



ELDERSHIP

GOVERNANCE POLICIES

UPDATED 11/1/2011

Raintree Christian Church Governance Policies

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DESIRED RESULTS POLICIES

1.0 Desired Results Policy

Our success as a church is defined by Jesus Christ. Following his admonition in Matthew 28:19-20, we strive to make disciples (followers of Christ). Followers of Christ are grace-dependent and motivated by gratitude to *think* and *act* like Jesus Christ.

1.1 Statement of Faith

A disciple's *thoughts* are shaped by the following truths found in scripture and reinforced by Jesus' teachings.

1.1.1 GOD--There is one God existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13:14). He is the Creator of all things (Genesis 1:1). He is everywhere present (Jeremiah 23:23-34); He is just (Genesis 18:25); loving (1 John 4:8, 16); and full of grace (Ephesians 2:4-5). We have a relationship with Him only through Jesus Christ (John 14:6).



1.1.2 JESUS--Jesus Christ is fully human and fully divine (Philippians 2:5-8) existing eternally, fully equal with the Father (John 1:1,2). With the help of the Holy Spirit, He was born of a virgin, Mary (Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:34-35). He has proven Himself to be the Son of God by His deeds, fulfillment of prophecy, crucifixion and bodily resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

1.1.3 THE HOLY SPIRIT--The Holy Spirit is a divine person existing eternally with the Father (John 15:25). He convicts of sin, righteousness and the judgment to come (John 16:8-11). Every believer is equipped with a gift or gifts by the Holy Spirit for ministry (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:7-16).

1.1.4 THE BIBLE--The Old and New Testament Scriptures are inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16-17) and without error in their original manuscripts (Matthew 1:18). They contain a complete revelation of His will for salvation of man and constitute the divine and only rule of faith and practice (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

1.1.5 HUMANITY--God created human beings in His image for the purpose of living in an intimate relationship with Him. Through our sin, though, we are separated from an intimate relationship with God. (Acts 17:24-28, Isaiah 59:1-2)

1.1.6 SALVATION--God sent His son, Jesus Christ, to offer his righteous life as payment for our sin. Salvation is a free gift of God received through faith and expressed through confession, repentance, and baptism by immersion (1 Corinthians 15:1-8, Romans 1:16-17; 6:23, Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 10:9, John 3:16, Acts 2:38). Those who are trusting Jesus in this way can have assurance of Salvation (1 John 5:13).

1.1.7 TRANSFORMATION--God not only wants to save us, He wants to transform us into the image of His Son. Transformation is initiated by salvation, sustained by God's grace, and gathers momentum as our will is brought in ever-increasing alignment with God's will. (Philippians 2:12, Romans 12:1-2)

1.1.8 THE CHRISTIAN LIFE--The Christian Life by its very nature is to be distinct from the world (Ephesians 4:22-24). Because of this, each believer is set apart (sanctified) by God for His purposes (Romans 6:22). The process of sanctification is carried out through prayer, the Word, witnessing, and fellowship (Acts 2:42; Colossians 3:16; Acts 1:8). Each believer has been given a spiritual gift or gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-



6; Ephesians 4:7-8) to be used in serving others (1 Corinthians 12:7).

1.1.9 **THE CHURCH**--The church is the body of Christ on earth, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to reach those separated from God and mature those who have been restored to God through Christ. (Ephesians 4:1-16) We believe that Christ is the Head of His Church, and therefore, in a cosmic sense, every Christian is a part of His church. However, we also believe God expects believers to be committed to a local body of believers because He knew we would only achieve our potential as disciples with the help of others (Hebrews 10:23-35).

1.1.10 **THE LORD'S SUPPER (Communion)**--The Lord's Supper was instituted by the Lord and delivered to the Apostles (Matthew 26:26-29) and is to be observed by believers in remembrance of Him as often as we come together (1 Corinthians 11:24-25). The Raintree family shares communion every Sunday.

