

# Way of Working

This policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis. This version replaces earlier versions.

Living Leadership will amend this policy, following consultation, where appropriate.

Date of last review: June 2021

## 1. Purpose of Policy

This policy sets out the basic principles underlying Living Leadership's work with leaders and churches across a broad range of traditions. These principles govern how we expect staff and associates to interact with others, especially in matters where there is disagreement between evangelicals.

In addition to running its own activities, Living Leadership collaborates widely with others for the purpose of growing disciple-making leaders. We are committed to seeing churches thrive. It is common for us to work with churches that do not agree 100% on all matters with each other, or with the convictions of individual Living Leadership staff or associates.

## 2. Our bases of fellowship

1. Our core convictions, expressed in our **Statement of Faith** (Appendix 1).
2. **Our mission:** "To contribute to growing disciple-making leaders in the Church by providing training, support and resources that promote gospel faithfulness and lifelong fruitfulness in ministry".
3. Our values of grace, generosity and passion for the glory of God, elaborated in our **Statement of Ethos** (Appendix 2).
4. Deep friendships based on trust between Living Leadership and churches, in which resources and best practice are shared according to two relational principles explained in Section 3.
5. Policies that express our desire to serve God and others faithfully and with integrity (see Section 4).

## 3. Two relational principles

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

## **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** (see Appendix 1), 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. It is, therefore, silent on matters of church governance, baptism and a wide variety of issues of doctrine and practice that evangelicals have historically agreed do not need to compromise gospel unity and collaboration. We are willing to accept invitations to serve (as opposed to partner with) those who do not share our convictions, but on such occasions, we are clear about the basis from which we serve.

Our **Statement of Ethos** (see Appendix 2) 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 practice, but always built on these foundations.

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

When we work in partnership with others who share our Statements of Faith and Ethos, we seek to serve within their concerns and ways of working. Our aim is to help leaders and churches thrive in their context, not to dictate to them.

We may give advice to leaders when it is requested. In doing so, we will always encourage leaders 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 their 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 staff and associates to handle issues of contention within evangelicalism sensitively and graciously.

## **4. Our policies**

As expressions of our commitment to work in a way that expresses love for God and for others, we have policies to govern work done in the name of Living Leadership, including:

- **Code of Conduct in Interpersonal Ministry** (mentoring and pastoral care);
- **Communications Policy** (including Brand Guidelines);
- **Conflicts of Interest Policy;**
- **Data Protection Policy;**
- **Partnership Policy.**

Our policies are available on request from [admin@livingleadership.org](mailto:admin@livingleadership.org). Living Leadership cannot accept responsibility or liability for work done in contravention of these policies.

## 5. Worked examples

### At Living Leadership events

Churches from different denominations and traditions bring junior leaders to our Formation Residentials. For trust to be maintained, the churches must have confidence that Living Leadership will not trespass on their doctrinal convictions or ways of working. If a delegate asks a team member their view on a matter on which evangelicals disagree, our approach is:

- a. Provide, as far as we can, a balanced and fair overview of different positions held by evangelicals, giving the best case on both sides of contentious matters (while being free to indicate our own convictions);
- b. Encourage them to search the Scriptures;
- c. Encourage them to talk to their church leaders and offer to help them begin a conversation if they would find that helpful.

### Cooperation in events run by others

We are often invited to contribute to events and conferences organised by other organisations. Once again, trust and confidence are critical to building positive relationships. When serving others, we do everything we can to not undermine their convictions or churchmanship. We recognise this is not always easy, as we don't know all the internal issues of groups who invite us to serve. We therefore like to humbly acknowledge this up-front, and ask them to receive and translate our contributions as helpfully as they can to their own context where we don't quite get it right. It helps all concerned to admit our lack of knowledge and a desire to learn as well as to teach

### Working with small groups of leaders or an individual church or leader

We are regularly invited to train church leadership teams who do not share all the assumptions of the Living Leadership trainer. Living Leadership does not take a position, for example, on gender and leadership, church governance or charismata. Under these circumstances our job is not to change their minds or even to let them know our personal convictions (unless they express an interest).

## Appendix 1: 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.

## Appendix 2: 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.

We aim to do this with a wide network of friends who agree with our Statement of Faith.