

Elders: Shepherds for the Flock

Week 1: Who God Gives to Lead

Scripture:

1 Peter 5:1-4

Motivation (Why You Need This):

The care a growing church cannot give on its own...

- **Growth** - we have grown into a church of more than 500 people
- **Limits** - two pastors cannot truly know and watch over every soul
- **Drift** - when no one is watching closely, people slip away unnoticed
- **Strain** - the care that fit us as a small church cannot stretch to fit us now
- **Design** - God never intended His church to be carried by one man alone

For years, The Summit has been shepherded by a very small number of people. That worked when we were small. We are not small anymore.

People we love are sitting in rows we cannot reach. People are hurting, drifting, and wondering if anyone knows their name.

Will we hold on to a structure built for the church we used to be, or grow into the one God is calling us to become?

Information (What You Need to Know):

God's design for shepherding His people...

- **God gives His church elders**
 - ✓ From the very beginning, the apostles appointed elders in every church
Acts 14:23 (ESV) And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.
Titus 1:5 (ESV) This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you...
 - ✓ Elders are not a modern idea, but are God's design for His church
 - **Three words describe one calling: Elder** (one who is spiritual maturing); **Overseer** (one who watches over); **Shepherd** (one who feeds and protects)
 - The same men elders, overseers, and shepherds. An elder is a shepherd, not a board member

■ **The elders are to serve His church in five ways...**

✓ **Shepherding** - knowing and caring for the people

1 Peter 5:1 (ESV) So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: **2** shepherd the flock of God that is among you...

✓ **Teaching** - teaching Scripture and guarding sound doctrine

Titus 1:9 (ESV) He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

✓ **Praying** - praying over the church and its people

James 5:14 (ESV) Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

✓ **Leading** - giving wise spiritual direction

1 Timothy 5:17 (ESV) Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.

✓ **Modeling** - living a life worth imitating

1 Peter 5:3 (ESV) ...not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

The standard is character, not resume. God's qualifications are about who a man is, not what he can do

1 Timothy 3:2 (ESV) Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, **3** not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. **4** He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, **5** for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? **6** He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. **7** Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

■ **Where elders fit at The Summit**

✓ **Staff Led** - our pastors and staff lead the church day to day

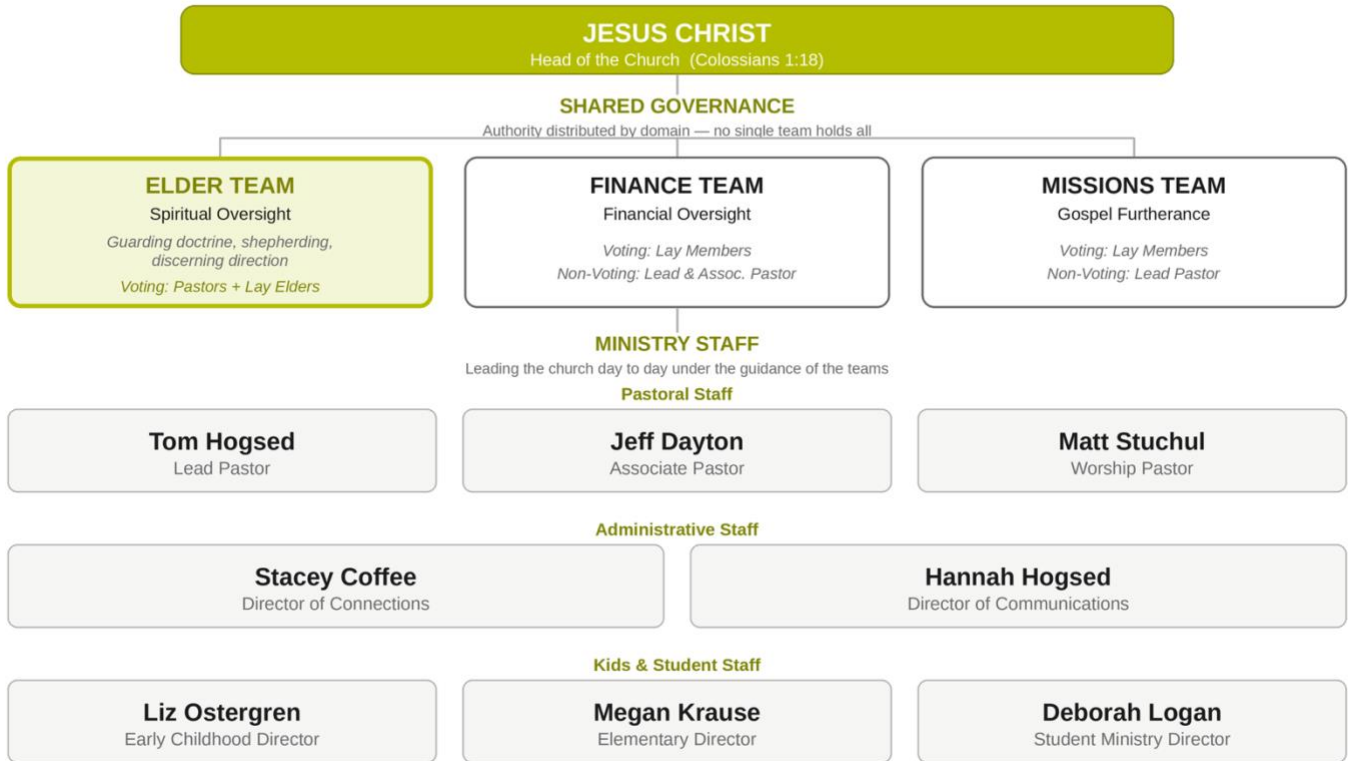
✓ **Team Guided** - the Elder Team help guide our doctrine, direction, and shepherding

✓ **Congregation Gifted** - every member is a minister, serving with their gifts

We are not forming a board. We are catching up to our own size.

The Summit Church · Leadership Structure

Staff Led · Team Guided · Congregation Gifted



Application (What You Need to Do):

We are not adding elders to run the church better. We're adding shepherds so that you can be known, watched over, and cared for.

A church can have your name on a card and still leave you unknown.

Jesus looked at the crowds and felt compassion, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. He was building shepherds for us all along. God is giving us more so that fewer of you go unseen.

God is giving us shepherds to...

- Know you by name
- Pray for you when you cannot pray for yourself
- Pursue you when you drift
- Guard you from error
- Point you to Christ

So, the question is: **Will you let yourself be shepherded?**

Every human shepherd is only an under-shepherd. Our elders point past themselves to the One they answer to – Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep. Our minds must go to the cross.

At the cross, the Shepherd became the Lamb. He laid down His life to gather us, and He gives us under-shepherds to keep us until He comes. Follow the Shepherd who already gave everything for you.