

Steps to consider in transitioning to a plurality of elders:

Evaluate your motivation for making this transition:

- Are you motivated by a desire for a healthier church?
- Did a thorough examination of church leadership in the Scriptures lead you to consider this transition?
- Do you have deacons who are “sitting on the wrong seat on the bus?”
- Do you have a desire for a shared burden for decision-making?
- Do you have a conviction that there are potential elders already in the church?

Study and learn from recommended books on elder leadership:

- Anyabwile, Thabiti M., *Finding Faithful Elders and Deacons*
- Dever, Mark, *A Display of God’s Glory*
- Dever, Mark, *Understanding Church Leadership*
- Getz, Gene A., *Elders and Leaders: God’s Plan for Leading the Church; A Biblical, Historical, and Cultural Perspective*
- Hammett, John S., *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches: A Contemporary Ecclesiology*
- Harvey, Dave, *The Plurality Principle: How to Build and Maintain a Thriving Church Leadership Team*
- Merkle, Benjamin, *40 Questions About Elders and Deacons*
- Merkle, Benjamin, *Why Elders? A Biblical and Practical Guide for Church Members*
- Newton, Phil and Matt Schmucker, *Elders in the Life of the Church: Rediscovering the Biblical Model for Church Leadership*
- Newton, Phil, *Mending the Nets* (To be released in June)
- Rinne, Jeramie, *Church Elders: How to Shepherd God’s People Like Jesus*
- Strauch, Alexander, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership*

Interact with KBC Pastors and Churches who have led in a transition to elder leadership:

- Coral Hill Baptist Church, Glasgow, *Pastor Ray Woodie*
- Ballardsville Baptist Church, *Pastor Tony Wolfenbarger*
- Grace Baptist Church, Somerset, *Pastor Todd Meadows*
- Fulton First Baptist Church, *Pastor Stephen Cavness*
- Hebron Baptist Church, *Pastor Shawn Dobbins*
- Victory Baptist Church, Shepherdsville, *Pastor Stephen Crenshaw*

Follow wise counsel from church leaders who have transitioned to an elder-led model:

- Teach the Scriptures.
- Be patient.
- Clarify the roles of elders and deacons.
- Explain that elders are not new in Baptist church history.
- Develop a study on the topic of elders.
- Create a blueprint to answer practical questions (FAQs).
- Plant seeds in private conversations.

- Ask, “Is it biblical? Is it practical? Is it helpful?”
- Anticipate that some church members may be hesitant to embrace this model. Don’t give up!

Anticipate possible challenges in transitioning to an elder model:

- Adjusting to the new rhythm of how the church does things and how elders make decisions.
- Caring for lay elders so they avoid burnout.
- Making changes to the church’s governing documents (Constitution & Bylaws, etc.).
- Dealing with pushback on decisions made by elders.
- Encountering sin within the elder body.
- Making sure the ball doesn’t get dropped between the elders and deacons.
- Spiritual warfare.
- Church members may be tempted to stop serving and just let the elders do everything.
- Confusion of the elders’ roles.