

# LEADING TOGETHER

## A THEOLOGY OF CHURCH TEAMS



CROSSROADS  
FELLOWSHIP



## Anticipated Schedule for the day:

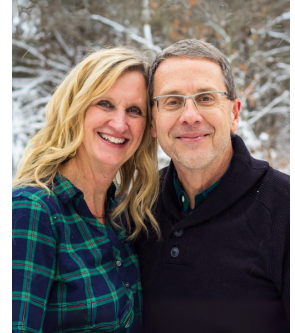
10:00 am.	<b>Kick off Session</b> Welcome, Worship Prayer - Brian M The Heart of Christ (Matthew 11) - Jon B
10:30 am	<b>General Session</b> - Doug C
12:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm	<b>Breakout Sessions</b> Deacon Training: Doug M Pastor Training: Doug C
2:30 pm	<b>Wrap-up Session</b> The Design of Christ (Ephesians 4) - Jon B Worship - Brian M CF Opportunities - Jon B Final Thoughts and Closing Prayer - Aaron Birk?
3:00	<b>Dismiss</b>

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## Today's Guest Speakers

### Doug Crawford

After serving the West Cannon Baptist Church for 43 years, Doug now serves as the Executive Director of the Bridge Fellowship, a network of over 150 churches. Doug serves on the Council of 18 for the GARBC. He and his wife, Kathy, have been married for 46 years. They were privileged to raise six children and now have 18 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.



### Doug Murray

Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Kouts, Indiana, for the last 8 years. Doug previously served as a church planter in Lutz, Florida. Doug serves on the Crossroads Fellowship Board. He and his wife, Valarie, have been married for 29 years, have raised 4 children, and now have 3 grandchildren.



### Our Host Pastors

Brian McCorie, Trey Otjen, Greg Oertel

# Session 1: A Theology of Leadership

Introduction:

An ever present danger ... to introduce tradition into the discussion at a level that equals or exceeds the authority of our theology. (Matthew 15:1-6)

## 1. A Brief Theology of Leadership

A) Leadership is a Good Gift from God that is Rooted in Creation

> God created and intended structures of authority for His creation ... before the FALL

The created was to submit to the Creator (Genesis 2:15-17)

The wife was to submit to the leadership of her husband (1 Corinthians 11:3)

**Significant Truth** – headship / submission are rooted in the image of God not a result of the Fall ... equality in essence / distinction in function

**TRUTH** - Leadership / headship is a good part of God's creation and therefore informs our understanding of leadership in the church.

B) The Response to Leadership Changes because of the Fall

> The created will resist and rebel against the Creator (Genesis 3)

> Adam's offspring will resist authority / leadership in their lives (Genesis 4)

Husband and wife relationship will know conflict over leadership

Parent and child relationship will know conflict over leadership

God's people, the nation of Israel will resist leadership

Moses will need help (Numbers 11:10-17)

Israel's rebellion will lead to anarchy (Judges 21:25)

God appoints leaders in all nations to govern / protect image bearers (Romans 13:1-5; 1 Peter 2:13-17)

C) Why does the Church Need Leaders?

> It's God's Design

Paul's letter to Timothy the Elder (1 Timothy 3:4, 12)

Paul's letter to Titus the Elder (Titus 1:5-6)

> For the good of His people, the church, God appoints leaders ...

Leaders are to see that the needs of the church are cared for (Acts 6:1-7)

Leaders are to exercise wisdom to prevent division in the church (Acts 15)

Leaders are to protect the flock from wolves in their midst (Acts 20:17-35)

Leaders are to provide a pattern of behavior for the church to follow (Phil. 4:9)

> Leaders are to rule well (1 Timothy 5:17)

> Leaders are to encourage, rebuke, and exhort the church family with patience and teaching (2 Timothy 4:1-2; Titus 2:15)

## 2) What Building Blocks Did God Give to the Church for Leadership

A) The qualifications, responsibilities, and guidelines for the CONGREGATION

> Qualifications for the congregation

Congregational authority is dependent upon a saved church membership  
(1 Corinthians 1:1-2)

> Responsibilities of the congregation

Appointment of leaders (Acts 6:3-7)

Entrance to membership (2 Corinthians 2:5-9)

Removal from fellowship (1 Corinthians 5:4-12)

Doctrinal purity (Galatians 1:6-9; Jude 3-4)

> Guidelines for the Congregation

Submission to leaders (Hebrews 13:17)

