
Missio Dei Church

Missional Elder
Candidates

Paul Vroom, Lead Pastor



Tuesday, March 03, 2009

Peace Community Church
130 South Route 45
Frankfort, IL 60423

Attention: Elders of Peace Community Church

Elders of Peace Community Church,

For the past two years, Missio Dei Church has been voraciously pursuing a mission “*to be a church with passionate faith in Jesus Christ that sacrificially loves, serves those in need, and draws people into an ever-deepening relationship with God.*”

To help the church in her mission, I have been intentionally slow in the process of identifying, training and ordaining elders as I want to make sure that we have the right men, in the right places, for the right reasons, with the right training all for the glory of God. These elders need to lead the church, teach and preach the Word, protect the church from false teachers, exhort and admonish the saint with sound doctrine, visit the sick and pray, and judge doctrinal issues. (Strauch 16) This document, although lengthy, is provided to you so that you may see the faithful due diligence towards that end.

On Wednesday, April 1, three young men will indicate to me after eight months of discernment and training as to whether or not they would like to continue on in pursuing ordination as an elder for Missio Dei Church. As parent church elders, I am humbly asking that the elders of Peace Community interview each candidate and make a formal recommendation as to whether or not the candidate meets the qualifications as stated in Scripture and the Book of Church Order (1.I.1. Section 8).

If you have any questions about Missio Dei Church or what is found in this document, please contact me directly.

Because of the Cross,



Paul Vroom
Lead Pastor

“If anyone aspires to the office of oversee, they desire a noble task.” – 1Timothy 3:1

Missio Dei Elder Considerations

The office of pastor/elder is the highest calling in the New Testament church and requires the best men under the controlling power of the Holy Spirit for the direction of God's people into His purposes for His glory. At Missio Dei Church we take seriously the requirements for and the expectations of the office and consider anyone desiring the office to approach it with much somber judgment and cautious consideration.

At least one way for a man to attain the role of elder/pastor was to aspire to it. In fact, since it is the duty of elders to do their work with gladness and not under constraint or for love of money (1 Peter 5:1-3), this should be thought of as one of the elders' qualifications. This need not exclude the possibility that a man may be sought out and urged to become an elder. But no pressure should be used that would result in an unwilling, half-hearted service.

Potential Elder Candidates would first need to aspire to the office of overseer (elder) and offer themselves for the office (1 Timothy 3:1), and if accepted as a candidate would undergo nine months of rigorous preparation and discernment as they and their family (if applicable) are tested and approved by the demands of the Scriptures (1 Timothy 5:22).

If an elder candidate passes the testing and training period he will be brought before the church body and introduced. The church will have a few weeks to ask him any questions and raise any concerns to the lead pastor. After that, if the members of the church have no reason to seek their disqualification, they would be accepted into the office of pastor/elder by ordination. In holding that office we would expect them to shepherd at Missio Dei Church for the remainder of their life unless God were to clearly call them about for His purposes elsewhere.

Therefore, for the potential candidates' and church's benefit, we would like to be clear in what we are seeking in a potential pastor/elder:

1. We want men of outstanding character and evident love for God.
2. We want men whose wives demonstrate maturity and wisdom.
3. We want men who are Christ-like heads of their homes.
4. We want men who have proven themselves loyal, mature, theologically astute, teachable, generous with his service of others, and generous with his financial giving to even be considered.
5. We want men who have an evident calling and exemplary gifting.
6. We want men who functionally fit in ministry philosophy, personal style, and relational connection with the lead pastor and any other potential elders.
7. We want men who can teach well and refute error with courage.
8. We want men who can discipline with strength and shepherd with tenderness.
9. We want men who have a heart for people both lost and found.

10. We want men who God has already raised up to lead His people as evidenced by people following him as he follows Christ.
11. We want men who are responsible, hard working, and self-governing.
12. We want men who the other pastors/elders see as a peer.
13. We want men who intend to occupy their office in the church for the duration of their lives unless God would call him out for the purposes of the Gospel elsewhere.

Elder Ordination Timeline:

Elder Interviews

After prayer and fasting, MDC Elder Candidates will indicate to Paul Vroom on Wednesday, April 1, whether or not they still are aspiring to the office of Elder. If they are still aspiring to the office, they will be presented to the elders of Peace Community Church for interviews. Following the interview, Paul will need to be notified as to whether or not the Elder Candidate is qualified for the office of Elder for Missio Dei Church.

