

# Proposal for a New Selection Process for Elders and Deacons

**Proposal:** Pastors Jason and Dave are proposing a new selection process for Elders and Deacons. We are proposing that we move from an Election process by lot, to more of a selection process. This has been discussed by the Consistory, and we would like to discuss this with the congregation. Based on prayer, Biblical reflection and feedback from the congregation we will vote on this at our next consistory gathering.

## **Rationale:**

1) The Pastors do not believe that the current system of drawing lots is the most Biblical way of approaching ordination of Elders and Deacons. We do see in the Scriptures that they did cast lots to replace Judas as an apostle (Acts 1:26). However, it is interesting to note that after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, there is not another example of the casting of lots for any leadership position again. It should be noted that we went to a “lot” system to overcome the kind of “Popularity contest” that we had previously – where the Congregation voted on the new Elders and Deacons. We say “popularity contest” because often those who were elected were those who were best known by the congregation, and it could overlook some folks that were less well known, but very capable and competent to serve. It kind of resembled what is done in elections of government officials. However, the election process is a process we do not see in scripture.

2) Much more consistently after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, we see Elders and Deacons **Chosen and appointed** by the Apostles (leaders of the Church) - see Acts 14:21-23. These were people that had the qualities that are outlined 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9. They were also chosen because they were seen as ones who were already living out these roles and overseers (elders) and servants (deacons). Elders in the NT were always “Set apart, and appointed by the 5-fold ministry gifts – Pastor, teachers, Apostles, Evangelists, prophets. After Pentecost elders and deacons were selected by the leadership of a local church.

3) There is no definitive way or command that Elders/Deacons are to be appointed in the NT, so there is some liberty. Often the way elders and deacons are selected are more in line with the way Government or Corporate structures than actually mentioned in the NT. We are hoping to more closely follow the scripture than the Culture.

4) The Pastors feel that a process of Choosing Elders and Deacons with the input of the Congregation is a better and more Biblical means than we currently use. This way we can identify emerging leaders, call them out as being identified and nominated by the congregation and chosen by the leaders, then they can be equipped, mentored and disciplined into their new role) and then when ordained, they can hit the ground running after what God has called them to. Frankly, what often happens now is that many are nominated for a position – then they are called and asked (often begged to serve), and then when we finally get a double slate, we then

cast lots. We are suggesting that nominations are brought from the congregation and leadership, prayed on by all, one name is selected for each position needed based on the divine nudgings of the Holy Spirit. These candidates would be approached by the pastors with the full weight of the Spirit of God, and the leadership of the church, and then encouraged to serve.

5) The process we are suggesting is actually the very way we select Pastoral elders now. This method has worked very well, and we are simply suggesting that we also select our future elders and deacons by this method.

**Here is the flow we would suggest:**

1. Praying for Leaders Corporately, and calling for nominations. In this way we can engage the church in identifying those who are already doing the work of elder/deacon. The whole church is being involved and educated in this process.
2. Nominations from the Congregation and Elders are prayerfully processed in the Consistory Leadership.
3. Then these Elders/Deacons (one candidate for each position needed) are contacted and encouraged to take the position.
4. Then these emerging leaders are trained and disciple into their new role (For approximately 4 months).
5. Then they are ordained/Installed in January.