

QUESTIONS ...

1. HOW DOES THE SHEPHERDING TEAM (ST) SELECT AND NOMINATE AN ELDER CANDIDATE? THAT IS, WHAT IS THE PROCESS?
2. DOES THE ST HAVE A FORMALIZED PROCEDURE TO DESCRIBE THE SELECTION AND NOMINATION PROCESS? WHAT ABOUT TRAINING OF THE IDENTIFIED ELDER CANDIDATE?
3. IN THIS SELECTION AND NOMINATION PROCESS WHAT QUALIFICATIONS IS THE ST SEEKING IN AN ELDER CANDIDATE?
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5. AS BOTH CURRENT ELDERS (ELDERS DON HONG AND KING TAK LEE) ATTEND ENGLISH WORSHIP SERVICE, WHY DID THE ST SELECT ANOTHER CANDIDATE WHO ALSO ATTENDS ENGLISH WORSHIP SERVICE?
6. CAN YOU ELABORATE ON BROTHER AL CHEN'S QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE IN TEACHING AND PREACHING GOD'S WORDS?
7. IF I MISS THE PRIOR Q/A SESSIONS WITH BROTHER AL CHEN, WILL THERE BE ANY OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM EITHER IN A SMALL GROUP OR ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS?



ANSWERS ...

1. HOW DOES THE SHEPHERDING TEAM (ST) SELECT AND NOMINATE AN ELDER CANDIDATE? THAT IS, WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

There will always be a pool of brothers ministering throughout the church. The Shepherding Team will observe these brothers in their ministries, service and love for brothers and sisters and God. He shall demonstrate his love and commitment to the Church. After observance over a period of at least three years, discussion and prayer over him/them, a brother(s) may be identified to be a potential future elder. If there is consensus over this extended period of service and ministry of these persons, the Shepherding Team may ask one or more of these brothers to join the didactic teaching program for training on the basic and fundamental understanding on the Scriptural teaching on Biblical eldership.

It is noted that the selection of a brother to participate in the didactic training regimen is not a guarantee that he will be automatically nominated to become an elder at RCCC in the future or when this portion of the training is completed.

Briefly, the Shepherding Team unanimously identifies and nominates a brother to the Church Council for confirmation. The Council must confirm the nomination by at least 75% of the members. The nominated brother is then asked if he wishes and so led to become an elder candidate of the Church. After a brother accepts the nomination, his candidacy is announced to the Congregation and processed according to the dictates of the Church Constitution. During this three month waiting and prayer period, the elder candidate will be mentored by members of the ST according to the giftedness and oversight responsibilities of each member. The Facilitator shall prepare a schedule and topics of mentorship for the ST to follow.

Refer to the guideline *Elder Selection and Approval Process*¹ for further details.

2. DOES THE ST HAVE A FORMALIZED PROCEDURE TO DESCRIBE THE SELECTION AND NOMINATION PROCESS? WHAT ABOUT TRAINING OF THE IDENTIFIED ELDER CANDIDATE?

Yes, the guideline *Elder Selection and Approval Process* describes the identification and selection criteria and suggests a formal training program consisting of didactic training before a brother is nominated, and after nomination, a description on mentorship training for the nominated elder candidate.

3. IN THIS SELECTION AND NOMINATION PROCESS WHAT QUALIFICATIONS IS THE ST SEEKING IN AN ELDER CANDIDATE?

RCCC seeks qualified brothers to fill the role of a Biblical elder as expounded in Scripture and described in the guideline titled *Responsibilities of the Biblical Elder* (January 2000)². The elder nominee must have a character of caring and ability to teach and preach. In addition he should show further shepherding abilities in protecting the flock and leading and managing the church. That is, the nominee must demonstrate maturity in areas of character, understanding of Biblical truth and spiritual discernment as set forth in Titus 1:6-9, 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Acts 20:19-24.

4. ARE ELDERS SELECTED AND NOMINATED BASED ON THE LANGUAGE CONGREGATION? ARE THERE ANY PLANS TO NOMINATE BROTHERS WHO ATTEND MANDARIN OR CANTONESE WORSHIP SERVICE?

The Shepherding Team seeks qualified brothers to serve as elders first rather than targeting specifically their language skill. God's provision in the past enabled this fulfillment when the eldership was first implemented in August 2000 when elders Albert Yeh and Don Hong oversaw the Mandarin and English congregations primarily. [The Cantonese worship service had not started yet.] However, while their focus was on the respective language congregations they were elders for the whole church and their shepherding responsibilities encompassed the whole church.

Thus selection and nomination is primarily based on giftedness, ability and availability. After a three year term, Elder Yeh stepped down and Elder Don continued a new term to oversee the English congregation in the absence of an English pastor. In August 2003, Elder Timothy Ng was nominated and he focused on the Mandarin congregation though he is Cantonese. The following year Elder Li Tian (Aug. 2004) was nominated and he focused on the Mandarin congregation and Elder Timothy switched to the Cantonese congregation.

