

CONFIDENTIAL: We don't intend to make this communication public, and we ask that you not make it public either.

Elders,

As you consider how you will respond in this crisis, we want to remind you of what powers you have as elders, both formally and informally.

Your Formal Powers as Elders

According to the Second Amended and Restated Bylaws of Mars Hill Church (attached), you have the following powers:

A) You may have the power to approve nominees to the board of advisors and accountability (Section 6.9.b.i). With the recent resignation of both James MacDonald and Paul Tripp, we urge you to approve future nominees with wisdom and care if given the opportunity.

B) You have the power to change Mars Hill Church's statement of faith by a three-fourths majority vote (Section 6.9.b.ii). This might require a Special Meeting of the Full Council (Section 6.4). A Special Meeting can be called by the Chairman of the Board, Michael Van Skaik, and he must call such a meeting if requested in writing by either two-thirds of the executive elders, or two-thirds of the board of advisors and accountability. Since there are currently five members of that board, this means that four of them would have to request this in writing. You might consider whether recent events influence your beliefs about what forms of church government are wise.

Your Informal Powers as Elders

Though your formal authority is limited, we appeal to you to recognize and lovingly steward your pastoral influence in the following ways:

A) Though you do not have the legal authority to insist that a Special Meeting of the Full Council be called, you have the freedom to request that Michael Van Skaik, the Chairman of the Board, calls such a meeting. He has the authority to do so without the approval of the rest of the board (Section 6.4). A Special Meeting may be called for a variety of purposes.

B) Though you do not have the legal authority to determine the slate of nominees for filling the vacancies in the BoAA, you do have the freedom to request that the board consider particular nominees. The BoAA may have up to eight members in addition to the three Executive Elders (Section 7.2). Because there are currently five board members, it is possible that up to six more could be added. Six new board members would constitute the majority of the board.

C) Lovingly shepherd those within your care. Many are broken and confused.

D) Continue to ask the tough questions of the Executive Elders and the BoAA.

E) Grant freedom to one another to think critically, and respect that faithful men may draw different conclusions from one another.

Soberly and prayerfully consider that taking a stand may require personal risk when confronting the culture and system that Mars Hill has become. We urge you to stand for the sake of the gospel, the good reputation of the office of elder, and of the good reputation of our Lord Jesus Christ.