1.1.11 **ETERNITY**--Christ will one day return, final judgment will be rendered, the image of God will be completely restored within us, and we will reign with Christ forever. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, 1 John 3:2). The coming of Christ for His Church can occur at any time. Scripture teaches that Jesus will descend from Heaven (Acts 1:11); that all Christians, dead and alive, will be raised to eternal life (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18); and all non-believers will be judged or condemned to eternal punishment and separated from God for eternity (Matthew 25:31-45; Revelation 20; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

1.2 **Spiritual Formation**

Disciples of Christ are known for their beliefs as well as their *actions*. Our works are never the condition for our salvation but always the result of our salvation. (Eph. 2:8-9) Motivated by gratitude, and partnering with the Holy Spirit disciples devote their lives to being shaped or formed in the image of Jesus Christ. The process of spiritual formation at Raintree Christian Church will include (but is not limited to) the following:

1.2.1 **Appreciation of God through worship.** Disciples will be encouraged to worship corporately with other believers at least once each week.

1.2.2 **Belonging with others through community.** Disciples will have opportunity to participate in smaller groups such as Bible classes, small groups, or transformation groups.



1.2.3 Contribution to others through sacrifice. Disciples will be encouraged to sacrifice their time, talent, and treasure in the name of blessing and ministering to others both within the body of Christ and outside the body of Christ.

1.2.4 Duplication of disciples through leadership. Healthy disciples reproduce. They make new disciples by sharing the good news about Jesus, baptizing those who believe, and teaching/equipping them to live think and act like Jesus.





OPERATIONAL LIMITATIONS POLICIES

2.0 Operational Limitation Policy

The Senior Minister shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance that is unbiblical, unlawful, or contrary to the Raintree mission, vision and values.

2.1 Treatment of Church Members

With respect to interactions with church members or prospective church members, the Senior Minister shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions that are unsafe, undignified, unnecessarily intrusive, or that fail to provide appropriate expectations between Raintree and its members.

Accordingly the Senior Minister shall not:

2.1.1 Use methods of collecting, reviewing, transmitting, or storing member information that fail to protect against improper access to the material elicited.

2.1.2 Fail to establish with members and prospective members a clear understanding of what may be expected and what may not be expected from the church.

2.1.3 Fail to establish with members and prospective members a clear understanding of what is expected of members of the church.

2.2 Treatment of Staff

With respect to the treatment of paid or volunteer staff, the Senior Minister may not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions that are unsafe, unfair or undignified, or that fail to provide appropriate confidentiality or privacy.

Accordingly the Senior Minister shall not:

2.2.1 Operate without written personnel policies that clarify personnel rules for staff, provide for effective handling of grievances, and protect against wrongful conditions of nepotism and grossly preferential treatment for personal reasons.

2.2.2 Prevent staff from grieving to the Eldership when (1) internal grievance procedures have been exhausted and (2) the employee alleges either that (a) Eldership policy has been violated or (b) Eldership policy does not adequately protect his or her human rights.

2.2.3 Fail to acquaint staff with their rights under this policy.

2.2.4 Fail to document all performance reviews and performance counseling related to unmet expectations that could potentially result in termination.

2.3 Financial Planning and Budgeting

Financial planning for any fiscal year or the remaining part of any fiscal year shall not deviate materially from priorities established by a reasonable interpretation of the Elder's Desired Outcomes Policies; risk fiscal jeopardy.

Accordingly the Senior Minister shall not allow budgeting that:

2.3.1 Contains too little information to enable credible projection of revenues and expenses, cash flow, and disclosure of planning assumptions.

2.3.2 Plans the expenditure in any fiscal year of more funds than are conservatively projected to be received in that period unless explicitly authorized by the Elders.

2.3.3 Allows cash to drop below a safety reserve of less than two months operating budget at any time unless explicitly authorized by the Eldership.



2.4 Financial Conditions and Activities

With respect to the actual, ongoing financial conditions and activities, the Senior Minister shall not cause or allow the development of fiscal jeopardy or a material deviation of actual expenditures from Eldership priorities established in the Desired Outcomes policies.

Accordingly the Senior Minister shall not:

2.4.1 Expend more funds than is projected to be received in the fiscal year to date.

2.4.2 Fail to settle payroll and debts in a timely manner.

2.4.3 Allow tax payments or other government-ordered payments or filings to be overdue or inaccurately filed.

2.4.4 Purchase or dispose of real property.

2.4.5 Fail to aggressively pursue receivables after a reasonable grace period.

2.4.6 Provide benevolence support to a single family unit in a calendar year of more than 10% of the entire benevolence budget.

2.5 Asset Protection

The Senior Minister shall not allow the assets of the church to be unprotected, inadequately maintained, or unnecessarily risked.

