



inspiring people to say 'yes' to Jesus

WHAT IS THE EXECUTIVE?

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

111 Robert St, Como 6152
www.comobaptist.org.au
08 9450 5328



We demonstrate Loving by...

Loving each other in God's love through spiritual, emotional and practical action. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. John 13:34-35

We demonstrate Inspiring by...

Spurring one another on, applying our gifts of service, inspiring others to express their Spiritual gifts. Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Hebrews 10:24



We demonstrate Going by...

Going and making disciples, inviting people into a relationship with Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. Matthew 28:19-20

We demonstrate Living by...

Devoting ourselves to Christ's way of living with other believers, through authentic discipleship. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:42



inspiring people to say 'yes' to Jesus

By way of introduction

In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith. (Acts 6:1-7)

As a body of believers seeking to serve Jesus Christ, we too need to set aside people to lead us. The aim of this information is to help us gain an understanding of what is involved in being a member of the Executive at Como Baptist Church; and to prayerfully consider those whom God may lay on our hearts to lead us.

At Como Baptist Church we are firstly guided by Scripture. As a membership, we are also assisted by our Constitution which lays out how we specifically are governed.

The membership is the final authority under Christ for decision making. We also delegate authority to elected and appointed people, particularly Deacons, Elders and Pastors. Together these positions form the Executive. The Membership elect Elders, who together with the Senior Pastors are the Eldership. The Eldership have delegated responsibilities to appoint Ministry Leaders, including Deacons and Staff.

Can we encourage you to join us in the suggested readings of Scripture, the extracts from the Constitution, the Roles and Responsibilities and to prayerfully consider our leadership.

Our Object or Purpose

The Object (or purpose) of the Church shall be to glorify God by:

- Promoting and providing opportunities for people to meet together regularly for worship, prayer, teaching, encouragement and fellowship.
- To engage in the task of active mission, within the local community, Australia and overseas.
- Enabling and encouraging Christians to discover, develop and use their gifts for the service of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Church and in the community.
- Seeking every possible way to make disciples of Jesus Christ and connect them into His church.
- Administering the ordinances of Believer's Baptism and the Lord's Supper in accordance with the New Testament Scriptures.
- As far as possible, and as opportunity offers, caring for those in need in the community.

The purpose of the Executive is to enable and lead the Church to fulfil the purposes of Como Baptist Church as stated in its Constitution.

What are the Biblical qualifications for Elders and Deacons?

Throughout Scripture we see that God uses all kinds of people to fulfil his purposes. Not everyone was well spoken, nor highly educated; rather God's chosen person for a specific task.

As the New Testament Church grew, so did the need to appoint leaders. In Acts 6:3 we read that those to be appointed were to be known as being full of the Spirit and wisdom.

Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in each of the churches they founded (Acts 14:23). Paul told Titus to appoint elders in every town in Crete (Tit. 1:5).

In Jerusalem, the elders seem to have had a ruling function in conjunction with the apostles (Acts 15:6, 22-23; 16:4; 21:18). Paul referred to "the elders who direct the affairs of the church" (1 Tim. 5:17).

What does it mean to "direct" the church? The Greek word is *proistemi*, which literally means "to stand before." This word is used to say that elders and deacons should "manage" their own households (1 Tim. 3:4-5, 12), which should be done with self-sacrificial love. The NIV translates this word "leadership" in Rom. 12:8. 1 Tim. 5:17 tells us that elders helped direct the church, but only some of the elders were preachers and teachers. All preachers were elders, but not all elders were preachers.

The extent and limits of elders' authority is not spelled out in the New Testament, but it is clear that they do have authority. Members are told, "Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls and will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with sighing—for that would be harmful to you." (Heb. 13:17 NRSV). Also see 1 Thess. 5:12, and 1 Tim. 5:17.

Although elders have authority that should be obeyed, they should not use their authority for self-service. Peter told them to serve "as overseers — not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock" (1 Pet. 5:2-3). Like overseers and pastors, they are to take care of the flock (1 Tim. 3:5). They anoint the sick and pray for healing (Jas. 5:14). They "watch out for your souls, and will give an account" (Heb. 13:17, NRSV).

However, many of the functions of elders are not restricted to elders. The New Testament tells members to serve one another, teach one another, instruct one another, edify one another, admonish one another and submit to one another. The elders serve in all these areas to build others up, teach right doctrines, promote spiritual maturity and equip the saints for works of ministry. Elders preach and direct the church with concern for the spiritual well-being of the members; they work to bring out the most in the other members.

