



Graduation Prep Manual

CHECKLIST,
ASSESSMENT
GUIDELINES AND
FOLLOW-UP STEPS



CHURCH EXTENSION
MINISTRIES

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(February 2023)

Graduation Checklist

Preceding Year through Graduation Year

Year Preceding Graduation

January-March

- Notify the director of Church Extension of your plans to begin the graduation process
- Begin announcing plans for graduation to the congregation
- Complete identifying committed participants with the Transitional Leadership Team (TLT)
- Complete identifying potential elders with the TLT
- Project and draft a self-supporting budget
- Continue to plan and schedule committed participant instructional/training sessions
- Plan and schedule leadership instructional/training sessions

April – August

- Complete the committed participant and leadership instructional/training sessions
- Confirm the committed participants (minimum of 20)
- Confirm the elder designees (minimum of two plus the church planter)
- TLT will meet with director of Church Extension when confirmations are completed
- Compose a letter to the Board of Church Extension requesting assessment
- Director of Church Extension to confirm assessment dates and particulars
- Plan for the assessment (confirm the attendance of all committed participants and elder designees, organize meeting place and luncheon)
- Send completed committed participant applications to the director

September – December

- Hold the assessment (Sept/Oct)
- Director of Church Extension to present recommendations from the assessment team to the Board of Church Extension (December board meeting)
- Announce results of assessment to congregation and inform them of the upcoming plans for graduation, if recommended by the Board of Church Extension
- Begin looking ahead to what needs to be accomplished and develop a plan

Graduation Year

January – April

- Review graduation follow-up steps in the *BFC Church Planting Guide*
- Prepare a presentation for the reception at the BFC Conference (April)
- Begin working on the following administrative needs:
 - Forming by-laws
 - Incorporation of the church. Each state has their own protocol. For Pennsylvania, go to http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/019/chapter41/019_0041.pdf for the Pennsylvania codes for incorporating non-profit corporations.
 - A financial plan for handling payroll
 - Securing adequate insurance coverage
 - State tax exemption ID: in Pennsylvania, go to www.revenue.state.pa.us for Tax Exemption Application form Rev-72.
 - Federal EIN number (EIN Application is found at <https://sa2.www4.irs.gov/modiein/individual/index.jsp>)
 - Bulk mail permit: go to www.usps.com for an application.
- The TLT and elder candidates discuss the call of a pastor
- Approve a self-supporting budget (initially a six month budget - July to December)
- Discuss the BFC Conference presentation and the election of elders
- Reception at the BFC Conference (April)

April to July

- After reception at the BFC Conference, arrange for a chartering service with the moderator of Conference (April-May)
- Elder designees and TLT will meet to discuss the call of a pastor, administrative items, and ratification of elder designees
- Complete the calling of a pastor (if the church planter is to be called, follow the call procedure in the *Faith & Order*. If a search for a pastor is to proceed, follow the pulpit supply procedure in the *Faith & Order*)
- Inform the church planter of the decision on the call and work with him to either transition into the role as pastor or to move on to another church planting project or ministry
- Hold the chartering service (May/June) - (see *Faith & Order*)
- Hold a congregational meeting (June) to: approve budget, present the call, and ratify elders (see *Faith & Order*)
- Schedule an installation service for the pastor and elders (see *Faith & Order*)
- Complete all administrative responsibilities (see above)
- Complete disengagement from Church Extension – July 1

ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Self-supporting Assessment

Procedure

- The Transitional Leadership Team and church planter shall inform the director in writing that the mission church is prepared to have its finances reviewed in order to determine: (1) whether the mission church can offer a call to a pastor and provide a salary package that will meet the requirements of the Bible Fellowship Church (BFC) and; (2) whether the mission is financially able to maintain its ministry outreach and facility costs.
- The director will inform the Board of Church Extension (BOCE) concerning the self-supporting assessment and request that the BOCE Treasurer review the mission church's financial records, in order to verify its ability to be financially self-supporting.
- The director will report to the BOCE the results of the assessment and if approved, the director will arrange with the mission church the preparations for the committed participant and elder candidate assessments. The self-supporting assessment must be favorable and approved by the BOCE before moving on to the next assessments. If the self-supporting assessment is not favorable, the director and Finance Committee will assist the mission church with a plan for becoming self-supporting.

