

Church Council Candidate Application

A Prayerful Discernment Process for Spiritual Governance

1 Corinthians 4:2, *“Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.”*

Dear Church Council Candidate,

Thank you for prayerfully considering service on the Church Council of Charter Oak Church. The Church Council serves as the primary governing body of Charter Oak Church. Together with the Lead Pastor, Church Council provides spiritual oversight, organizational accountability, fiduciary stewardship, and governance leadership that advances the mission of Charter Oak Church – to reach out to those who are searching and equip believers to be fully devoted followers of Jesus.

Church Council members are not selected because they are simply successful leaders or long-time members. They are chosen because they demonstrate spiritual maturity, biblical wisdom, servant leadership, and a willingness to steward God's Church with humility and integrity.

As a Wesleyan church within the Global Methodist Church, we believe leadership begins with holy living, faithful discipleship, and complete dependence upon the Holy Spirit. We ask you to complete this application prayerfully and honestly.

Church Council is comprised of fifteen men and women, including the Lead Pastor and two non-voting staff members. Church Council positions are a four-year term. Church Council meets once a month, usually on the third Thursday at 7:00pm. Church Council general session meetings are open to anyone to attend. In order to serve as a member of Church Council you must be a member of Charter Oak Church.

Application Process

There are two parts to the application process:

- **Church Council Application**
Please complete the attached application, sign below, and return to Kristi Fellers, Executive Assistant to the Lead Pastor, either at the church office or through email (kfellers@charteroak.church).
- **Member Recommendation**
You must submit a recommendation from another member of Charter Oak Church, utilizing the attached form. The recommendation form should be completed without consultation or feedback from the recommended candidate. Recommendations should not be obtained from a family member.

Thank you for taking time to complete this application. Serving as a Church Council member is an important position in our church, one that is not to be taken lightly. As such, we ask that you prayerfully complete this form and evaluate each question honestly. Please take time to read 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, which describe the qualifications for elders.

Understanding Church Council

A Calling to Spiritual Governance

Thank you for prayerfully considering serving on the Charter Oak Church Council. Serving on the Church Council is both a privilege and a sacred responsibility. Church Council members are called to steward Christ's Church by providing spiritual discernment, governance, accountability, and faithful oversight of the ministry God has entrusted to Charter Oak Church.

As a Wesleyan church within the Global Methodist Church, we believe leadership begins with a vibrant relationship with Jesus Christ, a life marked by holiness, humility, servant leadership, and a commitment to the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ.

Church Council service is not simply another volunteer position. It is a calling to prayerfully discern God's direction, faithfully steward the resources of the church, protect its doctrinal integrity, and ensure that Charter Oak Church remains healthy and effective for future generations.

The Purpose of Church Council

The Church Council serves as the governing body of Charter Oak Church. Working in partnership with the Lead Pastor, the Church Council provides spiritual and organizational oversight that advances the vision, mission, and long-term health of the church.

The Church Council exists to:

- Protect the vision, mission, and doctrinal integrity of Charter Oak Church.
- Provide prayerful spiritual discernment for the future direction of the church.
- Ensure faithful stewardship of the church's financial, legal, and physical resources.
- Support, encourage, and appropriately hold the Lead Pastor accountable for fulfilling the vision and mission of the church.
- Promote unity throughout the church while serving the best interests of the entire congregation.
- Ensure the church remains focused on making disciples of Jesus Christ.

Governance vs. Management

Healthy churches understand the difference between governance and management. Church Council governs. The Lead Pastor leads the ministry of the church and oversees the day-to-day operations, staff, and ministries.

Rather than managing ministries or supervising staff, the Church Council provides oversight by:

- establishing strategic direction
- approving major policies and budgets
- monitoring organizational health
- protecting the mission of the church
- and ensuring accountability throughout the organization

Church Council members serve as trusted partners who encourage, advise, and appropriately challenge while maintaining unity and mutual respect.

A Partnership with the Lead Pastor

The relationship between the Church Council and the Lead Pastor is built upon mutual trust, shared accountability, open communication, and a common commitment to God's mission. The Lead Pastor provides visionary leadership for Charter Oak Church, while the Church Council provides governance, accountability, encouragement, and wise counsel.

Together, the Lead Pastor and Church Council seek God's direction for the future of Charter Oak Church and work collaboratively to ensure the church remains faithful to its mission and effective in its ministry. Healthy governance requires both courageous accountability and unwavering support.

