

Proposed Constitution and By-Law Amendments



Introduction – Why are we updating our by-laws and leadership structure now?

- 1) Help Prevent the likelihood of issues that our church has gone through these past 10+ years
 - Moral failings of multiple pastors/elders
 - Pastors/elders leaving the church
 - Lack of accountability and transparency
 - Burden of the ministry on one staff pastor and pride in leadership
- 2) Help Promote the mission and health of GBC going forward
 - Raise up more leaders including pastors/elders
 - Allows for more time for intentional discipling and other ministries by staff pastors and reduces burnout
 - Increases the team (or plurality) aspect of staff shepherding
 - Creates a healthy interdependence of staff pastors and elders and keeps the leaders more humble



There are two main items we are voting on to amend in our constitution and by-laws.

- 1) Update our leadership structure (Article IV: Governance in our Constitution (pg. 8) and Sections 2&3 in the by-laws (pgs. 14, 16-21)):
 - Add and update role and responsibilities of a Lead Teaching Pastor (formerly Senior Pastor)
 - Add a new staff position of Executive Pastor

- 2) Update language to clarify the role of our deacons (Section 4 in the by-laws pgs. 22-23)



Item #1: There are two main changes that impact how our pastoral staff will function going forward.

There will be two executive-level staff pastors that will work in tandem and report directly to the elder team.

- Lead Teaching Pastor
- Executive Pastor

- 1) The Lead Teaching Pastor will preach most of the time but will also lead and disciple a preaching team of men with desire and ability to grow in this ministry.
- 2) The Executive Pastor will serve as the primary administrator and oversee other areas of ministry defined by their job description based on giftedness and needs of the church.



Item #1: There are benefits of having two executive-level staff pastors report directly to the elder team.

- Increases the team (or plurality) aspect of staff shepherding
- Enables a second staff pastor to work in tandem with the Lead Teaching Pastor and foster a healthy interdependence
- Enables the second staff pastor to more directly share the burden previously solely carried by the Senior Pastor
- Decreases the chance of "burnout" as staff pastor responsibilities are shared among two men
- Increases accountability among staff pastors helps keep the leaders humble



Item #1: The new structure better accomplishes the mission and needs of our church going forward.

- Reminds us that Christ is the head of the church and not man (Col 1:18)
- Better accomplishes our church mission statement of “making more and better disciples” as it encourages the elders/pastors to raise up other men to preach (Eph 4:12). This includes intentional discipleship relationships with the preaching team.
- Encourages the congregation to focus more on the Word being preached rather than the preacher (Heb 4:12, 2 Tim 3:16, 1 Thess 2:13)
- Healthier for the church and provides foundation for future church growth (e.g., church plants, missionaries, church revitalization) (2 Tim 2:2, Matt 28:18-20)
- Allows more time for discipling, equipping, counseling, funerals, weddings, leadership development, etc. While the Lead Teaching Pastor will still work the same number of hours each week and preach most Sundays, preaching less will allow more freedom from constant sermon production and enable him to shepherd in other areas
- Increases the team (or plurality) aspect of shepherding through preaching (1 Tim 3:2, 5:17; Titus 1:5, 9; 1 Peter 5:1-3)



Item #1: FAQs

Are these changes biblical?

- The elders believe the Bible is clear about having a plurality of elders/overseers for local church oversight and leadership (e.g., Acts 15, James 5:14, Acts 14:23, Acts 20, Titus 1:5, 1 Peter 5:1-3). However, the Bible intentionally allows room for different church structures and position titles within that plurality. We believe this current change is wise for our specific local congregation going forward.
- It is our prayer and desire that these changes will provide a healthier environment and future for our church



Item #1: FAQs

Will these changes prevent future pastors from moral failure?

- **No.** Only the grace of God keeping our pastors humble, transparent and walking in repentance and obedience can prevent sin leading to moral failure. However, we believe this structural change will increase accountability and support for our staff pastors.

Are there other churches using this similar structure?

- **Yes.** We have spoken with other churches who are operating under this structure. Again, we believe this current change is wise for our specific local congregation going forward but not mandated by Scripture.



Item #1: FAQs

How often will the Lead Teaching Pastor preach?

- Our aim is to have him preach ~70% of the time. However, the by-laws allow room for some flexibility (by-laws state "majority of Sundays") depending on the future needs of the church.

Can we attract a good hire who only wants to preach 70% of the time?

- As we have spoken with other churches, it seems that many churches of our size or larger tend to have pastors preach around 70% (or even less sometimes). Churches smaller than ours tend to have their pastors preach more. There are plenty of exceptions on both sides.



Item #1: FAQs

Will the Executive Pastor preach?

- Our desire is to have our next Executive Pastor hire preach as well. The by-law changes allow for flexibility if for some reason an Executive Pastor in the future does not desire or have a calling to preach on Sunday and is gifted in other areas to help shepherd this church. However, he will still be required to teach as Scripture lays out as a qualification of an elder.

Couldn't we just stick with the title "Senior Pastor?"

- Technically, we could. We are very thankful for the various senior pastors in our lives. However, we think that the title "Lead Teaching Pastor" better reflects the functional changes to the position and new proposed leadership structure.



Item #1: FAQs

How will the rest of the staff be organized under these two positions?

- Ministry staff positions will roll up under either the Lead Teaching Pastor or Executive Pastor depending on competency, area of ministry, and other factors. This will be determined by the elder team and listed in job descriptions and responsibilities for both men.

How will the pay of the positions be determined?

- Although these two positions are equal since both report directly to the elders, they will still have different responsibilities. Pay will be determined according to position, responsibilities, experience, and education.

What does this change mean for Joe Bennett?

- Joe is presently the interim Teaching Pastor, and the elders are praying and seeking God's wisdom for how Joe will fit into this new structure. There are no plans to have an Equipping Pastor staff position in the future.



Item #2: There are a few changes in the Deacon section. (Section 4)

- The edits in this section are mainly language/wording in nature and provide clarity and unity regarding the role of the deacon team. These edits are meant to better reflect how we already function.
- The word “*all*” is unclear in this section since elders, deacons, and non-deacon finance team positions (treasurer, bookkeeper, accountant, etc.) each have differing responsibilities related to finances and/or facilities. We took out the word “all” and made it more specific.
- Added a point: "Support the elders, church staff, and ministry leaders to meet physical and practical needs of the church body." This allows for flexibility of role beyond just finance and facilities and is found in Scripture (Acts 6).
- The deacons, treasurer, bookkeeper, and accountant have each shared their input and agree with these changes.