Committed Participants Assessment

Introduction

I. Definition and Responsibilities of Committed Participants

- A committed participant is a person 18 years or older who is convinced that God is calling him/her to be part of the work of establishing a new mission church. Committed participants of a church of the BFC shall give testimony and evidence of faith in Christ and the new birth. They shall be in sympathy with the *Faith & Order*, have been baptized by immersion subsequent to salvation, and seek to live in conformity to the likeness of Jesus Christ.
- Committed participants shall joyfully accept the following responsibilities:
 1. To live in keeping with the doctrines and standards of the Bible Fellowship Church.
 2. To exercise willingly their spiritual gifts in the mission church.
 3. To minister under the direction of the mission church.
 4. To communicate the Gospel to the outside world.
 5. To pray regularly for the church planter and the ministries of the mission church.
 6. To support the program of the mission church financially with the regular giving of tithes and offerings.
 7. To submit to those God has ordained as leaders in the mission church.
 8. To be a faithful part of the ministry and life of the mission church.
 9. To observe the Lord's Supper.
 10. To demonstrate mutual care and concern for others in the mission church.
 11. To protect the unity of the mission church.
- An individual may become a committed participant in the mission church at any time after he/she has given testimony and evidence of faith in Christ, has been baptized by immersion subsequent to salvation, has agreed to the duties and responsibilities of a committed participant, and submits a committed participant application or church membership transfer application. The TLT must approve the applicant to be a committed participant. Applications are available on churchplantingbfc.org/resources under graduation resources.

II. Procedure for Committed Participant Assessment

- The Transitional Leadership Team (TLT) and church planter shall inform the director of Church Extension Ministries in writing that the mission church has at least 20 committed

participants, as described by the definition, submits the committed participant applications to the director for his review, and desires to be assessed by the BOCE.

- The director shall present the request to the BOCE after favorable review of the applications.
- The director will form an Assessment Committee from members of the BOCE and designate one of the members of the Assessment Committee to act as chairman.
- The chairman of the Assessment Committee will inform committee members of their appointment. If anyone declines to serve, the chairman will contact the director and he will seek another candidate.
- The chairman of the Assessment Committee will then make arrangements with the church planter for a visit to the mission church and a meeting with at least 20 committed participants. There are several options for holding a meeting:
 1. A Saturday might be chosen, allowing the group to have a time of refreshment in addition to the assessment discussion.
 2. A weeknight might be chosen with the assessment discussion taking place after some fellowship.
 3. A Sunday afternoon may also be selected.
 4. A typical format for a weekend assessment may include refreshments (30 minutes), the assessment discussion (2 hours), a break (30 minutes or more if lunch is prepared), and an elder assessment, if scheduled (2 hours).

III. Assessment Discussion

The group should meet in a circle. The Director of Church Extension will begin the discussion with prayer. Each committed participant should respond to the following:

1. Please share your brief testimony of how God saved you.
2. Please share how you were led to be a part of this mission church.
3. Please share your vision of this church. Please explain.

(The committee has the freedom to ask other questions but should remember to limit the time. This group time should be kept to around two hours with a short break.)

Note: Some committed participants may be members of another Bible Fellowship Church and will be transferring their membership to the new church. The director may use his discretion during the assessment discussion process of BFC members.

IV. Evaluation

The director and Assessment Committee will meet to evaluate the discussions with the committed participants of the mission church. If the committee believes that there are at least 20 committed participants qualified to become members of the mission church, the chairman will prepare a resolution to be sent to the director. These recommendations will be presented to the BOCE at its next meeting.

V. Sample resolution

Resolved that, after evaluation of the committed participants presented by the Transitional Leadership Team of the (mission church), the Assessment Committee acknowledges the (mission church) has a minimum of 20 Committed Participants prepared for membership.

Note: The Elder Candidate Assessment should take place following the Committed Participant Assessment – see the following section.

Steps to Forming a Committed Participant Role

Forming a Committed Participant Roll is a preliminary step to the formation of the membership roll after the mission Church is recognized at the Bible Fellowship Conference.

Forming a Committed Participant Roll

I. The church planter of the mission church shall make an announcement regarding the formation of a committed participant roll. The formation of a committed participant roll may begin at any time during the stages of the mission church in consultation with the director of Church Extension Ministries. Committed participants may be added to this roll as often as is necessary and according to the direction of the church planter and the Transitional Leadership Team.

