Church Officer Nomination and Election Procedures
Arden Presbyterian Church (PCA)

The Lord calls certain men, as recorded in Scripture, to serve him and his church in leadership roles as elders and deacons. The apostle Paul teaches us that the desire to serve as an officer in the church is a worthy ambition. He also explains in 1 Timothy 3 the demanding requirement of both offices (elder and deacon). Thus the desire to be a spiritual leader in the church is a good thing, but not everyone is qualified or called to serve as an officer. Those who aspire to office in the church must meet the biblical standards, and must be examined and tested (1 Tim. 3:15).

Paul describes the church as the "household of God…the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). Because of the Bible's high view of the church we must seek only the most qualified men to lead her. Officer nominations and elections have little to do with popularity and much to do with a person's consistent and deepening love for God above all things. This love for the Lord manifests itself in a growing love and servant attitude toward one's neighbor.

The Offices of Elder and Deacon

Elder: The officer of elder is one of spiritual oversight and government of the church (Titus 1:5ff; 1 Tim 3:1-7). In the NT, elders are sometimes referred to as shepherds (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:1-4) because they are charged with the care and nurture of the church just as a shepherd cares for his flock. Elders are also responsible for the teaching ministry of the church (1 Tim. 5:17-18). Thus, elders must both understand the truths of God's work and be able to effectively minister in the body of Christ as one who encourages, edifies and when needed, confronts and rebukes.

Deacon: The office of deacon is one of service, extending mercy and sympathy to those in need, especially to those within the church. Deacons are first mentioned in Acts 6:1-6, as those chosen to minister to the physical needs within the church. The spiritual nature of the deacon's service of mercy is no less vital than the elder's shepherding and ruling; the health of the church is inseparably tied to both offices. The duty of the office is threefold: 1) to minister to those in need and distress, 2) to administrate financial issues within the church (receiving and distribution of gifts), and 3) to care for the church's property.

Any man assuming the office of elder or deacon must meet the biblical qualifications listed in **1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9 (elder)** and **1 Timothy 3:8-13 (deacon).** Both offices are perpetual — that is, for life, unless extraordinary circumstances allow or call for the dissolution of one's office.

At Arden, men in both offices serve **3-year terms**.

Qualifications for Church Office

(Based on 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1)

ELDER

Above reproach: Is the candidate living in such a way that no one can accuse him of ungodly beliefs, habits, or actions?

Husband of one wife: If married, is the candidate a loving and faithful husband; or if single, is he above reproach in his relationships with women? This qualification does not prohibit a *biblically* divorced man from holding office. The focus is on his purity in thought, word, and deed toward women and faithfulness to his wife.

Sober-minded: Is he self-controlled in all areas of his life? Does he over-indulge himself in any areas?

Self-controlled: Is he in good control of his emotions and wise in his decisions?

Respectable: Is he dependable, honorable, with a life that is in order?

Hospitable: Is he generous and kind to both insiders and outsiders, with an open life and home?

Able to teach: Does he have a proven ability to communicate biblical truth in a practical way (such as teaching, preaching, counseling, exhortation, or small group leadership)?

Not a drunkard: Does he have any habits that he cannot or does not control, particularly in the area of food and drink? This includes overuse, abuse, and addiction.

Gentle, peaceable; not arrogant, quarrelsome, violent or quick-tempered: Does he settle disputes in a timely and biblical way? Does he avoid fighting, arguing, bullying, and quarreling? Is he a humble man?

Not self-willed: Is he one who does not insist upon his own way?

Free from the love of money: Is the accumulation of material wealth a primary motivation and object of concern for him, or is he generous and free from the love of money, position, and worldly glory?

Manages his household well with children under control: Does he lead his wife and children well? Does he have the respect of his wife and children? Is his home a lovingly-disciplined and Christ-centered home?

Not a recent convert: Does he have a track record that testifies to Christian maturity and growth in grace?

Well thought of by those outside the church: Even among non-Christians, is he above reproach regarding his personal life in material and financial matters, as well as in reputation?

Able to exhort others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose: Does he know and regularly study God's Word? Does he have a heart for biblical truth and is he diligent to seek to preserve the truth? Is he able to discern false doctrine and refute it biblically? In the PCA, an elder must be personally committed to and believe the system of doctrine summarized in *The Westminster Confession of Faith and Larger and Shorter Catechisms*.

DEACON

Qualifications for deacon include several of those noted previously for the office of elder (except for "able to teach") with the following additions:

Dignified: Is he respected for his devotion to the Lord?

Not double-tongued: Is he honest? Does he tend to say one thing and mean another?

Loving what is good: Does he look for, and expect, the best in other people? Are his values consistent with biblical values?

Hold to the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience: Deacons are not required to teach, but they must be personally committed to and believe God's Word as summarized in *The Westminster Confession of Faith and Larger and Shorter Catechisms*.

Procedure for Election of Officers

- **Nomination:** An officer must be nominated by a member in good standing of the congregation.

- **Training and Examination**: Nominees who accept the nomination to office are required to attend Officer Training Classes. The purpose of the classes is to train, educate, and examine nominees in the areas of Christian experience, knowledge of Bible content, knowledge of the system of doctrine, government and discipline of the PCA, duties of the office, and willingness to give assent to the ordination questions.

- **Election:** If the nominees are approved following their examination, they are presented to the church at a congregational meeting. A simple majority vote is required to elect the officers.

- **Ordination and Installation**: New officers are ordained and installed according to the procedures in the PCA Book of Church Order, Chapter 24.

- **Term of Service:** Perpetual, with three years of service followed by a one year sabbatical.

Your Responsibility

Each member should be aware of their responsibility to prayerfully nominate those men for office who already demonstrate the biblical qualifications for office.

Officer Nomination Form – Due January 10, 2027

I have prayerfully considered the biblical qualifications for officers in Christ's church and would like to offer the name of:

_____

in nomination for the office of

ELDER **DEACON**

(*Circle One*)

In light of the biblical qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:1-14 and Titus 1:6-9, I have observed his consistency in the following areas:

(*Please check*)

_____ His personal and family life

_____ His heart for evangelism

_____ (For elder only) His aptitude for teaching in private or public in the following context: _____

_____ His love for others

_____ His love for the Word of God

_____ His faithfulness in worship

_____ His hospitality

_____ His generosity

I am confident of his qualifications for office, and I offer his name in nomination and will regularly pray for him and his family should he be elected to serve at Arden Presbyterian Church.

I have spoken with the nominee and he is willing to be nominated for the office.

_____

(Please sign your name)

Arden Presbyterian Church