

Elders

THE CHURCH AT SOUTH MOUNTAIN

What is the work of an elder, overseer, or pastor? The Word of God is clear in a number of places about the duties of elders.

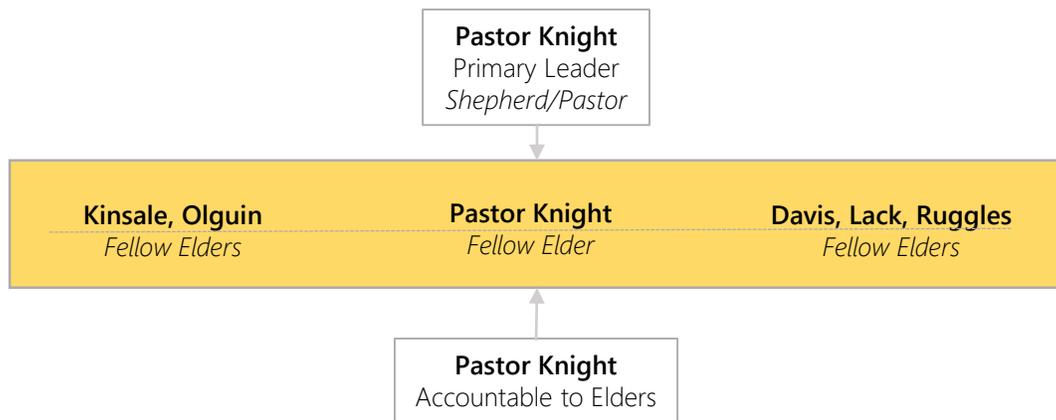


Plurality

What is CASM's Philosophy of Plurality?

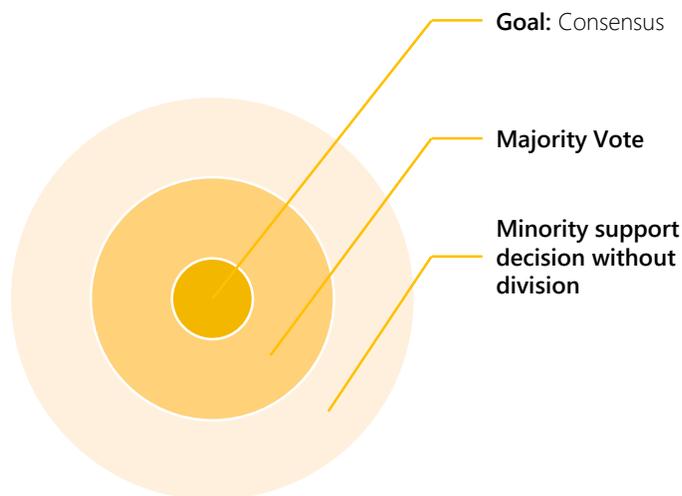
EQUALITY and DIVERSITY within ELDERS' TEAM

Although the New Testament teaches that elders share equally *the same office and pastoral charge*, there is at the same time a rich diversity of *giftedness, effectiveness, influence, time availability, experience, verbal skills, leadership ability, and biblical knowledge* (Matt.10:2; Luke 22:32; Acts 15:6; 20:28-31; 1 Cor.9:11; Gal.2:9; 6:6; Eph.4:11-14; 1 Thess.5:12-13; 1 Tim.3:2, 10; 5:17-19, 22-25; Titus 1:9-13; James 5:14; 1 Pet.5:1,2). So, how does plurality look at CASM?



HOW ARE DECISIONS MADE?

When making decisions, the elders will strive for the goal of consensus. Recognizing that this is not always possible, rather than holding up the decision when there is not consensus, a vote will be taken and the decision will rest with the majority. The dissenting elder(s) will then be expected to be in support of the majority decision and will do his part to ensure its success, without causing any division.



Accountability

How Do We Watch After Each Other?

28 Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.—Acts 20:28

16 Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.—1 Timothy 4:16

Unique difficulties with the ministry constantly beset the elder.

- A variety of duties (2 Tim.4:5)
- Complex social and moral problems (1 Cor.6:9-11)
- Keeping people together (1 Cor.7:17-24)
- Misconceptions about an elder's calling (2 Tim.4:5)
- Opposition and the spiritual battle (1 Tim.1:18; 6:12; 2 Tim.2:3; Eph.6:10-18)
- Trials (2 Cor.6:3-10)
- Laziness
- Discouragement (Gal.4:16)
- Vulnerability to criticism (Ps.42; 43)
- Over-involvement with people's troubles, stress, and burnout (Gal.6:1; 2 Cor.11:29)
- An occasional desire to escape
- Pride

HOW DOES ACCOUNTABILITY LOOK TO YOU? (List three needs you have)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

S.O.U.L. CARE

S—SAFEGUARDING THE MARRIAGE and FAMILY. We must not forget that each elder is under the pastoral authority and care of the entire elders team. This means we must be genuinely concerned for the spiritual condition of the elder, his wife, and his children. At times an elders' team may need to advise an elder to pull back from some task or responsibilities because of an overloaded work schedule or a stressful home situation. In practical ways like this, elders guard one another's souls; they act as loving pastors to one another.

O—OPENING THE HEART. Our elders' meetings must provide a regular forum for sharing personal needs and prayer requests. Praying for one another binds people together, enhancing their knowledge of the pastoral care for one another. It also provides an opportunity for elders to acknowledge and thank one another for special efforts or faithfulness to a task.

U—UNITING TOGETHER. Leading God's people isn't easy. Listening to complaints and dealing with people's sins wears a person down. Even Moses fell apart under the pressure of the people's sins and complaints (Num.11:10-15). The friendlier and closer elders are to one another, the better prepared they are to handle the pressure and disagreements that occur while leading a church.

L—LEISURE AND RELAXATION. Enjoying each others' company and taking time to have fun and fellowship is crucial to longevity in pastoral ministry. Elders should schedule some times for connection and social interaction apart from the cares of shepherding God's people.