



ADVANCE COMMUNITY CHURCH

Eldership Assessment



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	3
BACKGROUND.....	
Personal.....	4
Family.....	5
General.....	6
Church Background.....	7
SPIRITUAL VITALITY.....	8
THEOLOGICAL CLARITY.....	9
DOCTRINAL CLARITY.....	10
PASTORAL CLARITY.....	16
MARRIAGE & FAMILY LIFE.....	18
RELATIONSHIP BUILDING.....	20
LEADERSHIP ABILITIES.....	23
EMOTIONAL HEALTH & STABILITY.....	25
MISSIONAL LIFESTYLE.....	26
DISCIPLE-MAKING SKILLS.....	27
FINANCIAL PHILOSOPHY.....	28
PERSONAL & SENSITIVE QUESTIONNAIRE	29
MISC.....	33

INTRODUCTION

Admittedly, the idea of a thorough assessment like this for eldership within a local church is rare and even daunting. Many churches select elders based on their tenure, leadership ability, communication skills, perceived knowledge of Scripture, popularity, and the list goes on and on. However, it is very rare for a church to dig deep into a person's life in multiple realms in a written evaluation like this assessment.

The reason we are making such a big deal of the office of eldership at Advance is because the Bible clearly communicates its importance. For example, read Acts 20:28-31, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-16, Hebrews 13:17, and 1 Peter 5:1-4. These passages state the importance of the office within the church. The elders, overseers, and pastors are accountable to Christ who is the Head of the Church (Ephesians 5:23).

The following questions are primarily from the Acts 29 Network and their churches. Every Acts 29 pastor has actually completed an assessment much more thorough than this. They then are placed before a group of pastors and questioned for at least two hours. It is common for Acts 29 churches to duplicate this model in vetting potential elders within the church. It is an extensive process. However, its intent is to gain and maintain the highest standard for those serving in leadership within the local church. Scripture affirms the need for a plurality of elders where each has equal authority. Every Acts 29 pastor has been thoroughly assessed. This particular eldership assessment is designed for potential lay elders and is a significant abbreviation of that process. This assessment is not a "pass-fail" tool. Rather, it will reveal strengths and weaknesses of those who complete it.

It is a good thing for a man to pursue eldership in humility and with teachability. The strength of any church is first and foremost connected to the blessing of Christ over and among its people. It's His Church! Then, the elders and deacons play significant roles in shepherding and serving. We believe the Bible is clear that an elder must be a man. This is not a sexist statement. A woman may serve in any other capacity. This is not based on ability, but on biblical design.

Overview - here's the process of eldership:

1. Seek God intently regarding your potential call to this role.
2. If you're married, make sure your wife is supportive.
3. Complete and submit this assessment. It will take time, so be patient.
4. Meet with existing elders of Advance (and potentially another Acts 29 pastor).
5. Various conditions may be assigned. You will then need to complete them.
6. If elders approve, your name will go before the congregation for 2 weeks. This will give the congregation an opportunity to respond to your elder candidacy.
7. Elders will then welcome you into active service as an elder.

Thank you for your willingness to submit to this process. It will test and grow you. Please know that your responses will be kept confidential among the elders and pastors of the Acts 29 region (consisting of Ohio, Western PA, and Kentucky). May God richly bless you throughout this journey!

BACKGROUND

PERSONAL

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Blog: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Nationality: _____

Languages Spoken: _____

Social Network Information

Twitter: _____

Facebook: _____

Other: _____

Background Check

May we perform criminal and FBI background checks on you? Y | N

Driver's License #: _____

Are you a "partner" of Advance Community Church? Y | N

Member of another church? Y | N

If so, name and location? _____

FAMILY

Marital Status: Single | Married

Date of Marriage: _____

Spouse Name: _____

Age: _____

Occupation: _____

Email: _____

Blog: _____

Children - Name(s) and Age(s): _____

Have you or your spouse ever been divorced? Y | N

Do you or anyone in your family have any major health issues? Y | N

Education (institution | degree | year):

Spouse's education (institution | degree | year):

Do you have future family or educational aspirations? Y | N

* Explain: _____

GENERAL

Describe hobbies, special interests, favorite forms of recreation:

Who has made the biggest impact to your faith and why?