During the latter part of 2004 and subsequent years since the Board of Elders continued to seek qualified brothers to serve as elders. From 2005 to 2010 three Mandarin-congregation brothers were identified as potential candidates but God had other plans. In 2009 brother Al Chen was also identified and he wasn't led to accept until mid-2011.

There is no specific plan to identify language-specific congregation elder candidates. The Shepherding Team seeks brothers who have the potential to be elders irrespective of the language. However, with the guide *Elder Selection and Approval Process* in place, targeting language-specific elders may be easier in the future. The ST does not wish or intend to limit the number of lay elders to three (one to oversee each language congregation) but desire God's provision to provide qualified brothers to serve and expand the size of the ST as the Church grows more elders would be needed.

5. AS BOTH CURRENT ELDERS (ELDERS DON HONG AND KING TAK LEE) ATTEND ENGLISH WORSHIP SERVICE, WHY DID THE ST SELECT ANOTHER CANDIDATE WHO ALSO ATTENDS ENGLISH WORSHIP SERVICE?

Refer to Q/A #4 for better understanding. A Mandarin speaking brother had been identified during the same period as Brother Al Chen, but that brother did not accept the calling as he has a burden outside of the local church.

Brother Al has no language barrier with the Mandarin congregation. The reason he chose to attend the English worship at this new location was to worship with his two growing sons in observing and guiding their spiritual growth. He is keenly aware of the need of the Mandarin congregation, and with his older son Abraham leaving home soon for job relocation, and the younger son reaching college age, he can also attend the Mandarin service more often having to balance his commitment to teach English SS at 9:30 on some Sundays.

6. CAN YOU ELABORATE ON BROTHER AL CHEN'S QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE IN TEACHING AND PREACHING GOD'S WORDS?

Brother Al Chen has submitted a list demonstrating his service to the church to include his teaching ministry in Sunday school teaching of adult and children classes. This list is attached.

He has not had the opportunity to preach to date. Opportunities to preach at RCCC are very limited for non-seminary graduates and non-clergy brothers. This stems from a very tight protection of the pulpit to limit the opportunity to only seminary graduates since the era of Rev. Hansen Chen starting in 1988. There had been very few exceptions under Pastor Liang until the eldership began in 2000 when the lay elders began preaching. This has been relaxed somewhat in the English congregation where preaching opportunities have been extended to seminary students such as to former youth and current youth directors.

Prior to being selected to be elders, these brothers also did not have the opportunity to preach in any of the respective services as like brother Al.

7. IF I MISS THE PRIOR Q/A SESSIONS WITH BROTHER AL CHEN, WILL THERE BE ANY OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM EITHER IN A SMALL GROUP OR ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS?

No further Q/A sessions are planned. Minister Eric Lin is scheduling visits to various small groups for Brother Al. We encourage any person interested in talking with Al to call him direct to make the arrangements.

Reference:

1. *Elder Selection and Approval Process*, Shepherding Team, August 27, 2011
2. *Responsibilities of the Biblical Elder*, RCCC, January 2000

Counting God’s Blessings in His House

by Brother Al Chen

To follow the Shepherding Team’s instruction and to comply with the elder nomination procedure, I would like to use the opportunity to count God’s abundant blessings to me and my family over the years we have been part of the RCCC family. I respond to His call and serve not because I am competent in myself to claim anything for myself, but my competence comes from God (2 Corinthians 3:5). I am thankful that my spiritual leaders have given me many opportunities to learn how to serve, to grow spiritually and, thus, receive God’s many blessings. Please find a summary of my ministries at RCCC below.

RCCC Ministry	Responsibility
NC State Student Fellowship	Fellowship coworker
Mandarin Choir	Choir member
Children Sunday school	Sunday school teacher
Junior Church	Junior Church coworker, teacher
Vacation Bible School	VBS coworker, teacher, translator
Youth Sunday school	Sunday school teacher
Youth Crossroad camp	Coworker, counselor
Youth Parent Council	Coworker, Chair
English Adult Sunday School	Sunday school coworker, teacher
Worship	Mandarin-English translation coworker
Church Expansion Committee	Committee member
Church Expansion Fundgiving Committee	Committee member, Chair
Mandarin, English Pastoral Search Committees that called Minister Eric Lin and Pastor Dick Lee	Committee member
Finance	Finance deacon
Finance Committee	Committee member
Board of Deacons	Deacon, Chair
Deacon Nomination Committee	Committee member, Chair
Board of Trustees	Trustee

The vision and mission of the church on earth is to proclaim God’s salvation and His plan by faith with loving tenderness. Praise the Lord that He has given me various ministries to labor together to share the gospel, directly and indirectly, with many coworkers as a team. Unto our Father in heaven and the Lamb be praise and honor and glory because He is willing to use unworthy vessel like me. Please join me in prayer to ask God continuing to strengthen me that I may become a servant after God’s own heart.