



This companion to
Pastors and Elders:

*Caring for the Church
and One Another*
offers support for those
who want to study
recommendations and
strategies offered by
author Timothy Mech.

Included on this enhanced DVD:

- 8 training videos (total time: 52 minutes)
- Intro: 3.5 minutes
- Video 1: 7 minutes
- Video 2: 5.5 minutes
- Video 3: 8 minutes
- Video 4: 6.5 minutes
- Video 5: 6 minutes
- Video 6: 5.5 minutes
- Video 7: 4.5 minutes
- Video 8: 5.5 minutes
- Leader's Guide—discussion questions for each chapter of the book
- PowerPoint presentation that supports the Leader's Guide
- PDF and RTF resources containing useful documents from the book

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS: Windows XP, Windows Vista, or later; Mac OS X 10.4 or later, 256 MB RAM; 100 MB free hard disk space; a DVD-ROM drive; a page-layout or word processing program that supports JPEG files (such as Microsoft Word, Microsoft Publisher, Corel WordPerfect, Adobe InDesign, etc.) or a program capable of reading PDF-formatted files.

PASTORS AND ELDERS: CARING FOR THE CHURCH AND ONE ANOTHER

Leader's Guide

How to Use. This guide is intended to assist whoever is assigned to lead the teaching and training of pastors and elders at each regularly scheduled board of elders meeting. Before each meeting both pastor(s) and elders should read a chapter of the book *Pastors and Elders: Caring for the Church and One Another* and reflect on the questions at the end of the particular chapter assigned for that meeting.

PowerPoint. The leader may use this guide in preparation for a PowerPoint presentation to participants. The PowerPoint is intended to lead participants in the discussion of each chapter and in teaching and training along with the corresponding video vignette(s).

CHAPTER ONE

WHO'S IN CHARGE?

Jesus [said], "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me."

—Matthew 28:18

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty and gracious God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, You have commanded us to pray that You would send forth laborers into Your harvest. Of Your infinite mercy give us true teachers and ministers of Your Word who truly fulfill Your command and preach nothing contrary to Your holy Word. Grant that we, being warned, instructed, nurtured, comforted, and strengthened by Your holy Word, may do those things which are well pleasing to You and profitable for our salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. (119)¹

OBJECTIVES

By the Holy Spirit at work through God's Word, we will

- understand the difference between spiritual authority and power;
- identify on the basis of Scripture the authority given to pastors and elders;
- grow in our fellowship with Christ and one another, understanding that He is in charge and is working with us and for us and through us as His Word has its way in our lives.

¹ *Lutheran Service Book*, "Increase of the Holy Ministry," p. 306.

FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. *What is the difference between spiritual authority and power?*

Spiritual authority is an unlimited ability or commodity. You cannot exercise authority unless you are under authority. Authority cannot be taken. Someone else must give it to you. You exercise authority by authorizing others to act, not by keeping it to yourself. Authority grows with the delegation of authority to others. Political influence and power, on the other hand, is a limited ability or commodity. A person has power at the expense of someone else. I must disempower others in order to have it and keep it for myself. Those who lack authority use power. If you operate with power, then you have a constant battle with the other power people in the congregation. That leads to manipulation by the great power-monger: Satan. Operate with power and you are operating on Satan's terms. A good example of this would be to disregard or change the rules if the rules keep you from getting what you want.

2. *How does Jesus exercise His authority in the Church?*

Jesus exercises His authority through His Word. His words give and bestow what they say. For example, Jesus "rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Peace! Be still!' And the wind ceased, and there was great calm" (Mark 4:39). Jesus said to Lazarus who had been dead for four days, "Lazarus, come out" (John 11:43b). Lazarus came out of the tomb alive and well. Jesus said to the disciples in the Upper Room, "Peace be with you" (John 20:21), and the disciples had peace.

NOTE: Leaders may want to download and have available the LCMS statement on the role of elders in the congregation:

<http://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=545> (p. 16);

and the elder's job description:

<http://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=1196> (p. 6).

3. *What are elders authorized to do in the congregation?*

Elders, as members of the priesthood of all believers, are authorized to be servants in the Church. The apostle Peter writes of all Christians, “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. . . . Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover up for evil, but living as servants of God” (1 Peter 2:9, 16).

