

March 15, 2007

Dear Church Family,

The purpose of this letter is to update you on the progress which the Deacon Body has made in their study of Biblical Eldership. Over the last couple of years, a Task Force has done extensive research in Scripture passages that relate to elders as well as the ways in which Baptist churches today have applied those passages. After making several reports to the Deacon body, the Deacons have recently approved with a strong majority to recommend that the church family consider adjusting our current leadership structure to include Elders. **It is their desire to bring a motion for consideration by the church membership at the Business Meeting scheduled for May 20, 2007.**

This is a very important decision that will have major implications on the organizational structure of the church. We do not enter into a decision of this magnitude lightly and want to ensure that time is dedicated for prayer, study of the Word, and open dialogue as we together seek the Lord's will in this matter. Over the next couple of months, an intentional effort to educate the congregation on the concept of eldership and to clearly discuss the potential changes to our current leadership structure will take place. I want to assure you that this process will be done in a manner which will address questions and concerns of the church family and that the process will not be rushed.

The original plan to accomplish this goal is as follows:

March 15	Letter sent to church membership
March 20	Elder Resource page to be placed on the church website containing information and articles about biblical eldership (This information will also be available in the church office for those without internet access)
April 15	10:30 AM Service - I will preach on Biblical Eldership and the proposed changes to the Constitution and By-Laws will be distributed at the end of the service 6 PM Service – I will teach on the subject of the requirements and role of elders with time for questions and discussion from the congregation
April 22	6 PM Service – The Deacon Task Force will present the proposed changes to the Constitution and By-Laws in a format that includes questions and discussion from the congregation
April 29	6 PM Service – The Deacon Task Force will continue the presentation from the previous week
May 6	This is a Life Group night, but if time is still needed for the Deacon Task Force to continue their presentation, it will take place and Life Groups will be rescheduled
May 20	Business Meeting at 6 PM

In addition, there will be testimonies shared by several deacons both in the morning and evening services between April 15 and May 20.

As you are probably aware, churches have utilized elders in different ways and with varying levels of responsibility and authority. I encourage you to look with an open mind at the specific recommendation that will be made here at Summit Woods as it is likely different from other models that you have seen in that the principles of congregational decision-making will still be in place. I pray that this process will be edifying as we search the Scriptures together and unifying as we together seek to structure Summit Woods in accordance with God's plan for His church. In the end, may God be glorified as we desire to Exalt the King and Extend the Kingdom!

For His Glory,

Pastor Ryan