



June 29, 2014
Elder Recommendation

Introduction

In 2007, Summit Woods Baptist Church adopted a new Constitution and By-Laws which implemented an elder-led form of church polity. In 2009, the first elders were chosen by the congregation and began serving. Building on this necessary and biblical approach to church polity is a constant prayerful mindset and quest for the existing elders. One of the most important priorities of virtually every elders' meeting is our seeking God's direction in recommending men who would serve as new elders.

After much time in prayer and conversation, the elders of Summit Woods joyfully recommend Todd Arnold to be affirmed by the congregation as a new elder.



Todd and his family have been members of Summit Woods since February, 2007. Todd, his wife Jodi, and their son, Matt have been actively serving our congregation in a variety of ways. In addition to their regular evangelistic ministries across Kansas City, Todd and Jodi have been hosting Bible studies in their home for a number of years. They are host and leaders of a Growth Group and for the past year, Todd has been regularly teaching and serving in our student ministries. Todd has also joined the preaching rotation on Sunday evenings, preaching to our church this past Spring. He has demonstrated a solid character that exemplifies the qualities called for of an elder in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. His commitment to the local church is evident. Jodi regularly meets with a group of ladies for mentoring and discipleship, has taught a women's class in the past, and is also currently serving as a small group leader for a women's group that meets each Wednesday evening. Their son Matt loves Christ and makes that evident in the ways he seeks to evangelize others and personally grow in his intake of God's word, even with his physical challenges.

We have spent an extensive amount of time with Todd and his family in both formal settings for discussion of his potentially serving as an elder and informal times that have allowed us the opportunity to get to know them more personally. We are confident in this recommendation. Todd exemplifies the qualities of a solid shepherd and will serve our congregation with both Christ-like humility and biblical strength.

The material you hold in your hands includes his testimony, answers to a host of questions, as well as a timeline of events that will afford our congregation ample opportunity to connect with Todd and hear from him publicly.

We thank God for the privilege of serving as elders at Summit Woods and are excited with the potential of Todd joining the shepherding team. We are available to you to answer your questions and personally talk with you further about Todd and why we believe he is uniquely qualified and ready to serve Summit Woods as a new elder.

Yours for Christ's Church,

Bret Capranica, Brandon Ferguson, Mark Krystyniak and Rob Stouffer

Todd Arnold

The following questions are some of those asked by the Elders of SWBC during the process of evaluating him for being recommended to the body. His answers serve to demonstrate how his life and views display the qualities called for in Scripture of those who would serve a church as an elder.



Todd, Jodi, and Matt Arnold

1 Timothy 3:1-7

The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task.

2 Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. 4 He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, 5 for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? 6 He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7 Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

Titus 1:5-9

5 This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you—6 if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. 7 For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, 8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. 9 He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

Personal Life

How did you become a Christian? Please also describe when, where, and why you were baptized.

In February of 1988 while working at Fixtures Furniture, a fellow employee named Willie Hooker explained the gospel to me over lunch break. I was captivated. During the next break, I asked him, "How can I have my sins forgiven?" He wrote down several Scriptures and told me to get a Bible. I got home and read those verses. Willie had said to me, "if you so desire, cry out to God to save you." That is exactly what I did! God has radically changed my heart. I now love God and hate my sin more and more. I was baptized on Mother's day of the same year. My baptism was a display to the local church (Gashland Baptist-Gladstone, MO) what Christ had done in my life and that I wanted to identify with Him and His church.

What is your educational background?

I went to Winnetonka HS and finished the twelfth grade. I received a GED after God saved me in the summer of 1988.

Describe your current walk with the Lord and how He is sanctifying you and conforming you to the image of Christ. How have you grown in Christian maturity in the past year?

My current walk with the Lord is stronger today than it ever has been. God is more glorious and beautiful today than He ever has been, and yet my sin seems bigger than ever before. Christ is growing me; my love for the Church is growing. Christ is sanctifying me in my desire to lead and shepherd his people. It is hard for me express how much I love SWBC and what this church means to me and family. Christ has and is growing me in my contentment. I've seen that He has grown me in the way I respond to my wife. I've seen that God is growing me in my love for His Word and to explain His Word to His Church. My love for sound doctrine has grown greatly over the past few years. The seriousness and deep desire to be a protector of His people. I now have a desire to preach and teach God's word. God has grown me tremendously in hospitality and my desire to gather with others. God has grown me in discipline in the last year in regards to my work habits.

