



Living Leadership Network

Commitments

The Living Leadership network includes: employees whose roles include ministry responsibilities (including participation in staff devotions); Associates; Affiliates; trustees; and volunteers involved in direct ministry with people or leadership of a programme.

All those in the network must:

- a) affirm the Living Leadership mission and values;
- b) adhere to the Living Leadership Statement of Faith, Statement of Ethos, Relational Commitments, and Position on Sexual Ethics;
- c) commit to work within all Living Leadership policies governing their work, including the Living Leadership Code of Conduct in Interpersonal Ministry.

Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action in the case of an employee, removal as a trustee, or termination of status as an Associate, Affiliate or volunteer.

Living Leadership Vision, Mission and Values

Living Leadership's vision is:

To see Christian leaders and spouses of Christian leaders living joyfully in Christ and serving Him faithfully

Living Leadership's mission is:

to help grow leaders in the church by providing training, support and resources that promote a lifetime of gospel faithfulness and fruitfulness in ministry.

Living Leadership's values are:

grace, generosity and passion for the glory of God

Living Leadership Statement of Ethos

We want to be and to grow leaders who are:

- captivated by the glory of God and the wonder of the biblical gospel of Jesus Christ;
- wise and kind, serving out of a deep relationship with God and love of His Word as the heart of their spirituality;
- passionate in the belief that taking the gospel of God's salvation into every corner of the globe is the primary mission of the church;
- committed to leading out of a clear and life-long enjoyment of God's grace and dedicated to serving others in love;
- humble, faithful, prayerful, loving, repentant and forgiving, knowing that secret character before God is more important than skills.



Living Leadership Statement of Faith

We believe in the fundamental truths of Christianity, as revealed in the Bible, including:

GOD

The one true God who lives eternally in three distinct but equal persons—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The love, grace and sovereignty of God in creating, sustaining, ruling, redeeming and judging the world.

JESUS CHRIST

The incarnation of God's eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was born of a virgin. He is truly divine and truly human and is the only person to have lived a sinless life. The bodily resurrection of Christ, his ascension to the Father, his reign over Heaven and Earth and his mediation as the only Saviour of the world.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The ministry of God the Holy Spirit, who illuminates the scriptures, leads us to repentance and unites us with Christ through new birth. He empowers believers to live for Christ, serve him and make him known.

THE BIBLE

The divine inspiration and supreme authority of the Old and New Testament Scriptures, which are the written Word of God. The Bible is fully trustworthy for faith and conduct being both inerrant and infallible as originally given.

PEOPLE

The dignity of all people, made male and female in God's image to love God and others, to be holy and to care for creation. The universal sinfulness and guilt of fallen humanity, making all people subject to God's wrath and condemnation.

SALVATION

The substitutionary atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross. He died in our place, paying the price of sin and defeating evil, thereby reconciling us with God. This is the all-sufficient ground of redemption from the guilt and power of sin and from its eternal consequences. The justification of sinners solely by the grace of God through faith in Christ crucified and risen from the dead. We are credited with his righteousness entirely by his grace and by no effort of our own.

THE CHURCH

The Church, the body of Christ both local and universal, is the priesthood of all believers. The body is given life by the Holy Spirit and endowed with the Spirit's gifts to worship God and to proclaim and live out the gospel.

THE FUTURE

The personal and visible return of Jesus Christ to fulfil the purposes of God. He will raise all people to judgement, bringing eternal life to the redeemed, eternal condemnation to the lost, and will establish a new heaven and new earth.



Living Leadership Relational Commitments

We believe it is possible to work joyfully with a broad range of churches and individuals if we make the following two commitments:

a) Our work is governed by our Statements of Faith and Ethos

Living Leadership is confessionally orthodox and Protestant, as reflected in our **Statement of Faith**, which contains matters we consider primary to Christian faith but is deliberately minimal. It is not intended to be a comprehensive catechism or creed but rather to function as a basis for unity.

The Statement of Faith is, therefore, silent on a wide variety of issues of doctrine and practice that evangelicals have historically agreed do not need to compromise gospel unity and collaboration, such as matters of church governance, baptism, the nature and operation of certain gifts of the Spirit, and which leadership positions in the Church are open to women. Within our network are people who hold to various positions on these matters. Our activities welcome people with a variety of positions and we will endeavour to ensure that discussion around these issues is conducted in love and in a way that does not distract from the purpose of the activity or cause anyone who agrees with our Statement of Faith to feel unwelcome.

We are willing to accept invitations to serve (but not to partner formally with) those who do not agree with our Statement of Faith, but on such occasions, we are clear about the basis from which we serve.