Strictly speaking, the word “elder” in the Bible (Acts 14:23; 1 Tim. 5:17–19, Titus 1:5–9 and 1 Peter 5:1–4) refers to those who hold the pastoral office. What we commonly call “elders” today are laymen appointed to serve the congregation in its temporal affairs and to assist the pastor in administrative tasks. Later such men came to be known as the “deacons” (meaning “servants”). Scripture does not define the exact role of such deacons, only their qualifications (1 Timothy 3:8–13). Scripture gives them no special spiritual responsibilities in the congregation beyond those given to every Christian. While the office of pastor is divinely instituted and indispensable for the Church, the deacon is an optional office based on Apostolic and church custom. The deacon or elder is a position of lay-service, concerned with the temporal and administrative affairs of the congregation. In many congregations deacons or elders are also charged with oversight of the pastor. But, rightly understood according to Scripture, they exercise only that oversight given to every Christian in the congregation.²

4. *What is a pastor authorized to do in a congregation?*

Pastors ordained into the Office of the Public Ministry are authorized by God through the Church to preach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments according to the Word of God. The apostle Paul writes, “I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom; preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching” (2 Timothy 4:1–2). Jesus said of one in this office, “The one who hears you hears Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me, and the one who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me” (Luke 10:16).

² “The Role of Elders,” *LCMS FAQ: Worship/Congregational Life*, <http://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=1196> (October 2011).

By the public ministry we mean the office by which the Word of God is preached and the Sacraments are administered by order and in the name of a Christian congregation. Concerning this office we teach that it is a divine ordinance; that is, the Christians of a certain locality must apply the means of grace not only privately and within the circle of their families nor merely in their common intercourse with fellow-Christians, John 5:39; Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:16, but they are also required, by the divine order, to make provision that the Word of God be publicly preached in their midst, and the Sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, by persons qualified for such work, whose qualifications and official functions are exactly defined in Scripture, Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23; 20:28; 2 Tim. 2:2.

Although the office of the ministry is a divine ordinance, it possesses no other power than the power of the Word of God, 1 Pet. 4:11; that is to say, it is the duty of Christians to yield unconditional obedience to the office of the ministry whenever, and as long as, the minister proclaims to them the Word of God, Heb. 13:17, Luke 10:16. If, however, the minister, in his teachings and injunctions, were to go beyond the Word of God, it would be the duty of Christians not to obey, but to disobey him, so as to remain faithful to Christ, Matt. 23:8. Accordingly, we reject the false doctrine ascribing to the office of the ministry the right to demand obedience and submission in matters which Christ has not commanded.³

5. *Why is it important to authorize others to work within the church?*

Failing to authorize and equip others for work in the congregation is a recipe for disaster. It robs the people of God in the congregation of the privilege and honor of serving the Lord in His Church. It takes the pastor away from the noble task of delivering the Lord's gifts of forgiveness, life, and peace to God's people. Sooner or later, the pastor will be crushed by the weight of trying to do everything in the church himself. Worse, he may begin to think that he is indispensable or come to resent the people he serves because they don't do what he would like them to do.

³ A *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal position of the Missouri Synod*, "Of the Public Ministry," (adopted 1932), pp. 9–11, <http://lcms.org/page.aspx?pid=415> (October 2011).

6. *What is the meaning of the robe and stole a pastor wears for the Divine Service?*

The robe and stole a pastor wears in the Divine Service beautifully illustrate whom the pastor represents, the extent of his authority, and what he is given to say. The robe covers the man and declares that the words he speaks are not his own. The stole, first placed around the neck of the pastor at his ordination, represents the vow the pastor made to faithfully preach and teach the word of God. At ordination, a pastor is given orders to say what the Lord says through this office of the public ministry.

NOTE: Leaders may want to refer to, and possibly have available, resources such as *The Altar Guild Manual* (Lutheran Service Book Edition), "Vestments for the Clergy," pp. 69–71 (CPH © 2008, item #15-5102); and/or a fuller presentation in *Gathered Guests* (2nd ed.), "Vestments in the Lord's Service: Dress for the Occasion," pp. 205–220 (CPH © 2009, item #53-1155).

7. *What are the instruments a pastor is authorized to use for the care and cure of souls?*

The pastor has instruments that he is authorized to use for the care and cure of souls, namely, the Lord's Word and Sacraments. The Word of God consists of both Law and Gospel. Like the magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) used by a medical doctor, the Law's main purpose is to identify what is wrong with us. In other words, the main purpose of the Law is to show us our sin. The Law is not an end in and of itself. It serves the Gospel just as a doctor's diagnosis of a medical problem serves the process of healing. When our sin is brought to light, that is, confessed, it is identified, and there is a desire for it to be removed.

The other two functions of the Law are to keep evil in check and to guide us in the living of the Christian life. The purpose of the Gospel is to forgive our sin, to remove it from our very being. This is done through the absolution, the declaration of the Lord's forgiveness. Just as a stethoscope is an invaluable instrument in a doctor's medical bag, one of the most important tools in the pastor's "spiritual medical bag" is private confession and absolution. In confession and absolution the source of our pain and agony, namely sin, is dealt with by the authority of Jesus Christ. The penitent is asked, "Do you believe that my forgiveness is God's forgiveness?"

