

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ELDERS

Volume 2

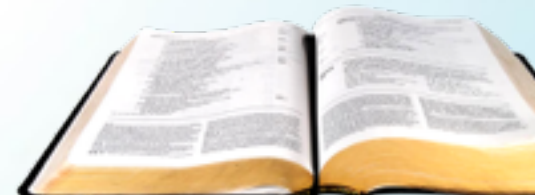
Section D



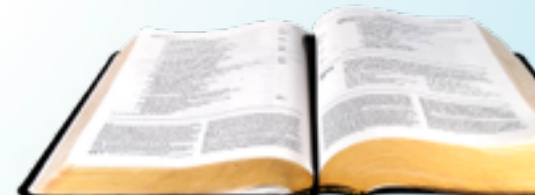
General Conference
Ministerial Association

“The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.”

1 Timothy 5:17



In this study, our objective is to summarize some of the general responsibilities of the church elders, and by these means awaken in our leaders the desire to excel in different areas, and that they consider it a privilege to thoroughly fulfill their assigned position.



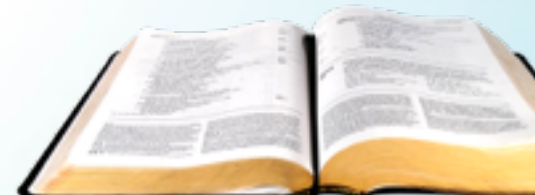


I. Support all the departments of the church



“Under and in cooperation with the pastor, elders are spiritual leaders of the church and are responsible for fostering all departments and activities of the work. Elders should maintain a mutually helpful relationship with other officers.”

*Church Manual, Revised 2010,
p. 74*

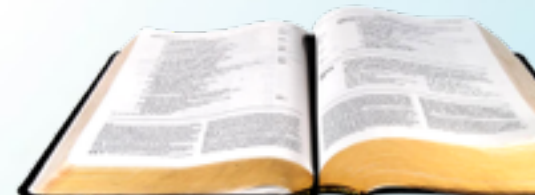


The elders should:

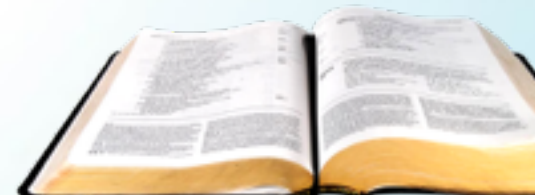
- Strongly support the *Sabbath School* program.
- Be accountable for the *evangelistic activities* of the church.
- Decidedly support all *youth programs*, additionally *serving as advisor* to that department.



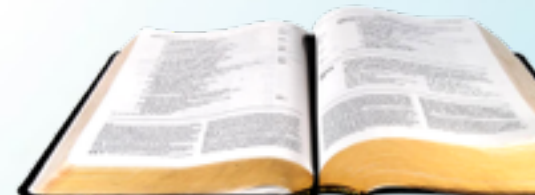
- Promote the different clubs for teens and children.
- Be a constant supporter of the children's department and its diverse activities.
- Establish programs that contribute to the preservation of the family and its spiritual growth.



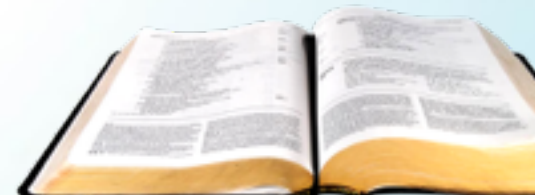
- Ensure that children in the church receive adequate care and have the necessary facilities to successfully develop their various activities.
- Provide support to the activities of the Women's Ministry Department, *strongly favoring* its various programs.



- Serve as advisors to the deacons to ensure an appealing appearance of the temple and to maintain order during worship and other church services.
- Support the deaconesses in their program of giving assistance to the needy.

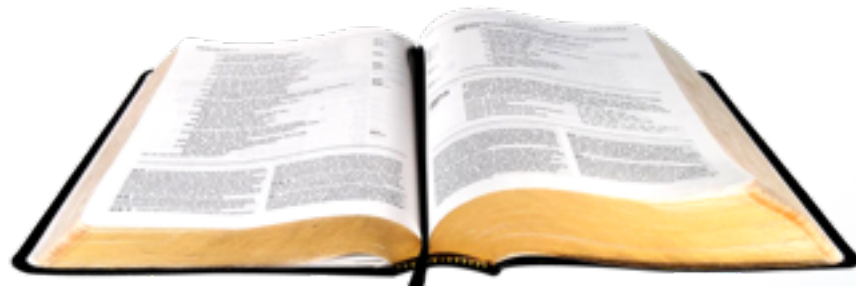


- Organize weeks of prayer for the church with the goal of abundantly nourishing the brethren.
- Develop weeks of stewardship in order to encourage loyalty and benevolence in the church.

