



QUALITIES OF AN ELDER

Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task.

1 TIMOTHY 3:1

WHAT IS AN ELDER?

In the New Testament there are four words used for leaders.

**Elder/
Presbyter**

refers to the age and
maturity of leaders

Leader

someone who shows
the way, a guide

**Bishop/
Overseer**

a person who looks
after things

**Shepherd/
Pastor**

provides care for
the flock

The word “elder” implies older, but traditionally we have not had a specific age in mind. Maturity displayed is more important than age.

Harpeth Hills currently has 13 elders: [Paul Cates](#), [Ted Clark](#), [Stan Ezell](#), [David Flow](#), [Stuart Fraser](#), [Randy Gott](#), [Mike Green](#), [Tom Henderson](#), [Dana Janssen](#), [Parker Panovec](#), [Bill Prady](#), [Phil Roe](#), and [David Solomon](#)

Our elders do not serve a specific term but rotate off when they so desire. Paul Cates has served the longest, 31 years, and five of the elders have served three years. Occasionally, when circumstances like health or family dictate, elders have gone on a sabbatical of up to a year and then returned to duty.

WHAT DO ELDERS DO?

Elders lead. They provide overall direction for the congregation. They make big decisions while delegating many others to the ministers and staff. We are not looking for managers or successful businessmen. We simply want those who can point people to Jesus. This is what is meant when we use the word shepherd.

Shepherds guide people, not boss them around. Shepherds are servants first. Jesus was quite explicit about this.



*You know that the rulers of the Gentiles
lord it over them, and their great
ones are tyrants over them.
It will not be so among you;
but whoever wishes to be great
among you must be your servant,
and whoever wishes to be first among you
must be your slave; just as the Son of Man
came not to be served but to serve,
and to give his life a ransom for many.*

MATTHEW 20:25-28

Our shepherds watch over the flock. They provide pastoral care and visit funeral homes and hospitals when time allows. They frequently pray with people in need. They check up on people. They care.

We do not need more leaders to help “run things.” Church management is not the issue. Shepherding the flock is our greatest need.

ARE WE LOOKING FOR A SPECIFIC NUMBER OF SHEPHERDS?

No. We are looking for Spirit-led individuals who can help with shepherding, but the elders do not have a set number in mind as they begin this process.

WHAT IS THE SELECTION PROCESS?

The congregation has until Sunday, December 15, to turn in names on either the form supplied via direct mail or online at HarpethHills.org/elders. Remember to sign your nomination form. All submissions are confidential.

Selecting elders is not a vote or popularity contest, but certainly, someone who will serve as an elder must receive significant support from the church. It is important for our leaders to hear the Spirit speaking through the congregation.

After praying over this list, the elders will contact individuals highly recommended by the church to determine their willingness to serve. Those who agree to continue the conversation will then meet with the elders privately.

At the end of this discernment process, the names of those willing to serve will be presented to the congregation, and the church will be given two weeks to respond with approval or questions. The new elders will then be ordained. We hope to complete this process by the beginning of March 2020.

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In 1 Timothy and Titus the Apostle Paul gave instructions about what kind of men make good elders. His two lists, totaling some 30 traits, are not identical. Paul was not being legalistic but was speaking in broad terms. In effect he was saying, "Here is the kind of person you should look for."

Spiritual Maturity is a Must

Not a recent convert
Apt teacher
Firm grasp of the Word

Character Counts

Above reproach, respectable
Well thought of by outsiders
Self-controlled, sensible
Temperate, not a drunkard
Not a lover of money

Consider His Family

Faithful husband
Manage his own household well
Hospitable
Keeps his children submissive in every way
Children are believers

Choose a Team Player

Not violent, but gentle
Not quarrelsome
Not arrogant
Not quick-tempered

PASSAGES TO CONSIDER

1 Timothy 3:1-7 • Titus 1:5-9 • 1 Peter 5:1-5



Boldly advancing His kingdom. Joyfully living our faith.