Recognize that you will be held accountable for your decisions / actions

B) The qualifications, responsibilities, and guidelines for the **ELDERS**

**NOTE:** Elder is the most prominent title for this office, overseer second, pastor least

> Qualifications for both Timothy and Titus (1 Timothy 3:1-7, 14-15; Titus 1:5-9)

> Responsibilities

To lead (1 Timothy 5:17-18)

But not “rule over” (1 Peter 5:1-7)

To model, teach and defend sound doctrine (1 Tim 4:12; Titus 1:10-11)

To protect, feed, and lead the sheep (Acts 20:28-31)

> Guidelines

Elders are accountable to the church (1 Timothy 5:19)

A plurality of elders is assumed  
(Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:5; James 5:14; 1 Pet 5:1)

Servant leaders (John 13)

C) The qualifications, responsibilities, and guidelines for the DEACONS

> Qualifications (Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:8-13)

> Responsibilities

“to serve” (Matt 20:28; Mark 1:31; 6:2)

“a servant” (Mark 10:43; John 2:5)

> Guidelines

Recognized/approved by the church (Acts 6:3-6)

Honored by the church family (1 Corinthians 16:15)

Rewarded by God (1 Timothy 3:13)

### **3. Building a Leadership Team**

A) Building a team / relational ministry is good because it images God who is Good

> Unity among leaders is critical if we are to fulfill our mission  
(John 13:33-35; 17:20-21)

B) A Leadership Team will ALWAYS accomplish more than an individual

> Moses needed Aaron / Joshua / bunch of elders

- > Paul needed Barnabas / Silas / Titus / Timothy / etc (Acts 13 / Acts 15 / 2 Cor. 8-9)
- > Pastor/teachers equip the saints to do the work of the ministry (Eph. 4; 1 Cor 12)
- > Jesus invested in a team of disciples to take over when He ascended

C) A Leadership Team is a gift from God - not an undesirable encumbrance

- > If God has called you to lead, then He has called you to be on a team/lead a team/serve with a team

### **APPLICATION:**

1. Some practical lessons learned for building a leadership team

- A. Develop a clear vision and philosophy of leadership that potential team members **MUST** understand and share
- B. Build your team with people you like to spend time with ... because you're going to
- C. Add team members whose strengths will be used in their area of responsibility, enhance your ministry, and meet the needs of your constituents
- D. Add team members who are **DOING** what you will be asking them to do
- E. Know that you are a team player but a **PLAYER COACH**
- F. Be prepared ... building a team will require time, humility, and may not end well
  - > Some people just don't play well in the sandbox

2. Some worthy benefits of having a healthy leadership team

- A. Encourages wise decision making, etc - wisdom/safety in a multitude of counselors
- B. Discourages the pride that accompanies success
- C. Encourages healthy relationships that image / glorify God (John 13:34-35; 17:20-21)
- D. Discourages being overwhelmed / discouragement/depression
- E. Encourages health of the institution ... especially long-term and/or through transitions

## Session 2: Pastors/Elders Breakout

### Three Models for Implementing Elders

	Kent City	North Park	Middleville
<b>How many elders do you have?</b>	9	8 currently but probably 9 next year	8 currently
<b>How many pastoral/staff elders vs. "lay" elders?</b>	4 lay elders 5 pastoral/staff elders	5 lay elders 3 pastoral/staff elders	6 lay elders 2 pastoral/staff elders
<b>How many elders are you required to have? (or goal?)</b>	Not less than 2 pastoral/staff elders and not less than 4 lay elders	Goal is 1 more lay elder than pastoral/staff elders when possible	At least one more lay elder than pastoral/staff elders. Ideally 12 lay elders & deacons total with a close-to-even split.
<b>Terms or perpetual?</b>	Renewable 4 year terms	3 year terms, renewable once	3 year terms, renewable once
<b>Is there a limit before a break?</b>	No	A year break is required after 2 consecutive terms	A year break is required after 2 consecutive terms
<b>How are elders chosen?</b>	Elders are chosen by the deacons	Elders are nominated by the congregation, appointed by the elders, and then voted on by the congregation with a 2/3 approval required.	Elders are nominated by the congregation, screened by a nominating committee, appointed by the elders, then voted on by the congregation with a 2/3 approval required.
<b>Do often do the elders meet? When?</b>	Once a month 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday afternoon	Twice a month Tuesday nights	Once a month 2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday at 7:00 PM
<b>How and when do your elders meet with the deacons?</b>	We do an annual leadership retreat and year end breakfast. Both groups work together on significant decisions (staff, major projects, etc.)	We do an annual leadership retreat & meal for the elders, deacons, and their wives, Fri-Sat. We have a goal of meeting together once in the spring and once in fall for about the first 45-60 minutes of the meeting to share what they are working on, questions, & prayer requests.	The elders and deacons meet together monthly as the Full Board for about an hour before splitting into distinct boards for the rest of the meeting. The Full Board is responsible to propose the final budget and some other major decisions.
<b>Other unique features?</b>	The elder and deacon relationship is complementarian, not hierarchical. Respect and mutual submission are vital for our or any structure to function.	-We have admin and mercy deacons. -In the fall we will also be adding a deaconess role that is primarily geared toward ministering to women, female shut-ins, benevolent needs, and leadership to women's ministries.	-We have an Executive Committee that meets on the Sunday prior to the Board meetings & as needed. Exec includes the Senior Pastor, Lay Elder Chair, Lay Elder Clerk, and Head Deacon. -Both lay elders & deacons have care groups -Each lay elder is partnered with a deacon
<b>When did your church switch to elders?</b>	2011	2018	2025 trial run 2026 official switch