II. Forming a roll shall include, but is not limited to the following:

- Qualifying a committed participant
 1. Is the individual at least 18 years of age or older?
 2. Is the individual convinced God is calling them to be a part of the new mission church?
 3. Does the individual give testimony and evidence of faith in Jesus Christ?
 4. Is the individual in sympathy with the *Faith and Order* of the BFC?
 5. Has the individual been baptized by immersion?
 6. Does the individual seek to live in conformity to the likeness of Jesus Christ?
- Explaining the responsibilities of a committed participant and reviewing the responsibilities of the church to its members and members to the church (*Faith and Order 202-2*).
- An instructional time in which the *Articles of Faith*, *Biblical Principles for Living*, and *Form of Government*, are introduced and explained.
- The completion of the *Committed Participant Application*.
- An interview with the church planter and at least one member of the Transitional Leadership Team to determine if the candidates satisfactorily meet the requirements and agree to the responsibilities of committed participants.

III. Committed participants in the mission church who are members of other Bible Fellowship churches may transfer membership once the mission church is received into BFC Conference.

COMMITTED PARTICIPANTS

Mission Church _____ Date _____

Committed Participants (20+ adults over 18)	Apps Reced	Trans	Elder Candidates (2 + not including Planter)
1.			1.
2.			2.
3.			3.
4.			5.
5.			5.
6.			6.
7.			7.
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			Deacon Candidates (not mandatory)
16.			1.
17.			2.
18.			3.
19.			4.
20.			5.
21.			6.
22.			7.
23.			
24.			
25.			
Committed/Non- Committed =			

* Applications in hand

Download a fillable PDF of this form at ChurchPlantingBFC.org/Resources

**COMMITTED PARTICIPANT APPLICATION FOR A
BIBLE FELLOWSHIP MISSION CHURCH**

(Fillable PDF of this form available at ChurchPlantingBFC.org/Resources)

_____ (Name of Mission Church)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Place of birth _____ Date _____

Are you married _____

Date of marriage _____

Where married _____

To whom married _____

Divorced _____ Date of divorce _____

Children – names and ages _____

Occupation _____

Membership in other organizations _____

II. CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

Conversion (or approximate point in your life when you were saved)

Give a description of how God saved you (use back of sheet if necessary – explain fully):

Have you been baptized by immersion?

Date _____ By _____ Where _____

If not, are you willing to be baptized by immersion? _____

Church membership: Will you be transferring a BFC membership? _____

Name of present church _____

Location _____

Will you obtain a letter of transfer?

Have you ever been disciplined by a church (if yes, explain)? _____

Please list the following:

1. Christian service training or experience: _____

2. Please list any Christian service you may desire to perform in the mission church:

III. **STATEMENT OF FAITH AND PRACTICE**

What is your belief concerning the Bible? (Explain fully)

What do you believe a Christian is? (Explain fully)

What do you believe it means to live a Christian life? (Explain fully)

IV. **STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO JESUS CHRIST**

Will you seek to manifest the virtues of love, peace, joy, longsuffering, forgiveness, self-control, brotherly love, and kindness for the sake of Jesus Christ?

Will you seek to refrain from the sins of improper attitudes and motives as well as questionable activities and practices for the sake of Jesus Christ?

Will you, by private worship, Bible reading, prayer, and relationships with others, seek to maintain a positive, vital Christian testimony that will glorify and please Jesus Christ?

Will you seek to fulfill the “Great Commission” by being a witness to others of the Gospel in your life and in your conversation, and invite and gather people into this mission church?

Will you seek to submit to the Lord and pursue an active walk with Christ, knowing that there are worldly pursuits which could impede your spirituality?

Will you be sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s leading as to how you might serve Christ in ways He would lead?

V. **STATEMENT OF RELATIONSHIP TO THE BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH**

Have you read the “*Articles of Faith*” of the “*Faith and Order of the Bible Fellowship Church*” or attended an instructional class for committed participants?

Are you in sympathy with the *Articles of Faith* of the Bible Fellowship Church?

Will you submit to the authority, discipline, and spiritual leadership of the Bible Fellowship Church as stated in the “*Faith and Order*”?

Will you faithfully support this mission church with your talents, spiritual gifts, and finances?

What do you consider your gifts or talents (if music, list instrument or vocal)?

Will you endeavor to be responsible for faithful attendance at the services, fellowship times, and other events of the mission church?

Will you seek to work together with the other Christians for the glory of God?

Will you seek the counsel of the mission church when in need or distress?

- VI. Comments – Briefly state why you believe God is calling you to be committed to this particular mission church. Add any other comments or questions (Use the reverse side of this page if needed).

YOUR SIGNATURE _____ **DATE** _____

Date approved by Transitional Leadership Team _____

Church Planter _____ Initial _____

Comments _____

**REQUEST FORS TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP FROM A
BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH**

This form is to be used when transferring membership from another Bible Fellowship Church.

