

# Roles and Activities of the Local Elder

Chesapeake Conference  
of Seventh-day Adventists



**I. It is a personal calling**



In His infinite mercy, God uses men and women in order to place them before the greatest work ever entrusted to a mortal: The salvation of souls! God does this in spite of our weaknesses and failures, but does so because He is willing to transform us and turn us into leaders after His own heart. He never calls anyone so that they fail; He calls us to enable us and for us to succeed in the task He sets before us.



# **Elders in the church are men and women called by God to fulfill a divine purpose, to:**

- Prepare the church for the second coming of Jesus.
- Work with the church to accomplish its mission upon the earth.
- Lead the church in worship of the Almighty God.
- Teach the church to be active disciples of Jesus.



## **II. Roles of the Elder**



# 1- Leading Worship

- Keep the focus on the congregation's expression of worship to God.
- Be intentional about drawing a clear line between performance and worship.
- Be sure that the worship experience results in the congregations leaving the service with a sense of hope for daily living.



## 2- Preaching the Sermon

- Make sure that Jesus is at the heart of every message.
- Allow your understanding of the local congregation shape your sermon.
- Be specific, practical, and very clear as to how your message can be implemented in a life of faith.
- Speak personally and from the heart.



### **3- Setting Congregational Goals**

- First, sit down with the other leaders of the church and talk about who you want to be, as an Adventist witness, in your community.
- Develop community assessments that identify what is distinctive about your community and its needs.



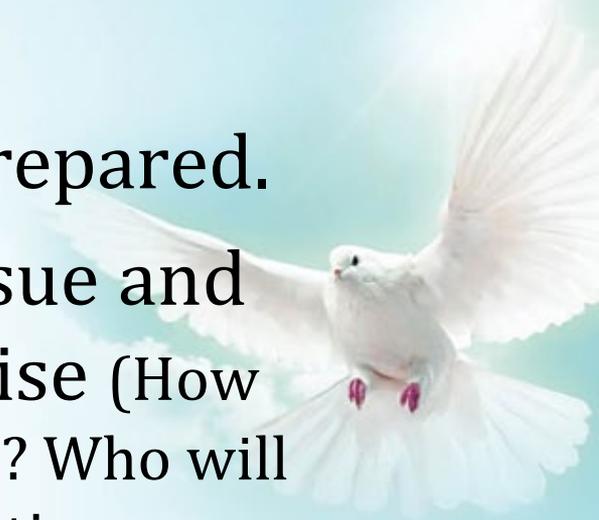
### **3- Setting Congregational Goals**

- Take a careful look at the distinctive spiritual gifts already manifested in your congregation.
- Sit down with the other leaders in the church and write out a strategic plan.



## 4- Managing Meetings

- Go into the meetings well prepared.
- Anticipate all sides of the issue and conversations that might arise (How will this affect different age groups? Who will be asked to pay for this? What reactions can we expect?)
- Go into the meeting with a specific agenda and share it in advance.
- Bring proposals that have something for all factions in the congregation.



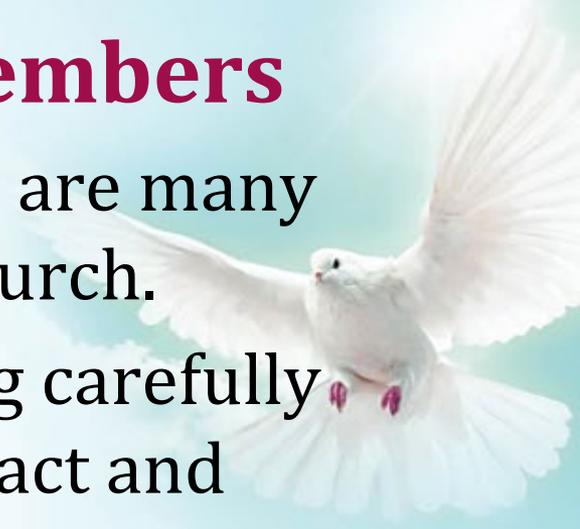
## 5- Local Church Growth

- We must understand how and why public evangelism works.
- Develop an annual cycle of evangelism that moves from gaining interests to appeals to accept Jesus and be baptized.
- Have a plan to retain new members through active discipleship.



