

Recognition Guideline

This process is for men and women who sense a call from God to serve in one of the leadership offices of Gardens in Exile — Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors/Teachers (Elders/Overseers), or Deacons. It provides a pathway of recognition for both those who have ministry experience and meet the qualification.

1. Character Questions (for Family & Church Leaders)

These should test the integrity, reputation, and fruit of the Spirit in the candidate's life.

- Does the candidate display Christlike humility, love, and self-control in their daily life?
- How do they handle conflict, correction, or disagreement?
- Are they faithful in marriage/family responsibilities (if applicable), and do they manage their household well? (1 Tim 3:4–5)
- Do they have a consistent devotional/prayer life that bears fruit in godliness?
- How do you see their reputation inside and outside the church (e.g., workplace, neighbors)?
- Have you observed patterns of sin or immaturity that could disqualify or hinder them in leadership?
- Would you trust this person with spiritual authority over your own family?

2. Ministry Questions (from Ministry References)

These should test calling, fruit, and gifting in the specific office sought.

For Apostles

- Have they demonstrated capacity to plant, oversee, or strengthen churches?
- Have they raised and equipped other leaders?
- Do they carry a proven ability to pioneer new works and persevere under trial?

For Prophets

- Do they exercise prophetic gifting that edifies, exhorts, and comforts the church?
- Have their words been biblically sound, tested, and proven accurate?
- Do they display humility and accountability when corrected or tested?

For Evangelists

- Is there evidence of consistent fruit in evangelism (people coming to faith)?
- Do they train and inspire others to share the Gospel?
- Do they remain rooted in sound doctrine while engaging the lost?

For Pastors/Teachers (Elders/Overseers)

- Do they teach sound doctrine with clarity and faithfulness?
- Have they shepherded believers through discipleship, counsel, and care?
- Do they protect the flock from false teaching and division?

For Deacons

- Do they serve faithfully and are they skilled in meeting the needs or gifts of the needs of the local church?
- Are they reliable, trustworthy, and willing to serve without seeking recognition?
- Do they demonstrate spiritual maturity even in practical service roles?

3. Other Needed Steps (Beyond Questions)

To make the process complete and consistent:

- **Theological Examination:** Oral or written exam based on the curriculum set by the Apostolic Council.
- **Document Agreement:** Candidate must read, understand, and sign the Charter and Leadership Bylaws.
- **Mentor Report:** Recognizing leader writes a formal report with testimony of the candidate's qualifications, discernment, and recommendation.
- **Council Record:** The Apostolic Council receives the report for official record.
- **Public Appointment:** The leader publicly appoints the candidate through prayer and laying on of hands.
- **Discipline Clause:** If references or reports are found to be dishonest, both candidate and mentor may face discipline.

4. Authority to Recognize Leaders

Apostles → All offices

Prophets → Prophets

Evangelists → Evangelists

Pastors/Teachers → Pastors/Teachers and Deacons

Deacons → None (they're appointed by Apostles or Pastors/Teachers)