



ELDER

TRAINING

HANDBOOK

HOLY CROSS CHURCH



DEACON

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OFFICER TRAINING AT HOLY CROSS

This *Officer Training Handbook* is intended as a road map for you as you discern if God is calling you to serve Holy Cross as an elder or deacon of the church. If God is calling you to serve Holy Cross as an officer, then this material will prove necessary to equip, train, and encourage you in specifically, practically, and pastorally what it means to be an officer at Holy Cross.

Serving as an officer comes with sacrifice. This training covers a lot of ground and will require a lot of time, reading, personal participation, and commitment. Not only is this process profitable for theological training, I pray it will help prepare you for the weight of giving an account before God for the church he has called you to serve. With that in mind, it ought to be handled with humility and an eagerness to learn and hear from God in your preparation.

Officer training is required for all men seeking to be an elder or deacon at Holy Cross. Completion of this training does not guarantee or assume that you will become an officer. Becoming an officer will be determined by the following:

Is he qualified?

This training will help reveal if a person has the biblical qualifications to be an elder or deacon.

Is he called?

This process is critical for a man to assess his own calling as well as the Holy Spirit to affirm this calling internally and externally through the witness of others (ie. effectiveness in ministry, assessment of current officers, affirmation of gifts).

Is he a good fit?

A person's competency, calling, and character are not the only factors that will make an elder or deacon a good fit for Holy Cross. We will value, and pray for, a variety of gifts and personalities to be represented among our officers. It is good for a man to mesh well with the current elders and deacons in temperament, friendship, and philosophy of ministry.

An officer candidate comes into this process with humility and eagerness to learn, submitting to the current elders at Holy Cross and trusting in their input and assessment throughout the process.

Each session is laid out in four basic features: *Doctrine, Gospel-centrality, Pastoral Connection (or Servant Connection for deacons), and Reflection.*

1. Doctrine

Each session will cover basic (yet essential) biblical doctrines taught in the Bible and embraced by Holy Cross. Any man who desires to be an elder must embrace and uphold these doctrines without exception.

2. Gospel Centrality

This section will help us bridge doctrine to practice. This may be in the form of a gospel-centered article, sermon, or exercise.

3. Pastoral Connection (or Servant Connection for deacons)

As we dig into Scripture and readings, it is important to discuss how these truths will impact how/why we minister to, and serve, the people of Holy Cross. Particular emphasis for our elders will be on how to shepherd the church in light of the truths we embrace. For our deacons, particular emphasis will be on how to be a minister of mercy and service to the church.

4. Reflection

Questions are provided for each week to help you dig deeper (and more personally) with what you are learning. This is going to be a critical time not only for your own education of what we embrace doctrinally, but also for you to be available to hear from the Lord.

“You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, ² and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. ³ Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴ No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. ⁵ An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶ It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. ⁷ Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.”

2 Timothy 2:1-7

⁶ If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed. ⁷ Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; ⁸ for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.

1 Timothy 4:6-8

Officer Training Handbook Holy Cross Church

Schedule & Topics

Lesson	Topic	Date
1	The Biblical Elder / Deacon	_____
2	Revelation & Scripture	_____
3	God: His Nature & Sovereignty	_____
4	Man: Creation & Covenants	_____
5	Jesus: His Natures & Offices	_____
6	The Work of The Holy Spirit	_____
7	Justification, Adoption, & Sanctification	_____
8	Repentance, Good Works, & Worship	_____
9	The Church & Sacraments	_____
10	Last Things & God's Mission	_____
11	The Book of Church Order	_____

Reading Resources:

WCF = Westminster Confession of Faith
BCO = The PCA Book of Church Order
SCD = Summary of Christian Doctrine by Louis Berkhof
Various reading resources provided within the manual

APPENDIX

- A Synopsis of the Beliefs of Holy Cross Church
- Ministry Priorities and Philosophy of Holy Cross Church
- A Philosophy and Strategy for Engaging in God's Mission
- Infant Baptism at Holy Cross