INSTRUCTIONS: Fill out and deliver this form to the pastor of the church where you are a member at this time. A fillable PDF of this form is available at ChurchPlantingBFC.org/Resources

Date: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Dear Pastor,

Please transfer my membership from:

to:

Mission Church: _____

Address: _____

Sincerely,

Print Name

Signature

Date

Elder Candidates Assessment

I. Definition

- “In the New Testament church, Christ has provided men called elders, whom He has enabled and commissioned to govern with ministers in His church...Men who bear this office share equally with the ministers the authority in and responsibility for the life of the church; but in contrast to ministers, whose primary authority and responsibility are in the Word and doctrine and secondarily in ruling, the primary authority and responsibility of elders are ruling and governing and secondarily in the Word and doctrine...Those who fill this office should be examples to the flock of their sound faith, their blameless life and conduct, and their wisdom and discretion...Elders, as leaders of people, are chosen by membership of the church on the basis of Scriptural qualifications.” (*Faith & Order*, section 204-2.1 - 2.4)
- Review *Faith & Order* section, “The Board of Elders” - 401-1.1 - 1.9

II. Biblical Qualifications

- 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1; 1 Peter 5.

III. Procedure

- The church planter identifies potential elder candidates and discusses the men with the Transitional Leadership Team. The Transitional Leadership Team will give initial input to the church planter.
- The Transitional Leadership Team along with the church planter will meet and interview the potential elder candidates. The TLT will discuss the potential elder candidates and give feedback to the church planter. The TLT will recommend the elder candidates to be trained for eldership.
- The Transitional Leadership Team and church planter shall inform the director in writing that the mission church has at least two men prepared as elder candidates, other than the church planter, and desires that the men be assessed by the BOCE.
- The director presents the request to the BOCE.
- The BOCE approves the request and appoints an Assessment Committee. Normally the committee to assess committed participants would conduct the Elder Candidate Assessment. The director will appoint a new Assessment Committee if necessary.
- The director of the Church Extension will act as chairman of the committee.

- The chairman will inform the other men on the committee of their appointment. If anyone does not want to serve, the director will seek another candidate to be approved.
- The chairman will arrange with the church planter for a visit to the mission church and a meeting with all elder candidates. (See suggested format in previous section on Committed Participants Assessment, II. Procedures.)

IV. Assessment Interviews

The elder candidates should meet individually with the committee. Each interview will begin with prayer. The following areas should be covered with each elder candidate:

1. Doctrinal compatibility and agreement with the *Articles of Faith* of the Bible Fellowship Church.
2. The definition of an elder, and the biblical qualifications, should be read and reviewed with the candidate.
3. The candidate's conviction that he is qualified to be an elder.
4. The candidate's spiritual gifts, leadership qualities, teaching ability, shepherding ability, and governing ability.
5. The candidate's personal devotional life, family life, and church service history. (The chairman and the committee may ask other questions.)

Note: Some candidates may have served previously as ordained ministers or elders in the BFC. The committee can use its discretion about how thoroughly to examine such men.

V. Evaluation

The chairman of the Assessment Committee will meet with his committee and evaluate its discussions with the elder candidates. This meeting should take place immediately following the assessment interviews. If the committee believes that there are at least two men, other than the church planter, qualified to become elders of the mission church, the director will prepare a resolution to be presented to the BOCE. These recommendations will be presented to the BOCE at its next meeting.

Sample resolution:

Resolved that, after evaluation of the elder candidates presented by the Transitional Leadership Team of the (mission church), the Assessment Committee for the (mission church) acknowledges that the (mission church) has a minimum of two men, other than the church planter, prepared to serve as elders and further,
Resolved that, we recommend that the BOCE recognizes (names of recommended elder candidates) as qualified to serve in the office of elder at the (mission church).

Graduating a Mission Church with Bi-Vocational Pastoral Ministry

Some BFC Mission Churches will plan to graduate with a bi-vocational pastoral ministry. Bi-vocational ministry should not be an alternative for graduation based on the premise, *this is the only way the Mission Church can graduate*, but rather, that bi-vocational ministry is a viable means for graduation based upon:

- The Mission Church's belief that bi-vocational ministry is the way to build its particular church and that bi-vocational ministry is the best fit for their forward planning and philosophy of ministry.
- The Mission Church's discernment of its culture and demographics, resulting in the understanding that a bi-vocational pastoral ministry is what may be mandated by the cultural realities, i.e. low income, rural, urban, or ethnic Mission Churches.

