

UNDERSTANDING ELDERSHIP AT THE SUMMIT

Lay Elders



How God Shepherds a Growing Church

A Guide for the Congregation

The Summit Church

Why Elders? Why Now?

The Summit has grown into a church of more than four hundred. That is a gift — and it raises an honest question: how does a church this size make sure every person is truly known and cared for? One or two pastors, however devoted, cannot personally watch over the soul of everyone in a congregation this large.

God's answer, woven all through the New Testament, is a team of shepherds. Adding elders is not a change in who we are or a shift in who is in charge. It is our church maturing into the very structure God designed for a healthy, growing body. We are not importing a corporate board. We are catching up to our own size.

Who Are Elders?

In the New Testament, three words describe the same role:

- **Elder** — a person of tested spiritual maturity.
- **Overseer** — one entrusted with watching over the church's health.
- **Shepherd (pastor)** — one who knows, feeds, and protects the flock.

Scripture uses these words interchangeably for the same people (Acts 20:17, 28). An elder is not a manager or a board member — he is a shepherd. And the Bible's standard for an elder is character, not resume: a man above reproach, faithful, self-controlled, gentle, able to teach, and respected for the way he lives (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9).

What Do Elders Do?

The work of an elder runs in five lanes:

1. **Shepherd** — knowing and caring for the people of the church
2. **Word** — teaching Scripture and guarding sound doctrine
3. **Prayer** — praying faithfully for the church and its people
4. **Lead** — offering wise, biblical direction and counsel
5. **Model** — living a life of integrity worth imitating

How Elders Fit into Our Leadership

The Summit is **Staff Led, Team Guided, Congregation Gifted**. Here is how that fits together under the headship of Christ:

Staff Led. Our pastors and ministry staff lead the church day to day — the preaching, the programs, the operations, the staffing. That does not change.

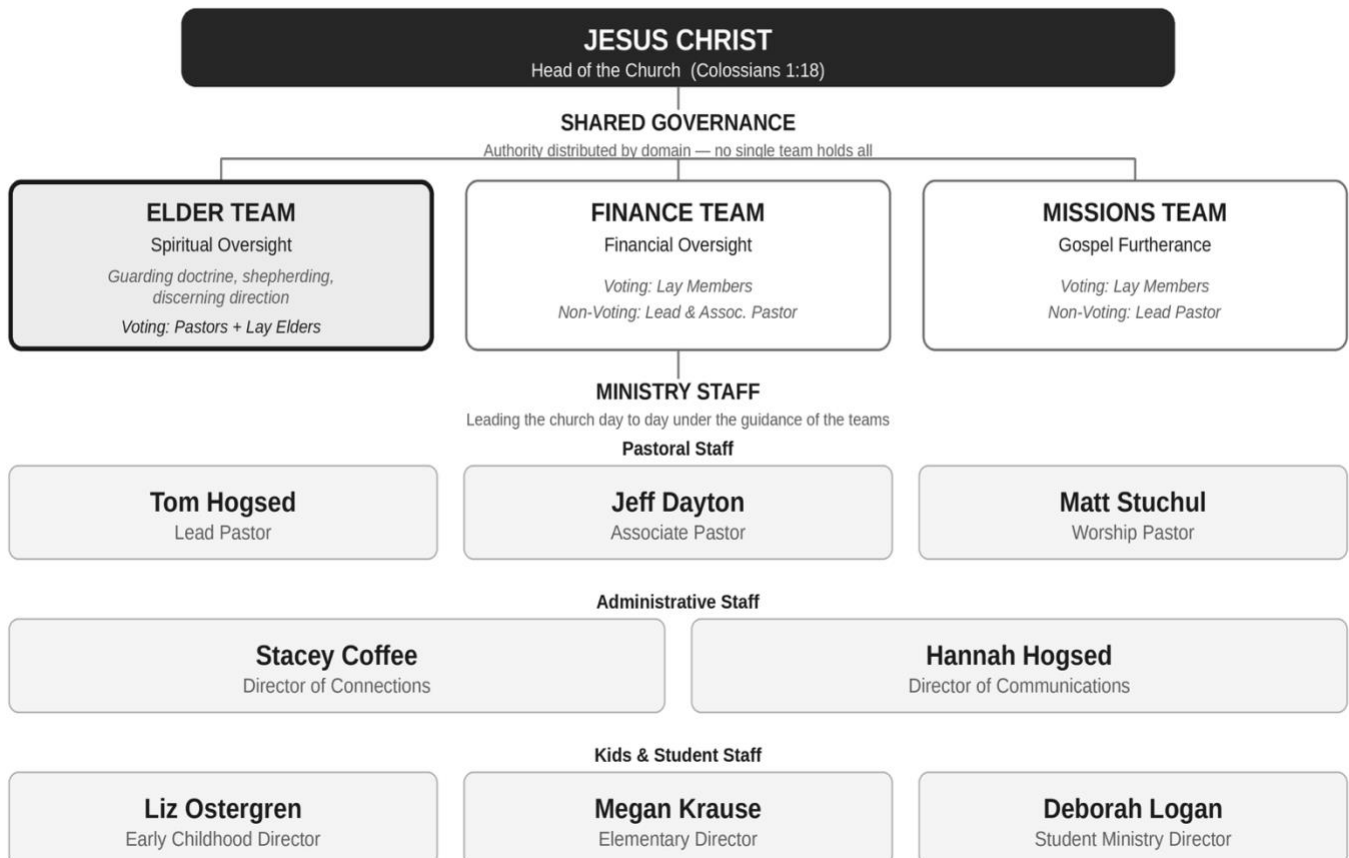
Team Guided. Under Christ, authority is shared across teams by domain, so no single group holds it all. The **Elder Team** carries spiritual oversight, the **Finance Team** carries financial oversight, and the **Missions Team** carries our gospel work beyond these walls. The Elder Team — our ordained pastors together with our lay elders — guards our doctrine, helps discern our direction, and shepherds the body. Because our pastors serve on this team, the people who lead are guided by the same team they belong to, joined by lay elders who bring added wisdom, shepherding, and protection.

Congregation Gifted. Every member is a minister — serving with their gifts, giving generously, and affirming the direction God sets through the church's leaders.

One thing worth saying plainly: this is not a power shift. It is added care and added protection — for the church, and for the pastors who have carried much on their own.

The Summit Church · Leadership Structure

Staff Led · Team Guided · Congregation Gifted



MEET THE ELDERS

Our Elder Team is made up of two pastoral elders (ordained staff) and five lay elders called from our own congregation.

PASTORAL ELDERS

Tom Hogsed (Lead Pastor)

Jeff Dayton (Associate Pastor)

LAY ELDERS

Tom Boosz

Scott Nofer

Nolan Oakes (Ordained and Preaching Elder)

Ace Sucaldito

Charlie Wilson

YOUR PART

Shepherds need a flock that walks with them. Scripture asks something of the whole church in return (Hebrews 13:7, 17):

- Pray for them - they are watching over your souls
- Know them - go to them with your burdens, questions, and joys
- Follow their lead - receive their care and counsel with an open heart
- Lighten their load - let their work be a joy and not a burden