

## **OAKDALE BOARD MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS**

Oakdale Board Members are nominated by the existing board and Senior Staff in consultation with the congregation and undergo a robust screening and interview process before they are eligible for election to the Governing Board. Accepting the volunteer role of Board Member is not something to be taken lightly; Board Members make extensive time commitments and take on deep spiritual responsibility in leading Oakdale, and we are grateful for their selfless service on our behalf.

### **Board Member Prerequisites**

- Board Members must have attended Oakdale for at least **two** years.
- Board Members must be participating members of Oakdale.
- Must have volunteered in a significant capacity and led or participated in a Small Group for at least **one** year, preferably in a leadership or coaching role.
- Must have capacity, flexibility and availability to serve as a Board Member. The time requirement varies greatly month to month, but the minimum includes monthly meetings, annual retreat, and additional work outside official meetings.

### **Time Commitment for Board Members**

- Average one meeting per month, but likely 15 per year.
- Board retreat—one weekend per year.
- Four to six hours (on average) per month for review of board materials, policies, correspondence, meeting preparation, and team conference calls.
- If serious issues arise that require immediate attention by the Board, additional hours may be required outside of regular board meetings. (This happens infrequently, but is a possibility.)

### **Scriptural Overview of the Role of Elder**

#### **General Overview**

Scripture verses that address the role of a spiritual leadership and oversight: Titus 1:5, 9; I Peter 5:1–4; Acts 6:1-7, 20:28–31; James 5:14, 1 Timothy 3:4-5

At Oakdale, our Board Members:

- Carry the ultimate responsibility and authority to see that the church remains on a true biblical course; that its members are being appropriately shepherded, that the body is being fed through insightful and accurate biblical teaching, and that the life of the church is being well managed with the assistance of competent and godly leaders.
- Guard the body of Christ against harmful influences, confronting those who are contradicting biblical truth or continuing in a pattern of sinful behavior.
- Shepherd the church by being an example and role model.
- Care about the spiritual and physical wellbeing of members; pray regularly for the sick.

### **Specific Duties**

The Board Members of Oakdale are responsible for the following but will delegate to qualified others in the body so these duties are carried out effectively.

#### **Provide Spiritual Oversight (In partnership with the Appointed UMC Elder)**

- Implement and monitor compliance with UMC Book of Discipline.
- Implement and monitor compliance with Oakdale's Board Policy.
- Mandate ministry to the poor and distressed.
- Pray regularly for the staff and congregation.
- Participate (as needed) in the biblical process of conflict resolution outlined by Jesus in Matthew 18.
- Direct people into appropriate processes for guidance, assistance, and problem resolution.
- Respond to letters/phone calls from the church body, staff, or public.
- Continue to ensure Oakdale is reaching the unchurched and dechurched in our communities.

#### **Manage the Church**

- Develop and approve the annual operating budget.
- Encourage the Senior Pastor, the staff, and volunteers.
- Remove senior leaders who require dismissal for cause.
- Conduct annual review of the Senior Pastor.
- Delegate to qualified assistants, staff, and/or outside experts as needed.

# Essential Components of a Board Member

The biblical teaching on church leadership begins and ends with the character of the individuals who are called to the leadership team of the church. Our evaluation of individuals who aspire to serve as Board Members at Oakdale includes a comprehensive process to evaluate the “Five Cs,” with the primary focus on Character.

## 1. First “C”—Character (1 Timothy 3:2–7 and Titus 1:6–9)

- **Above reproach**—Board Members must lead by example and demonstrate a lifestyle free from patterns of sin.
- **Husband of one wife**— Board Members, if married, must be devoted spouses.
- **Temperate**— Board Members must be self-controlled, enslaved to nothing, and free from excesses.
- **Prudent**— Board Members must be sober, sensible, wise, balanced in judgment, not given to quick, superficial decisions based on immature thinking.
- **Respectable**— Board Members must demonstrate a well-ordered life and honorable behavior.
- **Hospitable**— Board Members must be unselfish with personal resources, willing to share blessings with others.
- **Able to teach**— Board Members must be able to communicate truth and sound doctrine in a non-argumentative way.
- **Not addicted to wine**— Board Members must be free from addictions and willing to limit their liberty for the sake of others.
- **Not pugnacious or quick-tempered**— Board Members must be gentle, patient, and able to exercise self-control in difficult situations.
- **Uncontentious**— Board Members must not be given to quarreling or selfish argumentation.
- **Free from the love of money**— Board Members must not be stingy, greedy, or for sordid gain, or preoccupied with amassing material things.
- **Manage own household**— Board Members must have a well-ordered household and a healthy family life.
- **Not a new convert/not a new believer**— Board Members must not be new believers. They must have been a Christian long enough to demonstrate the reality of their conversion and depth of spirituality.
- **Good reputation with outsiders**— Board Members must be well-respected by unbelievers and free from hypocrisy.