In the case of a Mission Church graduating with the ability to give a bi-vocational call for its Pastor, there must be a higher degree of assessment exercised when the Transitional Leadership Team recommends a Mission Church for assessment.

Because the weight of ministry that is involved with bi-vocational ministry is demanding on the bi-vocational Pastor, a vigorous leadership team and committed core group must be in place to co-labor with the Pastor. With this need of having an energetic leadership core in place and an active committed participant group the following criteria will guide the Assessment Committee when assessing the Elders and Committed Participants:

- The Mission Church graduating with a bi-vocational call to a Pastor will have at least four (4) men, other than the Pastor, qualified to be the Elders of the church. The Elder candidates will verbally commit, during the assessment, to be responsible for co-laboring with the Pastor in overseeing the ministry and shepherding the flock.
- The Mission Church graduating with a bi-vocational call to a Pastor will have at least thirty (30) Committed Participants who will commit to be the Charter Members of the new Church.
- The Charter Members will verbally commit, during the assessment, to share in the ministry with a high degree of involvement and active service in the new church to support the bi-vocational Pastor.

The Board of Church Health will need to provide ongoing monitoring of a Church that graduates from Church Extension with a bi-vocational call to a Pastor.

Follow-Up Procedures upon Completion of Assessments

(Also see Graduation Checklist)

I. The Board of Church Extension

The BOCE will consider the recommendations from the Assessment Committee at its next meeting. The director will inform the church planter and the Transitional Leadership Team of the mission church regarding the BOCE's findings and decisions.

II. The Mission Church

- The Transitional Leadership Team and elder designees of the mission church will establish a charter membership roll from the committed participants.
- The Transitional Leadership Team and elder designees will appoint one of the elder designees to be the delegate at Annual Conference, and prepare for the mission church's reception into BFC Conference. The Transitional Leadership Team may dissolve at this point unless it would be advisable for them to remain for a period of time to train and counsel the new elders. One member of the TLT should be asked to continue as an elder consultant through the end of the graduation year.
- Following the reception at the BFC Conference, the new elders and church planter will arrange with the moderator of the BFC Conference for a chartering service to be held.

Note: The committed participants may be the charter members along with others who present themselves for membership after the assessment. These individuals will sign the charter for the church at the chartering service.

- Following the chartering service, the call of a pastor will be implemented by the elders (see *Faith & Order*, Section 409). At this point the church planter will move on to another assignment unless he is called to be the pastor.
- The pastor and elders will organize and govern the church and set forth a plan and vision for the church.
- The elders will arrange an installation and ordination service for the new pastor and the elders (see *Faith & Order* 401-1.8 *Installation of Elders* and 703-7 *Installation of a Pastor*).

PROCEDURE FOR A MISSION CHURCH'S PRESENTATION AT ITS RECEPTION INTO THE BFC CONFERENCE

When a Mission Church has been assessed by Church Extension and recommended by the Board of Church Extension for reception into the BFC Conference, the Mission Church will plan a "presentation" of the Mission Church for the BFC Conference. Here are some procedures and suggestions for the reception and presentation.

- The new BFC church and its delegate(s) will be received and seated in the Conference bar during the first day of Conference. Currently the reception takes place on the Monday evening of Conference. This may be changed at the discretion of the Agenda Committee.
- The Director of Church Extension will give an introduction of the new church and its delegates and others from the church who are present.
- The Delegates and leaders will come forward and make their presentation.
 1. The entire presentation should be no more than 20-30 minutes in length.
 2. People from the church should have been invited to the night of the reception. The Conference will provide seating for the contingent from the church and refreshments when Conference adjourns. The presentation may include anything the church believes will present their "story" and enlighten the Conference as to how God has worked in the church to bring them to this point. Such things as power point, video, testimonies, music, etc. can be incorporated into the presentation. Any special arrangements for the presentation should be made with the Agenda Committee and/or Pinebrook Bible Conference.
- After the presentation, the Moderator will adjourn the session and call the Conference members forward to greet the new church. All are then invited for a time of fellowship and refreshments.

Six Marks of the Church

The following are identifying characteristics of an indigenous church, that is, one that is “a thing of the soil.”

1. Self-Image

The church must see itself as the body of Christ. Does the church see that crisis and catastrophe in its community are its opportunity to minister to the need? Do the members see the church in the community as the body of Christ there?