In what ways are you actively sharing the gospel (seeking to share the gospel) and disciple others?

I daily pray for gospel opportunities that God will give me the opportunity to speak of him. At my work God has and is giving me opportunities to share the gospel on a daily basis. I have also had the privilege on many occasions to preach the gospel open-air and one-on-one in downtown Kansas City and the North East area.

I have a young man who has spent time with my family and has specifically been in study with me, delving deep into Ephesians using one-to-one Bible worksheets. That transitioned into Jodi and me leading pre-marital training with him and his now wife.

I am always seeking believers and non-believers with whom to sit and read the Bible together.

Describe how you are actively seeking to grow and mature in your walk with Christ (e.g., your approach to the spiritual disciplines of Bible intake, prayer, fellowship, etc.).

The first thing I do each morning is read John MacArthur's Drawing Near daily devotional. I am currently reading through the books of Titus and Colossians daily. Next I will move on to Philipians. I also pray throughout the day for wisdom and discernment, and understanding of His word. I pray that I would make application of God's word in my daily life and that God would give me opportunity to proclaim His excellencies. As far as fellowship and seeking to grow and mature in my walk, I am meeting with Dawson Bryant weekly and I host a Growth Group in our home. I talk, several times a week, with Glenn Holmes for accountability and sharpening, asking each other difficult question in regard to my personal walk, how I treat my wife and son,

talking about fellow believers who are in need of support and encouragement and how we can meet those needs and people who are hurting in the church. I have monthly phone fellowship with Justin Peters, who heads a national discernment ministry. I am regularly discussing doctrine and the application of doctrine in our family time.

What is your personal belief and practice regarding giving and financial stewardship?

Giving generously, cheerfully, and consistently to provide for the furtherance of the gospel. Taking care of God's shepherds (Pastor and church staff), (2 Cor. 8-9). I don't believe tithing is a New Testament command, I believe it can be a principle for people in giving, but our giving must be motivated by the Gospel.

Who are the spiritual leaders in your life (past or present) who have or do shape you?

My first pastor, Jim Lady, Mark Baker, Jeff Purvis, Dr. Gerald Wheatley, Ryan Bowman, Dr. Bret Capranica, Dr. Ben Aubrey, Dr. S. Lewis Johnson Jr., Dr. John MacArthur, Ray Comfort

Have you ever discipled anyone? If so, who, how long and describe what that discipling relationship looked like.

Dawson Bryant (2012-current); Matt Esplend (2013-present); Meeting weekly to study the book Ephesians & Colossians using one-on-one bible reading.

Matt Arnold (21 years) studying the bible together, systematic theology, videos on the history of the church, biblical creation, biblical evangelism, listen to sermons and discuss above, one-on-one bible reading.

Ben Bush (11 years old to 16 years old) studying the bible together, systematic theology, videos on the history of the church, biblical creation, biblical evangelism, listen to sermons and discuss above, one-on-one bible reading.

Jodi Arnold (1988-current) studying the bible together, systematic theology, videos on the history of the church, biblical creation, biblical evangelism, listen to sermons and discuss above, one-on-one bible reading.

Al Martinez (2009-2010) studied several books of the bible, one-on-one bible reading, and spent time street preaching and studying biblical evangelism.

What are your long-term plans as far as living in this area?

I have no plans to move out of the area.

Family Life

How did your wife become a Christian and when, where, and why was she baptized?

She was saved in 1989 during revival at Gashland Baptist Church in Gladstone. She was baptized in 1992 at Heartland Baptist Tabernacle in Belton.

How did you meet your wife and how long have you been married?

I met my wife at work; we have been married twenty-five years in September.

How has she expressed her support of your desire to serve as an elder?

She is excited, supportive and encouraging. She has been praying for me in becoming an elder even before this process began (around 5 years).

Who are your children and how old are each of them?

Matt - 21

List some specific ways you lead your family.

Bible study, daily discussions and daily prayer. Besides studying the Bible together, on occasion, we will study Wayne Grudem's systematic theology. We also will discuss difficult doctrines. We have, and still use at times, the "One-to-One" Bible reading to study a book of the Bible. Recently we have read Titus, Colossians, and Amos. We also have several videos on different topics, such as Church History, History of the Bible (how we got the Bible), the History of Calvinism, biblical evangelism and several sermons on video. I also strive to live as a godly example to my family.

How would you describe the overall spiritual condition of each of your children? Have any of your children professed faith in Christ and been baptized? If so, when, where and how did this happen?

