

Submitted Motion:

A church member has requested that in the new Bylaws we continue to have women At Large members as part of the new Elder governance structure from a complementarian perspective.

Rationale of Motion:

- Elders made up of all men would be deficient in all the knowledge needed to shepherd the church due to the lack of the female perspective.
- Men will work on their own and will make their choice on when to seek female input from *their* perspective, not a female's perspective.
- Elders need to be accountable to the full church and having two board members at large that are women would foster accountability.
- From a complementarian viewpoint, there are issues that women may need to discuss with the church spiritual leadership but would want to discuss with a woman.
- Our theological stance as a church is not changing, yet the new model seems to exclude women from an important seat at the table whereas the previous model allowed it.

Executive Board Response:

The Executive Board believes that a "members-at-large" position is inconsistent with the biblical model of Elders and Deacons. The new Bylaws do include, encourage, and expand the leadership roles for women in accordance with a biblical, complementarian perspective (described below).

Under the current Bylaws:

- The Executive Board is comprised of the senior pastor, associate pastor, the eight deacons, the missions chair, the trustee chair, and two "members-at-large."
- Only men may serve as senior pastor, associate pastor, or as deacons.
- Women may serve as the missions chair, trustee chair, or as a "member-at-large" representative on the Executive Board.

Under the new (proposed) Bylaws:

- We will eliminate the Executive Board and move to a biblical model of Elders and Deacons.
- The Elders and Deacons will have important yet distinct leadership responsibilities.
- We uphold the qualifications and responsibilities of Elders and Deacons as outlined in Scripture.
- We affirm that the office of Elder is open to qualified men and that the office of Deacon is open to qualified men and women (1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; Act 6:1-4).
- There will no longer be a "Board" nor a "member-at-large" position.
- Women will be welcomed into many leadership opportunities including serving as Deacons or as the Head Deacon.

We affirm that Scripture is sufficient in providing the direction and safeguards for proper church governance. Elders are accountable to God and to the congregation to seek out, understand and

serve the men, women, children, and youth within God's church with compassion and humility. Elders will "shepherd the flock of God that is among you" (1 Peter 5:2) in the model of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 11:1). An elder will discern the direction of the Holy Spirit and guide the church toward His plans for ministry (2 Tim. 1:13-14). An elder will rely on the endless resources of God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to serve His people (2 Cor. 12:9; Acts 1:8). Please see *Shepherd and Souls* Sermon Series, S. Solberg April 2018 for further clarification.

You may ask: What is a complementarian?

Complementarians believe that God created male and female to reflect complementary truths about Jesus. Complementarians believe that males were designed to shine the spotlight on Christ's relationship to the church (and the LORD God's relationship to Christ) in a way that females cannot, and that females were designed to shine the spotlight on the Church's relationship to Christ (and Christ's relationship to the LORD God) in a way that males cannot. Who we are as male and female is ultimately not about us. It is about testifying to the story of Jesus. We do not get to dictate what manhood and womanhood are all about. Our Creator does. That is the basis of complementarianism.*

*Greg Strand Post: <https://www.efca.org/blog/understanding-scripture/complementarianism-primer>