

April 3, 2011

Dear Members of Tabernacle Presbyterian Church—

In one of the most mysteriously humbling ways that God works, He chooses to lead His Church through fallen, yet redeemed, men who serve as Elders and Deacons. It is your privilege to participate in the Spirit's work of calling biblically qualified men to serve and lead our church through this nomination process. In addition to being a privilege, it is also a duty as you consider your vow to "support the church in its worship and work to the best of your ability."

Enclosed you will find a timeline for Tabernacle's officer installations, the biblical requirements for the two offices of elder and deacon, and a nomination form. Additional forms are available on the Information Table or online at www.tab-pres.org (you can even submit your nomination online). We recommend the following outline as you consider your nomination(s):

1. **Read the timeline** for the nomination and installation process. This will give you an overall picture of what's ahead.
2. **Study the qualifications** for officers listed specifically in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 (other passages are also pertinent). Notice the emphasis on a man's character rather than his duties. Many men are skilled at tasks pertaining to leadership in the Church, but God is more concerned about the man's heart. We should be too.
3. **Pray about who you might nominate.** Many have prayed through the Tab phone directory and found it helpful.
4. Remember that any male member of our congregation may be nominated (especially those whom you may have nominated in the past) as long as you believe he is qualified. **Please nominate every man you believe meets these qualifications**, regardless of who else may or may not be nominating the same individual.
5. Complete a nomination form for *each* man you nominate. **Please return your nominations no later than Monday, May 2.** Feel free to mail your nominations or drop them off at the office. You can also submit them online at www.tab-pres.org. Nominations will close after May 2.

Every nominee will be considered by the Session. However, each man nominated might not be pursued due to a number of possibilities:

1. A nominee may be dealing with a life issue known to the Session, but not to the body at large.
2. He may disagree with one or more fundamental doctrinal distinctives of the *Westminster Confession of Faith*.
3. He may not desire to be considered for the office at this time.

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We would request that you make your nominations apart from the nominee(s) knowing your intentions. This may preserve a man from the potential awkwardness of several people approaching him with their intentions, should the Session have sufficient reason not to pursue him. We wish to avoid false expectations and hurt feelings.

The Session will initially screen the list of nominees. If it seems that the Holy Spirit has led a number of members to nominate the same man and the Session considers him to be a potential candidate, then he will be contacted for a preliminary interview. Here we will inquire about his own willingness to seek officer status (1Tim 3:1), his general doctrinal agreement with the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, and, if married, his wife's input on his fitness for the office and her willingness to support him as a future officer.

Upon confirmation that he is willing to pursue the process and that he meets our initial criteria, he will be invited to participate in an officer training curriculum in order to prepare him for his potential ordination to either elder or deacon. Those who have been previously ordained and/or completed some similar form of officer training will not need this preparation.

Those who have met the above requirements will then be invited by the Session to an in-depth interview and examination. The Session will also seek input from the wives of approved nominees who are married. The interview will include the following elements:

1. Examination in his Christian experience and maturity.
2. Examination in his knowledge of our system of doctrine, government, and discipline.
3. Examination in the duties of the office to which he has been nominated.
4. Determination of his willingness to give assent to our ordination vows (*BCO 24-5*).

Upon completing their interview successfully, the Session will present these men to the congregation as candidates for election at a regularly called Congregational Meeting.

The Bible places a great deal of stress on the character and responsibilities of church officers. Much is entrusted to them and much is required. Ordinarily, a man is ordained for life, and so this is a serious endeavor. **Please take great care with this process, and ask the Lord to bless Tabernacle with godly men who will love and serve this church the way Jesus does for the entire Body, which is His Bride.** We are praying for you, and would ask that you do the same for us throughout this process.

His and yours and on behalf of Tabernacle's Session,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Esson".