- **Not self-willed**— Board Members must not be stubborn, or prone to forcing their opinions on others or abusing authority. They must be servant-minded.
- **Loving what is good**— Board Members must desire the will of God in every decision.
- **Just**— Board Members must desire to be fair and impartial. Their judgments must be based on scriptural principles.
- **Devout**— Board Members must be devoted Christ followers, seeking to be conformed to His image. They must be committed to prayer, worship, the study of Scripture, and the guarding of their spiritual walk.
- **Holding fast the faithful Word**— Board Members must be stable in the faith, obedient to the Word of God, and continually seeking to be controlled by the Holy Spirit.

**2. Second “C”—Competence:** Defined as specific, Holy Spirit-endowed gifts and abilities, combined with skills acquired through training and life experience.

**3. Third “C”—Chemistry:** The intangible quality of being able to “fit” within the existing team. The ability to blend into and enrich the current circle of community and relational harmony within the board.

**4. Fourth “C”—Courage:** The ability, when needed, to enter into difficult exchanges and defend the faith, the church, and individuals in ways that preserve and maintain the community. The ability to speak the truth in love without destructive results.

**5. Fifth “C”—Calling:** The ability to sense God’s calling on one’s life for a particular season of service to the body of Christ: “I think God is in this.”

## Essential Characteristics/Skills of Board Members

- Able to keep confidential information
- Spiritual maturity
- Able to exhort in sound doctrine
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Excellent communication skills
- Team player
- Humility
- Conflict-resolution skills

# Essential Spiritual Gifts for Board Members

The spiritual gifts of discernment, wisdom, and teaching are considered foundational gifts for those who serve as Board Members; however, the presence of other gifts such as leadership, administration, encouragement, and mercy greatly enhance Board Member's functioning.

## 1. Discernment

The gift of discernment is the divine enablement to distinguish between truth and error. It is the ability to discern the spirits, differentiating between good and evil, right and wrong. Scripture references are: 1 Corinthians 12:10; Acts 5:1–4; and Matthew 16:21–23. People with this gift:

- Distinguish truth from error, right from wrong, pure motives from impure motives.
- Identify deception in others with accuracy and in an appropriate manner.
- Determine whether a word attributed to God is authentic.
- Recognize inconsistencies in a teaching, prophetic message, or interpretation.
- Can sense the presence of evil.

## 2. Wisdom

The gift of wisdom is the divine enablement to apply spiritual truths effectively to meet needs in specific situations. Scripture references are: 1 Corinthians 12:8; James 3:13–18; 1 Corinthians 2:3–14; and Jeremiah 9:23–24. People with this gift:

- Focus on the unseen consequences in determining what next steps to take.
- Receive an understanding of what is necessary to meet the needs of the body.
- Provide divinely guided or given solutions in the midst of conflict and confusion.
- Hear the Spirit provide direction for God's best in a given situation.
- Apply spiritual truth in specific and practical ways.

## 3. Leadership

The gift of leadership is the divine enablement to envision the future of the church coupled with a humble heart to serve others. Scripture references are: Genesis 12:1; Isaiah 43:18–19; Matthew 7:7; Matthew 20:25–28; Luke 22:27; John 10:3–4, 11; 1 Corinthians 2:9–13; and James 1:5. People with this gift:

- Are servants by nature; eager to see the church prevail in the world.
- Demonstrate spiritual foresight that anticipates the work of God.
- Allow Scripture and prayer to inform their decision-making process.
- Impart vision to others using clear communication.
- Can assess significant past events and their potential for impact on the present and future.
- Are able to think creatively and apply ideas and concepts in new ways.
- Desire accountability in fulfilling their responsibilities and meeting the needs of those they serve.