Pastors ^{and} Elders

CARING FOR THE CHURCH
AND ONE ANOTHER

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Chapter One

Who's in Charge?

By the Holy Spirit at work through God's Word, we will

- understand the difference between spiritual authority and power;
- identify on the basis of Scripture the authority given to pastors and elders;
- grow in our fellowship with Christ and one another, understanding that He is in charge and is working with us and for us and through us as His Word has its way in our lives.

Chapter One: Who's in Charge?

JESUS IS LORD
OF HIS CHURCH

What is the difference between spiritual authority and power?

Authority

- Authority unlimited
- Cannot be taken
- Exercise authority by authorizing others to act
- Authority grows with the delegation of authority to others

What is the difference between spiritual authority and power?

Power

- Power is limited
- Have power at the expense of someone else
- Disempower others to keep it for yourself
- Those who lack authority use power
- Constant battle with other power people
- Satan is a great power-monger

How does Jesus exercise His authority in the Church?

- Jesus exercises His authority in the Church through His Word.
- Jesus said, “Peace be with you” (John 20:21), and the disciples had peace.

What are elders authorized to do in the congregation?

- Elders are appointed laymen
- Elders may also be called “deacons,” meaning servants
- They serve in temporal affairs
- They assist the pastor in administrative tasks
- They may be charged with oversight of the pastor but, according to Scripture, elders exercise only that oversight given to every Christian in the congregation

What is a pastor authorized to do in a congregation?

- Preach the Gospel
- Administer the Sacraments according to the Word of God

APPENDIX A

THE GREEN SHEET

The following is an example of the Green Sheet mentioned in Chapter 2. It is printed landscape on one sheet of 8 ½ x 11 paper, double-sided, and inserted in the bulletin every week.

The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

October 2, 2011

Introit

Ps. 118:22–24; antiphon: Ps. 118:1

Oh give thanks to the LORD, for | he is good;*
 for his steadfast love endures for- | ever!
 The stone that the builders re- | jected*
 has become the | cornerstone.
 This is the LORD's | doing;*
 it is marvelous | in our eyes.
 This is the day that the | LORD has made;*
 let us rejoice and be | glad in it.
Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.
 Oh give thanks to the LORD, for | he is good;*
 for his steadfast love endures for- | ever!

Collect

Gracious God, You gave Your Son into the hands of sinful men who killed Him. Forgive us when we reject Your unfailing love, and grant us the fullness of Your salvation; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Gradual

He will command his angels con- | cerning you*
 to guard you in | all your ways.
 Bless the LORD, | O my soul,*
 and all that is within me, bless his | holy name!

Learn by Heart: The First Article (paragraphs 1–2) **LSB # 322**

Readings for Next Sunday: Isaiah 25:6–9; Philippians 4:4–13; Matthew 22:1–14

APPENDIX F

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION—BOARD OF ELDERS¹

ACCOUNTABLE TO: _____

PURPOSE: To oversee the spiritual life of the congregation and its individual members.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

These guidelines are as intended by the congregation's constitution and the bylaws.

1. The Board of Elders shall have authority and responsibility for the spiritual welfare and activities of the congregational members, individually and corporately.
2. The chairman of the Board of Elders shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Elders.
 - a. The chairman shall appoint a secretary to record the minutes.
 - b. The chairman shall appoint one elder to serve as an advisor on, at a minimum, each of the following committees: Worship, Board of Christian Education, Ushers, Social ministry, New Member Ministry, Youth and Health Ministry. Other committee assignments may be made to other ongoing and ad hoc committees in the congregation including, but not limited to, Assimilation, Public Relations and Sanctity of Life.
 - c. The chairman will report the recommendations of the Board of Elders to the church council and the voters assembly.
 - d. The chairman may call special meetings of the Board of Elders.
3. The Board of Elders shall meet once a month, except that up to twice per year they may be cancelled with consent of the pastor(s).
4. The Board of Elders shall consist of not less than **xxx** nor more than **xxx** geographic elders, not including the chairman, such number to be established from time to time by the voter's assembly. While the entire Board of Elders is responsible for the spiritual welfare and activities of the congregation, both individually and corporately, as a matter of convenience each geographic elder is assigned members in a geographic zone and then becomes the elder for these parishioners. Such geographic boundaries may change from time to time but no congregational member will be without an elder assigned. The chairman may act as an elder to new members for a period of time (less than six months) until their assignment/transfer to a geographic elder.

¹ "LCMS Job Descriptions: Congregation Officer: Elders," pp. 6-7,
<http://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=1196>.

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE LETTERS

The following are sample elder letters. The first two letters are addressed to someone who has been inactive. The others are sample letters that elders might send out every Advent and Lent.

I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the LORD!”