Accordingly the Senior Minister shall not:

2.5.1 Fail to insure against theft and casualty losses to at least 80 percent of replacement value and against liability losses to elders, staff, and the church itself in an amount greater than the average for comparable churches.

2.5.2 Subject plant and equipment to improper wear and tear or insufficient maintenance.

2.5.3 Unnecessarily expose the church, its Eldership, or staff to claims of liability.



2.5.4 Make any purchase (1) wherein normally prudent protection has not been given against conflict of interest; (2) of over \$5,000 without having obtained comparative prices and quality.

2.5.5 Fail to protect information, and files from loss or significant damage.

2.5.6 Receive, process, or disburse funds under controls that are insufficient to meet the Eldership-approved auditor's standards.

2.5.7 Invest or hold operating capital in insecure instruments, including uninsured checking accounts and bonds of less than AA rating, or in non-interest-bearing accounts except where necessary to facilitate ease in operational transactions.

2.5.8 Reduce the pension commitment to the Carmans.

2.5.9 Endanger the church's public image or credibility, particularly in ways that would hinder its accomplishment of desired results policies.

2.6 Compensation and Benefits

With respect to employment, compensation, and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers, and volunteers, the Senior Minister shall not cause or allow jeopardy to fiscal integrity or public image.

Accordingly the Senior Minister shall not:

2.6.1 Change his own compensation and benefits.

2.6.2 Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.

2.6.3 Establish current compensation and benefits that deviate materially from the geographic or professional market for the skills employed as determined by the National Association of Church Business Administrators compensation database.



2.7 Communication and Support to the Elders

The Senior Minister shall not permit the Elders to be uninformed or unsupported in their work.

Accordingly the Senior Minister shall not:

2.7.1 Neglect to submit monitoring data required by the Eldership (see policy on Monitoring Senior Minister Performance) in a timely, accurate, and understandable fashion, directly addressing provisions of Eldership policies being monitored.

2.7.2 Let the Eldership be unaware of relevant trends, anticipated adverse media coverage, material external and internal changes, particularly changes in the assumptions upon which any Eldership policy has previously been established.

2.7.3 Fail to advise the Eldership if, in the Senior Minister's opinion, the Eldership is not in compliance with its own policies on Governance Process and/or delegation policies, particularly in the case of Eldership behavior that is detrimental to the work relationship between the Eldership and the Senior Minister.

2.7.4 Present information in unnecessarily complex or lengthy form or in a form that fails to differentiate among information of two types: monitoring, and other data used for decision preparation for example.

2.7.5 Fail to deal with the Eldership as a whole in official elder matters, unless the Elders have authorized an individual or committee to do so.

2.7.6 Fail to report in a timely manner an actual or anticipated non-compliance with any policy of the Eldership.

2.8 Emergency Senior Minister Succession

In order to protect the church from sudden loss of Senior Minister services, the Senior Minister may have no fewer than one other minister familiar with Elders and Senior Minister issues and processes.





ELDER'S DELEGATION POLICIES

3.0 Delegation Policy

The board's sole official connection to the paid and unpaid staff, its achievement, and conduct will be through the Senior Minister.

3.1 Unity of Control

Only decisions of the board of elders acting as a body are binding on the Senior Minister.

Accordingly:

3.1.1 Decisions or instructions of individual elders or committees are not binding on the Senior Minister except in rare instances when the board has specifically authorized such exercise of authority.

3.1.2 In the case of elders or committees requesting information or assistance without board authorization, the Senior Minister can refuse such requests that require, in the Senior Minister's opinion, a material amount of staff time or funds, or are disruptive.

3.2 Accountability of the Senior Minister

The Senior Minister is the board's only link to paid and unpaid staff

achievement and conduct, so that all authority and accountability of staff, as far as the board of elders is concerned, is considered the authority and accountability of the Senior Minister.

Accordingly:

3.2.1 The board will refrain from giving instructions to persons who report directly or indirectly to the Senior Minister.

3.2.2 The board will refrain from formally evaluating any staff other than the Senior Minister.

3.2.3 The board will view Senior Minister performance as identical to staff performance, so that staff accomplishment of elder-stated results and avoidance of board-proscribed means will be viewed as successful Senior Minister performance.

