



Operational Values

- 1. WE STRIVE TO WALK IN THE LIGHT AT ALL TIMES IN ALL SITUATIONS.**
 - a. Because God is light, we are blessed with His presence, wisdom, power, and provision when we operate in the light. Satan loves the dark, and we make ourselves vulnerable to deception, confusion, and dissension whenever we operate there.
 - b. At the leadership level, we do not have secret conversations outside of official meetings. The intent is not to forbid outside conversation, but to keep such conversations in the light by reporting them openly to the larger group.
 - c. We will not employ the use of secret ballots on any matter in any setting.
 - d. When we become aware of undercurrents in the life of our congregation, we will address them openly in an appropriate manner.
 - e. We will operate with an open-book policy when it comes to finances.
 - f. We cannot respond to and will not give weight to anonymous messages of any kind.

- 2. WE ARE FULLY DEVOTED TO LIVING OUT THE “MATTHEW 18 PRINCIPLE.” (SEE MATTHEW 18:15-17)**
 - a. Violation of this principle does great damage to the body and will not be tolerated. This includes such behavior as gossip, slander, triangulation, anonymous communications, and any actions that stir up dissension within the body.
 - b. If one is approached by an individual who speaks negatively or critically of another member of the staff or church, the appropriate response is to instruct that individual to go directly to the person or persons involved. We may assure the individual that help from leadership is available if the direct approach fails.
 - c. If we desire open and forthright communication, we must all be open and receptive to individuals who approach us with concerns.
 - i. We shut down healthy communication when we are defensive or unwilling to listen.
 - ii. We must remember that a sincere “critic” who is willing to be a part of the solution can be one of our great assets.
 - iii. If a critic is not motivated by love and the desire to be constructive, we look for the kernel of truth and discard the rest.

- 3. WE MAINTAIN CLEAR LINES OF OVERSIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITY.**
 - a. *Board:* Provides broad, long-range, strategic leadership that keeps us moving in the right direction.
 - i. Places a high priority on listening prayer and spiritual discernment.

- ii. Keeps the church accountable to its stated mission.
 - iii. Provides spiritual and leadership accountability for the Lead Pastor.
 - iv. Is NOT involved in the management of the day-to-day operations of the church.
- b. *Resource Management Team*: Responsible for managing the resources God has entrusted to us with a commitment to the highest biblical and ethical standards.
- i. Reports to and works at the direction of the board.
 - ii. Gives attention to the details.
 - iii. Three teams that work together: Finance, Facility, and Personnel
- c. *Staff*: Responsible for overseeing all ministries and “equipping the saints for works of service.”
- i. Emphasis on equipping vs. doing ministry.
 - ii. Staff leadership priority: identifying, equipping, nurturing leaders of teams.
 - iii. Staff members empower others to lead by:
 - 1. Effective initial training and ongoing support.
 - 2. Establishing timely and effective means of communication.
 - 3. Encouraging and expressing gratitude on a regular basis.
 - 4. Holding leaders accountable to mutually agreed upon expectations.
- d. *The “Saints”*: Responsible for carrying out works of service.
- i. Every member is a minister.
 - ii. The body is designed so that members care for one another’s needs.
 - iii. The marketplace is one of our most important mission fields.
- 4. WE MAKE DECISIONS AND EXERCISE LEADERSHIP THROUGH A PROCESS OF SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT THAT LEADS TO CONSENSUS RATHER THAN A DEMOCRATIC (MAJORITY RULES) PROCESS THAT MAY RESULT IN A FRACTURED COMMUNITY.**
- a. It is essential that we be about God’s business, not our own.
 - b. We recognize our own frailty and acknowledge our susceptibility to self-will and personal biases
 - c. Decision-making that is rooted in prayer, confession, the public acknowledgment of personal biases, and careful listening to God provides the best context for making spiritual decisions. Recognizing that this is generally not a quick or simple process, we resist the urge to rush it for the sake of expediency.
 - d. We understand that both visionary leaders and people groups are capable of making good or poor decisions. The process of spiritual discernment is meant to create an environment in which the gift of visionary leadership and the goal of broad ownership are held in tension.

e. Once consensus is reached, we walk in agreement, equally celebrating success and taking responsibility for failures.