# THEOLOGY OF LEADERSHIP

## SECTION A—CHRIST'S AUTHORITY

God the Father has given all authority over the Church to Jesus Christ alone (Matt. 28:18). The church is built by Him and upon Him as its Chief Cornerstone (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:20), is under His authority as the Head of the Church (Eph. 1:22, 23; Col. 1:18), and is under His care as its Chief Shepherd (Eph. 5:25; 1 Pet. 5:4). It is in Christ that the church body grows and is held together (Col. 2:19). His personal rule over the church continues today even as we await His return. We desire to obey Him, to imitate Him, and to seek His mind in all things.

Christ's authority over His church is communicated through the Holy Scriptures, which are the very words of God (2 Tim. 3:16). God has also given to every believer His Holy Spirit to aid them in properly understanding His Word. We humbly recognize that no creed, church document, corporate vote, personal experience, or office carries the same authority—Christ's authority supersedes all.

All leadership has authority only as it is granted by Christ in His Word therefore man's leadership in the church is never a matter of wielding the power of Christ, but rather of stewarding the gifts provided by the Holy Spirit and ordained by Scripture for the benefit of all (1 Cor. 12:4–7).

Scripture reveals a model for local church governance that recognizes and delegates responsibility and authority to the congregation, elders, and deacons (Phil. 1:1). When each of these groups fulfills its role under the authority of Jesus Christ and His Word, it will produce harmony and serve as a testimony of God's grace and our identity as Jesus' disciples (John 13:33–35).

## SECTION B—CONGREGATION

### Church Membership

Those who gather for the weekly services in the local church are a mixture of believers and unbelievers. Those who believe and then have been baptized are expected to enter into church membership, a relationship of responsibility and accountability to one another before God (Acts 2:41, 42; 1 Cor. 12:4–7; Heb. 10:21–25). These members make up the congregation with all its privileges, responsibilities, and authority. Believers who desire to become members are admitted at the recommendation of the leadership and the approval of the congregation.

### Church Members' Responsibilities to God

The fundamental responsibility under Jesus Christ for the preservation of all aspects of the local church belongs to the congregation. The Scriptures give the responsibility for settling disputes to the congregation (Matt. 18:15–17), contending for correct doctrine (Gal. 1:8; Jude 3), appointing and affirming officers, and admitting or excluding members (2 Cor. 2:6–8; 1 Cor. 5:1–13). The congregation is responsible to make sure that God's Word is rightly preached, that the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper are rightly celebrated, and that all members are living lives worthy of their calling (Eph. 4:1).

Although congregations may fall short in fulfilling their responsibilities to the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, their responsibilities do not cease. No other group—either inside or outside of the church—may remove these responsibilities from the local congregation. Jesus

Christ has given gifted men to lead His church in the fulfillment of its obligations (Eph. 4:11–16, 1 Pet. 5:1–3). As the leaders submit to Jesus Christ, it is the congregation’s responsibility to submit them (1 Thess. 5:12, 13; Heb. 13:17)

It is the responsibility of the local church to recognize those whom God has gifted for leadership and to entrust them with the necessary resources (1 Tim. 5:17, 18). This model images the Triune Godhead wherein all Persons of the Godhead are equal in essence and yet there is headship (1 Cor. 11:3).