Elder Candidate Introduction (May 3, 2009)

Introduction of MDC Elder Candidates to the congregation and preaching on Eldership: For three weeks people will be encouraged to be in prayer about whether they are qualified for the office of Elder. If there are unresolved issues that the congregation has with the Candidates, they will be encouraged to use the biblical principles of confrontation. If it cannot be resolved, Paul Vroom will be brought into the matter. This is very important as members will need to willingly put themselves under the authority of the Elders.

Elder Candidate Public Oral Examination (May 24, 2009)

During our worship service on May 24, our elder candidates will be given an oral examination at which would be expected to defend their theology and philosophy of ministry to the church. If the regular "members" of the church have no additional reasons to seek their disqualification, the candidates will be accepted into the office of pastor/elder.

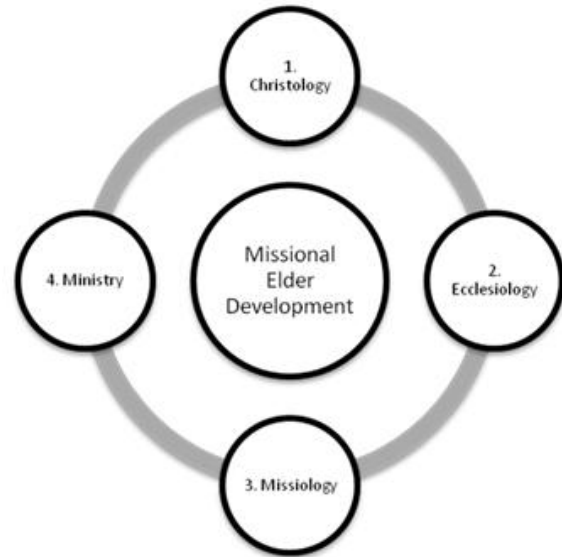
Elder Ordination (June 7, 2009)

Ordination of first (charter) MDC Elders.

Missional Elder Development Matrix

Since we didn't start off with elders from the parent church, one of the questions that we have been struggling through is, "How you identify your initial/founding elders with out a formal membership?" I have some very high convictions about the office of elder/pastor as you can see below (*Missio Dei Elder Considerations*), so want to make sure that Missio Dei has the right people, with the right training, in the right place, for the right reasons. Because of these convictions, I have created a Missional Elder Development Training course for the three elder candidates that we have.

The training framework I have used in our Missional Elder Development Training. The framework came from the Acts 29 Boot Camp that I attended in 2006 and from the book Confessions of a Reformation Rev: Hard Lessons from an Emerging Missional Church by Mark Driscoll.



Christology:

Our Christology is really the starting point for everything. This really is the centerpiece of it all.

Who is Jesus, what has he accomplished and what has he sent us to do? In this section we will be looking at what really is this Gospel? What is propitiation? What is Gospel-repentance? What is my Gospel-story? What does it look like to have a biblical (reformed) worldview? What does it mean to be reformed?

Projects: Writing out their Gospel Story. Take-home examinations on the Doctrines of Grace and Christian Worldview.

Texts used: Centrality of the Gospel by Tim Keller (article), Holiness by Grace by Bryan Chapell, Putting Amazing Back into Grace by Michael Horton, In My Place Condemned He Stood by J.I. Packer and Mark Dever, What is the Christian Worldview by Phillip Graham Ryken, Bible Doctrine by Wayne Grudem, as well as Reformed confessions and creeds.

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Ecclesiology:

How does the Bible tell us to structure our church leadership so that our church can most effectively be God’s missionary to our culture? We will be defining what biblical eldership is by going in back to the only God-given, authoritative source of authentic Christianity, text of the Holy Scripture.

Projects: Take-home examination on Biblical Eldership

Texts used: Biblical Eldership by Alexander Strauch, Bible Doctrine by Wayne Grudem, as well as Reformed confessions and creeds.

Missiology:

We are entrusted with the gospel and are motivated by it to share its hope-filled message with others. A church on mission primarily understands the centrality of the gospel. John Piper in *Let The Nations be Glad* (p. 17) said, “Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn’t. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity, but worship abides forever.” With a proper understanding of why we are on mission we can answer the question, How can we most effectively expand God’s Kingdom where we are sent?

Texts used: *Total Church* by Tim Chester and Steve Timmis, *Let the Nations be Glad* by John Piper, *Bible Doctrine* by Wayne Grudem, as well as Reformed confessions and creeds.

Ministry:

How does Jesus want me to help serve his mission our culture through our church?

Projects: The candidate must write out a self-analysis of their gifts and passions and how they will be used as an elder.

Texts used: We will be using Assess Me which is a three-fold assessment (ePersonlity (Personality Test), Grace Gifts (Spiritual Gifts Test) and Leadership Style (Team Building Test), *Bible Doctrine* by Wayne Grudem, as well as Reformed confessions and creeds.