



THE LEADERSHIP TEAM of COAST HILLS COMMUNITY CHURCH

The spiritual leadership of the church is entrusted to a team of leaders, described in the Bible as "Elders"; we refer to the group of Elders in our church as *The Leadership Team*.

Coast Hills has a leadership structure that is designed to lead this local church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to bear fruit, prevail, and fulfill its God-given calling under the Great Commission.

Our structure is meant to serve our vision, ultimately

"Helping people discover and follow Jesus."

I. FRAMEWORK OF LEADERSHIP

While The Leadership Team oversees the church and has ultimate responsibility¹, leadership at Coast Hills happens cooperatively between Elders, the Lead Pastor, Staff and Ministry Teams.

Roles become clearer when we realize that there are ministry "means" and ministry "ends" that both need leading, yet both require a unique kind of attention and framework.

Ministry Ends describe where a church wants to go. This has to do with our vision and the Big Picture. This is the process, in large part, of planning for the future. The overseers of ministry ends are always looking at who we are and who we are not, where we are and where we want to be.

Ministry Means are about the now. Ministry means are the "how to's" and "the what" of the day-to-day operations and decisions of a church. The role of those concerned with ministry means are clear on the ministry ends, and they are all about working things out to get there.

¹ The prerequisite for such responsibility is a healthy team marked by consensus decision-making focusing on unity and harmony.

In Terms of Ministry Ends and Ministry Means

The Leadership Team is all about Ministry Ends
The Staff/Ministry Teams are all about Ministry Means
The Lead Pastor is about both; a bridge between the two.

There are ministry position descriptions for these different areas of leadership, but for the purposes of this document, we are concentrating on the unique role of the Leadership Team, and how other teams relate to it.

A. Who Is the Leadership Team?

The Leadership Team consists of 7 - 9 persons, of which no more than three members are employees of the church. The team will choose a Chair annually.²

The Leadership Team will guard the vision and direction of the church, particularly in helping to define the core values and purposes, as well as the broad scope ministries of Coast Hills Community Church. Those who serve on this team have a strategic and visionary viewpoint.

They also support the Staff in their responsibilities through prayer, insight, encouragement and support, as well as providing, through the Lead Pastor, cautionary input and advice from time to time.

B. Leadership Team Meetings and Decision-Making Process

The Leadership Team meets regularly on a bi-weekly or monthly basis. These meetings are organized and managed by the Chairperson and/or Lead Pastor.

Coast Hills preferred decision-making process is the consensus style versus a parliamentary procedure model. Consensus decision-making focuses on unity and harmony among the Leadership Team; voting tends to divide and polarize. Consensus decision-making allows for members to voice dissent but ultimately requires those who hold a contrary view to commit to the decision being made by the majority.

Occasionally, consensus decision-making may require a postponement of a decision until further dialogue occurs. We strive towards the ideal of unanimity. Between regularly scheduled Leadership Team meetings, The Chair, Lead Pastor and one other member can process issues requiring immediate action. In the case where the Chair and Lead Pastor are the same person, two leadership team members would need to be involved in the decision-making process. The entire Leadership Team shall be informed immediately. Such action shall be presented at the next regularly scheduled Leadership Team Meeting for information, affirmation, recording and/or further action.

² The position of Chairperson can be held by the Lead Pastor or Elder.

C. The Lead Pastor in Relationship with the Leadership Team

A proper working relationship mandates that a Lead Pastor and the Elders are accountable to one another. The Holy Spirit needs to be the ultimate authority in all church decision-making.

The model for the church is no different than the one outlined for husbands and wives in Ephesians 5. Headship of the husband does not mean the right to authoritatively dictate orders to the wife. It is rather the role that Christ takes with respect to the church, one of sacrificing for her, and doing whatever possible to present her as holy and without blame.