2. Self-Functioning Nature

The church as the Body of Christ has many separate parts, each with its own function, but interacting with the other parts to make the body a self-functioning organic whole. The church must experience internal growth in grace so that all of the parts are properly functioning for the good of the whole body. “The more people who are involved in a ministry of participation, the nearer the society comes to being... an indigenous church.”

3. Self-Determination

Does the church make its own decisions? Does it lead and involve its members in the decision-making process? Does it understand and practice “consensus” in coming to its decisions? Do the elders provide wholesome decisive leadership?

5. Self-Propagation

Does the church see itself as being directly addressed by the words of the Great Commission? Is the matter of quantitative church growth from the non-Christian population of real concern to the church?

6. Self-Support

Does the church have a desire to fully support its own ministry financially? Does it have a plan and goals? Does it anticipate becoming a giving church for missions worldwide?

7. Self-Giving

This is the mark of service. “A truly indigenous church regards the social problems of its environment as its own concern.” Is the church seeking to understand and to help to solve these problems, thus bringing the message and concern of Christ to the community? The “evangelistic word” and the “evangelistic deed” must go together.

As described by Dr. Allen R. Tippett, cited by Malcom R. Bradshaw: Church Growth Through Evangelism-in-Depth, South Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 1969. D.f. also: Allen R. Tippett: Verdict Theology in Missionary Theology, Lincoln, Illinois: Lincoln Christian College Press.

Developing Leaders

One of the most challenging aspects of church planting is qualifying men to serve as elders in the Church. The Church Planter along with the TLT will develop a plan for identifying and training men to be elders. The guidelines below can be followed when the Church Planter and the TLT believe they have men that could meet the qualifications for being the future elders of the Church.

Note about Deacons

If the Church Planter and TLT believe there are men and women gifted to serve as deacons, they can develop a plan to train deacons. Church Extension does not hold assessments for deacons.

Considerations for Elders

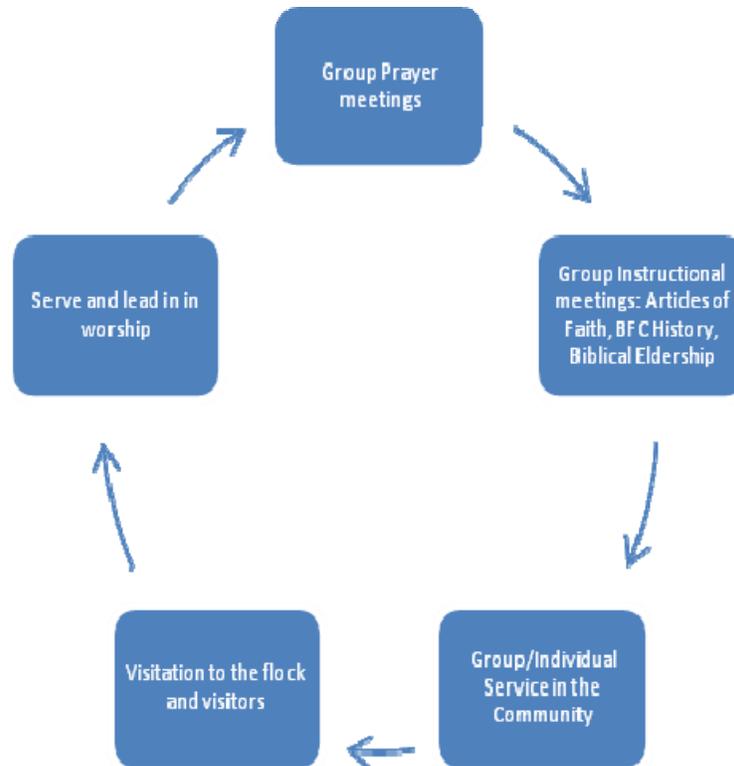
I. Identification

God calls men to serve as elders and gives us the privilege of discovering who those men are. Will we make errors of judgment in identifying elder candidates? Yes, there are times that the men we believe will be qualified to be elders are not God's calling. For this reason we should take time and care in assessing men to be elders as best we can. Here are *some* helpful things to consider when identifying elder candidates:

1. Does the man show a desire to serve as an elder – I Tim. 3:1; 4:14? There are some men who are overzealous in wanting to be a leader but do not miss true desire in even men who are zealous.
2. Has the man demonstrated a willingness to serve the body and the community – I Peter 5:1-5?
3. Has the man been gentle and caring with the flock – Acts 20:28-32?
4. Can the man teach; was he heard and was his teaching effective – I Tim. 5:17?
5. Does the man pray? Is he willing to pray with people – Jas. 5:14-15?
6. Does the man spend time in the Word? Is there evidence of his knowledge and love for God's word – II Tim. 2:15?
7. Has the man had any negative encounters in the church or demonstrated any character traits that would be questionable – Tit. 1:5-9?
8. Are leaders and potential leaders comfortable with being around the man - I Tim. 3:3?
9. Has the man demonstrated that he is punctual, attends services consistently, a volunteer, and is happy in service?
10. Does he demonstrate a willingness, with grace and truth, to confront error, sin, and divisiveness in the church - Titus 1:9?

