



EMMAUS ROAD

— CHURCH —

Officer Nominations

2023

OFFICER NOMINATIONS¹

Emmaus Road Church

2023

Introduction

The leadership of the church by elders and deacons is as prudent today as it was in the first century. It is God's intentional design to feed and minister to His Body and Bride through these two church offices. Identifying, preparing, and electing men for church office must be a genuinely Spirit-led process.

This calling exceeds the possession of natural abilities as we commonly see with candidates in our political process. Instead, calling involves the power and wisdom of God at work in an individual's life which requires recognition not only by the officer nominee (internal calling) but also by the church members and their elders (external calling). So, the identification of officer nominees is not swayed primarily by their vocational achievements or by their physical or outward attributes.

Instead, identifying officer nominees involves selecting men in whose lives God is clearly at work. This is much better assurance that the responsibilities and ministries they would be set apart to assume would be a natural expression of a heart that they already have instead of a hat that they would merely wear.

This material is meant to assist the members of Emmaus Road Church (ERC) in this important nomination process and to explain the steps each officer nominee must make in order to eventually become ordained and installed as an officer.

Every member is urged to carefully read through this information and prayerfully evaluate nominees within a biblical and ecclesiastical framework before submitting the name of any man for nomination.

¹ This booklet has been adapted from Covenant Presbyterian Church in Nashville, TN.

Steps from Nomination to Ordination

Nomination

The first step is for communicant members of ERC to nominate men whom they deem biblically qualified to assume the office of elder or deacon. Before this step begins, please bear in mind the following guidelines.

1. We have the responsibility to follow the steps and procedures in the Presbyterian Church in America's Book of Church Order (BCO).

Therefore, you are asked to nominate only men who are active members of ERC.

2. Making a nomination is meant to be a result of the Spirit of God leading and moving in your heart. It is a private step between you and God.

Therefore, you are asked not to discuss the men you nominate either with the officer nominee himself or with anyone else in the congregation.

This request has its basis in the fact that not every nominee submitted would be contacted by the Session. The Session has the responsibility to determine if nominees qualify for church office (BCO 24-1). There will be times, because of the Session's sense of God's leading and/or their own knowledge of the nominee, that they will determine that it is not wise for the nominee be asked to consider their candidacy for church office.

3. We want to make every effort to avoid partisanship in the nomination process.

Therefore, you are asked not to nominate yourself or any family members for church office.

To assist the member in this nomination process, there are several evaluative aids in this material. Please use these aids for each nominee being considered for office. Evaluate with a heart tender toward God, "listening" to your own conscience, laying aside personal bias and prejudice, prayerfully seeking His leading before

writing down a name for nomination. Here are the aids you are encouraged to utilize:

- The biblical passages which list the qualifications for elders and deacons;
- The description of the responsibilities and ministries of deacons and elders from The Book of Church Order;
- The questions on Christian experience that each officer nominee will be asked by the Session;
- The officer nomination form.

The nomination period will last two weeks (14 days), so there is no need to rush through this step. But, on the other hand, avoid the temptation of waiting until the last minute, thinking you have plenty of time to submit your nomination(s).

Questions on Christian Experience

After receiving the nominations for church office, the Session of ERC will prayerfully consider each one. It is possible that the Session will determine that it is not wise or prudent to ask a man's permission to put his name forward as a nominee. Although there may be several reasons why the Session would come to this conclusion, there are two predominate reasons:

1. They have knowledge of the nominee's life that biblically disqualifies him from church office;
2. They sense a leading from God's Spirit that the nominee should not be an officer.

If the Session senses God's leading in the nominee, they will inform him that he was named as a nominee, that the Session concurs with his nomination and ask if he would please pray about his sense of God's leading to proceed to the next step.

If the nominee senses God's leading to take the next step, he will be asked to answers the questions on Christian experience. He may also be asked additional questions regarding specific duties particular to ERC officers and for initial responses to the questions for ordination he will be required to answer if elected to office.

Upon answering the questions, the Session determines God's leading if the nominee should be invited to proceed with officer

training. If an invitation is extended to the nominee to proceed with training, the nominee may express his sense of God's leading to do the same.

Training

The training period lasts from August through December. During August, there will be four (4) joint training sessions with all officer candidates and potential Women's Leadership Team members touching on theology, philosophy of ministry, shepherding, and leadership.

From September through December, elder and deacon candidates will be divided for continued training.

The time for training is designed to not only equip the officer candidate with the knowledge and skills for their office, but also to confirm or question the wisdom of continuing to move forward in the process of becoming a church officer. This time gives the candidate further confirmation, or the lack thereof, that God's hand is upon them to become an officer.

Examination

If there is concurrence between the Session and the candidate that God's will is for him to continue, the candidate will be examined by the Session in his Christian experience, knowledge of the Bible and theology, and the duties of his potential office. In addition, he will be examined in his willingness to give assent to the questions required for ordination, which are listed below.

1. Do you believe in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as originally given, to be the inerrant Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
2. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; and do you further promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with any of the fundamentals of this system of doctrine, you will, on your initiative, make known to your Session the change which has taken place in your views since the assumption of this ordination vow?

3. Do you approve of the form of government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in America, in conformity with the general principles of biblical polity?

4. Do you accept the office of ruling elder (or deacon, as the case may be) in this church, and promise faithfully to perform all the duties thereof, and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the Gospel in your life, and to set a worthy example before the church of which God has made you an officer?

