

“Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever” (Psalm 136:1).

Dear Rivermont Family,

While looking to God for the grace of endurance during the coronavirus pandemic, God continues to bless our church with passion for worship, discipleship, and mission. To enhance our ministry by the elders and deacons, the Session has called a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, August 30 to follow the 8:00 service (9:05am). The meeting will be live in the Sanctuary and via Zoom with the following purposes:

- To adjust the three-year terms of service for ruling elders and deacons to correspond with the ministry year, September 1-August 31;
- For Session to assign an elder or deacon to serve as a mentor for each respective elder or deacon nominee for a period of up to one year;
- For Officer Nominees to attend training classes and meetings per pastoral directive and to receive guidance from the pastors and mentors for opportunities to prepare the nominee for service;
- To approve revisions to the **attached documents**, approved by the congregation, entitled, *“The Nomination and Election of Church Officers”* and *“Elders and Deacons”* (vows and qualifications for church officers) to reflect the previous motions.

Session affirms the following reasons in support of the recommendations.

- For continuity of leadership, terms coinciding with our ministry year, versus a calendar year, would be optimal for our elders and deacons. New ideas often originate in the fall and carry into the spring. Having a new class of officers join us mid-stream has been challenging at times.
- The Session and pastors embrace the benefit of allowing a year of mentorship to allow nominees to benefit from a mentor, attend various meetings, respond to a number of leadership/developmental assignments, etc. While we’ll continue to have officer training classes, we often hear from nominees that that the classes are beneficial, yet also hear the desire for additional practical learning opportunities. As a committee of Session, the Vision Committee will provide guidance for the mentorship of elders and deacons.
- If approved, the Session will adjust the timing of congregational meetings, dates of ordination, and existing terms. At the end of August, we think a congregational meeting for election will work well with ordination during worship typically on the second Sunday of September.

Regarding the two attached documents, here’s some background:

- *The Nomination and Election of Church Officers* (August 2020) is a process document with edits based on current recommendations. As the process for the nomination/election of officers is a right reserved to the congregation per our Book of Order, this will be the fourth edition of this document approved by the congregation since REPC entered our denomination in 2003.
- The *Elders and Deacons* document (August 2020) was first approved by the congregation in 2017 to add Biblical and Book of Order Qualifications to our officer nominating process.

Prior to 2017, our process document had no qualifications mentioned. This is a concise Biblical and Book of Order summary of requirements while also highlighting ordination vows.

This Sunday (August 30), please attend the meeting by either joining us **live in the sanctuary** right after the 8:00 service or **by Zoom meeting**. We'll open the Zoom meeting by 9:05. You may enter the Zoom meeting by clicking on the tab for the Congregational Meeting on the Rivermont website or by clicking on the tab in Preparing for the Lord's Day that will be sent on Friday of this week. We'll also provide directions for voting during the meeting.

The Session expresses our thanksgiving to God for His grace and power as we press forward in worship, discipleship, and mission to the glory of His name.

In Christ,
The Pastors and Elders of Session