To what extent do you value missions? Please explain:

List your top three spiritual gifts:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Have you completed the S.H.A.P.E. assessment through Advance or do you have the results from another church context? Y I N

* If you've completed it elsewhere, can you submit it to the elders? Y I N

* If not, would you be willing to complete it as part of this assessment? Y I N

What are your strong points of ministry life?

What are your weaknesses of ministry life?

CHURCH BACKGROUND

List the churches you have attended/served beginning with the most recent.

Church: _____

Location: _____

Worship attendance from _____ to _____.

Reason for leaving: _____

Church: _____

Location: _____

Worship attendance from _____ to _____.

Reason for leaving: _____

Church: _____

Location: _____

Worship attendance from _____ to _____.

Reason for leaving: _____

Have you been licensed, commissioned, or ordained as an elder/pastor? Y I N

If so, when and by whom?

SPIRITUAL VITALITY

How and when did you become a Christian?

How and when did your spouse become a Christian?

How would you describe the vibrancy of your walk with Jesus today (include your devotional practices, prayer life, and the role of worship)?

What have been your devotional practices over the past 3 months?

Who is spurring you on in faith? How do they speak truth into your life?

Describe the role of biblical authority in your life?

What evidence in your life reveals fruits of the Spirit?

How are you presently being sanctified in the image of Jesus Christ?

In detail, describe the last time your faith was severely challenged?

To what extent does your life reflect the qualities of an elder who is above reproach? Referencing 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, which character qualifications are still in need of the most maturation? Please explain:

THEOLOGICAL CLARITY

Who are your greatest influences theologically?

Outside the Bible, what books have profoundly shaped your theology?

Title: _____ Author: _____

Impact: _____

Title: _____ Author: _____

Impact: _____

What teachers/mentors/leaders have most influenced your walk with God and thinking about ministry?

What existing churches do you most admire and why?

How would you characterize your theological views (i.e., Baptist, Reformed, Charismatic)? Explain your answer.

What are your beliefs regarding a person being saved "by grace through faith"? Are "works" part of this process?

Do you hold the church leadership model of Jesus as the Head of the Church, male elders/pastors as earthly authority for the local church, and to church membership/partnership being only for a regenerate person? Explain:

Describe how you are currently learning and growing in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

DOCTRINAL CLARITY

God

What is your understanding of the Trinity?

Jesus

Describe who Jesus is, what He accomplished on the cross, and His mission.

The Holy Spirit

What is the your understanding of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit?

What is your position on speaking in tongues, prophecy and divine healing?

What is the role of the Holy Spirit today?

Humanity

Describe the doctrine of man

The Bible

Describe your understanding of the Bible's inspiration, purpose, and authority.

The Church

Define the Church. (What is the Church from a biblical perspective?)

Describe your philosophy on church polity/government. (cite biblical support)

What is the role of women in the church?

How is spiritual growth accomplished through the local church?

What is your view of baptism? (cite biblical support)

Salvation

What is salvation and how does a person receive it?

What is the role of God in salvation? What is the role of man in salvation?

The Gospel

What is the Gospel?

What led to that becoming real in your own life?

List your theological distinctives or “non-negotiables” - beliefs that would describe your ideal church and congregational identity?

What is the difference between primary and secondary doctrines?

PASTORAL THEOLOGY

Please cite Scriptural support for each answer.

A believer comes to you and says he wants to divorce his wife. How would you counsel this individual?

A couple asks your pastor to perform their wedding ceremony and you discover they are living together. How would you counsel the couple and pastor?

It has been brought to your attention that one of your congregants is in the middle of an adulterous relationship. What action would you take?

A man who is involved with homosexual activity sets up an appointment with you to discuss how his sexuality isn't at odds with his faith. How would you counsel this man?

