

## WHAT'S IT LIKE TO BE A RULING ELDER?

**Who:** Ruling Elders (REs) are members of the current Session at Sunset Presbyterian Church (SPC) and mature followers of Jesus Christ. They are drawn to serve the church in this way and strive to follow the qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9.

**What:** The Session is the leadership board of SPC, providing spiritual leadership and oversight for the church. The Session is composed of the EPC ordained pastors and the RE's in-office at the time. The Session decisions as a group, not as individuals. Most of the Session meeting proceedings are open, but proceedings will transition to "closed session" for confidential discussion. Matters discussed during "closed session" is to be held in strict confidence.

The operations and ministries of SPC are managed by the Senior Pastor and the staff leadership team. REs of the Session provide oversight and support the pastoral team, but do not directly manage the staff or operations. The specific leadership needs of the church vary with the life of the church and the events around us. REs must be willing to respond to God's call and serve as He needs us to.

More detail of the role and office are included in the EPC Book of Order, Part 1, sections 9-1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9 and 10. A link to the EPC Book of Order is available on the <https://sunset.church/elders/> web page.

**How:** As a servant and spiritual leader of SPC, REs are called to first seek the Kingdom of God. Your personal relationship with God is extremely important in this role. You will rely heavily on His wisdom for discernment and your intercession on behalf of the church is essential. We lean on God's mercy and grace as we as collectively make decisions that impact His church. These expectations demand time in His Word, prayer and communication with the congregation.

**When:** The time commitment varies, but these are the regular commitments:

Meetings: Our regular Session meetings are scheduled for the 3rd Thursday of the month from 6:30pm-9:30pm. Meetings can be extended or additional meetings scheduled, as needed. Meetings often include a Bible study segment that requires homework between Session meetings.

Committee assignments: (as needed)

Participation in the Life of the Church: Church attendance, communion, prayer, and continue serving in ministries that fit your passions and giftings.

Session Emails: Sometimes Session conducts business between meetings via email.

Presbytery meetings: SPC needs to send 4 voting participants (known as Commissioners) to quarterly Presbytery meetings. Meetings run from Thursday evening to noon on Saturday and are held in OR, WA or ID. Commissioners can be current REs or former REs. REs are encouraged to attend Presbytery meetings, as they are able.

Training: As new REs are preparing to serve, training sessions will be provided and incoming REs are asked to attend the Session meetings to observe and prepare for their upcoming term.