The Elders are the church in microcosm. So for both the Elders and Lead Pastor alike, following the example of Jesus Christ should be their guide. Therefore their focus is primarily relationally-oriented rather than task-oriented. That does not mean tasks are not important, but only in so much as the relationship is right. No structure will keep the Lead Pastor and the Elders on the 'straight and narrow' if the Holy Spirit is not the governing force in their lives.

The Lead pastor serves a unique role as Pastor and as Elder on the Leadership Team:

- The Lead Pastor has a specific job description for which he is accountable to the Leadership Team for and will be evaluated as to his effectiveness in that role by the Leadership Team.
- The Lead Pastor serves the Leadership Team by discerning the vision for the next year; the Leadership Team takes what is in raw form to come to a unified vision and to develop strategy, which the staff takes to introduce and set priorities for the next ministry season.
- The Lead Pastor interprets the "ends" for the Staff and Ministry Teams so that through the "means" they might accomplish the vision.
- The Lead Pastor represents and leads the Staff Team. With advice from the Leadership Team, the Lead Pastor is ultimately responsible for the hiring, evaluating and dismissing of staff.

The Leadership Team is responsible for hiring, evaluating, and dismissing, if necessary, the Lead Pastor.

D. Staff and Ministry Teams' Relationship To The Leadership Team

The Staff are charged with the responsibility of developing and overseeing the various ministries deemed necessary for the healthy functioning of the church to accomplish the vision. These are usually salaried individuals. All the day-to-day functions and decisions of the church are the Staff Team's role (*Ministry Means*).

All operational and ministry responsibility is held by the Staff Team, which is operationally directed by the Lead Pastor.

The Staff are accountable to the Lead Pastor who is accountable to the Leadership Team.

Ministry team leaders (*volunteer led*) are accountable to someone on the Staff team or directly to the Lead Pastor.

II. QUALIFICATIONS

It is important that Elders meet Biblical requirements. There are many different ways one can evaluate these standards:

A. Character

The character traits found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 serve as a model for Elders. No one will emulate these characteristics perfectly, yet they clearly need to be in evidence in an Elder. These traits need to be read and interpreted with care and grace. Two of these, for example, are as follows:

- The first has to do with “being the husband of one wife.” This does not mean that someone who has been divorced can never be an Elder. Marital faithfulness is a requisite. Elders could be male or female, married or single.
- Another trait needing clarification has to do with “managing his own family well, with children who respect and obey him (her).” This refers to young children still under the care of the parent. The respect and obedience demonstrated does not necessarily imply that the child is a believer. There are times when the care given to one's home must take precedence over serving in a leadership capacity. We believe that each situation needs to be considered honestly and gracefully.

B. Competence

Competence refers to that unique mix of spiritual gifts effectively combined with skills and training which allow Elders to fulfill their function. This is more fully described later in this document.

Some key spiritual gifts essential for Elders are discernment, wisdom, teaching, leadership, and faith as they are looking to the future and the long-range objectives of the church.

C. Chemistry

Members of Leadership Team need to *fit* with one another, respect each other, and complement each other. This does not mean agreement with each other at all times, but it does require one to be a team player.

D. Courage

This is the ability to make and defend tough positions. This involves

- ❑ confidentiality,
- ❑ good communication skills and
- ❑ good interpersonal relationships.

III. FUNCTION

1 Peter 5:1-4 outlines some of the over arching areas of responsibility of Church Elders. This passage talks about caring for the “flock of God.” The concern needs to be for the overall spiritual well-being and unity of Coast Hills Community Church.

Granted, the Elders cannot personally care for everyone, but each should lead, or have involvement in, a small group of people, whose physical, mental, emotional and spiritual care are of personal concern.

This passage also speaks of being eager to serve. The kind of leadership God has entrusted to Elders is not an authoritative or dictatorial leadership, but rather a servant leadership. This is the type of leadership demonstrated by Christ.

Caring for people will involve bringing them into community and/or restoring them to community. From time to time, people will encounter personality clashes and grievances with one another. Providing clear *conflict resolution* guidelines and teaching to the whole church body is crucial. Elders will be available to help restore unity. At these times they will need special wisdom, sensitivity, and a gentle spirit in order to restore unity, all the while following the procedure outlined by Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17. Church discipline is never intended to be punitive but rather restorative or remedial, as well as preventive. See Appendix A, *Confronting Conflict*.