What would you do if it was revealed to you that a couple in your congregation was openly criticizing your leadership?

MARRIAGE & FAMILY LIFE

Provide a brief narrative of your marital history.

Have you and your wife always been faithful to each other? Y I N
* If no, has there been gospel-centered forgiveness and reconciliation?

Explain: _____

Describe a difficult situation you faced as a family. How was it resolved?

How do you function on a regular basis as the head of your home?

What does discipleship look like within your home?

Describe the marital conversation(s) involving being assessed for eldership.

Confidentiality is required of an elder. Are you able to keep *sensitive* information from your wife, the rest of your family, and friends? Y I N

What challenges do you anticipate regarding confidentiality of church matters within your marriage so to avoid gossip?

Eldership requires sacrificial time and energy. Does your family have the margin to faithfully commit to this role within the church?

Are there other details about your marriage and family you need to share?

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

What are healthy qualities of the Christian friendships in your life?

How do you take the initiative in meeting new people in your neighborhood, at work, and in the church? To the best of your ability, describe your reputation.

Describe a few of your current friendships. What makes these strong?

Tell of some difficult relationships. How did you deal with these situations?

How have you developed teamwork in the past?

What strengths and struggles have you faced working with a team?

How do you go out of your way to make guests feel welcome at church?

LEADERSHIP ABILITY

Provide two examples of someone in whom you recognized leadership potential. How did you equip, encourage, and develop them?

How have you led others to be leaders in their home, work, or community?

Describe any formal or informal leadership training you have received.

Do you have experience in formally training others?

Tell of a time when you as a leader felt like you were doing the right thing, but significant people were against you. How did you deal with the adversity?

How should your identity in Christ be applied to the above situation?

EMOTIONAL HEALTH & STABILITY

Which best describes the norm of your home: "we live on top of the mountain", "life is rather mundane", or "we live the valley"? Explain your answer.

Give 4 adjectives others have used to describe you and your wife:

You: _____, _____, _____, _____

Your wife: _____, _____, _____, _____

* Do you agree with these attributes? Y I N

**Why? _____

Describe the most difficult experience you've experienced as an adult?

Have you ever received professional counseling? If so, please explain:

MISSIONAL LIFESTYLE

Describe the ways you have engaged non-Christians in relationship and conversation in the last 3-6 months. What was/is the fruit of these relationships?

What things have you done to engage your un-churched neighbors?

Tell of how you've trained or led other Christians toward a missional lifestyle.

Describe a time when someone you know responded to the gospel as a result of your witness.

DISCIPLE-MAKING SKILLS

Describe some examples of how you have helped new believers grow into maturing followers of Christ.

How did you respond to their successes and set-backs?

What processes or systems have you used in making disciples?

As a follower of Jesus, describe a time when you failed to obey? How has this impacted your discipleship of others?

FINANCIAL PHILOSOPHY

What financial convictions have guided your life since becoming a Christian?

What are your beliefs about debt (as an individual and as a church)?

What percentage of gross household income do you annually give away (to church, charities, and mission work)? Please explain:

Other than a mortgage, do you currently have debt? Briefly explain:

What advice would you give a new believer regarding financial stewardship?

PERSONAL & SENSITIVE QUESTIONNAIRE h

Have you or your wife ever been arrested for, charged, or convicted of a criminal offense? Y I N

If so, indicate dates and please explain:

Have you or your wife ever been physically or verbally abusive to each other (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)? Y I N

If so, indicate dates and please explain:

Do you or have you or your wife ever used illegal or narcotic drugs (including use of prescription medication)? Y I N

If so, indicate dates and please explain:

Have you or your wife ever been involved in Eastern Religions or occult activities (i.e. - tarot cards, Ouija boards, witchcraft, Wicca, New Age, etc)? Y I N

If so, indicate dates and please explain:

Have you or your wife ever been a victim of abuse, molestation, or rape? Y I N

If so, indicate dates and please explain:

To what extent have you or your wife been involved in gambling activities (card games, sporting events, casinos, recreational activities, etc)?