One Church in Multiple Locations

Charter Oak Church is one church meeting in multiple locations. Church Council members serve the entire church – not a particular campus, ministry, or personal interest. Every decision should be made with consideration for the health, unity, and mission of the church as a whole. We don't seek representation from every campus because Church Council members are expected to think beyond their campus, individual preferences and seek what is best for the entire body of Christ entrusted to Charter Oak Church.

Expectations of Church Council Members

Church Council members are expected to:

- Maintain a growing and authentic relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Live a life consistent with biblical leadership qualifications.
- Regularly worship, serve, and participate in the life of Charter Oak Church.
- Support the mission, vision, doctrine, and leadership of the church.
- Generously give to the work of God at Charter Oak Church.
- Prepare for and faithfully attend Church Council meetings.
- Pray regularly for the Lead Pastor, church staff, congregation, and fellow Church Council members.
- Maintain strict confidentiality regarding sensitive matters discussed by the Church Council.
- Exercise wisdom, humility, and discernment in decision-making.
- Support decisions made by the Church Council, even when personal preferences differ.
- Serve with humility, integrity, and a spirit of unity.

Time Commitment

Church Council members serve four-year staggered terms. Members should expect to:

- Attend monthly Church Council meetings.
- Participate in occasional special meetings or retreats as needed.
- Review meeting materials and prepare in advance.
- Serve on sub-teams or special projects when requested.
- Invest time in prayer, discernment, and ongoing leadership development.

Our Commitment to Discernment

The purpose of this application is not simply to identify capable leaders but to prayerfully discern whom God is calling to serve on the Charter Oak Church Council during this season of ministry.

We believe the Holy Spirit equips and calls leaders for His Church. Therefore, this application, the interview process, recommendations, and Church Council deliberations are all intended to help discern God's leading rather than merely evaluate qualifications.

We encourage you to complete this application prayerfully, honestly, and with an open heart, trusting that God's will is best for both you and Charter Oak Church.

**Charter Oak Church
Church Council Application**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Cell Phone _____

Email _____

Date of Birth _____ Approximate Age Baptized _____

Membership Date _____ Small Group _____

Ministry Involvement _____

How many years have you attended Charter Oak Church? _____

What are your spiritual gifts?

Family Information

Marital Status (circle one) Single Married Widowed Divorced

Spouse's Name _____

Children's Names	Ages
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_____	_____
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_____	_____
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_____	_____
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_____	_____
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Spiritual Journey

Describe your relationship with Jesus today.

Describe your salvation story.

How has God been shaping you over the last three years?

What spiritual disciplines are currently most important in your life?

Who has permission to speak truth into your life?

How are you intentionally growing as a disciple?

Wesleyan Theology

How does our Wesleyan understanding of grace influence the way you lead others?

Describe what it means to live a life of holiness.

How would you explain salvation to someone exploring Christianity?

Why is Scriptural authority important in Church leadership?

How should truth and grace work together in Church leadership?

Vision and Mission

Why does Charter Oak Church's vision and mission resonate with you?

How have you personally participated in our mission?

How does a multisite church advance disciple-making?

What excites you about the future of Charter Oak Church?

What concerns you about the future of the Church in America?

Leadership

Describe a difficult leadership decision you had to make.

How do you respond when you disagree with leadership?

How do you build unity while maintaining conviction?

Describe a time you admitted you were wrong.

How do you make decisions when information is incomplete?

Governance Readiness and Leadership Commitment

What is the primary responsibility of the Church Council?

How do you distinguish between governing the church and managing the day-to-day ministry of the church?

How should the Church Council support and encourage the Lead Pastor while also providing healthy accountability?

Church Council members regularly discuss confidential personnel, financial, legal, and pastoral matters. Why is confidentiality essential to healthy church governance?

If the Church Council makes a decision that differs from your personal preference, how would you respond?

How would you respond if a church member approached you with criticism or complaints about a staff member or ministry leader?

What does faithful stewardship mean to you as it relates to the resources God has entrusted to Charter Oak Church?

Charter Oak Church is one church meeting in multiple locations. How should Church Council members balance the unique needs of individual campuses while making decisions that serve the mission and health of the entire church?

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

To help maintain the highest level of integrity and transparency in church governance, please answer the following questions.