3.3 Delegation to the Senior Minister

The board will instruct the Senior Minister through written policies that prescribe the Desired Results to be achieved and describe the situations and actions to be avoided, allowing the Senior Minister to use a reasonable interpretation of these policies.

Accordingly

3.3.1 The board will develop policies instructing the Senior Minister to achieve certain results. These policies will be developed systematically from the broadest, most general level to more defined levels, and will be called "Desired Results policies".

3.3.2 The board will develop policies that limit the latitude the Senior Minister may exercise in choosing staff means. These policies will be developed systematically from the broadest, most general level to more defined levels, and will be called "Operational Limitations Policies".

3.3.3 As long as the Senior Minister uses a reasonable interpretation of the board's Desired Results and Operational Limitations policies, the Senior Minister is authorized to establish all further policies, make all decisions, take all actions, establish all practices, and develop all activities.

3.3.4 The board may change its Desired Results and Operational Limitations policies, thereby shifting the boundary between board and Senior Minister domains. By doing so, the board changes the latitude of choice given to the Senior Minister. But as long as any particular delegation is in place, the board will respect and support the Senior Minister's choices.

3.4 Monitoring Senior Minister Performance

The elders will systematically evaluate Senior Minister job performance, but solely on the basis of Senior Minister job outputs. These outputs consist of



staff accomplishment of results within the boundaries of operational limits.

Accordingly:

3.4.1 Monitoring is simply to determine the degree to which board policies are being met. Data that does not do this will not be considered to be monitoring data.

3.4.2 The board will acquire monitoring data by one or more of the following three methods:

- a. By **internal report**, in which the Senior Minister discloses compliance information to the board.
- b. By **external report**, in which an external, disinterested third party selected by the board assesses compliance with board policies.
- c. By **direct board inspection**, in which a designated elder or elders assess compliance with the appropriate policy criteria.

3.4.3 In every case, the standard for compliance shall be a reasonable Senior Minister interpretation of the board policy being monitored.

3.4.4 All policies that instruct the Senior Minister will be monitored at a frequency and by a method chosen by the board. The board can monitor any policy at any time by any method, but will ordinarily depend on a routine schedule as follows:

<i>Operational Limitation Policies</i>	<i>Method</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
<i>2.1 Treatment of Members</i>		
2.1.1 Data security	Direct	T3 Governance Meeting
2.1.2/3 clear expectations	Direct	Weekly, preaching/e-mail Connection luncheon
<i>2.2 Treatment of Staff</i>		
2.2.1 Personnel Policy Manual	Internal	T3 Governance Meeting
2.2.2 Grievance Process	Direct	Ongoing
2.2.3 Staff-knowledge of policy manual	Internal	T3 Governance Meeting
2.2.4 Performance-Review documentation	Internal	T3 Governance Meeting
<i>2.3 Financial Planning and Budgeting</i>		
2.3.1 Informational Reporting	Internal	Monthly, financial documents
2.3.2 Expenses less than cash flows	Internal	Monthly, financial documents
2.3.3 Two-month operational reserve	Internal	Monthly, financial documents
<i>2.4 Financial Conditions and Activities</i>		
2.4.1 Expenses less than cash flows	Internal	Monthly, financial documents
2.4.2 Payroll	Direct	Ongoing
2.4.3 Tax payments	External	Annual Audit
2.4.4 Real Property	External	Annual Audit
2.4.5 Receivables	External	Annual Audit



2.4.6 Benevolence limitations	Direct	Ongoing
<i>2.5 Asset Protection</i>		
2.5.1 Property and Liability Insurance	Internal	T3 Governance Meeting
2.5.2 Maintenance	Direct	Ongoing
2.5.3 Exposure to liability	Direct	Ongoing
2.5.4 Purchases	Internal	Monthly, financial documents
2.5.5 File Protection	Internal	T2 Governance Meeting
2.5.6 Financial processes	External	Annual Audit
2.5.7 Investments of reserves	Internal	T2 Governance Meeting
2.5.8 Carman Pension	Internal	Monthly, financial documents
2.5.9 Public image/credibility	Direct	Ongoing
<i>2.6 Compensation and Benefits</i>		
2.6.1 Senior Minister Compensation	Internal	Annual Budget Meeting
2.6.2 At will employment	Internal	Annual Budget Meeting
2.6.3 Staff compensation	Internal	Annual Budget Meeting
<i>2.7 Elder Communication/Support</i>		
2.7.1 Submission of internal reports	Direct	T1/T2/T3/Budget Meetings
2.7.2 Inform the elders	Direct	Weekly e-mails, phone calls
2.7.3 Elder violation of policies	Direct	T1/T2/T3 governance mtgs.
2.7.4 Clear reporting	Direct	T1/T2/T3/Budget Meetings
2.7.5 Eldership wholeness	Direct	Ongoing
2.7.6 Self-reporting of policy violation	Direct	T1/T2/T3/Budget, Ongoing
2.8 Emergency Senior Minister Succession	Direct	T1/T2/T3/Budget, Ongoing