5. Do you promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord?

6. Do you promise to strive for the purity, peace, unity and edification of the church?

Election

If the candidate passes the above exams and, again, if there is concurrence between the Session and the candidate that God's will is to continue, the man will be put forward as a candidate for office. A congregational meeting will be called for the specific purpose of electing church officers.

A majority vote of the congregation is required for the election of a candidate for church office.

Ordination and Installation

Newly elected officers will be ordained and installed before the congregation during a regular worship.

Evaluative Aids

Passages on Elder and Deacon Qualifications

1 Timothy 3:1–13: ¹The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. ²Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, ⁵for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil.

⁷Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

⁸Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. ⁹They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. ¹¹Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. ¹²Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. ¹³For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. (ESV)

Titus 1:5–9: ⁵This 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—⁶if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. ⁷For an overseer, as God’s steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, ⁸but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. ⁹He 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. (ESV)

Description of the Responsibilities and Ministries of Elders and Deacons from the Book of Church Order

Responsibilities and Ministries of Elders (BCO 8-3):

It belongs to the office of elder, both severally and jointly, to watch diligently over the flock committed to their charge, that no corruption of doctrine or of morals enter therein. They must exercise government and discipline, and take oversight not only of the spiritual interests of the particular church, but also the church generally when called thereunto. They should visit the people at their homes, especially the sick. They should instruct the ignorant, comfort the mourner, nourish and guard the children of the church. They should set a worthy example to the flock entrusted to their care by their zeal to evangelize the unconverted and make

disciples. All those duties which private Christians are bound to discharge by the law of love are especially incumbent upon them by divine vocation, and are to be discharged as official duties. They should pray with and for the people, being careful and diligent in seeking the fruit of the preached Word among the flock.

Responsibilities and Ministries of Deacons (BCO 9-2)

It is the duty of the deacons to minister to those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress. It is their duty also to develop the grace of liberality in the members of the church, to devise effective methods of collecting the gifts of the people, and to distribute these gifts among the objects to which they are contributed. They shall have the care of the property of the congregation, both real and personal, and shall keep in proper repair the church edifice and other buildings belonging to the congregation. In matters of special importance affecting the property of the church, they cannot take final action without the approval of the Session and consent of the congregation. In the discharge of their duties the deacons are under the supervision and authority of the session. In a church in which it is impossible for any reason to secure deacons, the duties of the office shall devolve upon the ruling elders.

Questions on Christian Experience

1. What are you currently doing (apart from corporate worship) to gain a better understanding of Scripture?
2. Is there anything from Scripture that you are having a particularly difficult time applying to your life at present?
3. What are your current habits of prayer?
4. Most recently, how have you seen the Lord work in your life or the lives of others through prayer?
5. Is there any sinful act against another that you have not confessed?
6. Who knows you better than anyone else (besides your spouse) and with whom you share freely and honestly?

7. How would you describe your relationship with your spouse?
8. Are there any of your marriage vows you are neglecting?
9. If you are a parent, how would you describe your relationship with your child/ren?
10. Are there any parenting responsibilities you are neglecting?
11. What do you think might be your spiritual gift/s?
12. How are you currently using your spiritual gift/s?
13. Do you know how to share the gospel message with another person?
14. Do you look for opportunities to share the gospel with friends, neighbors or colleagues?
15. Are you regularly praying for friends, neighbors or colleagues who need to hear the gospel message?
16. On average, how many hours per week do you currently work in your vocation?
17. How would you assess the amount of time you are currently working: not enough, just right, too much?
18. Are there any areas of your financial and material stewardship that need to be aligned with biblical principles?
19. Do you currently tithe to ERC?
20. Are you willing to discuss with some of the elders any struggles you are having with viewing pornography or other specific areas of temptation with which you struggle?
21. Are you aware of anything in your life that, if it became known, would bring reproach to you, the church, or the name of Christ?
22. Does your spouse completely support you in going forward with training to become a church officer?

23. Do you see yourself as being unable now or in the future to affirm any of the PCA officer ordination questions (see BCO 24-6)? Please be specific.
24. Are you willing (do you have the resolve) and able (does your schedule permit it) to set aside time for homework and to meet for training during officer training and apprenticeship—in addition to attending Session or Diaconate meetings?

OFFICER NOMINATION FORM²

Emmaus Road Church

Today's Date _____

I, _____, have carefully read all the information in the "Officer Nomination" booklet and it is after much thought and sincere prayer that I submit this nomination.

I nominate _____ for the office of: elder deacon

Please answer the following questions about the nominee. You may leave any question unanswered due to a lack of adequate information or knowledge.

1. Is the nominee a servant of others and does he minister to people in a spirit of love and humility? How have you seen this demonstrated?

2. What spiritual gift/s have you seen present in the nominee? Please give examples of how you have seen his gift/s used.

² This form is also available to submit digitally on the ERC website.

3. In what ways have you observed the nominee exhibit leadership in the church?

4. How have you seen the nominee exhibit a love for God’s Word and a good grasp of what the Word teaches?

5. How have you seen the nominee exhibit that he is a man of prayer, that he turns to the Lord often with faith and a spirit of expectation?

6. Would you go to the nominee for spiritual wisdom or comfort and encourage others to do the same? Why or why not?