Deacons (aka Ministry Leaders, Cluster Leaders)

The word *diakonos* means "assistant" — someone who works to help others. The word is used in a general sense to describe apostles, preachers, servants and other workers. It is used in a more specialized meaning in Phil. 1:1 and 1 Tim. 3:8-13 to denote an office in the church.

The word *diakonos* and the verb *diakoneo* often mean manual labour. 1 Pet. 4:11-12 makes a contrast between those who serve by speaking and those who serve (*diakoneo*). Those who have been given a gift of (manual) ministry (*diakonia*) should use that gift (Rom. 12:7). The seven men of Acts 6:3 have often been understood as deacons, because they served by *diakoneo* — waiting on tables (v. 2). Physical service has traditionally formed the core of the duties of a deacon.

We are given a list of qualifications for deacons, but not a list of their duties. The qualifications suggest that deacons may have had some teaching and ruling functions. "They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith" (1 Tim. 3:9). This concern for doctrinal

accuracy may have simply been part of the concern for a good example (v. 8), but it may also suggest that deacons helped teach.

Also, a deacon must also "manage their children and their household well" (v. 12 NRSV). The same qualification was given for bishops in v. 4, with the explanation given that bishops must manage the church (v. 5). If the same rationale applies to deacons, it implies that deacons helped direct the church. However, the New Testament does not mandate the specific duties of deacons. The church today is free to assign duties based on current needs.

(The summary above is based on an article from Michael Morrison, 1996)

What does our Statement of Faith say about leadership?

- Jesus Christ alone is the head of the Church.
- The Church is the community called into being by God. In both its universal and local expressions, it consists of persons who have personally and knowingly accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, and have pledged themselves to worship, follow and serve him as a priestly community.
- The will of Christ for each church is to be found as the Holy Spirit brings direction and conviction to that congregation gathered to seek his will in the light of the Scriptures. On this basis the members' meeting is the final authority under Christ for a congregation. Finding Christ's will through the members' meeting involves mutual counsel through the exercise of the members' gifts and learning from the experience of other congregations.
- Christ gives leaders to his Church. It is the duty of the local church through the members' meeting to recognise and affirm Christ's call to such leaders, and to set them aside to serve, thereby charging them with the responsibility to lead and delegating prescribed authority to lead. Mutual accountability is to operate between leaders and church.

What does our Constitution say about our Executive?

Several sections in our Constitution deal with the appointment, structure, responsibilities and accountabilities of the Executive. (Section 5 describes the Structure of the Church.)

The Deacons, Pastoral Staff, Elders and Senior Pastors are collectively known as '**The Executive**'.

The elected **Elders** and **Senior Pastors** are '**The Eldership**'.

The Eldership and **The Executive** have distinct responsibilities: the **Eldership** is responsible for the governance and direction of the Church, which includes the care and accountability of the Senior Pastors and managing the affairs of the church; whilst the **Executive** has leadership and ministry responsibilities for ministry areas, often referred to as Clusters.

The **Eldership** meet at least 6 times per year to consider matters of governance, including the direction of the Church and fulfilling the purposes, vision and mission of the Church. The **Eldership** also meet frequently for prayer and pastoral matters.

The **Executive** meet collectively at least twice per year for the purposes of planning and reporting. Individual **Ministry Leaders**, whether Pastoral Staff or Deacons, paid or volunteer, will also be regularly meeting with and supporting their ministry teams.

What specifically does the Eldership do?

The Pastors and Elders work together closely, forming the Eldership, and together shepherd the Church. Psalm 23 is a helpful description, not only of what the Father does for us, but also how the Elders shepherd. Elders are elected for a 3 year term, and can expect to spend approximately 12 hours per month serving as an Elder.

The Eldership is accountable to the membership and is responsible for:

- the governance and direction of the Church
- attending Eldership meetings, at least 6 times per year
- participating in regular prayer gatherings • preparation of the Annual Ministry Plan and Budget. This requires input and approval from the Executive, ministry leaders and membership
- any long term development planning.
- developing Principles, Policies and Guidelines for the Church.
- keeping the Senior Pastor/s accountable (including spiritually)
- providing care to the Senior Pastor/s
- authorising unbudgeted expenditure. (A limit is set by members at the AGM)
- making arrangements to ensure that the responsibilities of the Senior Pastor's are fulfilled (if there is a vacancy)
- determining the ministry areas of the Church. (ie the Clusters)
- appointing Ministry Leaders to lead the ministry areas. (paid positions will require approval by the membership either as part of the planning/ budget process or at a special members meeting.)
- carrying out all the duties delegated to it, including the oversight of all Church funds.