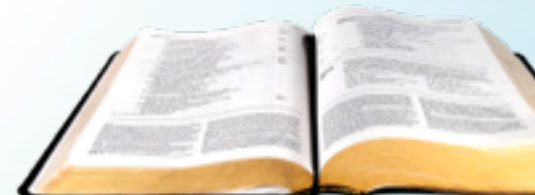




II. The elders and the Conference

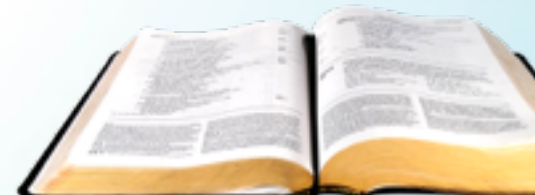


“The pastor, elders, and all officers should cooperate with conference officers and departmental directors in carrying out approved plans.”



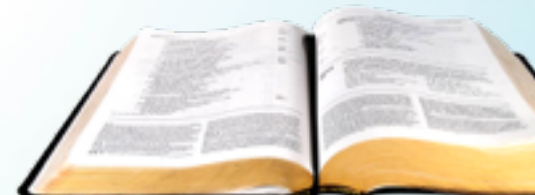
They should inform the church of all regular and special offerings, promote all the programs and activities of the church, and encourage all officers to support conference plans and policies.”

Ibid.

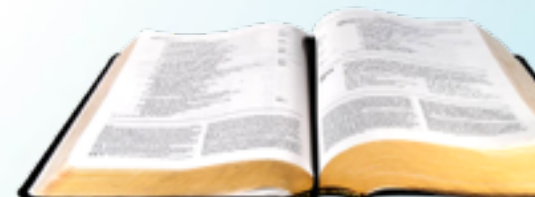


With regard to the Conference, the elders should:

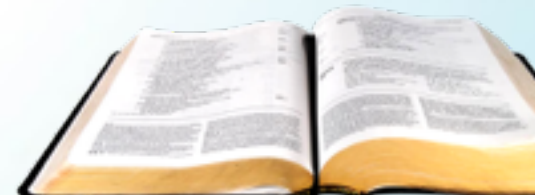
- Promote programs undertaken by the Conference.
- Guarantee that the treasury sends the money on schedule.
- Ensure that tithes and offerings are put to good use within the church.



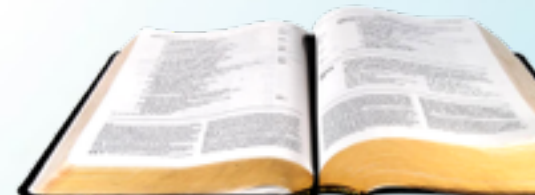
- Ensure that the secretary's report is sent on time to the Conference.
- Be vigilant for the church to stay within the guidelines laid down by the Church Manual.
- Prevent the church from being affected by negative leadership that promotes separatist movements and ends up dividing the church.



- Avoid extremist leadership that leads to the polarization of the church.
- Promote loyalty to the higher ranking institutions of the church.
- Embrace, with a willing spirit, the regulations of the Conference and superior organizational bodies of the church.



- Promote the participation of the church in the activities planned by the Conference.
- Make sure that the appropriate delegates are chosen for congressional meetings of the Conference.

