

THE ELDER AS SERVANT

MICHIGAN DISTRICT LCMS

WEBINAR FOR THE BOARD OF ELDERS

FEBRUARY 20, 2013

I. LIFE AS AN ELDER – ELDERS SERVING GOD

A. Five typical functions of elders:

1. Provide *leadership*
2. Show *wisdom* in stressful situations
3. Provide *evaluation* and *encouragement* for the pastor(s)
4. *Visitation* of members
5. Initiate programs of *spiritual* growth

B. Elder considerations:

1. Provide *leadership*
2. Filled with the *Holy Spirit*
3. Strong spiritual *influence*
4. *Always* “in the Word”
5. *Asked* , not volunteer
6. Basic *enthusiasm*
7. Concern for *quality* of ministry
8. *Clear* ministry *descriptions*
9. Grasp of *imputed* worthiness

II. ELDER / PASTOR / STAFF RELATIONSHIPS – ELDERS SERVING PASTOR

A. Help the man

1. Be a **confidant**
2. Be a **support** for personal / family needs
 - a. Develop a **caring** relationship
 - b. Develop a **trusting** relationship
 - c. Develop personnel **policies** (vacation, days off, etc.)
 - d. Develop **salary** guidelines
 - e. **Pray daily** for pastor and family

B. Help the leader

1. Support the **ministry**
2. Communicate ministry to **congregation**
3. Communicate **successes** and **obstacles**
4. Welcome and encourage **diversity** but **commit** to unity and purpose
 - a. Test with **Scripture**
 - b. Inform and invite **participation**
 - c. Be faithful with **information**
 - d. **Publicly** support pastor

C. Help the preacher

1. Test with **Scripture**
2. Test for proper **Law/Gospel** balance
 - a. **Know** and be **faithful** to Scripture
 - b. **Know** and be **faithful** to Lutheran doctrine (Confessions)

D. Help the congregation

1. Meet **regularly** to carry out responsibilities
2. Share **evaluations** of goals and expectations
3. **Train** regularly for better service
4. Be an **ambassador**
5. Serve **alongside** pastor as appropriate

III. ELDER SPIRITUAL CARE – ELDERS SERVING CONGREGATION

A. The elder as a man of **prayer**:

1. Matthew 6:5-14
 - a. Not outward **piety** (v. 5)
 - b. Not validated by specific **words** (v. 7)
 - c. No lack of **information** (v. 8)
 - d. Mark of a **mature** disciple (v. 9)
 - e. **Corporate** needs in mind (v. 9)
 - f. **God** -centered (v. 9)
 - g. **Submits** to God's will (v. 10)
 - h. **Spiritual** focus (v. 11)
 - i. **Forgiving** attitude (v. 12)
 - j. Combat the **satanic** (v. 13)

2. Factors impacting prayer:

- a. **Boldness** (Hebrews 4:14-16)
- b. **Familial** language (Galatians 4:6)
- c. **Authentic** (Psalm 27:8)
- d. Blocked by **unrepented** sin (Psalm 66:18)
- e. **Faith** -driven (Matthew 21:22)
- f. **Rooted** in Christ and the Word (John 15:7)
- g. Ask in **Jesus'** name (John 16:24)
- h. **Submissive** to God's will (1 John 5:14-15)
- i. Brings **glory** to God (John 14:13)
- j. **Confident** in God's power (James 5:16)

B. Elders serve

1. As an **example**

- a. **Faithful** in worship
- b. **Frequently** at the Lord's Table
- c. **Diligent** in Bible study
 - i. Personal
 - ii. Group
- d. **Servant** -leader
- e. **Within** the priesthood of all believers
- f. With **humility**
- g. As **requested**
- h. In **prayer**
- i. In **person**

- j. In **worship**
 - i. Don't “ **lord** it over them”
 - ii. Provide **personal** care
 - iii. Be aware of **needs** and situations
 - iv. Share **resources**
 - v. **Both** active and inactive