



## **The Structure of The Church at Schilling Farms**

The Church at Schilling Farms will seek to understand and follow the biblical nature of the church. The structure of the church should not be determined by culture, business practices, or denominational traditions.

### 1. The church is a **BIBLE-BELIEVING FELLOWSHIP**.

*“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.” Acts 2:42*

The apostles’ doctrine is clearly expressed in God’s Holy Word. The Bible declares God’s pattern for life!

When God’s Word is followed His church will experience peace and unity.

*“Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.” Romans 14:19*

*“For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.”*

*I Corinthians 14:33*

*“...endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Ephesians 4:3*

Implication: A good structure promotes unity and downplays differences.

*“Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse. For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it.” I Corinthians 11:17-18*

At The Church at Schilling Farms we vote on: Annual budget and servant leaders, Purchase of property or buildings, Calling of full-time pastors, Changes in our church polity.

### 2. The church is a **FAMILY**.

*“You should be like one big happy family, full of sympathy towards each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds.” I Peter 3:8 (LB)*

We operate on the basis of relationships not rules.

*“Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity.” I Timothy 5:1-2*

### 3. The church is a **BODY**.

*“For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.” Ephesians 5:23*

We are a Body—not a business! We are an Organism—not an organization!

We function on the basis of spiritual gifts—not elected officers.

*“For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.” Romans 12:4-6*

In an organization maintenance becomes the focus. But in an organism ministry is the focus!

The Church at Schilling Farms has a simple structure to maximize ministry and minimize maintenance.

*“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...” Ephesians 4:11-12*

The people example ministers.

The deacons example servants.

The pastors and Elders are the teachers/administrators.

4. The church is a **FLOCK**.

*“He said to him again a second time, ‘Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?’ He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.’ He said to him, ‘Tend My sheep.” John 21:16*

Jesus’ favorite description of the Church is found in *John 10:1-30, Matthew 26:31, Matthew 25:33*. Therefore, the church is cared for and led by shepherds.

Three different terms are used in the New Testament to refer to the same church leaders:

Poimen translated PASTOR or SHEPHERD

Presbuteros translated ELDER or one of SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Episcopos translated OVERSEER or BISHOP

*From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them: “You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always loved among you... Therefore take heed to yourselves and to 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.” Acts 20:17-18, 28*

The **Senior Pastor** Elder is responsible for leading The Church at Schilling Farms as a New Testament church. We recognize the Senior Pastor will have the primary responsibility to lead and feed the congregation. He will give direction and guidance to the Ministerial Staff, and serve as the chairman of the Elder Body. If a Senior Pastor vacancy happens, the Elder Body will work with four elected members of The Church at Schilling Farms to form a Pastor Search Team to find God’s man to lead the church. The Pastor Search Team will bring their nominee to the church for final church approval.

The **Ministerial Staff** will be responsible to the Senior Pastor for leading their respective area of ministry. We recognize the Ministerial Staff as called by God and expect them to assist the Senior Pastor in giving leadership to our church body. The Senior Pastor and Elders will recommend to the church body all Ministerial Staff members for approval.

**Elders** are men called out by God and recognized by the church as spiritual leaders. The purpose of this spiritual body is to assist the Senior Pastor in confirming the spiritual direction for the church, including all mission, stewardship, and operational matters. Elders will lead these critical areas in the church life. An elected Elder will serve a four-year term with no limit on the number of terms that can be served. At the end of an elected term the church family will be asked to nominate a person to fill the vacancy. The person will be reviewed by the Elder body and recommended to the church for approval. Additional Elders may be called out from the congregation as the Elder Body determines the need. The Elder must meet the biblical qualifications and responsibilities in *1 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Timothy 5:17, James 5:14, 1 Peter 5:4 and Acts 15:6-29*. The Elder Body must lead by unanimous decisions.

**Administrative Teams** will assist the Senior Pastor and Elders in carrying out the vision and purpose of the church in these critical areas: stewardship, operations, and missions. These teams will be nominated by the Elders and Senior Pastor, and elected by the church. Elected team members will serve on a three-year rotation system. Each Team will consist of six members, an Elder chairman plus five elected members from the church body. Additional Administrative Teams can be established as needed. All Administrative Team decisions must be unanimous. The Administrative Teams will function as follows:

**Stewardship Team** — The responsibility of the Stewardship Team is to develop and recommend the annual church budget along with considering any additional church expenditure. The

Stewardship Team will monitor the financial position of The Church at Schilling Farms and make necessary recommendations based upon its findings. The Stewardship Team will consist of four members plus the church Treasurer. The Treasurer will be elected annually by the church body, and serve no more than three consecutive years. The Treasurer will give a financial report at church's regular business meeting.

**Operations Team** — The responsibility of the Operations Team is to oversee the management of property, insurance, transportation, building, and grounds.

**Missions Team** — The responsibility of the Missions Team is to provide the foundational principles for the mission thrust of The Church at Schilling Farms.

**Church Treasurer** — The church shall annually elect a person to serve as treasurer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and payout, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money, or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church a monthly report of receipts and disbursements.

**Church Clerk** — A person will be elected to record all minutes of church business conferences.

The **Deacon** at The Church at Schilling Farms is a servant role as is stipulated in Acts 6:1-6. They are to be trustworthy of the responsibilities placed upon them, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. The criteria is further expanded in I Timothy 3:8-13. Deacon nominations will be reviewed by the Elder Body and recommendations made to the church for final approval as the need arises for additional Deacons. Deacons will assist the Senior Pastor and Elder Body by providing service and ministry to widows.