

## Elder Training

### 9:30 am Open with Prayer

“Where there is no vision, the people perish” Proverbs 29:18 KJV

“Where there is no prophecy, the people cast off restraint” Proverbs 29:18 NRSV

9:35 am What is prophecy vs. vision?

Listen to Acts 2:1-19

“In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.

Break into groups of 3 or 4 people

- Listen for one word
- Listen for a phrase
- What does this passage say to you?

### 10:00 Ground Rules for the Session

Each session member is called by the voice of God through the vote of the congregation.

All members and their thoughts are equally valuable.

The job of the session is to seek the direction of the Holy Spirit. Which means:

- Each member of session needs to first listen carefully.
- Each member’s thoughts are valuable and should be sought
- Each member of session needs to be flexible and not try to make their point of view prevail.
- Session is not about seeking compromise or one person’s opinion; it is about seeking the Holy Spirit.

### Duties of the Session:

G-2.0301 Ruling Elder Defined ([http://oga.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/book-of-order2017-electronic.pdf](http://oga.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/book-of-order2017-electronic.pdf))

As there were in Old Testament times elders for the government of the people, so the New Testament church provided persons with particular gifts to share in discernment of God’s Spirit and governance of God’s people. Accordingly, congregations should elect persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership and being compassionate in spirit. Ruling elders are so named not because they “lord it over” the congregation (Matt. 20:25), but because they are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. Ruling elders, together with ministers of the Word and Sacrament, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships. When elected by the congregation, they shall serve faithfully as members of the session. When elected as commissioners to higher councils, ruling elders participate and vote with the same authority as ministers of the Word and Sacrament, and they are eligible for any office.

10:45 Watch short video: Who Moved the Cheese?

What is this video talking about?

How might we apply it to our work as elders and our churches?

11:00 Characteristics of a Healthy Church

11:15 am SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunity, and Threats)

Lunch

1:00 PM Matthew 8:18-22

Now when Jesus saw great crowds around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. A scribe then approached and said, 'Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.' And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.' Another of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, first let me go and bury my father.' But Jesus said to him, 'Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead.'

What do you think he means, "let the dead bury their own dead?"

What is Jesus trying to tell us in this passage?

Ordination Questions:

- a. Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
- b. Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God's Word to you?
- c. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God?
- d. Will you fulfill your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions?
- e. Will you be governed by our church's polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit?
- f. Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world?
- G. Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church?
- F. Will you pray for and seek to serve the people **with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?**

Will you be a faithful ruling elder, watching over the people, providing for their worship, nurture, and service? Will you share in government and discipline, serving in councils of the church, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

2:00 pm Bible study

**3:00 pm Worship**