

Officer Nominations, Winter 2018

1 - STEP ONE

The process starts when a member of the church names or nominates someone who meets the following requirements:

- Has been a Christian for at least three years
- Has actively attended and participated at Grace Mills River for at least one year
- Is a member in good standing or is willing to become a member of Grace Mills River
- Demonstrates gifts and attitudes of a servant-leader
- Shows the consistent spiritual maturity and character necessary to be a leader
- Meets the Biblical requirements to be an officer (elder or deacon) (see below)
- Willing to serve sacrificially

By nominating an individual, you are indicating that you have spoken with him/her and have their permission to be nominated. No one should be “blindly” nominated or caught by surprise.

This person understands what he/she is being nominated for and knows they will need to complete training and interviews before they will be presented to the body for a vote.

Grace believes the Bible teaches only men who are qualified and called are eligible to become elders. However, both men and women may serve as deacons or associate deacons.

Grace, also, is committed to the PCA Book of Church Order which limits the ordination to the office of deacon to men. However, we also recognize and submit to our denominational leadership that the Session can appoint both men and women to serve as associates in the diaconate. Therefore, we give public recognition that these associate deacons, who meet biblical spiritual maturity requirements, complete servant-leadership training and willingly to submit to the Session’s authority, can serve the needs of the body. Although we find sufficient biblical warrant for females serving as deaconesses in the New Testament, we realize this issue can be confusing or even offensive to some so we willingly submit to our leaders and welcome any opportunity to offer the reasoning behind our perspective.

Members may submit nominations and recommendations for appointments beginning Sunday, January 21 through Sunday, February 18, 2018 by filling out the provided nomination form below and placing it into one of the collection boxes or by using the online form at GraceMillsRiver.org > About Us > Officer Nominations.

2 - STEP TWO

Pastors and/or session will meet with each of those who are nominated in order to:

- Determine their level of understanding concerning the work of the office to which they have been nominated or recommended
- Communicate what is involved in the required training process
- Review qualifications, job descriptions and expectations
- Confirm that each nominee/recommendation meets the initial requirements
- Confirm the nominee’s level of commitment and willingness to complete training and serve
- Explain what happens from nomination/recommendation to election and ordination (or appointment).

3 - STEP THREE

The nominee will begin the training described below:

- The training process, made up of four distinct phases, takes about one year to complete.
- Candidates can enter the training process at the beginning of any of the four phases described below.
- **Phase 1** – Begins in March with “Foundations of Servant-Leadership” a 12-lesson class that is offered weekly (except on holidays). This phase can be completed by attending the Sunday morning classes, or joining the weekly live webinars online. FSL includes introductions and instructions about gospel-centric ministry, distinctives of Grace Mills River (such as, our 8 core values, philosophy of ministry, theology, mission, structure and vision), reformed faith, Bible content, position papers, missional living and many other topics.
- **Phase 2** – Takes place June through August and includes beginning Sonship in pairs with an assigned mentor and completing required reading assignments, such as The Westminster Standards and at least one other assigned book. Phase 2 has no classes.
- **Phase 3** – Takes place primarily September to the Christmas holidays. This phase involves a few different class-like forums and discussions which are not weekly but include discussion from the summer readings, reading and overview of the PCA Book of Church Order, specific training in the area of Shepherding and other individual classes pertinent to the area of ministry they are entering.
- **Phase 4** – Begins after the holidays, January through February. The candidates begin attending officer meetings, receive specific training in the responsibilities, policies and status of their areas of ministry.

4 - STEP FOUR

Following training, the nominees will be presented to the session who will examine each candidate and approve them to be presented to the congregation for a vote. Typically the examination is brief in light of the months of training the nominees have been through.

5 - STEP FIVE

The elders approve a list of nominees called a ‘slate’ that is then presented to the congregation a month before members vote for each nominee at a congregational meeting. Each nominee must receive a majority of the needed votes at the congregational meeting in order to be installed and/or appointed.

6 - STEP SIX

Following the election, the new officers are ordained or appointed and consecrated to begin their ministry of leading and serving.

Reviewing Scripture Qualification

Considering the need and importance of leadership the session and pastors at Grace encourage members to pray and to carefully consider their choices before they make a nomination. Each nominee must meet the requirements for each office. An excellent place to start would be reading the qualifications listed in Timothy, and Titus and 1 Peter for officers in the church.

1 Timothy 3

“Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer [elder], he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap.

Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.” [*or deaconesses]*

Titus 1:5-9

“The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God’s work, he must be blameless— not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.”

1 Peter 5:1-4

“To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.”

Officer Nomination Form

After prayer and careful consideration, I believe and see evidence that the following person meets the initial requirements for the selected position at Grace Mills River.

Nominee: _____

Position: _____

Nominee's Email: _____

Nominee's Phone: _____

I find that they meet these requirements:

- Has been a Christian for at least three years
- Has actively attended and participated at Grace Mills River for at least one year
- Is a member in good standing or is willing to become a member of Grace Mills River
- Demonstrates gifts and attitudes of a servant-leader
- Shows the consistent spiritual maturity and character necessary to be a leader
- Meets the Biblical requirements to be an officer (elder or deacon)
- Willing to serve sacrificially

Please describe why you are nominating this individual and their relationship to you:

By entering your name below, you are confirming that you are a member in good standing and eligible to vote, not under formal church discipline and have considered this nomination prayerfully.

Your Name: _____

Your Email: _____

Your Phone: _____

You may nominate/recommend more than one individual, however, you must complete a separate form for each person you nominate. Remember that nominees must be interviewed and approved by a pastor and/or an elder before they can proceed. Although nominees must agree to be nominated initially, they are not obligated to become an official candidate or required to commit to the office until they have completed the full training.