

# New Elder Appointment

Four Lakes Church of Christ

October 28, 2018

Introduction (after the invitation song): Baxter Exum (Aaron and Ray come sit on the front pew)

- As most of you know, several weeks ago, we asked all of you to suggest the names of anyone who might be qualified to serve as an additional elder here at the Four Lakes congregation. A good number of you suggested that John Long meets those qualifications outlined in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Two weeks ago, we put John's name before this congregation, and we asked for any objections. No objections have been raised, but we have received many encouraging and supportive comments, so this morning John will join us as one of the shepherds of this congregation.
- We'd like to ask John to come to the front and have a seat on the front row, and we'd also like to ask that we all be turning together to four passages, starting with Acts 20 (p. 1741). In Acts 20, the apostle Paul has been collecting funds to bring back to Jerusalem to help out during a famine. He's in a hurry on this trip, he doesn't have time to go all the way inland to Ephesus, so he sends a messenger on ahead and asks the elders of the church to meet him on the beach in Miletus. And on this occasion, as he meets with these elders, he has some words of encouragement that apply so well to all men who will ever serve as shepherds. These are words that now apply to John - Acts 20:28-32 - speaking to the elders, Paul says (starting in verse 28),

***<sup>28</sup> Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. <sup>29</sup> I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; <sup>30</sup> and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. <sup>31</sup> Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears. <sup>32</sup> And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.***

- Let's also look at 1 Peter 5:1-4 (p. 1899). These are Peter's words of encouragement to his fellow elders - 1 Peter 5:1-4,

***<sup>1</sup> Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, <sup>2</sup> shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; <sup>3</sup> nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. <sup>4</sup> And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.***

- We then have Paul's words of encouragement to Thessalonica concerning their elders - 1 Thessalonians 5:12-14 (p. 1850),

***<sup>12</sup> But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, <sup>13</sup> and that***

***you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another. <sup>14</sup> We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.***

- And then we also have the writer of Hebrews' encouragement to support elders in their work - Hebrews 13:17-18 (p. 1886),

***<sup>17</sup> Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you. <sup>18</sup> Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a good conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.***

### Charge to the New Elder: Aaron Grodi

Since all of us here this morning are calling on John to accept this new responsibility, it is only right for us as a congregation to be very clear concerning what we expect from him as one of our shepherds; therefore:

- We charge you, John, to keep the Scriptures as your only authority, meditating on the word of God day and night, so that you will always know how to govern not only your own life, but how to care for the members of this congregation.
- We charge you to be a man of prayer, always asking God for wisdom and always interceding on behalf of this congregation.
- We charge you to be sensitive to the spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of this congregation, to make every effort to get to know every member better, to bind up broken spirits, to heal wounds, to agonize with us in our prayers, to uplift us in our discouragements, to encourage us in our spiritual journeys, to help every member bear his or her own load, and to go searching for those who have wandered away.
- We charge you to be approachable by every member of the congregation. You will not be able to satisfy every request or solve every problem, but we are entrusting you with the responsibility of attentively listening to concerns that are brought to your attention.
- We charge you to keep the Lord Jesus first in your personal life, in your family life, and in your life in this community. There will be some dark days ahead, but there will also be times of great joy, and so we charge you to always put your trust in God and to keep your eyes on the goal. You must not be easily discouraged.
- We charge you do everything in your power to protect this congregation from spiritual danger – not just from the outside, but from inside as well.
- We charge you to feed the flock of God, to make sure that the word of God is taught and preached faithfully.
- We charge you to regularly review Paul's words concerning elders in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, because these passages will remind you of the standards by which this congregation has called you out from our number to serve as one of our elders.

- As an elder, you will face many challenges – not only challenges facing the congregation, but also challenges to your faith personally, and so we charge you to face these challenges with love, and grace, and patience. You will face criticism, much of it put forward by those who may never know the whole story, and so we charge you to always respond to criticism with restraint and tolerance, remembering that all things are simple to those who do not have all of the information about a matter.
- As an elder, you will need the support and encouragement of your family, realizing that the service of an elder is often most burdensome to the members of his own family. We mention this, because they too have been given the approval of this congregation.
- And finally, we charge you to be conscientious and serious in your work as a shepherd over God’s people, knowing that all shepherds have a Great Shepherd to whom they will someday give an account for every soul in their care.

As we ask John to accept this responsibility, we’d like to ask that we all stand together to show our unity as a congregation and to show our support for what we’re doing here today. Let us all stand together.

John, do you accept these charges with all your heart, and will you meet these responsibilities with God’s help, and with the support of this congregation, to the best of your ability?

- John: \_\_\_\_\_

John is now a part of the eldership of this congregation. We’d like to dismiss John and his family to the entryway as we sing a song together, and then we’ll remain standing as Ray leads us in a closing prayer.

“Blest Be the Tie That Binds” (#76) - Josh Eacret

Closing Prayer: Ray Exum