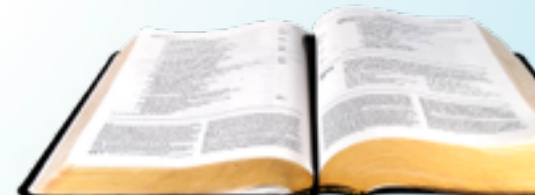




III. The elders and their relationship to the pastor

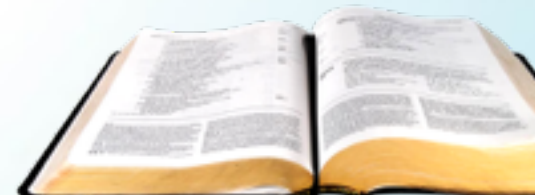


“The pastoral work of the church should be shared by the pastor and the elders. In counsel with the pastor, the elders should visit members, minister to the sick, foster prayer ministries,

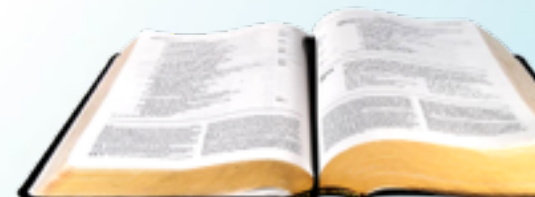


arrange or lead out in anointing services and child dedications, encourage the disheartened, and assist in other pastoral responsibilities. As undershepherds, elders should exercise constant vigilance over the flock.”

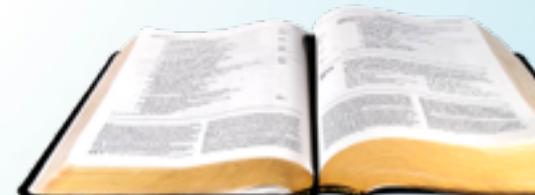
Ibid. 72-73



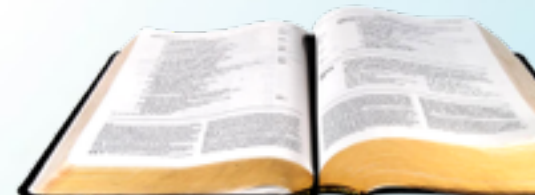
- The pastor and the elders should work in full harmony.
- The elders should recognize that the pastor chosen by the Conference is the leader of the local church.
- The pastor should recognize that the elders are men and women set apart by God, and he/she should concede to them the place that the Lord Himself has appointed.



- It is the duty of the pastor to ensure the competence of the body of elders.
- It is the duty of the elders to ensure the competence of the different leaders of the church departments.
- The council of elders should meet regularly, under the direction of the pastor, to discuss issues which have to do with the welfare of the church.



- A program schedule should be established for the church, and the elders should see to it that it is thoroughly carried out throughout its different stages.
- The pastor and the elders should work together as a team of friends.
- The pastor and the elders should remember that unity is the indispensable principle so that the Holy Spirit fulfills Its work amid the church.



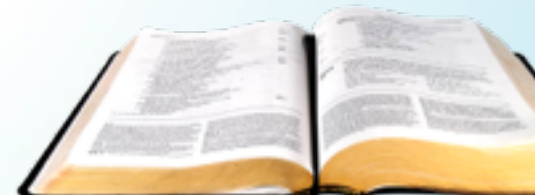


IV. The elders and the church board



“Every church must have a functioning board whose members have been elected during a church business meeting. Its chief concern is the spiritual nurture of the church and the work of planning and fostering evangelism in all of its phases.”

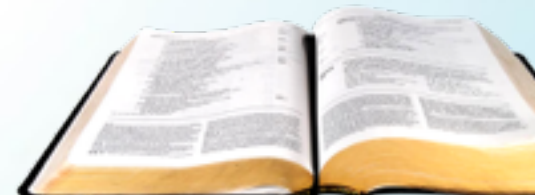
Ibid. 124



Responsibilities of the church board

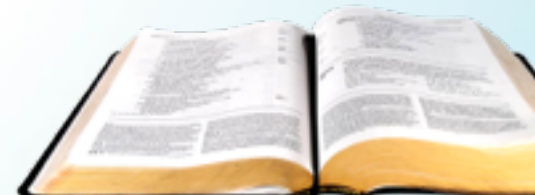
“Included in church board responsibilities are:

- 1. Spiritual nurture.*
- 2. Evangelism in all of its phases.*
- 3. Maintenance of doctrinal purity.*



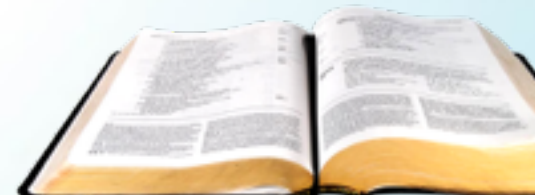
4. *Upholding Christian standards.*
5. *Recommending changes in church membership.*
6. *Church finances.*
7. *Protection and care of church properties.*
8. *Coordination of church departments.”*