II. Training Plan

Training takes place not only in the classroom but even more so in the body life of the church and community. Elder candidates should be given opportunities to serve in the church and with outreach opportunities in the community. Therefore a training outline might look like the following:



Planning considerations:

1. Develop “Your Plan.” Most church plants are different. The time when the men can meet and do projects will vary.
2. As difficult as this may be, set a schedule for meetings and projects that will have all candidates involved. Set a schedule that has a beginning and end. Remind the candidates that this will be a limited time involvement, knowing the time demand will be important i.e. 6 – 8 weeks.
3. Utilize other BFC Pastors, CE Director, and TLT members to assist with teaching or taking candidates out into the community and on visitation.
4. Have a written plan, with a timeline produced, to give to the candidates when you recruit them for training so they can see what will be required.
5. The training should include, to some degree, all the items outlined on the above chart: prayer meetings with the men, group instructional time, group service project, visitation, service in worship i.e.:
 - Group Prayer & Group Instructions (3 sessions) – Hold 3-90 minute sessions. The first 30 minutes devote to prayer. Then devote 60 minutes to teaching on the Articles of Faith and Biblical Eldership.
 - Community Service Project – (1 session) – Look for a service project in the community and preferably among the unsaved/ unchurched. Spend 90 minutes, as a group, working on the service project.
 - Visitation – (1 Session) – Break the group up into teams of 2 and assign them contacts for visitation: recent visitors, sick calls, and follow-up to people who have backed off church.

- Worship Service (as assigned) – Assign each man a part of the worship service. Rotate each man with various responsibilities to see how they function with: prayer, Scripture reading, announcements, taking offering, baptisms, communion, etc.
- More Sessions – If more sessions are agreeable to the candidates here are some ideas:
 1. Have the candidate sit in on one or more of your discipleship sessions.
 2. Have the candidate teach a Sunday School class or in another type of teaching session.
 3. Have the candidate serve in nursery, with the youth, elderly ministry, etc.
 4. Help the Elder candidate prepare a sermon and preach it.
 5. Have the candidate select a partner and go out into the target community and do a Survey utilizing the Church Extension Survey Manual.
 6. Have the Elder candidate sit in on a counseling session if appropriate and agreeable with the counselee.
 7. Your IDEA???
- 6. Visit each Elder/Deacon candidate in their home and hold a brief interview with the candidate and his wife to determine the wife’s support level.
- 7. Hold a final interview of the candidate.
- 8. Arrange an interview with the CE Director before recommendation for assessment.

Resources

- Ligon Duncan Trains His Men – available through Church Extension
- Natural Church Development Resource Listing – available through Church Extension
- Orientation Training Guide: Elder / Deacon, Building Church Leaders - available through Church Extension
- Articles of Faith & Biblical Principles for Living - available through Church Extension
- Mark Devers – 9Marks materials – www.ninemarks.org
- CT – Building Church Leaders – www.buildingchurchleaders.com
- Five Steps to Develop Leaders in Your Church – Life Way - www.lifeway.com
- Biblical Eldership – Alexander Strauch
- Eldership In Action – Richard Swartley
- The Elder - Cornelis Van Dam, P&R
- Finding Faithful Elders and Deacons - Thabiti Anyabwile (Available through 9 Marks)

ADDENDUM

BFC Required Financial Assessment for New Churches

Procedures:

Graduation Year – church is received as a Particular Church in April. They are only a Particular Church for 8 months.

Year 1 Following Graduation – church begins its first full year of being a Particular Church. They report 8 months of income to BFC Conference which was the time that they were a Particular Church in previous year. No Assessment yet, because it is based on year before graduation assessable income and the church was not a Particular Church during that time.

Year 2 Following Graduation – church reports its year 1 assessable income to BFC Conference for inclusion in the Year 3 budget. No Assessment yet, because it is based on Graduation year assessable income and the church was not a Particular Church for only 8 months in Graduation Year.