Matt is growing in his walk with Christ; his love for the Word of God is evident. Matt professed Christ in 2003 and was baptized as a display to show what Christ has done in his life. He let us know he wanted to be baptized; there was a conversation about being saved and then two interviews with our pastor, the second of which was videotaped.

How would you describe your overall approach to parenting? What is the biggest challenge you have faced as a parent?

That's a hard question for me due to Matthew's disability. I have always displayed my love to Matt. I not only tell him daily (several times daily) but I know it's very important to show him. Being a godly example, having opportunities to have gospel conversations.

From your present perspective, how would serving as an elder impact your family?

I think it would be a positive impact, Jodi has prayed for me in this. With the amount of time required to serve, it could be negative, but not to any damaging extent. Matt is a grown man but still needs me. We have more support now than ever before (nursing, family, and friends) and my job takes me away from family less than in the past.

Doctrinal Life

Please explain what you believe the Bible teaches about the following:

The Bible (inerrancy, inspiration, sufficiency, authority, what is the canon)

Inerrancy/Inspiration- God's word is without error. God breathed out His word, The Bible is the very word of God (2 Tim 3:16-17) (John 1)

Sufficiency-Good for all aspects of life (2 Tim 3:16-17)

Authority- John 1 Jesus is the Word, Jesus is God

Cannon- The cannon is the collection of books that makes up the Bible. Revelation closes out the cannon. Revelation 22:18-19 tells us that we are not to add anything to this Word. God's revealed Word ended with Revelation.

God the Father

He is Spirit. He is the first person of the Trinity, creator of all things (Gen 1:1-31, Eph 3:9) and orders all things according to his own purpose (Psalm 145:8-9). He is the only absolute and all-powerful ruler of the universe. He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Psalms 103:19-Rom 11-36). He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would save (Eph 1:4-6). The Father saves all those who come to Him through Jesus Christ; the Father is the one who adopts, as His own, all those who come to Him.

Jesus Christ

Second person of the Trinity. He possesses all the divine excellencies, He is co-equal, co-eternal, and of the same essence with the Father (John 10:30, John 14:9). God incarnate, Jesus became flesh, and dwelt among men. He didn't surrender any of his deity or His divine essence (Phillip 2:5-8). He is virgin born (Matt 1:23-25). Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross which was a voluntary death. His death was also substitutionary, taking the Father's wrath that sinful man deserved therefore redeeming us (John 10:15, Rom 3:24-25, Rom 5:8, 1 Peter 2:24). On the third day His resurrection earned our justification because it pleased and satisfied the Father.

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, a divine person, eternal, possessing all the attributes of God. The Holy Spirit allows the believer to know God through His Word (1 Cor 2:10-13). The Holy Spirit restrains evil (2 Thess 2:7). He was involved in creation (Gen. 1). The Holy Spirit renews the believer by washing and regeneration (Gen. 30:6; Titus 3:5-6). The Holy Spirit indwells the believer and sanctifies the believer.

The Trinity

The Trinity is the Godhead: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Although they are one God in essence, they are three distinct persons.

Mankind and his sinful nature

Mankind was created by God, in the image of God, perfect and without sin (Gen. 1: 26-27). Man was given dominion over all of God's creation Gen. 1:28). Mankind rebelled against God and then sin and death entered the world.

Although we are marred by sin we are the only creature that is made in the image of God (Gen. 9; James 3:9). Because of sin, mankind is totally depraved, meaning that the mind, will, and emotions are affected, or infected by sin (Gen 6:5; Jer 17:9; Rom 3:10-18). Total depravity does not mean that mankind is as bad as they could be; it is God's Holy Spirit that restrains mankind.

The Gospel

The gospel is the good news that God made a way for sinful man to be made right with their creator. Jesus Christ became flesh through the virgin birth, Jesus lived a perfect life, He never sinned in His thoughts or His deeds. Although he was innocent He willingly died on the cross as God the Father poured out His wrath on Christ. His was a death that we deserved. The Father treated Christ as though He had lived my life. Christ bore the sin of all of those who would be saved. Three days later God raised Jesus from the dead signifying that his wrath was satisfied.

Salvation (how is a person saved)

A person is saved by repenting from sin and putting their faith and trust in Jesus Christ alone. Recognizing that they have sinned against God and that they deserve hell for their sin and that there is no other way they can be saved. Then putting their trust in Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross to save them.

Justification

Justification means to be declared righteous. We now have a right relationship with the Father because of what Christ has done (Rom. 8:30, 33).