Do you have any family members currently employed by Charter Oak Church?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes (please explain)

Do you or an immediate family member own, operate, or have a financial interest in a business that currently provides, or may seek to provide, goods or services to Charter Oak Church?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes (please explain)

Are you aware of any personal, financial, professional, or relational circumstances that could create an actual or perceived conflict of interest while serving on Church Council?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes (please explain)

If selected to serve, are you willing to disclose future conflicts of interest and recuse yourself from discussions or decisions when appropriate?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Leadership Commitment

If selected to serve on the Charter Oak Church Council, I commit to:

- ☐ Supporting the vision, mission, and doctrinal beliefs of Charter Oak Church.
- ☐ Serving with humility, integrity, wisdom, and a teachable spirit.
- ☐ Protecting the confidentiality of Church Council discussions.
- ☐ Praying regularly for the Lead Pastor, church staff, congregation, and fellow Council members.
- ☐ Preparing for and faithfully attending Church Council meetings.
- ☐ Supporting decisions of the Church Council once they have been prayerfully made, even when they differ from my personal preference.
- ☐ Disclosing actual or potential conflicts of interest as they arise.
- ☐ Seeking the unity of the church above personal opinions or agendas.
- ☐ Governing rather than managing, respecting the distinct roles of the Church Council and the Lead Pastor.

Candidate Affirmation

I have completed this application honestly and prayerfully. To the best of my knowledge, the information I have provided is accurate and reflects my sincere desire to follow God's leading. I understand that selection to the Charter Oak Church Council is a process of mutual discernment and is not an entitlement or guarantee of service.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Church Council Candidate Assessment

Confidential Reference & Discernment Form

Candidate Name: _____

Your Name: _____

Relationship to Candidate: _____

How long have you known the candidate? _____

How often do you interact with the candidate?

- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Rarely

Purpose

Thank you for participating in the discernment process for Church Council leadership. Your thoughtful and honest responses will help the Selection Team prayerfully evaluate this candidate's readiness to serve. This assessment is confidential and will be reviewed only by the Church Council Search Team. Please answer candidly and prayerfully.

Spiritual Character

Based on your personal knowledge of this candidate, please rate the following:

Characteristic	Exceptional	Consistently Demonstrated	Generally Demonstrated	Needs Growth	Unable to Evaluate
Growing relationship with Jesus Christ	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Biblical integrity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Humility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teachable spirit	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Spiritual maturity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Self-control	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Emotional maturity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Faithfulness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Prayerfulness	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Leadership Character

Please evaluate the candidate's leadership qualities:

Leadership Quality	Exceptional	Consistently Demonstrated	Generally Demonstrated	Needs Growth	Unable to Evaluate
Sound judgment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wisdom	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Servant leadership	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Builds unity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Handles conflict biblically	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Listens well	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrates courage when needed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Exercises discernment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Mission Alignment

Based on your observations...

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Supports the mission of Charter Oak Church	☐	☐	☐	☐
Supports the vision and direction of the church	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrates commitment to disciple-making	☐	☐	☐	☐
Supports the Essential Beliefs of Charter Oak Church	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lives in a manner consistent with biblical leadership	☐	☐	☐	☐
Seeks unity rather than division	☐	☐	☐	☐

Governance Readiness

Please evaluate the candidate's readiness to serve in a governance role.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Understands servant leadership	☐	☐	☐	☐
Can maintain confidentiality	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrates sound decision-making	☐	☐	☐	☐
Thinks strategically rather than operationally	☐	☐	☐	☐
Can respectfully disagree while preserving unity	☐	☐	☐	☐
Would faithfully support Church Council decisions after they are made	☐	☐	☐	☐
Would appropriately support and hold the Lead Pastor accountable	☐	☐	☐	☐

Multisite Perspective

Charter Oak Church is one church in multiple locations. Please indicate your agreement with the following:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
This candidate demonstrates concern for the health of the entire church rather than one ministry or campus.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Written Responses

What are this candidate's greatest strengths?

How have you seen this candidate demonstrate spiritual leadership?

In what areas do you believe this candidate still has room to grow?

Is there anything the Search Team should prayerfully consider before appointing this individual to Church Council?

If you were serving on the Church Council yourself, would you be confident serving alongside this candidate?

- ☐ Yes, without reservation
- ☐ Yes, with minor reservations
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ No

If you selected anything other than "Yes, without reservation," please explain:

Final Recommendation

After prayerfully considering this candidate, I believe he/she is:

- ☐ Ready to serve on the Charter Oak Church Council at this time.
- ☐ Possess strong potential but would benefit from additional leadership development before serving.
- ☐ Not ready to serve on the Church Council at this time.

Additional Comments

Signature: _____

Date: _____