### **Church Members’ Responsibilities toward Each Other**

The Scriptures call members of West Cannon Baptist Church to love one another (John 15:12; 1 John 4:7–21), to live in unity and peace (2 Cor. 13:11; Eph. 4:1–3), to meet together and encourage one another (Heb. 10:23–25), to serve and equip one another using each one’s spiritual gifts (Rom. 12:3–13), to pray for one another (Eph. 6:18), admonish one another (Col. 3:16), and to financially give to support the commitments of the church (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:7).

### **Church Members’ Responsibilities toward Spiritual Leadership**

Church members are instructed to identify, value, and submit to their spiritual leaders who have been gifted by God to be overseers of the local church. A congregation that listens to and submits to their spiritual leaders will be a blessing to their leaders, and their leaders will find joy in their ministry to them (Heb. 13:17). The congregation is responsible for providing for their leaders (1 Tim. 5:17, 18), praying for their leaders (1 Thess. 5:25; Heb. 13:18), respecting their leaders (1 Thess. 5:2–13), and holding their leaders accountable (1 Tim. 5:19, 20).

### **Congregational Meetings**

The New Testament reveals a congregation working together—members, elders, and deacons—for the building up of the church (Acts 6:5; 15:22). Important issues and circumstances that arise will require the involvement and wisdom of the whole congregation. Some examples of the issues which the congregation will be asked to give input and approval are:

- approval and affirmation of church officers—elders and deacons
- changes to the Church Constitution, Congregation Approved Policies, and the Statement of Faith
- the discipline of a church member
- the annual church budget
- large loans and non-budgeted purchases that exceed 1% of the total budget
- the disposition or acquisition of all real church property

## **SECTION C—ELDERS**

In the New Testament, the spiritual leaders are those who oversee and shepherd the flock of God under the Chief Shepherd Jesus Christ and are most often called elders. Scripture uses three separate terms to refer to the same office: elder, overseer, and pastor or shepherd (1 Pet. 5:1–4). As a pastor and overseer, an elder is accountable to God for the welfare of the congregation and its ministries (Heb. 13:17).

The Pattern of spiritual leadership for God’s people has involved a plurality of gifted and qualified men (Num. 11:16, 17; Deut. 1:9–14; Acts 14:21–23; 20:17; Titus. 1:5). The combined counsel and wisdom of a team of elders helps ensure that decisions are not self-willed or self-serving to a single individual. Together, the elders strive to function in unity and harmony in seeking the mind of the Lord by means of a multitude of counselors (Prov. 11:14, 15:22).

### **Qualifications**

The Scriptures clearly teach that elders must meet certain qualifications before appointment to office. Elders are male servant leaders who humbly model the character and ministry of Jesus Christ and desire to shepherd His flock at West Cannon Baptist Church (1 Tim. 2:12–14; 3:1–5; Titus 1:6; 1 Pet. 5:2). An elder must not be a new convert and must be a member of West Cannon Baptist Church, faithful in attendance and actively involved with its members (1 Tim. 3:6).

An elder must be above reproach in all he does, which means being sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, uncontentious, just, devout, loving what is good, and having a good reputation (1 Tim. 3:2, 7; Titus 1:6–8, 2:5). He must not be addicted to wine, not one who lords authority over others, free from the love of money, and if married, he must be the husband of one wife (1 Tim. 3:2, 3:5:23; Titus 1:6,7; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3). He must be able to teach Scripture, exhort believers with sound doctrine, refute false teachers, and manage his own household well (1 Tim. 3:2, 4, 5; Titus 1:6, 7, 9).

### **Responsibilities**

God has given elders to His church in order to equip the saints for the work of the ministry and to build them up to spiritual maturity (Eph. 4:11–13). This includes training in knowledge, protecting against false doctrine, helping members to use their gifts for the benefit of the local church, and passing on to faithful men what has been entrusted to them. It also means caring for the flock, serving in love, providing direction, being an example, and evidencing godliness and growth before the congregation (1 Tim. 4:12–16).

Some examples of matters the elders would attend to are:

- Oversight of deacons
- Setting the overall curriculum
- Policy approval
- Clarifying the mission of the church
- Discerning doctrine
- Writing position papers
- Spiritual care of individual members and attenders
- Mentoring future leaders
- Nominating elders/deacons
- Equip members for service
- Pulpit supply
- Church discipline

Elders are also accountable to one another to minister to one another, to share the burdens of leadership as co-laborers in Christ, to hold one another accountable for maintaining their office with integrity, and to model in their shared leadership the unity God desires for the church.