Desired Results Policy

	<u>Method</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Statement of Faith (Thoughts)	Direct	Ongoing
Spiritual Formation (Actions)		
A ppreciation of God through Worship	Internal	Semi-Monthly
B elonging with Others through Community	Internal	Semi-Monthly
C ontribution to Others through Sacrifice	Internal	Semi-Monthly
D uplication of Disciples through Leadership	Internal	Semi-Monthly



ELDER'S PROCESS POLICIES

4.0 Process Policy

The purpose of the Eldership is to be accountable to God as it shepherds Raintree Christian Church and ensures that the church achieves its mission and purpose within the boundaries of Biblical principles and values.

4.1 Governing Style

The elders will govern with an emphasis on

- (1) demonstrating Christlike character
- (2) outward vision rather than internal preoccupation,
- (3) encouragement of diversity of gifts,
- (4) strategic leadership more than administrative detail,
- (5) clear distinction of Eldership and Senior Minister roles,
- (6) collective rather than individual decisions,
- (7) future rather than past or present, and
- (8) pro activity rather than reactivity.

Accordingly

4.1.1 The Elders will cultivate a sense of group responsibility. The Elders, not the staff, will be responsible for excellence in governing. The Elders will be the initiator of policy, not merely a reactor to staff initiatives. The Elders will use the expertise of individual elders to enhance the ability of the Eldership as a body rather than to substitute individual judgments for the Elder's values. The Eldership will allow no officer, individual,

or committee to hinder or be an excuse for not fulfilling Eldership commitments.

4.1.2 The Elders will direct, control, and inspire the congregation through the careful establishment of broad written policies reflecting the Elder's values and perspectives about results to be achieved and means to be avoided. The Elder's major policy focus will be on the intended long-term effects outside the congregation, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those effects.

4.1.3 The Eldership will enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Discipline will apply to matters such as attendance, preparation, policy-making principles, respect for roles, and ensuring continuance of governance capability. Continual Eldership development will include orientation of new elders in the Elder governance process and periodic discussion of process improvement.

4.1.4 The Eldership will briefly monitor and discuss its process and performance at each meeting and more formally on an annual basis. Self-monitoring will include comparison of Eldership activity and discipline to the Governance Process policies and the Elder's Delegation policies.

4.2 Eldership Job Description

The specific job of the Eldership is to achieve its governance purpose by defining, explicitly writing and monitoring policies related to "Desired Results" and "Operational Limitations."

Elder Expectations

4.2.1 The Elders will maintain the link between itself and God and between itself and the congregation. Connection to God is a daily expectation and will also include

- a. participation in corporate worship
- b. participation and leadership in a Bible class or small group
- c. contribution through serving in a ministry
- d. sacrificial giving representing at least 10% of their pre-tax income.

4.2.2 The Elders will produce written governing policies that, at the broadest levels, address each category of organizational decision.

- a. Desired Results: Organizational products, effects, outcomes.
- b. Operational Limitations: Constraints on executive authority that establish boundaries based on Biblical principles and values within which all executive activity and decisions must take place.
- c. Governance Process: Specification of how the Eldership conceives, carries out, and monitors its own task.
- d. Elder's Delegation: How power is delegated and its proper use monitored; authority and accountability of the Senior Minister role.



- 4.2.3. The Eldership will produce assurance of Senior Minister performance (against policies in 2a and 2b above.
- 4.2.4 To accomplish its job products with a governance style consistent with Eldership policies, the Eldership will follow an annual agenda that:
 - a. Completes re-exploration of Desired Results policies annually
 - b. Continually improves Eldership performance through Eldership education and enriched input and deliberation.
- 4.2.5 Senior Minister remuneration will be decided after a review of the annual monitoring reports received.

