

Who are Elders and Deacons?

Every so often at Liberti, we take nominations from members of the congregation for new elders, deacons and deaconesses to serve in our midst. Below are summaries of the work of elders and deacons. You can find current elders and deacons on the leadership page of our website.

- Those called to be **Elders** serve the church by acting as shepherds. They “shepherd” by overseeing the teaching of the church, setting the pace of the church’s prayer life, leading the vision, mission and direction of the church, and overseeing church discipline as necessary. In our tradition, this office is open only to men — we believe that this is a biblical teaching but also a difficult one, and plan to remain in dialogue through additional conversations and Q & A in June.

In the meantime, as you consider men in our congregation who may be called to this office, consider those who have taught or led various ministries — perhaps this is someone who leads a home meeting or prayer group or regularly shares their faith with others (See 1 Tim 3; Titus 1).

- Those who are called to be **Deacons** and **Deaconesses** oversee practical ministries of service and mercy both within the church community and also ministries that reach out to the city. They also assist the elders by overseeing wise use of our church’s budget. This role is open to men and women, according to Scripture (1 Tim 3; Romans 16:1 Acts 6:1-7; Acts 21:9).

As you consider congregants who may be called to this office, consider those who have demonstrated a particular concern for and willing to serve the suffering, the lonely, and the poor in our church and city. Consider also those who already serve regularly and joyfully in various ministries at our church.

Qualifications for Church Leadership:

The Biblical standard for those who would seek to lead in the church is very high, and according to Scripture, character outweighs skill in qualifying for church leadership.

Read over the passages listed above and also this 3 point summary below:

1. A leader is one who **loves well**: loves Jesus, his/her family, loves other Christians, loves those who are not Christians well. (1 Tim 3:1-7, John 15:9-17)
2. A leader is one who **repents well**: who knows that they need forgiveness and models a lifestyle of regular repenting and trusting in Christ, a person who is not self-righteousness and full of self-trust. (Matt. 23:23-28)
3. A leader is one who **knows how to get out of the way**: leading is not about promoting self, but promoting Jesus and seeking the growth and good of the church by being a servant. (Matt. 20:20-28)