### **Becoming an Elder**

Any qualified member at West Cannon Baptist Church may be considered for the office of elder, a process that may be initiated by the member, the congregation, or by the elders. Those deemed qualified will undergo a process of thorough examination into their lives, ministry, and doctrine by the existing elders. Those who prove themselves through this examination must then be approved by the congregation.

### **Leadership Structure**

Scripture does not limit the number of elders, but a minimum number of elders ought to be maintained so that the burdens and privileges of leadership are spread out. All elders are equals, although some may perform unique roles. All elders ought to be periodically reviewed by one another with input from those they serve in the congregation. Some elders may also be hired as staff.

### **Removing an Elder**

While an elder may step down from office at any time and for any reason, he may be made to step down if he no longer meets the qualifications of office.

Scripture warns not to entertain frivolous accusations but to be diligent in investigating serious matters (1 Tim. 5:19). An elder should not be expected to be perfect and should be treated graciously and charitably at all times; just any member should hope to be treated. However, some sins are severe enough that even if the elder has made things right and been forgiven, he may no longer be qualified for office.

If an elder has been found to be disqualified and refuses to step down, the rest of the elders must go before the congregation and present their decision of removal in a spirit of gentleness and humility (Gal. 6:1).

## **SECTION D—DEACONS**

In addition to elders, Scripture uses the title of deacon to refer to members who serve in an official capacity

(Phil. 1:1). Like elders, they model humble service to the congregation, assisting the elders in their shepherding and oversight of the local church. Deacons follow the example of the seven men appointed in Acts 6 to care for specific needs in the congregation so that the Apostles could focus on their unique ministry (Acts 6:1–4).

### **Qualifications**

Scripture holds deacons to similar standards of character as elders since they are set apart as trusted servants and faithful members. “they must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well” (1 Tim. 3:8–12).

Although we recognize and value the gifts and ministries of women highly at West Cannon, we will handle the office of deaconess separately and after the other structures are in place.

## **Responsibilities**

The pattern of deacons in Scripture is to take on ministries the elders delegate to them (Acts 6:1–4). The flexibility of the office frees deacons to serve in any way they are needed. Some examples of ways deacons at West Cannon Baptist Church may serve are:

- Hospitality—including transportation, parking, greeting, ushering, coffee, and visitor follow-up
- Buildings & Grounds—including maintenance and improvement of grounds and facilities
- Media & Technology—including audiovisual, internet
- Accessibility—interacts with other ministries to ensure special needs are addressed
- Finance—including budget accountability and the collection and counting of offerings
- Care—identifying and meeting personal needs of members and non-members
- Worship—including song selection, dramatic and artistic elements, Scripture readings, and prayer. Perform general tasks such as such as distributing the elements of communion and organizing volunteers

## **Becoming a Deacon**

The process for the appointment of deacons will involve identifying men who are gifted to serve, examining their qualifications, and training them for ministry. Potential deacons will be examined by the elders and then presented to the congregation, who will appoint them to serve for a period of three years.

Because there is no Scriptural limitation of the number of deacons within a local church, the number of deacons will depend upon those qualified and the number needed to effectively serve the church. All current deacons shall be presented to the congregation annually for affirmation and prayer.

## **Removing a Deacon**

Deacons must maintain their qualifications just as elders do. A deacon may step down from the office at any time and for any reason, but he or she may also be made to step down if he or she no longer meets the qualifications of the office.

If a deacon has been found to be disqualified and refuses to step down, the elders must go before the congregation and present their decision of removal in a spirit of gentleness and humility (Gal. 6:1).

## **LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE**

The work of elders and deacons can overlap, and the better informed each group is about each other's ministries and the church, the better their relationship will be. To encourage a healthy relationship, the deacons will appoint a chairman from among themselves who is to be in regular contact with the elders. Elders and deacons ought also to meet together for prayer, fellowship, and to consider the effectiveness of their care for the congregation. The deacon chairman will also assist fellow deacons by training them as they seek to serve effectively, scheduling and moderating deacon meetings, helping to find and approve volunteers to assist deacons with their tasks, and by encouraging deacons in their ministry to the church body.

Joint elders / deacons council meetings will be held once a quarter or as often as deemed necessary so that all can explain their goals, report on their work, and rejoice together in their ministry. While all deacons are welcome to attend, at least one representative of each area of ministry ought to be present.