The Elders also carry the legal responsibilities of ensuring that the Church is compliant with all relevant legislation.

And Ministry Leaders, including Deacons and Pastoral Staff?

Ministry Leaders hold responsibility for a particular area of church life: a Cluster. Some ministry areas may be led by a Ministry Leader (who meets the qualifications of a deacon, and some may be led by a member of Pastoral Staff.

The individual ministry leadership responsibilities may vary and therefore any terms, job descriptions and expectations will be made clear during the appointment process.

In fulfilling their responsibilities, all Ministry Leaders will need to work closely with each other, their ministry teams as well as offer support, feedback and liaison with the Eldership.

Each Ministry Leader will also be responsible for:

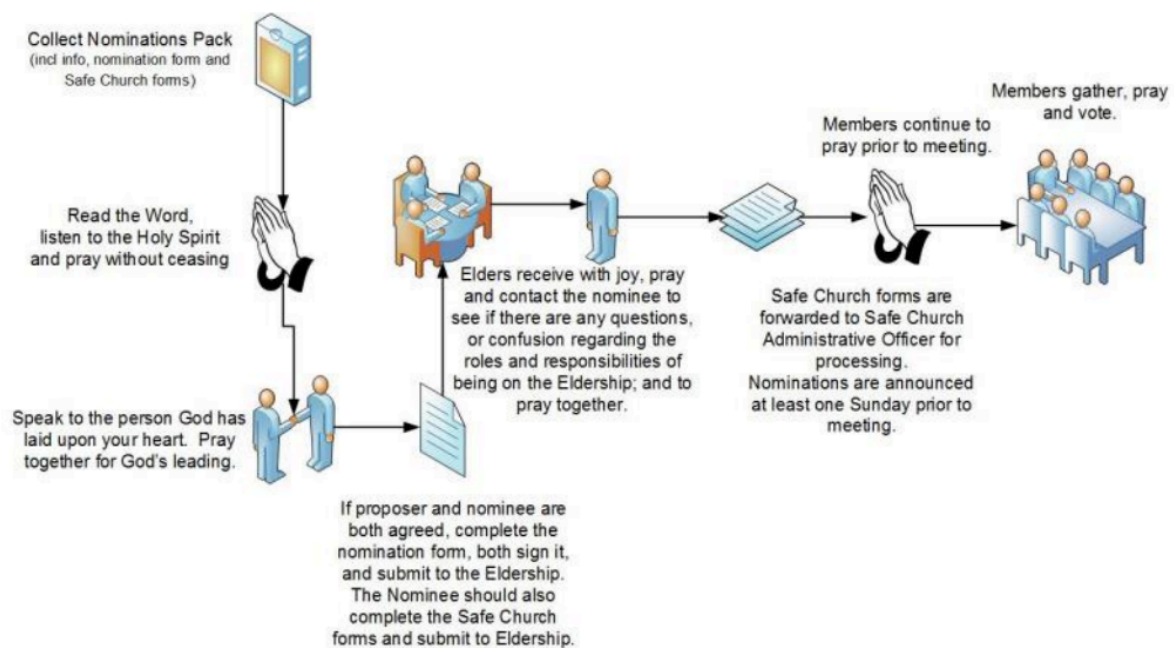
- attending Executive meetings, at least twice per year
- developing a plan for the ministry area they lead, including goals, expected outcomes and the resources required on an annual basis
- work according to the values, policies and principles of the Church and within the parameters of the Budget allocated to that ministry area.
- develop their ministry area
- appointing ministry team members to their ministry areas

Nominating Someone as an Elder

To nominate an Elder, you do need to be a member of Como Baptist Church. The person you are nominating also needs to be a member. Due to the oversight responsibilities of Elders, ministry staff cannot be nominated as Elders. When prompted by the Holy Spirit, please go and speak with the person and ask them if they could pray about nominating for the Eldership.

If the person agrees, you can complete a nomination form, have it signed by the nominee and yourself, and forward the nomination form to one of the Elders. A Nominee will also need to complete Safe Church requirements: an 'Application for Ministry' form, a Working With Children application, and a Volunteer National Police Clearance form.

An Elder or Senior Pastor will meet with the nominee to pray, discuss the roles and responsibilities of Eldership, and answer any questions. Confirmed nominations will be announced the week prior to the AGM.





inspiring people to say 'yes' to Jesus

(08) 9450 5328 | office@comobaptist.org.au | comobaptist.org.au
111 Robert Street, Como WA 6152 | PO Box 404, Como WA 6952