Do you or your wife (or have you and your wife) ever drink to the point of drunkenness (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)? Y I N

If so, please explain:

Have you or your wife ever been arrested for, charged, or convicted of a criminal offense? Y I N

If so, indicate dates and please explain:

Sexual Abuse:

1. Have you or your wife ever abused anyone? Y I N
2. Have you or your wife ever been sexually involved with a minor while you were legally considered an adult? Y I N

3. Have you been caused of or participated in any form of sexual harassment?
Y I N

If "yes" to any of these 3 questions, please explain:

To what extent have you been involved with pornography, including cable channels, soft-core porn (i.e. - HBO, Showtime, Cinemax, etc.)? When was the last time (if any) you purposely looked at pornography?

Do you use any Internet protection software? If so, who gets the results?

Have you or your wife ever had same-sex desires and/or same-sex experience?

Are you now, or have you or your wife ever been under a physician's care for mental or emotional treatment and/or met with a counselor for anything?

Have you or your wife ever participated in a 12-step program or any other type of recovery program for addiction or codependency issues? If so, explain:

If any of these areas in this entire section are unresolved at this time, are you open to get help with resolution?

Is there anything else in your personal life (past or present) that would potentially disqualify you or is not "above reproach" in serving as an elder of Christ's Church (1 Timothy 3; Titus 1)? If so, please explain:

Have you told the truth about all of the above questions? Y I N

My wife and I hereby certify that all of the information submitted in connection with this section is true and correct.

Your Signature: _____ Date: _____

Your Wife's Signature: _____ Date: _____

MISC.

Have you read and do you affirm the the beliefs, mission, and vision of the Acts 29 Network? Y I N

Have you read and do you affirm the beliefs, mission, and vision of Advance Community Church? Y I N

Are you fully committed to leading by example in the local church:

- with your time? Y I N (You will prioritize corporate worship.)
- with your talents? Y I N (You will actively serve.)
- with your treasure? Y I N (You will consistently give.)
- with your attitude? Y I N (You will model maturity in Christ.)

Knowing that this assessment and eldership process is a thorough journey, are you committed to being patient and teachable? Y I N

If confirmed and installed as an elder, will you commit to respecting the other elders in maturity and humility (even when you don't agree with them)? Y I N

If confirmed and installed as an elder, will you guard and protect the pastor and his family against various attacks within and outside the church? Y I N

* This does not mean you are a "yes man". It simply means you will honor and esteem the pastoral position of Advance Community Church.

If confirmed and installed as an elder, will you speak your mind in grace and truth within the church and community? Y I N

If confirmed and installed as an elder, will you pursue theological unity and support to the other elders? Y I N

If confirmed and installed as an elder, will you pursue missiological unity and support to the other elders? Y I N

If confirmed and installed as an elder, will you bring relational unity and support to the other elders? Y I N

If confirmed and installed as an elder:

- will you get to KNOW the church? Y I N
- will you FEED the church? Y I N
- will you LEAD the church? Y I N
- will you PROTECT the church? Y I N

Do you have any comments and/or concerns regarding your assessment?

Is there anything else the elders and Acts 29 should know about you?

NEXT STEPS:

After this assessment is reviewed, you will have the opportunity to meet with the elders. This will be to gain better understanding of answers you provided in this assessment and to ask questions of the elders. The follow-up meeting may, or may not, include your wife.

This assessment is not a “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” tool. Rather, it will be used to best equip you for leadership within the church. Therefore, expect there to be “conditions” given to you in order to firm up areas of weakness or inexperience. Although conditions may seem negative, they are actually a positive step for your growth as a Christian.

Expect the process to be slow. By design, Acts 29 supports a slower pace for the betterment of the potential elder and the church.

The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife,[b] sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. - 1 Timothy 3:1-7

Thank you for working through and submitting this assessment. We will be praying for God’s will and would ask for you to do the same.