The Atonement

The atonement is the work that Jesus Christ did in His life, death and resurrection to earn salvation for all those who will believe. (Matt. 1:21)

Sanctification

Sanctification is the process of conforming our character to that of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (I Thess. 4:3, 7). It is the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives but it is also our responsibility. Justification and glorification are a total work of God in our lives but sanctification is God working in us as we strive to walk in His likeness.

Perseverance (eternal security)

Believers are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever! (Jn 5:24; 6:37).

Glorification

Glorification is the culmination of our salvation!! The presence of sin will be gone. We, as believers, will enter the presence of our God! 1Cor. 15:55-56.

God's Sovereignty and Man's Responsibility in Salvation

God's total sovereignty and man's personal responsibility are both involved in the process salvation. Scripture doesn't reconcile this, it teaches both. All mankind is to commanded to believe (Jn 3:18-19, 36; 5:40; 2 Thess. 2:10-12). But Scripture also teaches that God choses all who come to Him (Jn 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48).

Last Things

I believe that there will be a literal seven year tribulation and at the end of that tribulation Jesus Christ will return for His Bride, the church, and will set up His earthly kingdom on earth for a1000 years. At the end of that time all the nations of the earth will rise up against him and be defeated and then the new heavens and the earth will come. Matt 25:31, Luke 1:32-33, Acts 1:10-11, Acts 2:29-30, Rev 20:1-7.

The Scriptures

The Scriptures are God's written revelation to man. All 66 books of the Bible, given by the Holy Spirit, are the very words of God (1 Cor 2:7-14, 2 Peter 1:20-21). Men were moved by the Holy Spirit to write down God's word; it was not their own ideas.

The Church

The Church is the bride of Christ. Jesus Christ died for the Church. The Church is made up of those who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. We are to display God's glory to the nations. The Church began at Pentecost. Acts 2:14-41. The Church did not replace Israel. Eph 3:10-11.

Baptism

Baptism is one of the two ordinances that Jesus Christ gave us along with the Lord's Supper. Baptism is a picture of what Christ has done in the believer's life (Christ's death, burial and resurrection). It must be administered by immersion. It is the first step in obedience within the believer's life. In and of itself it does not save; therefore, it must follow saving faith. Matthew 28:19, Acts 2:38, Mark 1:5.

The Lord's Supper

The bread is a picture of Christ's body which was broken for the Church, the wine is a picture of His blood that was shed for the Church. We are commanded to do this in remembrance of Christ and the cross. We are to think on what Jesus Christ has done at the cross and we are to do this until He comes again.

Gender Roles (within the family and within the church)

The husband is head of the home (spiritual leader of the home; Eph 5:23). The wife is the primary keeper of the home (Titus 2:4). The wife is the weaker vessel but not inferior. Within the church, the men are to teach the body, women are not permitted to teach men (1 Timothy 2:12). Only men should be Elders and Deacons (Titus 1:6; 1 Tim. 3).

The Lordship Salvation Issue

Jesus Christ must be not only our Savior but also our Lord. This is not an option. In Philippians 2:11 indicates that Jesus Christ has been highly exalted and that every tongue will confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God the father.

Divorce and Remarriage

Matt 19:3-9. The Pharisees had a liberal approach to divorce, but Jesus Christ challenged them. Remarriage after divorce is generally characterized as adultery. If reconciliation is possible that would be desirable. Biblical divorce may occur if the an unbelieving spouse leaves (1 Cor 7:15). The believing spouse is free to remarry.

Sanctity of Life

The Scripture teaches that life begins at conception (Psalm 139:13-15). Also, there is value in life at any age due to the fact we are all created in God's image despite our ability (Gen 9:6).

Church Discipline

I believe Scripture teaches that a church is not a healthy, functioning New Testament Church if it does not practice Church Discipline (Matt. 18:15-20 Titus 3: 9-11). If we are to love and shepherd God's people we must practice this.

Cultural Life

Where do you work and for how long have you worked there?

I work at Jack Cooper Auto Transport, Inc. I have been there 17 years and 6 months.

Describe your relationships with your immediate neighbors?

I have a good relationship with them. We have had the blessing of having gospel conversation with most of them; also we have had the honor of serving them in different ways.

Ministry Life

Why do you want to be an elder?

I love SWBC more than I ever thought possible. I want to serve Summit Woods as Titus 1:5-9 talks about. My desire is to care for this local church that God has placed me in. In caring for them I desire to teach and explain to them the Word of God and to protect them from heretical

teaching that would cause Christ's sheep harm. I want to be a personal example, by the grace of God. I believe God has prepared me for this task, and if I become an elder or not I will continue to serve His church at SWBC.