—Psalm 122:1

Dear Member of *(your church name)*,

It is with great sadness that we note that you have not been regularly worshiping with us at *(your church name)* for quite some time. If there is something that we have done or not done that has led you away, please let us know so that we might repent and reconcile with you. We’re not perfect at *(your church name)*, and we know that we may have inadvertently said or done something that has led you away from worshiping with us. If that is the case, we ask for your forgiveness.

We genuinely want you to join with us at *(your church name)* in receiving the grace of God in Jesus Christ every Sunday in the Divine Service. Be assured that our Lord who has promised to be wherever two or three are gathered in His name will be here to bless you with all the treasures of heaven. As an elder, I along with our pastors have no agenda except to serve you with the Gospel of Jesus Christ in both word and deed.

Please let us know if you plan to return to us, and know that it is our heartfelt prayer that you do. You can contact me by phone at *(phone number)* or by e-mail at *(e-mail address)*. If I don’t hear from you soon, I will follow up with a call. We hope to see you soon!

In Christ,

Member of the Board of Elders
(your church name)

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE ELDER AGENDA

BOARD OF ELDERS MEETING

(YOUR CHURCH NAME)

VISION: Making Known the Love of Christ

MISSION: (Your church name) is dedicated to the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ within and through its church and school.

THE BOARD OF ELDERS: Assist pastors in all matters pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the congregation.

Agenda

Date/Time/Place

- Opening devotion (Pastor)
- Minutes of last meeting
- Chairman's report
- Membership changes
 - › List and discuss changes
- Reports of Committees/recommendations
 - › Worship
 - › Ushers
 - › Personnel Committee
 - › Membership spiritual care—calls, highlights, tips
- Old business
- New business
- Study of Scripture and Lutheran Confessions
- Closing devotion (Pastor)

Goals for the Board of Elders

- Make visits and calls to all members of (your church name)—Minimum of three each month.
- Assist with updating church records (in conjunction with calls).
- Attend weekly Divine Service, Advent, Lenten services, and weekly Bible study.
- Attend each Board meeting. Notify the church office when unable to attend and follow up with Board Chairman after missed meeting to address any action items.
- Promote (your church name) and educate membership concerning (your church name)'s vision and mission.
- Personal support for pastor(s) including weekly pre-service devotion.
- Become familiar with (your church name) Constitution, Employee Handbook, Position Description Booklet, and School Student/Parent Handbook.

Dear (*name*),

We have missed seeing you at God's house these past weeks and are writing you this brief note to let you know. (Of course, there is always the possibility that we simply overlooked you in the crowd—and if that is the case, accept our apologies. Also remind us of it.)

When a brother or sister is absent from the services, it could be a matter of sickness, work, or vacation that has legitimately kept him away. When there is a reason for a member's absence, we—the pastor and board of elders—like to know. It is our duty and privilege to care about, and care for, all the members of the congregation. You are precious to us, as you are to the Lord Himself.

In case there is sickness or hardship in the family, we especially want to know so that we can offer our help and our prayers. And we would urge you to contact the pastor immediately to discuss the matter with him.

Of course, it is always possible for God's children to lose some of their zeal to hear God's Word preached, to worship their loving God, and to fellowship with the other saints. It is so easy for the cares, the pleasures, the busy-ness of life itself to interfere with heart and soul activities. Where this is the case we can only recommend the remedial action of returning at once to the house of God to hear His Word and receive the Sacrament, which alone can make one's faith and love burn hot again.

We hope that nothing of a serious matter—either physical or spiritual—has developed in your life to keep you from exercising your rights and privileges as a member of (*your church name*) congregation. We are looking forward to enjoying your fellowship in the near future.

“Blessed . . . are those who hear the word of God and keep it!” (Luke 11:28)

Yours in the Service of Our Savior,

Chairman of the Board of Elders Pastor

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE PASTOR REPORT

To: Board of Elders

From: Pastor—May/June Report

Date:

IN NOMINE JESU

WORSHIP

- List attendance and other information relative to worship

TEACHING

- List all classes

PASTORAL CARE

- List hospital, shut-in, and pastoral care visits and appointments
- List pre-marriage meetings with couples

BAPTISMS

- List the names of those baptized and dates of Baptisms

OTHER NEW MEMBERS

- List the names of other new members, dates they were received, and how they became members (e.g., adult Baptism, adult confirmation, transfer, profession of faith)

FUNERALS

- List names and dates of funerals

WEDDINGS AND ANNIVERSARY SERVICES

- List names of those married or celebrating their marriage with anniversary services, along with the dates of weddings and anniversary services

NEW MEMBERS

- List names of new members and dates they were received

MEMBERSHIP

- List Current baptized membership
- List Current communicant membership

ADMINISTRATIVE

- List all administrative tasks