Our **Statement of Ethos** describes the kind of leadership we wish to model and to develop in others. Grace, Christ-like character, servanthood, experiencing and exemplifying the love of God, making disciples and identity-in-Christ are all foundational to our understanding of Christian leadership. We are passionate about developing sound biblical and theological knowledge and strong ministry skills, but always built on these foundations.

b) We do not dictate belief or practice to churches or leaders

When we support Christian leaders and churches, we seek to serve within their concerns and ways of working. Our aim is to help leaders and churches thrive in their context under Christ, not to dictate to or direct them.

We may give advice to leaders when it is requested. In doing so, we will always encourage them to submit to the Lord's authority by obeying Scripture and prayerfully seeking the Spirit's leading. We will never undermine the properly appointed leadership in a church or organisation we serve. Nor will we ever suggest a course of action to a leader that would bypass established accountability structures and decision-making processes in his/her church or organisation.

Our value of grace leads us to do our best to avoid contention, even when we need to disagree with others. In all work in the name of Living Leadership, we expect employees and Associates to handle issues of contention within evangelicalism sensitively and graciously. We also expect Affiliates to operate this way in their work in their contexts as our partners.

Living Leadership Position on Sexual Ethics

The following convictions are not an addition to our Statement of Faith, but an explication in relation to sexual ethics of what the Statement of Faith affirms about God, people, sin and salvation. They derive from the Bible and reflect the shared understanding of Christians throughout history and across cultures. They are, therefore, essential aspects of the Christian faith.

1. The Bible presents a consistent principle that God's will for our sexual identity, desires and behaviour is rooted in God's purposes in creation and redemption. In Creation, God designed creation of human life in two complementary sexes and instituted marriage (Genesis 1:27; 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). In redemption, God is bringing a people into eternal, loving union with Christ, of which sexual faithfulness in marriage is a temporary expression in this life (Matthew 22:30; Ephesians 5:22-32). The Bible also teaches that people are sinners, alienated from and in rebellion against God, and any action or belief that is contrary to God's will revealed in Jesus Christ and in the Bible is sinful and brings death (Romans 3:23; 5:12; 7:7-25). Christians should, therefore:
 - a. accept their biological sex, either male or female as designed by God in creation, and seek to align their sense of gender identity and behaviour with it;
 - b. regard sexual desire as a good gift from God for the purposes of pleasure and bonding between a man and woman as well as for procreation; and
 - c. uphold the lifelong, committed, loving partnership between a man and a woman in marriage, as the only proper context for expression of sexual desires in words and actions.

2. The Bible teaches that sin and its consequences have impacted human beings profoundly in our bodies, in our minds, in our desires, and in our relationships (Romans 1:18-32; Ephesians 4:17-19), but that the Holy Spirit transforms the desires and minds of believers in Jesus Christ in response to God's Word (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 3:17-4:6) so that every thought is taken captive in obedience to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5). This lifelong work of transformation will not be complete until our bodies are restored through resurrection when Christ returns (Romans 8:18-25; 1 John 3:1-3). Therefore:
 - a. Christians, like all people, may experience recurring confusion or distress about sexual desires and gender identity as well as temptations to sinful sexual behaviours. Whilst these wrong thoughts and desires are not sinful in themselves, our commitment to lifelong discipleship with the aim of Christlikeness means that we must not embrace them as aspects of our identity, regard them as indicators of God's will, or believe that they cannot be resisted by God's grace and power;
 - b. Christian churches and organisations should extend grace and loving discipline to Christians who sin sexually with the aim of their restoration through repentance into fellowship with God and other Christians and commitment to future faithfulness; and
 - c. Christian churches and organisations should offer compassionate support to Christian people who experience temptation and struggles with sexual desires or gender identity to help them understand and live in obedience to biblical convictions.



3. The Bible describes sexual sin as profoundly harmful to people and upholds sexual faithfulness as a sign of commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 6:12-20). Therefore:
 - a. it is reasonable and necessary for Christian churches and organisations to hold to a clear biblical position on sexual ethics and to expect their key people to adhere to it;
 - b. Christians should be free, humbly and gently, to explain biblical convictions on sexual ethics to others and to teach that obedience to them is an aspect of faithful Christian living; and
 - c. civil authorities should recognise biblical convictions on sexual ethics as an essential aspect of Christian belief and protect Christian individuals, churches and organisations from religious discrimination because of their adherence to them.
4. The Bible calls God's people to love and honour all people (Matthew 5:43-48; 1 Peter 2:17). Therefore:
 - a. Christians should never act or speak in a way that victimises, abuses or dishonours another person, whatever their beliefs or behaviours;
 - b. Christians must never manipulate or coerce other people into thinking or acting in line with biblical convictions on sexual ethics; and
 - c. Christians should seek actively to serve and bless people irrespective of their beliefs and behaviours, both individually and through church communities.