Responsibilities of an Elder

1. Diligently pray
 - for the church
 - for the staff
 - for themselves
 - for our surrounding community
 - for issues at hand

2. Monitor & Care
 - for the spiritual culture
 - for the doctrine and teaching
 - for the finances
 - for the vision
 - for the spiritual/emotional/financial health of the Lead Pastor
 - for reconciliation issues
 - to ensure that evaluation of the Lead Pastor, Elders and Staff is taking place according to policy (*see note on the next page*)

3. Decide
 - ministry ends
 - policy
 - final budget approval (see financial responsibilities below)

4. Advise
 - to seek advice, having open eyes and ears to what God is doing and saying in the world
 - to be a learner and a reader to become better equipped to advise
 - to be a sounding board for the Lead Pastor

Financial Responsibilities

The Leadership Team is ultimately responsible for all the financial operations and shall determine the policies and guidelines for financial management of Coast Hills Community Church. The annual operating budget in its entirety, is approved by the Leadership Team and then presented to the participating membership for review two to four weeks before the Annual General Meeting. The budget is again presented to the participating membership for affirmation at the AGM.

Financial management of funds will be in accordance with the laws of Revenue Canada, follow Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and satisfy Coast Hills' policies and guidelines. The Leadership Team will ensure that an annual review of its records is conducted. The annual budget is developed by "grassroots" input through the Staff and Ministry Teams, coordinated by the Treasurer and Finance Team, approved by the Leadership Team and presented to the membership for affirmation.

Financial Responsibilities (continued)

The church will operate within its budget. Total actual spending shall not exceed five percent of the annual budget without approval of the Leadership Team and affirmation by the participating members.

Staff compensation is part of the regular budget and guided by a salary grid. The compensation package is determined solely by the lay members of the Leadership Team.

The Leadership Team also assumes responsibility that Coast Hills Community Church maintains *good standing* with the BC Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches.

Coast Hills Community Church is not a legal entity; all of its property titles are held by the BC Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches. The Conference, in good faith, allows Coast Hills to function with relative autonomy in terms of their operations and programs.

A Note About Evaluation:

Each year, each Elder's ministry and contribution will be evaluated by the rest of the team for the purposes of leadership growth and training.

One of the tendencies of Elders is to over-function. This is the tendency of Elders to micro manage Staff or be overly authoritarian to the body. This pitfall usually relates to low levels of trust, misunderstanding of the role of Elders, or an inflated ego.

The opposite is to under-function; this is the condition of Elders not fulfilling their biblical mandate, generally characterized by lack of leadership, lack of accountability, controlling Staff Members, unattended finances, or unattended sin.

These functions will affect an Elder's role and need to be addressed with sensitivity and honesty.

- The Leadership Team will facilitate a formal annual evaluation of its performance
 - The Leadership Team will individually and collectively evaluate its performance
 - The Lead Pastor will evaluate the Team's performance
 - The Leadership Team will discuss these evaluations for the purpose of improving its leadership.
- The Leadership Team will facilitate a formal annual evaluation of the Lead Pastor's performance.
- The Lead Pastor will facilitate a formal annual evaluation of the Staff Team's performance.

IV. ELDER SELECTION & LENGTH OF TERM

A. Selection of Elders

When a new Elder is needed to serve on the Leadership Team, the Participating Membership is given notice and invited to submit names of candidates to the Leadership Team. Potential Elders should demonstrate the qualities outlined in I Timothy 3:1-7 and outlined in this document and should be actively engaged in ministry in the church.

After the Leadership Team has discerned a qualified participating member, one or more Elders shall interview the candidate with respect to their spiritual walk, and their past and present ministry experience and involvement.