Year 3 Following Graduation – church begins paying the assessment based upon year 2 assessable income.

Example:

2017 – church is received as a Particular Church in April. They are only a Particular Church for 8 months.

2018 – church begins its first full year of being a Particular Church. They report 8 months of income to BFC Conference which was the time that they were a Particular Church in 2017. No Assessment yet, because it is based on 2016 assessable income and the church was not a Particular Church in 2016.

2019 – church reports its 2018 assessable income to BFC Conference for inclusion in the 2020 budget. No Assessment yet, because it is based on 2017 assessable income and the church was not a Particular Church for only 8 months in 2017.

2020 – church begins paying the assessment based upon their 2019 assessable income.

The BFC Conference Annual Assessment is based upon the resolutions passed at the 2009 Annual Conference and reaffirmed at the 2010 BFC Conference. As a reminder, the BFC Assessment encompasses all of the administrative amounts previously paid by each church to various organizations: Ministers Retirement Fund (\$900 per church, \$9.00 per member), Administrative Budget, and the Board of Communications. **This is now your only obligation.**

PLEASE NOTE: Other amounts that you normally send to the individual Bible Fellowship Church Departments (Board of Missions, Church Extension, Pinebrook Bible Conference, Victory Valley) should continue to go to them.

Your Assessment monies should be sent on either a **monthly or quarterly** basis to the ***BFC Executive Board*** (PO Box 3555, Allentown, PA 18106). For questions about assessment, ask the Executive Director Dave Allen at dallen@bfc.org or office@bfc.org.

An individual copy of your church's assessment will be emailed to the church in November. Reminders may be sent to your church on a quarterly basis throughout the year as a reminder, especially if you are late! A church is welcome to make contributions to the Administrative Budget before the due date.

Installation of Pastor (found in Principles of Order, suggested forms)

Observations Exodus 17:8-16 (optional):

1. Moses' staff and lifted hands reminded all that the battle was the Lord's and by His might is the victory is won.
2. God's Leaders will always face constant attack.
3. God's leaders always put their ultimate trust in the Lord.
4. God's leaders are encouraged and assisted through the support of God's people. (Aaron & Hur)

THE LORD IS MY BANNER – Jehovah Nissi

Introduction of (Name of Leader)

Leader : Do you Pastor _____; confess that Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior and that He alone is the Redeemer and Head of the church?

Pastor: I do

Leader: Are you inwardly persuaded that you are called of God to the proclamation of the Gospel and to the office of pastor and teacher?

Pastor: I am

Leader: This body voted to call you as its pastor to serve under the *FAITH & ORDER* of the Bible Fellowship Church and the bylaws of this body. Do you believe that this call is the will of God, and do you accept this call?

Pastor: I do

Leader: Will you as pastor-teacher solemnly affirm that you will take heed to yourself and to all the flock, over which the Holy Spirit has made you an overseer, to feed the church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood?

Pastor: By God's help, I will!

Charge to the Congregation

Questions: Will you as a congregation, on the basis of the evidence given as to the validity of the call of Pastor _____, receive and honor him as your minister/pastor?

If so, answer "We will" (Congregation responds.)

Installation Prayer: (Pastor kneels, with elders, deacons, and other designated participants around him. Designated person(s) will lead in prayer)

Installation of Elders – (found in Principles of Order, suggested forms)

Leader (name of leader): Do you reaffirm your faith in Jesus Christ as your own personal Lord and Savior?

Elders: I do

Leader: Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, totally trustworthy, fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, the supreme, final, and the only infallible rule of faith and conduct?

Elders: I do

Leader: Are you in agreement with the *Articles of Faith* of the Bible Fellowship Church?

Elders: I am

Leader: Will you endeavor to follow the *Principles of Order* of the Bible Fellowship Church?

Elders: I will

Leader: Do you promise to submit to your fellow elders in the Lord?

Elders: I do

Leader: Are you inwardly persuaded that you are called of God to the office of elder?

Elders: I am

Leader: Do you promise to promote the truths of the Gospel and the purity and peace of the Church?

Elders: I do

Leader: Will you be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all your duties and to walk with exemplary piety before the flock?

Elders: I will

Leader: Will you, as elder, solemnly affirm that you will take heed to yourself and to all the flock, over which the Holy Spirit has made you an elder?

Elders: I will

Charge to the Congregation

**Question: Do you, the members of the church, acknowledge and receive these brothers as elders? And do you promise to yield them all honor, encouragement, and obedience in the Lord to which their position entitles them
If so, answer “We do” (Congregation responds).**