

# The Session

## PRAYER AND DISCERNMENT

As an active member, you are being considered for service as an elder on the Session of Escalon Presbyterian Church. Please pray about this, discerning God's leading in consultation with current priorities of your own family. The opportunity to serve your church in this role is an important one - yet it is an opportunity to help our church make life-changing impacts in the lives of those in the communities that we serve. We offer this packet to help you understand our theological commitments and the expectations involved.

## THE SESSION

The Session consists of the Pastor, who is the Moderator of the meeting, and twelve Ruling Elders, elected by the congregation, according to the Polity and Discipline of the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians.

## TERMS

Each year 3 elders are elected to serve a four-year term, following which two years must elapse before one is re-eligible for election.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

The session has responsibility and authority for governing the congregation and guiding its mission for Christ in the world. Elders are given authority and responsibility, along with pastors, to oversee the spiritual health of the congregation as well as the congregation's faithfulness to God's mission. In the Reformed tradition the marks of the church are the proclamation of the Word, the Sacraments rightly celebrated, and the exercise of discipline.

## QUALIFICATIONS

Elders must adhere to the Essentials Tenets of ECO [see *attachment*]. Failure of officers to continue to adhere to these standards is grounds for a session or

presbytery to remove an officer from service according to the Rules of Discipline in this Constitution. Please watch this video:

<https://vimeo.com/133696065>

## TEAMS

The Session is divided up into six ministry teams:

1. Adult Ministries
2. Youth Ministries
3. Church Life
4. Mission Outreach
5. Finance
6. Trustees

Each team consists of two active elders, with the remaining membership consisting of interested members and attenders of EPC. Ordinarily, the four-year term of each elder will consist of two-years as chair-in-waiting, and two years as chair.

## TIME-COMMITMENT

- Monthly meetings (ordinarily the 3rd Tuesday of Each month) from 7 to 9.
- Quarterly (minimum) ministry team meetings called by both elders on a ministry team.
- Serve on communion team (once a quarter) and help count offerings (one month each year).

## A COMMON PURPOSE

Session is a non-contentious group that gathers under the common purpose of our church's mission and the mission of the ECO. Yes, there are disagreements and we will vote for or against each other's proposals after prayer, deliberation and discernment. Christian disagreement can be healthy to the body of Christ - political conflict is not. Every voice is heard, mutual support and respect is offered, and transparent

# Ordination Vows

honesty is expected. There really is great joy offered for one's vibrant service to their church.

## ORDINATION VOWS

- *You must be able to affirm and abide by these*
  - a. Do you believe in One God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and do you boldly declare Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and acknowledge Him Lord of all and Head of the Church?
  - b. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the Word of God, and, inspired by the Holy Spirit, the unique witness to Jesus Christ and the authority for Christian faith and life?
  - c. Will you receive, adopt, and be bound by the Essential Tenets of ECO as a reliable exposition of what Scripture teaches us to do and to believe, and will you be guided by them in your life and ministry?
  - d. Relying on the Holy Spirit, do you humbly submit to God's call on your life, committing yourself to God's mission, and fulfilling your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture and guided by our confessions?
  - e. Will you be governed by ECO's polity and discipline? And will you be accountable to your fellow elders, deacons, and pastors as you lead?
  - f. Do you promise to be faithful in maintaining the truth of the Gospel and the peace, unity, and purity of the Church?
  - g. Will you pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?
  - h. Will you be a faithful elder, watching over the people in their worship, nurture, and service to God?