



## Proposed Constitutional Amendment - October 2021 Frequently Asked Questions

### **Why does the lead pastor have to be approved by a 2/3 vote of the elders, but can be removed by the senior pastor and without a vote of the elders?**

All staff is accountable to the senior pastor. Article VI (A)(1) of the Constitution provides that the senior pastor has the responsibility for the oversight of all staff, which includes hiring and firing a lead pastor.

The relationship between the senior pastor and the lead pastor is vital, fragile and critical. It is much like a marriage. If there is ever a difference which prevents participation by both, or justification for removal, the senior pastor should have the ability to excuse the lead pastor from his staff position and/or the elder board. Forced participation by the two of them (as both pastors or elders) could lead to significant problems.

All elders are accountable to the elder board. The elder board has the authority to remove any elder, at any time. If this amendment is approved, the elder board could remove the lead pastor from the elder board at any time. The proposed addition to the Constitution invites the senior pastor to remove the lead pastor from the elder board as well, given the nature of their relationship.

Moreover, the senior pastor is accountable to the elders. If the senior pastor ever makes a decision to excuse the lead pastor from his staff role, or as elder, for unfounded reasons, the elders are clothed with authority to discipline the senior pastor.

Biblical church governance embodies the virtue of mutual submission among staff, pastors and elders.

### **What is the reason the Lead pastor would be a non-voting member of the Board?**

Historically, the senior pastor has not exercised his authority to vote at elder meetings, except in exceptional circumstances. For this reason, the elders are proposing that Tom be a non-voting elder. We might one day decide to propose another constitutional change, providing that the senior pastor be a non-voting elder.

### **Do the elders have the constitutional authority to remove the Lead pastor without the cooperation of the Senior pastor?**

The elders have the authority to remove the eldership of all men serving as elders. If this amendment passes, the elders could remove the lead pastor from the elder board at any time.

Article VI (A)(1) of the Constitution provides that the senior pastor has responsibility for the oversight of all staff; this includes hiring and firing of a lead pastor. However, the senior pastor is accountable to the elders on all issues.

If, hypothetically, a senior pastor is uncooperative with the elders about the justified removal of a lead pastor, the elders could discipline the senior pastor.