These areas of ministry are standing committees or commissions chaired by a deacon and composed of approved volunteers. They meet monthly or as often as needed to carry out their ministry on behalf of the elders and congregation.

Adopted June 26, 2016

## Session 2: Deacons Breakout

### The Occasion for the Church's first lead Servants (Acts 6:1-7)

In the early church, caring for one another's physical needs was a hallmark of the love Jesus called His disciples to have for one another. In Acts (Acts 2:44; 4:32-37), selling positions and even property for the needs of those in the Jerusalem church were commonplace. The distributors of that wealth started with the Apostles (Acts 4:35). Unity was the result, being of one heart and soul (Acts 4:32), as well as growth, as the Apostles testified greatly of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus (Acts 4:33).

- **Growth revealed \_\_\_\_\_ problems forming in the infant church (1)**
  - **Spiritual issues arose out of physical failures of care.**
    - **Grumbling was causing division between Hellenistic vs. national Jews.**
    - **The occasion for the grumbling: widows were going without their daily distribution.**

Observation:

This was the first instance in the church where unity was threatened due to the biased treatment of those receiving care from the church at large. Unity is a primary directive of King Jesus for His Church (John 17:20-34). Physical needs contributed to the spiritual response that threatened this unity.

- **Two dilemmas – urgent \_\_\_\_\_ going unmet with no \_\_\_\_\_ group (2)**
  - **Both the spiritual needs and physical needs were urgent for the church.**
    - **The Church, young and growing, needed to be disciplined with the Word.**
    - **Physical care for the needy had become a core act of love for the infant church.**

Observation:

Spiritual and physical needs are different but not mutually exclusive. Physical needs impact the spiritual growth and maturity of believers and churches; they cannot be neglected (James 2:15-16). Spiritual deficiencies of believers impact their physical state (finances, health, etc). Marriage issues, financial issues, and health issues often come about through spiritual failures. We are spiritual and physical beings made in the image of God. The early church met needs in both areas.

- **The Apostles calling was to the ministry of the Word and to pray.**
  - **Obedience to Jesus's call required a solution that allowed them to continue this call.**
- **The solution – create a \_\_\_\_\_ team to provide meeting \_\_\_\_\_ needs (3-6)**
  - **The church was tasked to select seven men for appointment to meet the need. (3-4)**
    - **Splitting of duties ensured the right people accomplished the appropriate tasks. (4)**

Observation:

The creating of a new team allowed for (1) the Apostles to continue in their primary calling of the ministry of the Word and prayer. This new group would be responsible for fulfilling the physical needs of the church body. Distinct roles meeting different needs.

- ***The qualifications of the appointees highlight the importance of this “ministry”. (3)***
  - **Men of good repute – men with a reputation of integrity, maturity, and ability.**
  - **Full of Spirit and wisdom – their lives have evidence of spiritual maturity and sensitivity, being directed by and following the Spirit of God with wisdom.**

Observation:

This is an early allusion to the qualifications of the office of the deacon Paul gives in 1 Timothy 3. There Paul lists a model servant of Christ. One who is worthy of respect, dignified. He has self-control over his base desires, over drinking (“not addicted to much wine”), over money (“not greedy for dishonest gain”), over sexual desires (“husband of one wife”, v12). They also must have a concrete understanding of the faith as revealed in the Scriptures and practice it. They must be tested, to be able to walk the walk not just talk the talk. Their ability to lead through serving must be evident in their homes, indicated by their wives’ godly character as well as the state of their homes and character of their children. Godly character is the root of any administrative abilities possessed.

- ***The church selected seven highly qualified men whom they set apart for ministry. (5-6)***
  - **Godly men were selected – Stephen and Philip listed first. (5)**
    - *The church affirmed the Apostles’ instruction.*
    - *Stephen (the first martyr) and Philip (the Evangelist) both had great ministry of the Word, signified by the attention given in Acts 7 and 8.*
  - **The new team’s ministry was publicly announced by laying hands and prayer. (6)**

Observation:

The office of the deacon is not a consolation prize for those not gifted to teach. The office of deacon is to be held by men with high Godly character and spiritual maturity, who know the Scriptures and the importance of the church. Giftedness in presenting the Word of God is not necessary but a working knowledge of Scripture is needed for the unity of the church. Holding the office of deacon does not require a man to put away teaching and preaching from their ministry arsenal. It simply means ministering the Word of God is not part of their role as lead servants.

