

## What is an "Elder" Again?

The way a church or congregation is governed is called a "polity." There are many kinds of polities. Here are three common forms:

- An *episcopal* polity is one built around bishops (Gk. *episkopos*) who lead regional churches. Catholic, Orthodox, Lutherans, Anglicans and most Methodists are episcopal.
- The *presbyterian* polity has a council called a *presbytery* (from the Gk. *presbēteros*) who oversee regional churches. They usually appoint local groups, called sessions, to oversee individual congregations.
- A *congregational* polity is dependent upon the congregation, which votes on decisions made. This is most common in Baptist and non-denominational churches.

The challenge of these various polities is that while they represent aspects of the biblical testimony, they lack others. At Bedford Road, we believe a congregation should be *elder-led*, which means we have a community of elders (1 Tim 3:1-7, 4:14, 5:17-19; Titus 1:5; James 5:14; 1 Pet 5:1-6) who oversee the congregation. The teaching pastor is a member of the elder community who the congregation has recognized as called and equipped for vocational ministry. The elders are the shepherds (leaders and caregivers) of the congregation. They appoint ministry leaders (Gk. *diakonos*) to handle specific tasks, and they present matters to the congregation for consideration and affirmation.

An elder-led congregation functions based on spirit-directed consensus and community rather than organizational hierarchy and structural demands. Leadership is not for temporal advantage but for spiritual growth and peace.

## Financial Summary

<b>2023 Budget</b>	\$224,885	<b>Budget to Date</b>	\$12,975
<b>Weekly Budget</b>	\$4,325	<b>Giving to Date</b>	\$10,887

A full financial report for the partial fiscal year May-Dec 2022 will be available by January 31. Thank you again to all for your generous stewardship. You can give via the offering box in the back of the sanctuary, via mail, or online at [bedfordroad.org/giving](http://bedfordroad.org/giving).

Website: <http://bedfordroad.org>;  
Streaming: [youtube.com/@bedfordroadbaptist](https://www.youtube.com/@bedfordroadbaptist)  
Contact: (603) 424-9623; PO Box 443, Merrimack, NH

January 22, 2023

**BEDFORD ROAD  
BAPTIST CHURCH**

Welcome

Creating environments where people  
encounter Jesus and journey together

## Today's Worship

### "We Believe"

© 2002, Richie Fike, Matthew Hooper, and Travis Ryan, CCLI# 6367165

### "Blessed Be Your Name"

© 2002, Beth and Matt Redman, CCLI# 3798438

- Join us at the Lord's Table -

### "Doxology"

### "Even If"

© 2017, Bart Millard, Ben Glover, Crystal Lewis, David Garcia, CCLI# 7079513

### "They'll Know We Are Christians"

© 1966, Peter Scholtes, CCLI# 26997

- Exploring the Scriptures Together -

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## News and Notes

### Group Bible Studies

Tues 7pm (Ray Pouliot, Mike Trask), begins next week

Wed 7pm (Bob Bragdon)

7pm (Doc Delisi), still ongoing, 82 Cross Rd, Hooksett

### January

29 Music Team Planning Meeting

### February

4 Southern NH Rescue Mission

18 Ladies' Ministry, 9:15am

22 Beginning of *tessarakoste*, the 40 days before Resurrection

24 Ministry Leaders Meeting

## Exploring the Scriptures Together

### Text:

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### The Big Idea:

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Nursery is provided 9:30-11:30am for children ages 0-3.  
There is an age-appropriate teaching time for children ages 4-10.  
Children are dismissed right before the message.