

The Elders First Christian Church of Neoga

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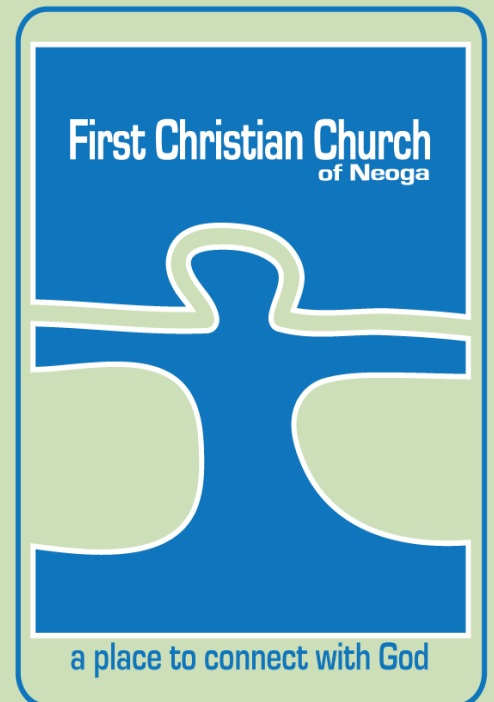
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WHAT WE BELIEVE SERIES

Topic:

An Elder-Led
Church



What is an Elder-led Church?

There are various forms of church government in use today, with three models being the most common:

- The Pastor-led model where the church is led by one person, usually a Senior Pastor.
- The congregational-led model, where the congregation, in regular business meetings, votes and decides on issues affecting the church.
- The Elder-led model, where the church is led by a plurality of qualified leaders, to provide oversight and direction for the church.

FCC adheres to the Elder-led model for a number of reasons. First of all, we believe it most closely follows the New Testament pattern for church leadership. Scripture throughout the Epistles contains instructions about this form of leadership. Additionally, a plurality of elders (currently 6 in our case) helps protect against heresy or false teaching. Also, since different elders have different gifts, a wide range of ideas and wise counsel are brought into each discussion.

Elder Qualifications:

The qualifications for elders are found in I Timothy and Titus 1.

The responsibilities of elders are spelled out all through scripture, including the often-used metaphor of a shepherd. The Apostle Paul exhorted the elders to “be shepherds of the church of God” (Acts 20:28) and Peter said, “be shepherds of God’s flock which is under your care” (I Peter 5:2). A study of the role of shepherds in the Bible (see Ezekiel 34 and Psalms 23) reveals a lengthy list of responsibilities which can be summed up as leading the flock, providing oversight and direction, caring for and feeding them, guarding them from going astray, protecting from savage wolves (false teachers), seeking the lost, and helping the weak.

Other responsibilities include that of directing the affairs of the church (I Tim. 5:17), determining church policy (Acts 15:22), preaching and teaching (I Tim. 5:17), praying for the sick (James 5:14), and given to prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:3).

Except for these broad parameters of shepherding the flock and providing oversight, much flexibility is used by various churches regarding their organizational structure. At FCC, the elders, along with our pastoral staff, determine direction and vision, but the day-to-day responsibility for the actual leadership toward that direction is given to the staff, under the authority of the elders.

At FCC, all elders are equal. One person is selected as a moderator, but that is primarily to plan the agenda and facilitate meetings. Some elders may appear more prominent than others, but that is a function of giftedness rather than position.

The responsibility of being an elder is a very serious matter. It is God’s work that we are doing (Titus 1:7), not ours, and we will have to give an account to God for the way we lead (Hebrews 13:17).