Ibid. 124



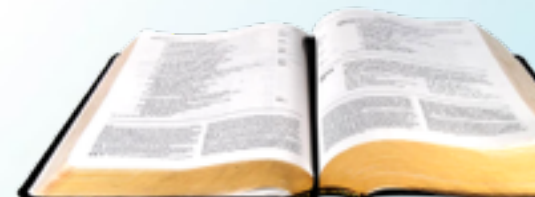
Some general considerations

- The church board is elected by the church itself during a business meeting.
- The Conference board does not interfere in the election of the board of the local church, unless they are violating principles established in the doctrines of the church or in the Church Manual.

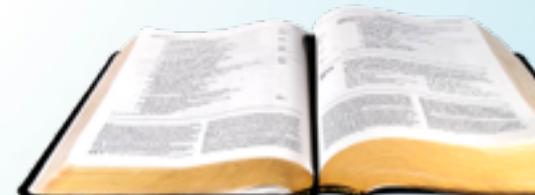


- The pastor of the church who has been elected by the Conference is the president of the church board.
- *“If the pastor prefers not to act in this capacity or is unable to be present, he/she may arrange for an elder to preside as chairperson.”*

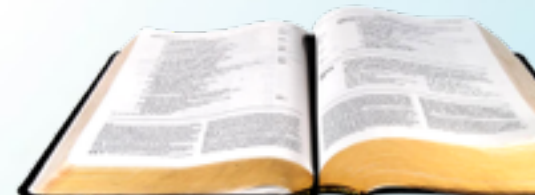
Ibid. 126



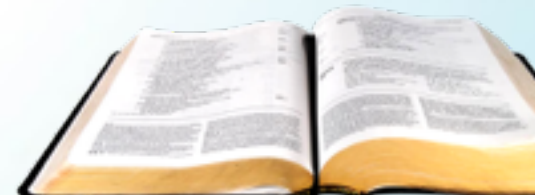
- Ordinarily, church elders should not on their own schedule a board meeting without prior consultation with the pastor and having reached an agreement.
- The life term of the board is determined by the church itself during an administrative meeting.
- The church board does not have absolute power; only the church at large has such power.



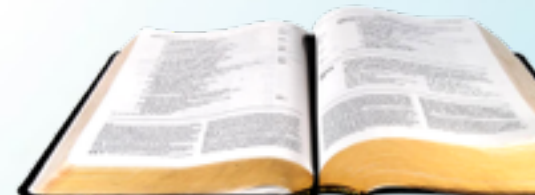
- The duty of church elders is to faithfully attend the different meetings of the board.
- *“Votes by proxy or letter are not permitted.”*
Ibid. 126
- The quorum is determined by the church at large during an administrative meeting.



- The quorum should be constituted by official members of the board and not include persons invited for a particular occasion at a time when the board meets.
- It is recommended that the church board meets at least once a month.

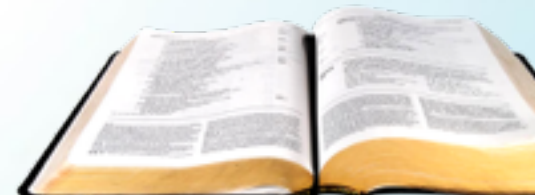


- If it is necessary to increase the number of meetings, that is of no consequence.
- The board meetings should be announced in advance and should be held on the Sabbath when the church is in full session.



- *“The board should permit no other business to interfere with planning for evangelism. Should other business be too time-consuming, the board should appoint committees to care for specific areas of church business, such as finance or church building projects. Such committees will then make recommendations to the board.”*

Ibid. 127

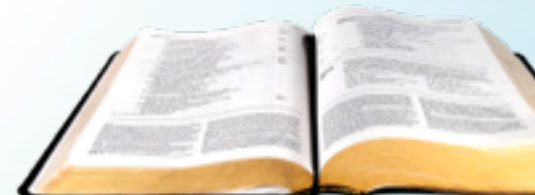




Recapitulating what we studied



- 1. Which departments of the church should the elders support?**
See slides 6-10.
- 2. In their relationship with the Conference, what should elders do?**
See slides 14-17.
- 3. According to the Church Manual, what are the responsibilities of the church board?**
See slides 26-27.



“And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful.

Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth.”

2 Timothy 2:24-25