- ***The result – the Word of the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ and disciples were \_\_\_\_\_ (7)***
  - ***The effects of splitting responsibilities was the ministry of each team flourished.***
    - **With physical needs being met and unity apparently restored, disciples multiplied as the impact of the Word spread.**

Observation:

The church functions as its Head intended, when elders/pastors and deacons know the purpose and priority of their servant roles. When spiritual care and physical care are both given the attention due by men with roles clearly defined, not in conflict but in coordination, the church grows into Christlike maturity and all needs are met.

## Functions derived from Acts 6:1-7

Because Acts 6 is the main occasion in which Scripture outlines the partnership expected in meeting spiritual and physical needs, it makes it challenging to determine an actual list of functions/roles. Even in this passage, we are discerning functions based on a scenario that presents a need for designated servants (deacons) but doesn't state explicitly the intent of establishing an office. Yet Scripture is clear (1 Timothy 3:8-13) the office of deacon is a necessary role to accomplish Christ's purposes in the church. The work of the ministry is to be done by the Body, the oversight and shepherding of the ministry is done by elders/pastors. Deacons provide administrative oversight, taking leadership directives from the elders, correctly planning resolutions, and executing them on behalf of the Body or sometimes with the Body, for the good of the Body.

- **Deacons assist Word ministries by fulfilling other ministries – they \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - **The Apostles gave the requirements, the team acted to fulfill the Apostles' instruction.**
  - **Elders are responsible to shepherd the flock of God, exercising oversight (1 Peter 5:2) through the ministry of the Word for God's intended outcomes (2 Timothy 3:16).**
  - **Deacons support those in Word ministry (elders) to keep them free from distractions.**

Discussion question:

Where should the line be drawn between what elders/pastors lead and what deacons lead? [Describe one decision you think belongs to elders/pastors and one that belongs to deacons; explain why.]

What responsibilities are you uniquely gifted to carry so elders can focus on teaching and shepherding?

[Identify two gifts among your group and match them to specific church needs.]

How do you make communication with elders/pastors regular, honest, and constructive?

[Propose one simple repeatable communication-rhythm (weekly, monthly) and its agenda, e.g., group texts?]

- **Deacons are first-in-line servants – they \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - **Deacons are the first-in-line servants when needs arise – humbly and excellently.**
  - **Deacons model the humility needed to serve and submit to the Body and elders. (Ephesians 5:21)**
  - **When burdens are discovered, they lead in the bearing of them for others (Galatians 6:2)**

Discussion question:

What systems have or should you put in place to ensure the vulnerable are cared for consistently and confidentially?

[List three practical steps (referral, follow-up, recordkeeping)]

- **Deacons promote the unity of the church – they \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - **One of first reasons for creating the office was to protect the unity of the Body.**
  - **A church that functions correctly pursues “the unity of the Spirit” (Ephesians 4:3)**
  - **Our progress towards Christlikeness is in part having “unity of the faith” (Ephesians 4:13)**
  - **Deacons meet physical needs of the Body, knowing the church’s health is at stake.**

Discussion question:

When you disagree with an elder/pastor about a practical decision, how should you surface and resolve it?

[Role play a respectful conversation that brings the issue to the leadership table.]

When one or more members of the Body are given to complaining or grumbling, how would you confront it, disarm it, and determine if/when it should be raised to an elder/pastor?

[Case study: members turned their small group into a complaint session over the building program.]

- **Deacons facilitate the Body’s care for itself – they \_\_\_\_\_.**
  - **Tasked with distribution to a growing church, they successfully ensured the care of all.**
  - **Tied closely to their support function, administration is vital to ensure elders can continue the oversight of the church with their primary focus on ministry of the Word.**
  - **With no specific instructions given, the team planned a course of action and executed the plan for a church of thousands.**

Discussion question:

What ministry need is currently unmet because you lack courage, time, or resources and what small first step could you take?

[Pick one unmet need and outline a 30-day pilot.]

How do you balance compassionate service with accountability and stewardship of resources?

[Give an example where compassion and stewardship might conflict and how you’d decide.]

- **Possible miscellaneous questions to work through with your elders/pastors:**

How does your congregation’s mission shape what you prioritize as deacons?

[Name one current ministry that clearly advances the church’s mission and one that doesn’t; why?]

How will you evaluate whether your service is actually strengthening the church’s spiritual health?

[Suggest two measurable indicators (e.g., number of pastoral referrals completed; follow-up visits made)]

How are you developing the next generation of deacons and volunteers (i.e., servants)?  
[Design a 3-step onboarding for a new deacon.]