5. WE VALUE PEOPLE ABOVE SYSTEMS, STRUCTURE, AND POLICIES.

- a. Systems, structures, and policies (SSPs) are essential and beneficial to the body.
- b. SSPs are intended to support people and facilitate ministry, not the other way around.
- c. We do not institute SSPs solely to correct unhealthy behavior or prevent the possibility of the same in the future. Rather, we choose to “speak the truth in love” on an individual basis when unhealthy behavior warrants it.
- d. SSPs should be clearly communicated and consistently managed.

6. WE CULTIVATE A LEADERSHIP-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT WITHIN HEALTHY PARAMETERS.

- a. All ministries must be faithful to our stated mission, core values, and operational values, and must not violate scripture.
- b. All leaders work under the broad direction of, maintain healthy lines of communication with, and are accountable for leadership effectiveness to a coach, director or pastor.
- c. Financial expenditures must not exceed budgetary limits without prior approval.
- d. Under these conditions, ministry teams have the freedom and authority to prayerfully dream, create, make decisions, change course, and execute plans in their specific areas of ministry.

7. WE ALLOW THE FREEDOM TO FAIL.

- a. If we’re not taking risks, we’re not growing.
- b. Failure is one of our greatest opportunities for learning and growth.
- c. Failure is often a necessary part of the journey toward success.

8. WE EMPHASIZE ROLES DETERMINED BY SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND FUNCTIONS RATHER THAN TITLES AND OFFICES.

- a. Titles and offices tend to reflect a worldly view of leadership and may foster pride and other worldly attitudes when it comes to serving within the body.
- b. Effectiveness in leadership is the fruit of God-ordained gifts (spiritual gifts, abilities, passions, personality and life experiences) rather than titles and offices ordained by man.
- c. Because we do not view the church as an institutional “machine,” we refuse to use people to merely fill ministry holes. Rather, our aim is to help all members identify how they are Gifted to Serve and make ministry connections accordingly.

9. WE BELIEVE CHANGE IS GOOD.

- a. It is more important to know where God is moving today than where He was moving yesterday.
- b. No sacred cows allowed. Defending or maintaining a ministry or program for no other reason than to preserve the past is a sure sign of drift toward institutionalization.
- c. If it is not working, change it. If it can be improved, go for it. If it is no longer fruitful, celebrate it, give it a gracious burial, and discern where God is moving now.

10. WE UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING CLEAR A HEALTHY GENDER BOUNDARIES. (THESE STANDARDS ARE REQUIRED OF ALL STAFF AND MEANT TO SET AN EXAMPLE FOR ALL LEADERS.)

- a. We will not meet with members of the opposite sex without someone else in the office wing.
- b. All office doors must have a window and must remain unobstructed when meeting with a member of the opposite sex.
- c. We will not travel alone with members of the opposite sex (this applies to all travel, locally and abroad). Exceptions may be made only in the case of emergency and should be reported immediately to one's direct supervisor.
- d. We will exercise caution when it comes to long-term counseling with members of the opposite sex.
- e. We will exercise wisdom, honor, and respect for others when it comes to touching members of the opposite sex in any manner (including hugs, prayer postures, etc). This is not meant to create an atmosphere of fear and suspicion, but is rooted in our desire to protect ourselves and others from anything other than the love of brother and sister.

11. WE ARE COMMITTED TO HELPING LEADERS MAINTAIN A LIFE IN ORDER.

- a. Who we are is more important than what we do.
- b. If an individual is found to be in sin, we exercise appropriate spiritual discipline.
- c. If an individual is not found to be in sin, but is otherwise in crisis, it may be best to release that individual from leadership responsibilities in order to give full attention to the crisis. That decision should be made after much prayer and communication with the individual, and is to be seen as a blessing rather than punishment.