of an elders' Appointment is indefinite, except as noted below.

Elder's Duties: The first and primary roles of the elders (shepherds) are to lead, feed and tend the church body, as a shepherd would care for an Owner's sheep.

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They perform their decision making as a unit, seeking always to follow the Scriptures and make decisions that are in the best interests of the members. In addition, an elder must be capable of refuting false doctrine and able to teach. The Board of Trustees (composed of the current elders) shall meet, at an appointed time, to elect officers and, collectively, determine what Trustee position, if any, a new elder(s) will be assigned.

Elder's Sabbatical: An elder may request a sabbatical for a period not to exceed 1 year, after a tenure of 3 years. A letter to the Elders dated at least 30 days prior to the sabbatical start date will be considered and, if approved, the elder will retain his Appointment as an elder; however, he will be relieved of all elder duties for the sabbatical period. Notice of such Sabbatical shall be provided to the congregation. Not more than one elder may be on Sabbatical.

Elder's Resignation: An elder may resign his Appointment at any time without cause, however, the resignation shall be by a signed and dated letter to the Elders stating the effective date of resignation. Notice of such Resignation (and the cause, if provided) shall be provided to the congregation, on or before the effective date.

Elder's Termination: Only the majority Elders may terminate another elder's Appointment, for cause, by a signed letter to the affected elder stating the "cause" and the effective date. "Cause" may include, but not limited to: "Conduct unbecoming"; "Failure to perform assigned duties"; "Failure to maintain Scriptural qualifications." Notice of such Termination and the cause shall be provided to the congregation. No elder may be terminated without first hearing from the elder and confirming, by at least two credible witnesses, the grounds for the "Cause."

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Roy Davis, Elder

Doug Keup, Elder

Bert Parker, Elder

Steve Terry, Elder

Rich Dawson, Elder

Elder Selection and Appointment Process Attachment:

Clarification of Terms

Introduction: Bible scholars debate the meaning of various terms in these passages and differ considerably in their interpretations. It shall be the policy of MCoC to conservatively interpret the following Terms, being careful to follow the Scripture, as is our practice, especially when evaluating candidates for Elder (and Deacon).

1. I Tim 3: 1...(*if any man aspires to the office of overseer...*) and also Titus 1: 6. We take these Terms to mean:
 - a. It should not be assumed that "any" man should be considered for the office of "overseer." It shall be the MCoC policy that only a "man" who is a baptized believer AND a current Member (in-good-standing) of MCoC should be considered for this position.
 - b. He must "aspire to," that is, "demonstrate his desire (or passion)" for the office of elder (overseer).
 - c. The "office" of overseer is a volunteer position and is therefore unpaid. This "office" is a position of trust and must be exercised with utmost responsibility and accountability. See Heb 13: 17.
 - d. An elder candidate must demonstrate he is, " *Holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching (Bible), so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict (Bible).*" Therefore, it is expected that a candidate must have taught MCoC Bible classes and faithfully attend assemblies as a Member of MCoC, before being considered a candidate for elder and after being appointed.

2. I Tim 3: 2...(the *husband of one wife*..) and Titus 1: 6. It should be noted that Bible scholars debate these two terms: only ONE wife ever, One wife AT A TIME, One LIVING wife, Not divorced and/or remarried to the same wife, and not a polygamist. It shall be the policy of the MCoC that "one wife" means: the man's original marriage is intact and the wife is alive and living under the same roof as her husband.

3. I Tim 3: 6. (... *Having children who believe.*) And Titus 1: 4...(keeping his children **under control** with all dignity 5. (but if a man does not know how to manage his **own household**, how

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will he take care of the church of God?). In this case, there are several considerations.

- a. The term “*Household*” shall include only those family members living continuously in the same “*house*.”
 - b. The term “children” is plural, meaning the candidate must have more than one child but may have additional children that are adopted, or not related but living with his family (household).
 - c. “*Believing children*” being those who have expressed their belief through baptism and demonstrate conduct that is becoming a believer (i.e., *not accused of dissipation or rebellion*), while in his household.
 - d. Children, who have started their own families or are in college or military, etc., are independent of their father’s control.
4. “**Not a new convert...**”, means a man who has been a Member of the Lord’s Body for a period that should have clearly demonstrated his commitment to the Lord, to do good works and to faithful in participation in the MCoC congregation. Leadership and authority should only be entrusted to those men who have exercised leadership and authority well in the past (either: civil, military, Deaconship, family, community, etc.).
5. *If any man is **above reproach**, for the overseer **must be above reproach** as God's steward (Meaning):*
- a. *not self-willed,*
 - b. *not quick-tempered,*
 - c. *not addicted to wine,*
 - d. *not pugnacious, (confrontational, argumentative)*
 - e. *not fond of sordid gain,*
 - f. *but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching (Bible), so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.*

The wife of an elder (and deacon) candidate must also be: *reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.*

- g. Likewise, the elder candidate must have, “a good reputation with those outside {the church,} so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.”

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- h.* A candidate for MCoC elder shall hold fast to the doctrine that Baptism is essential for salvation. *Mark 16: 16. "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."* And that the doctrine of "Justification by Faith alone" is a false doctrine.

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