

Case Study

Church Name: Ballardsville Baptist Church

Pastor's Name: Tony Wolfenbarger

City/Town: Crestwood, KY

What were your motivations in making this transition?

We believe Scripture clearly teaches that the church is led by a plurality of elders. Because we want to obey Jesus and follow his teachings in Scripture we made the change. There were other things that led us to look for a solution and those had to do with organizational issues that limited the church's potential and kept dividing us by votes. We consistently struggled with leadership issues. Who led the church? The committees, the staff, the pastor, the congregation? Elders solve all of that and it is both described and prescribed in Scripture.

What steps did you take in the process?

- July 2014 – Preached on Elders during 1 Timothy Series
- April 2015 – Began an Elders Study on Sunday Nights
- June 2015 – Elder Initiative Stopped/Paused - Church fell apart – Spiritual Warfare
- October 2017 – Elder Discussions began again.
- February 2018 – Elder Blueprint Approved
- March 2018 – First Elders

What challenges or hurdles did you face?

- Elders quitting the church.
- Several leaders quit the church.
- Several volunteers stopped serving to just let the elders do it.
- Decisions are now all on the elders.
- Elders focus more on decisions and physical aspects of the ministry than the spiritual aspects of the ministry.
- Training men and having men who can be elders.

What were the benefits of this transition?

- We are biblically aligned.
- We have a group of men who love the Lord, each other, and the church making decisions.
- Elders can make tough decisions without a popularity vote.
- Great unity in the church.
- The pastor has help leading the church.
- Pastor and elders offer one another wise counsel based on truth of Christ.
- The church is healthier.