## 6- Reclaiming Missing Members

- We must remember that there are many reasons members leave the church.
- Care must be taken in selecting carefully chosen individuals who have tact and sensitivity to issues who will engage missing members.
- We must begin visiting members who are inactive (or nearly so).



# *Visitation Guidelines*

1. Prepare before you visit someone (know in advance what it is that you need to know about the person's circumstances).
2. Begin with social interaction.
3. Move to the spiritual.
4. Ask important questions.
5. Keep confidences that are shared.
6. Invite the individual back to church.
7. Be sure to pray before you leave.
8. Leave before you are asked to leave!



## 7- Member Visitation

- Set up a broad visitation plan.
- In today's society it is generally better to make an appointment for your visit.
- Follow the visitations guidelines.
- When appropriate, take someone with you on the visit (perhaps another elder).
- Try and make your visits regular so that your members are comfortable with them.



## 8- Personal Counseling

- Understand the laws for counseling in your state.
- Put the emphasis on listening.
- Focus on broad, spiritual solutions.
- Help them lay out options to form a plan.
- Know when to refer to a professional.
- Pray with understanding of the moment of crisis.



## 9- Bible Study and Baptism

- Have a Bible study curriculum that you are comfortable with.
- Try to have someone help you give the Bible study (this mentorship is important to developing others to give Bible studies).
- Be sure to ask for decisions at the appropriate times during the studies.
- Follow the church manual and the local conference policy when preparing for baptism.



# 10- Anointing and Prayer for the sick.

- First ask the individual if they would like prayer or anointing.
- If anointing is desired, if time permits, call other elders to join you.
- Read from James 5:13-15.
- Emphasize spiritual as well as physical healing and the Holy Spirit's role in both.
- Leave shortly after the anointing to allow the individual to reflect on the spiritual meaning of this even.



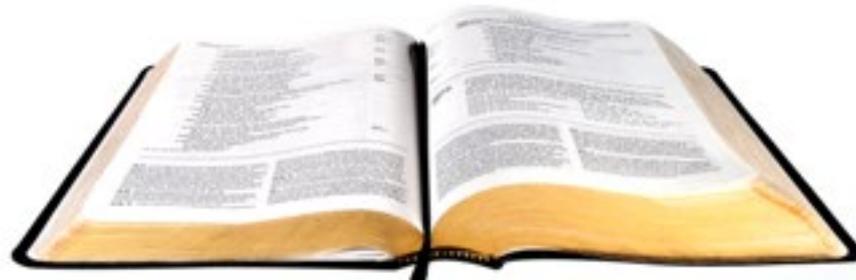
# 11- Special Services

- Baby dedications
- Funerals
- Communion service
- House dedications
- Ground breaking
- Church dedication





# **III. The elders and discipleship**



*“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

***Matthew 28:19-20***



The church has been commissioned by Jesus to go to all the corners of the world to prepare true disciples, and church elders are not outside of that mandate.



- I. Each of the church elders chooses to seek a friend (John 1:40-45).
- II. Each of the elders chooses to pray for their friend and their friend's family.
- III. The elder will not take into consideration whether their friends are difficult or not.
- IV. The elders share positive things with their friends.



- V. The elders exalt Jesus to their friends.
- VI. The elders speak to their friends with full conviction.
- VII. The elders are not discouraged if their friends do not seem receptive knowing that discipleship takes time.
- VIII. The elders put their friends into contact with Jesus.



- IX. The elders remember that the Holy Spirit is their companion.
- X. The elders are always looking for someone new to disciple.