What is your understanding of the primary roles and responsibilities of an Elder as defined by Scripture?

To teach sound doctrine. To be a protector of sound doctrine for the health and purity of God's people. To help lead the congregation to best display the Gospel to the nations.

How are you currently fulfilling these responsibilities in the different contexts in which God has sovereignly placed you?

I have the privilege of teaching in the student ministries. I also lead a Growth Group in my home (which is awesome!!). I have also had the wonderful honor of preaching on a Sunday night.

Have you read the SWBC Church Covenant, and do you fully affirm all that it contains?

Yes

Have you read the Baptist Faith and Message (2000), and do you fully affirm all that it contains?

Yes.

Have you read the by-laws of SWBC, and do you fully support all that they contain?

Yes.

Describe how you would handle a situation in which you were on the minority side of an issue being decided by the Elders and you had strong convictions about your position.

If my convictions were based on Scripture I would prayerfully, lovingly, and graciously show that. But if my strong convictions were based on my preferences, I would lovingly and graciously submit to the majority of the Elders.

When you have been met with opposition, has it been mostly related to your style of leadership, your personality, your beliefs, or something else? Please explain.

My beliefs. Some time ago, I had to separate with a brother because he felt my view of election was heretical and he would not repent of that view. He was causing dissension not only in our home Bible study group, but also in our ministry, and in the church.

What ministries at SWBC have you been involved in?

Equipping Classes
Growth Group
Student Ministries
Men's Bible Study (Mid-Week Fellowship)

Preaching

Evangelism Ministries (Street Preaching and personal evangelism)

Describe your involvement in the previous two churches you have been a part of (name the churches, how did you serve, and why did you leave)?

At Eastside Baptist Church I taught and was part of the outreach teams that visited guests and the homebound. I really enjoyed that. We left Eastside Baptist Church because we disagreed with their approach to gospel ministry. I sought opportunity to talk through these issues with the Pastor and we left peacefully.

At First Baptist Kearney I also was part of the outreach program, doing home visits. I also taught in the youth department. We left FBCK because we moved to Independence.

Describe any previous teaching experiences you have had at other churches?

I have taught in the youth department at First Baptist Kearney. I also taught an adult group at Eastside Baptist Church, and young children on Wednesday nights (I also drove the bus to pick them up). I also taught at Heartland Baptist and their satellite church in Gladstone.

How would you describe the difference between biblical convictions and personal preferences? How should elders resolve differences they have on issues of ministry application?

A biblical conviction is something biblically based and can be proved using Scripture. A personal preference is something I might like or prefer but is not commanded by Scripture.

Affirmation Timeline

Sunday, June 29	Announcement to the Church.
Sunday, July 6, 13, 20, 27	<p>Todd will be available in the Fellowship Hall after Equipping Classes from 10:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. for dialogue.</p> <p>Todd will deliver the mid-service prayer and read Scripture during our main worship gathering.</p> <p>Todd will be available for dialogue at the Welcome Table after the main worship gathering.</p>
Sunday, August 24	Todd will give his testimony, preach, and conduct a Q&A session beginning at 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, September 7	Congregational vote to affirm Todd (at the conclusion of our main worship gathering)

From Our By-Laws

III. Members of the Board of Elders

While no specific number is mentioned, the Biblical mandate is for a plurality of Elders to Elder/lead the local church. An Elder candidate must be a church member for at least one year with the exception of the Pastor-Teacher and Associate Pastor(s).

The Elder Board shall consist of the Pastor-Teacher, the Associate Pastor(s), and other qualified men as affirmed by the church body. At least one member of the Elder Board must be a lay elder.

IV. Length of Service

Each Elder, with the exception of the Pastor-Teacher and the Associate Pastor(s), is appointed for a 3-year term. At the end of the 3-year term, the Elder can be re-appointed to another 3-year term.

After two consecutive 3-year terms, the Elder must take a year off from serving on the Elder Board before he can be considered for another 3-year term.

VII. Nomination and Appointment of Elders

This process should follow three steps:

The candidate should express his desire and willingness to serve to the Elders. A church member may also recommend a candidate to the Elders.

The candidate is examined and trained by the Elder Examination Board and recommended to the church by the Elders.

The candidate is affirmed and ordained by the congregation, thereby becoming a member of the Elder Board.