4.3 Selection of Elder Chairman

The Eldership requires a chairman to set specific goals and agenda items, assure policies and processes are being honored, and occasionally act as representative to other parties. The Eldership will elect a chairman annually.

Selection of Elder Chairman Details

- 4.3.1 The selection process for Chairman will take place annually. Elders may nominate current Elders who have participated at least one year in the Raintree eldership.
- 4.3.2 Each nominee will prayerfully consider his nomination and indicate to the Eldership why he feels called to accept this charge.
- 4.3.3 The Eldership will then make its selection by consensus.
- 4.3.4 At the time an oncoming chairman is selected the Eldership will select a secretary to serve for a period of one year.



4.4 Elder Chairman's Role

The Chairman assures the integrity and fulfillment of the Eldership's process, and occasionally represents the Eldership to outside parties.

Chairman's Role Details

4.4.1 The job result of the Chairman is that the Eldership behaves consistently with its own rules and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the organization.

- a.) Meeting discussion content will be only those issues that, according to Eldership policy, clearly belong to the Eldership to decide, not the Senior Minister or his delegates.
- b.) Deliberation will be fair, open, and thorough but also timely, orderly, and to the point.

4.4.2 The authority of the Chairman consists of ensuring conformance to decisions that fall within topics covered by Eldership policies on Governance Process and Eldership Delegation, except where the Eldership specifically delegates portions of this authority to others. The Chairman is authorized to use a reasonable interpretation of the provisions in these policies.

- a.) The Chairman is empowered to chair Eldership meetings with all the commonly accepted power of that position (for example, ruling, recognizing).
- b.) The Chairman has no authority to make decisions about policies created by the Eldership within the Desired Results and Operational Limitations policy areas. Therefore, the Chairman has no authority to supervise or direct the Senior Minister.
- c.) The Chairman may represent the Eldership to outside parties in announcing Eldership-stated positions, decisions and interpretations within the area delegated to him.
- d.) The Chairman may delegate this authority but remains accountable for its use.

4.5 Elder's Code of Conduct

The elders commit themselves individually and as a group to Christlike conduct.

Elder's Code of Conduct Details

4.5.1 Elders must represent unconflicted loyalty first to the purposes of God and secondarily to the interests of the congregation. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty to affinity groups. It also supersedes the personal interest of any elder acting as a member of the congregation.



4.5.2 Elders must avoid conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility.

- a.) When the Eldership is to decide upon an issue about which an elder has an unavoidable conflict of interest, that elder shall absent himself without comment from not only any voting but also from any deliberation.
- b.) Elders must not use their positions to obtain employment for themselves, family members, or close associates. Should an elder or any of his immediate family desire employment, he must first resign from the Eldership.

4.5.3 Elders may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the congregation or staff except as explicitly set forth in Elders' policies.

4.5.4 Elders, other than the Chairman or his designee, shall refrain from any interaction with public, press, or other outside entities in matters involving the Eldership.

4.5.5 Elders make no response as an individual to other individual judgments of Senior Minister or staff performance.

4.5.6 Elders will maintain appropriate confidentiality.

4.5.7 Elders will attend all meetings and prepare appropriately for each meeting through prayer, reading assignments and completion of Elder-assigned tasks. Necessary absences will be reported in advance to the Elder Chairman.

4.6 Eldership Committee Principles

Eldership committees, when used, will be assigned only to reinforce the wholeness of the Eldership's job and never to interfere with delegation from the Eldership to the Senior Minister.

Eldership Committee Principles Details

4.6.1 Eldership committees are to help the Eldership do its job, never to help or advise the staff. Committees ordinarily will assist the Eldership by preparing policy alternatives and implications for Eldership deliberation. In keeping with the Eldership's broader focus, Eldership committees will normally not have dealings with current staff operations.

4.6.2 Eldership committees may not speak or act for the Eldership except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Expectations and authority will be carefully stated in order not to conflict with authority delegated to the Senior Minister.

4.6.3 Eldership Committees cannot exercise authority over staff. Because the Senior Minister works for the full Eldership, he will not be required to obtain approval of an Eldership committee before an executive action.



