

Choosing Your Successors

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this article taken from the UCCK UK homepage

Choosing your Successors In a CU of two or three hundred members, you may be spoilt for choice, and can't possibly know everybody. In a tiny CU of a handful of members, you have hardly any choice — and those you know may be reluctant to take on the responsibility!

A political spirit always weakens a CU. When factions spring up, with favoured candidates, representing various viewpoints or denominations, they breed mistrust, division and ungodliness. That spirit can arise from anywhere on the theological spectrum, and we should always resist it. It poisons the atmosphere long after the choices have been made.

It's also important to try to avoid a situation of public winners and losers, such as you get in Student Union elections. In fact, my plea is that we manage this process in a way that is wholly different from Student Union democracy. Surely we in the Kingdom of God can do better than that. We need a way of rising higher than natural ambition, hustings, gossip and public humiliation.



Whose interests and views are we trying to serve as we seek to choose our successors?

Firstly, we need a way of discerning God's purposes and choices. He expresses his values and preferences in his Word, the Bible. He has probably also started using certain individuals to fulfil particular roles among his people (e.g. administration, leadership, encouragement etc.). The trick is to see it.

Secondly, the present committee has the responsibility to offer its view and recommendations, as they are still the leadership until the hand-over. They have a unique understanding of the pressures and requirements of CU responsibility and must not wash their hands of this task. They can find help from their staffworker at this point.

Thirdly, the CU members themselves need a way of expressing their views. They need to 'own' the process, and support the outcome in an informed and mature way.

These three 'parties' need to interact and be helped towards unity. So, here's a suggestion:

At an appropriate time in the CU programme, arrange for someone to bring Bible teaching to everybody on Christian leadership. Serving on the Exec is not a 'job' so much as a question of character, calling, servanthood, courage and gifting. This would help CU members to

view the leadership responsibility much more from God's point of view, than as an exalted office at the top of a competitive ladder. The teaching from Scripture might help people discern what God is already doing in the lives of others. That teaching should be given by someone who know what CUs are like.

CU members are then asked to think and pray during the next couple of weeks in response to Scripture. This must not be a time for gossip or putting pressure on anybody. During that time, they are invited to give confidential feedback to the existing Exec if they feel there are signs of God already beginning to use certain individuals in ways that suggest they could be called on to do something similar on Exec.

The existing Exec takes all that feedback from the membership, as stimulated by Scripture, and prayerfully chooses its successors over the next couple of weeks. They present 'the team', and the CU at a General Meeting would be invited to approve (or I suppose, disapprove) of the whole proposed selection.

No 'system' is perfect in our present world. However, this suggestion aims to allow God to speak through the Bible, leaders to lead as is their duty, members to play their part, and it also tries to avoid the worst aspects of human politicking into which we are prone to fall.

1 Samuel 16:7