Upon acceptance by the qualified individual, the Leadership Team will give notice to the congregation of this pending Elder appointment. If no substantiated objections are raised, this person will be presented to membership for affirmation and be invited to serve on the Leadership Team.

There shall be no discrimination of gender, age or ethnicity in determining selection.

B. Term of Service

Each elder is invited to commit to serve for a three year term. After serving for two consecutive three year terms, the Elder is required to step down from the Leadership Team for a minimum period of one year before a re-appointment could occur. (Existing elders in 2005 may rotate out for a year before the conclusion of their terms if necessary to ensure continuity)

C. Termination

An Elder's position will be terminated if a lifestyle of inappropriate behavior is discerned or if there is a failure to function as an Elder.

APPENDIX A

CONFRONTING CONFLICT

"If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the fault. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back. But if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses. If that person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church. If the church decides you are right, but the other person won't accept it, treat that person as a pagan or a corrupt tax collector." Matthew 18:15-17

Disagreements can be constructive, but whenever one occurs, if those involved don't turn to Matthew 18:15-17 and follow it very closely, the disagreement can become destructive very quickly. Here are some common symptoms that indicate unresolved conflict exists within a relationship, a Life Group, or even a Ministry or Task Team at Coast Hills.

Tattling: someone brings a conflict to a person in leadership before he or she has directly confronted the offending party.

Tiredness: the avoidance or fleeing of a conflict, as evidenced by work patterns devoid of energy.

Retaliation: sometimes a very subtle, passive aggression (a person may withdraw or withhold usual courtesies).

Inauthenticity: duplicity between how someone feels and acts toward another.

Tattling, tiredness, retaliation, and inauthenticity make for an unpleasant environment. Thankfully, Matthew 18:15-17 presents practical guidelines for conflict resolution, the most important which could be summarized as "confront directly and early." Consider the following action steps:

"10 Commandments" to Biblical Confrontation

#1 Commit to owning the Value

Teach and model Matthew 18:15-17 often and through many different voices so it becomes part of the very fabric of Coast Hills and Life Groups before relational discord occurs.

#2 Monitor Yourself

1 Timothy 4:16 says, "Watch your life closely." Learn to discern which offences you can let be covered by sheer grace and which get rooted in your spirit and must be addressed.

#3 Redirect Others

Resist the temptation to listen when someone discusses a conflict he or she is having with another person in the group/church and, instead, redirect that person to honour Matthew 18: 15-17 by talking to the offending party directly.

CONFRONTING CONFLICT (continued)

#4 Know how to Confront

Resolving Conflict is not about winning or losing an argument but rather is about preserving the Bride of Christ. Pray first, and then exercise personal, verbal discipline. Remember that affirming words reduce defensiveness and a "gentle answer turns away wrath."

#5 Narrow the Issue

Although you may be tempted to expand a conflict to include more than the original offense, narrow the issue to address only the offense.

#6 Be Solution-Oriented

The goal of Matthew 18:15 is reconciliation; focus on understanding what went wrong, why it went wrong, and how it can be prevented in the future.

#7 Use the Mirror Technique

Very often we don't hear each other clearly. Repeat back to each other what you hear, asking, "I understand you to be saying such-and-such. Is that true?"

#8 Be Open to Agreeing to Disagree

Sometimes conflict is resolved by understanding each other, and then "agreeing to disagree agreeably."

#9 Be Committed to Follow-up

Some relational conflicts cut deeply. Be intentional about investing time rebuilding the relationship once a conflict has been resolved.

#10 Be Gracious When Others Confront You

Allow others to respectfully ventilate and express their frustrations; do not switch the discussion from the issue they have with you to an issue you have with them.

Matthew 18:15-17 carries the potential to heal, to restore, to foster reconciliation, and yet it's a process that is too often ignored in the local church. Don't deny conflict exists. Every day you wait to address an offence violates Ephesians 4:26, which says, "Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry."

*(*From notes accompanying a taped conversation between Bill Hybels, Lee Strobel and Russ Robinson, all of Willow Creek Community Church.)*