4.6.4 Eldership committees are to avoid over-identification with specific affinity groups rather than the whole. Therefore, an Eldership committee that has helped the Eldership create a policy on some topic will not be used to monitor congregational performance on the same topic.

4.6.5 Committees will be used sparingly and ordinarily in an ad hoc capacity.

4.6.6 This policy applies to any group that is formed by Eldership action, whether or not it is called a committee and regardless of whether the group includes elders. It does not apply to committees formed under the authority of the Senior Minister. Even on those committees, however, an elder will be serving as an appropriately gifted volunteer and not in the official capacity of an elder.

4.7 Selection and Removal of Elders

The procedure for selecting Elders at Raintree is not an election. The procedure is a process of selection under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The role of the Eldership is to prayerfully investigate, qualify and select candidates to become new Elders. The completion of the process is celebrated with ordination of the new Elders by the congregation at a worship service.

Elder Selection Details

4.7.1 Members of the congregation may suggest names for consideration for the position of Elder.

4.7.2 The selection committee consists of the existing Eldership. The Eldership shall prayerfully review the names submitted to determine if an individual has the willingness to serve and meets the qualifications set forth in the New Testament as found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. The remaining candidates' known strengths and weaknesses will be evaluated through the lenses of "character, chemistry, and competency" to see how they might contribute to the overall church leadership and its immediate and long-range objectives.

4.7.3 Candidates will complete the Ministry Leadership Application and return it to the Eldership. The Elder Chairman will then schedule time on a regular meeting agenda to review the application and to thoroughly interview the candidate.

- a.) If this will be the candidate's first term on the Eldership, an extensive interview will be scheduled to include a time with the candidate, and may include a time with both the candidate and his wife.
- b.) Returning elders may be excused from the fore mentioned candidacy period.



- c.) Selection of candidates for formal affirmation of the congregation requires a unanimous vote of the eldership.

4.7.4 Candidates successfully completing this process will have their names published in church communications over a period of four weeks. During this time of evaluation, members of the congregation are encouraged to provide input to the eldership regarding the individual's qualifications, outside reputation, areas of concern, and areas of strength.

- a.) All feedback will be directed to the Elder Chairman.

- b.) The Eldership will evaluate feedback.

4.7.5 After prayerfully reviewing the congregation's input, the Eldership shall, if necessary, reassess the candidate and then either present him before the congregation to be affirmed during a congregational meeting or decline his candidacy.

4.7.6 The term of service for an elder is four years, followed by a period of one year sabbatical prior to re-eligibility for another term.

Elder Removal Details

4.7.7 An elder may choose to resign from service as an elder at any point in time with the advice and consent of the other elders.

4.7.8 An elder may also be removed from leadership by the decision of a simple majority of the remaining elders if they believe there is a just Biblical cause or if he fails to fulfill his duties and functions.

4.8 Role of the Elders' Secretary

In general, the Secretary is responsible for recording and disseminating minutes of all decision-making meetings (specifically Eldership meetings and congregational meetings). He is also occasionally required to sign legal documents.

Eldership Secretary Role Details

4.8.1 **Elders' Policy of Unity:** Raintree's Elders are committed to unity. In keeping with this commitment, all questions or issues under consideration are discussed until everyone comes to a consensus agreement. Hence, there is no need for formal motions, seconds or yea/nay votes with respect to most issues the Eldership considers.

4.8.2 With respect to certain legal matters, documented decisions must include a formal motion, a second, and a record of the vote. The kinds of issues that require such formal documentation include:



- Approval and affirmation of the annual budget.
- Approval of governance policies.
- Approval of buying or selling property.
- Approval for borrowing money, including amount and loan terms.
- Approval of staff housing allowances.
- Approval of Senior Minister compensation adjustments.

4.8.3 Eldership minutes are confidential and access to them is limited to the Elders and selected members of senior staff.

4.8.4 The names of everyone in attendance, as well as absentees, should be listed in the minutes.

4.8.5 Raintree’s Eldership uses the minutes as a leadership tool. To this end, the secretary needs to record topics with sufficient detail so that a person who did not attend could read them and have a general understanding of what transpired.

Reviewed and Updated: July 16, 2008

Elder Chairman: _____
Bruce Clinard

Elder Secretary: _____
David Taliaferro

Elder Board Members: _____
Mike Evans

Senior Minister _____
Brent McCall

