**Format:** 3-week congregational class
**Timing:** Sundays after worship, late 2025
**Purpose:** To teach the biblical foundation of eldership and the practical, living model at McKnight as we invite and prepare new leaders.

**WEEK 1 – *“The Forest: God’s Design for His Church”***

**Focus:**

The big picture — God’s plan for the universal and local church and why leadership matters.

**Content:**

1. **What is the Church?**
	* *Universal Church* (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:47)
	* *Local Church* as God’s visible expression in each community
2. **Why Leadership?**
	* Leadership is God’s design to equip and mature the body (Ephesians 4:11-16)
	* Servant leadership vs. positional authority
3. **Overview of Church Leadership Roles**
	* Elders (Shepherds, Overseers)
	* Ministers (Evangelists, Teachers)
	* Ministry Leaders / Connect-Group Leaders (“functional deacons”)
4. **Eldership at McKnight: Guiding Principles**
	* *Shepherding Model 2025 v1 mBret*
	* Locally adapted model
	* Primary calling: *Shepherd the flock* (Ezekiel 34:4 reframed positively — strengthen, heal, bind up, bring back, search, serve in love)
	* Three focus areas: **Administration, Vision, and Pastoral Care**
5. **Discussion / Reflection**
	* How have you seen godly leadership shape a church?
	* What do you expect of an elder? What should an elder expect of you?

**WEEK 2 – *“The Trees: The Role of an Elder at McKnight”***

**Focus:**

What elders *do*, how they lead, and how our 3-part model functions.

**Content:**

1. **Core Calling: Shepherding**
	* Strengthen the weak, heal the sick, bind the injured, bring back strays, seek the lost
	* Be examples, not overlords (1 Peter 5:1-4)
2. **Three Complementary Leadership Areas**
	* **Administrative Elders** – oversee finances, policies, facilities, risk management
	* **Pastoral Elders** – focus on relationships, prayer, visitation, and congregational care
	* **Vision Elders** – cast vision, oversee ministers, and guide teaching priorities
	* Each team brings recommendations to the full eldership for final decisions.
3. **How Elders Work with Ministers**
	* Elders = shepherds who lead spiritually
	* Ministers = staff who equip and communicate
	* Mutual respect: “It is the job of ministers to set up elders for fruitful shepherding, and the job of elders to support ministers.”
4. **Shepherding in Practice**
	* Monthly elder meetings focused on prayer and pastoral concerns
	* Elders available Sunday 8:45 a.m. for prayer
	* Special sessions on key issues (women’s roles, leadership, unity)
	* “Positions” documents to maintain clarity and unity (non-doctrinal guidance)
5. **Interactive Element**
	* Current elders briefly describe their area (Admin / Vision / Pastoral) and a story from their experience.

**WEEK 3 – *“The Fruit: Becoming and Supporting Elders”***

**Focus:**

How men are called, trained, and affirmed — and how the congregation participates.

**Content:**

1. **Biblical Qualifications**
	* 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9
	* Emphasize character and spiritual maturity over business skill
2. **Eldership Development at McKnight**
	* Formal mentoring: men “intern and discern” alongside current elders
	* Intentional leadership development — discipling future elders
	* Rotational model: elders may take sabbatical breaks; new elders are groomed and affirmed
3. **Congregational Partnership**
	* Pray for and encourage elders (Hebrews 13:17)
	* Provide feedback with grace
	* Support ministry leaders (male and female) serving as “functional deacons”
4. **Looking Ahead**
	* Explain process for adding younger married men to leadership
	* Outline timeline for congregational input and prayer
	* Conclude with commitment prayer for current and future elders.