# The Crossroads Fellowship

## Our Mission: Saturate Indiana with the Gospel

In Acts 1:8, Jesus gave His church its marching orders—and they haven't changed. Our pathway helps churches move from **Connect** → **Strengthen** → **Multiply**. As pastors thrive, leaders are equipped, and congregations mobilize, churches become sending churches—releasing lay leaders, missionaries, and pastors across Indiana and beyond.

### The Pathway

#### Step 1: **CONNECT** — Care for Pastors

Healthy pastors lead healthy churches. We make sure shepherds are cared for so they can care for others.

- Local pastor fellowships (no more than 45-60 minutes away)
- Peer coaching and prayer support
- Retreats and renewal opportunities

#### Step 2: **STRENGTHEN** — Develop Leaders

Your leaders get practical tools and coaching to build a disciple-making culture that lasts.

- One-day summits on vision, strategy, culture
- 6–9 month cohorts with implementation coaching
- Elder, volunteer, & ministry team training

#### Step 3: **MULTIPLY** — Send & Support

Every church can play a part in reaching every county—and every neighbor—with the Gospel.

- Plant English-speaking and foreign-language churches
- Revitalize struggling congregations
- Equip sending churches to release leaders





We ask each Crossroads church to prayerfully consider giving 1.5% of its operating budget to the Fellowship. We recognize this is a significant commitment, different from what you may be accustomed to giving. However, this investment has a clear and multiplying return as we work together to saturate Indiana with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Your support enables us to:

- Multiply the impact of pastors as they train others, lead seminars, and mentor peers.
- Send leaders to strengthen neighboring churches, missionaries, and ministries.
- Plant new churches, including language-specific congregations, to reach the nations God has brought to Indiana.

### **Why This Matters Financially**

Your investment in Crossroads Fellowship is not "another line item." This partnership strengthens your pastor, equips your leaders, and extends your church's reach into unreached counties and people groups. Think of this in two budget categories:

- **Equipping/Training:** Leveraging the Fellowship is like having a full-time trainer on your staff, without paying a full-time salary.
- **Missions:** Giving here helps plant new churches and extend the gospel into communities your church may never visit.

Paul commended the Corinthian church for its readiness to give, which encouraged others (2 Corinthians 9:2). Your faithful giving will inspire other churches, strengthen the network, and, most importantly, advance the gospel across our state.

### **A Vision for Indiana**

Acts 1:8 reminds us that we must reach our Jerusalem (your city), our Judea (our state), the world, and the sojourner among us. If Indiana churches do not reach Indiana with the gospel, who will? No one knows Indiana better than we do. Let's reach our state -and through it, the nations -with the good news of Jesus Christ.

We ask you to join us in this renewed commitment. By setting aside 1.5% of your budget, you are not simply funding an organization; you are fueling a movement to saturate Indiana with the gospel. Together, we are stronger, healthier, and multiplying churches for generations to come.

## Coming Events

<p><b>Families Connect: Top Golf</b></p>	<p>June 10, 2026 11am - 2pm</p>	<p>TopGolf, Fishers \$10/person includes golf and lunch</p>	<p>Pastors: bring your wife and children for a fantastic afternoon of fun and connection. <i>Some restrictions apply.</i></p>	
<p><b>Church Planting Retreat</b></p>	<p>September 15-16, 2026</p>	<p>Twin Lakes Camp \$100/person includes training, housing, and meals.</p>	<p>What do you need to do now to become a multiplying church in five years?</p>	
<p><b>Church Planting Administration Training</b></p>	<p>September 17, 2026</p>	<p>Twin Lakes Camp \$100/person includes training, housing, and meals. <i>Restrictions apply.</i></p>	<p>For those interested in helping form the team that will assist churches with their church-planting efforts.</p>	
<p><b>Annual Conference</b></p>	<p>October 26-28, 2026</p>	<p>Faith Church, West Campus, West Lafayette \$175/person or \$245/couple includes conference and most meals.</p>	<p><b>Lead Like Jesus</b>, keynote speaker Terry Thompson. Practical workshops, connect times, Sweet and Savvy events, and our Timothy Training Award Banquet.</p>	
<p><b>Reach 92 Offering</b></p>	<p>November 1, 2026</p>		<p>A special day for building our Reach 92 Fund for church renewal and planting. 100% stays in Indiana.</p>	



# CROSSROADS

F E L L O W S H I P

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