

CROSSROADS COMMUNITY CHURCH

LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHY

INTRODUCTION

The New Testament does not provide a comprehensive description of church leadership or government. While particular gifts, functions, and roles are described, the specific way in which a church is to be organized and structured is not defined. This allows latitude and flexibility in the structure of a particular local church.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT LEADERSHIP?

1. The people are the ministers, the pastors are the “administrators”.

It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. Ephesians 4: 11-12 (NIV)

According to this verse, the role of the pastor in the body is to equip the people to discover and employ their giftedness in ministry. Thus, the pastor's biblical job description includes equipping people and managing ministries for effective service.

2. Those with leadership gifts are to lead.

If someone has the gift of preaching the Good News, he should preach. He should use the faith God has given him. If someone has the gift of helping others, then he should help. If someone has the gift of teaching, he should teach. If someone has the gift of speaking words of comfort and help, he should speak. If someone has the gift of sharing what he has, he should give from a willing heart. If someone has the gift of leading other people, he should lead them. If someone has the gift of showing kindness to others, he should be happy as he does it. Romans 12:8 (NLT)

If [his gift] is leadership, let him govern diligently. Romans 12:8 (NIV)

Paul states a clear and simple yet easily overlooked principle: leaders should lead. People are not raised up to positions of church leadership based on longevity (what I call “good old boy” leaders) nor financial means (what I call “golden rule leaders”—he who has the gold makes the rules). Nor is godly character alone the definitive qualification for a leader. There are many who are good, godly people, but don't possess the requisite leadership gifts, abilities, or personality needed to lead the church well. Effective church leaders possess both character and leadership gifts.

3. Leaders serve by leading and lead by serving.

But Jesus called them together and said, “You know that in this world kings are tyrants, and officials lord it over the people beneath them. But among you it should be quite different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must become your slave. For even I, the Son of Man, came here not to be served but to serve others, and to give My life as a ransom for many.” Matthew 20: 25-28 (NLT)

Jesus said that leadership is not about fulfilling a personal agenda, but rather meeting the needs of people. Godly leaders serve the church by helping it be and do everything God wants for the church—thus accomplishing God's purpose for the church in this generation.

4. Effective leadership minimizes maintenance and maximizes ministry.

God has carefully placed each part of the body right where He wanted it. 1 Corinthians 12:18 (Msg)

Church leaders often spend too much time in committee meetings that accomplish little and squander volunteer's most valuable resource—time. A better way is to have high level leaders focus on the administrative details of managing ministries, freeing people up to use their gifts and passion in ministry.

5. Leadership should be balanced between gifted individuals and ministry teams.

The reason I left you behind in Crete was for you to organize everything that still had to be done and appoint elders in every town, in the way that I told you. Titus 1:5 (NJB)

Paul modeled this principle throughout his ministry. He rarely did ministry alone, but surrounded himself with key people who served as a ministry team (see for example Acts 13:1; Romans 16:3).

A SIMPLE STRUCTURE FOR TEAM LEADERSHIP:

We are committed to the concept of team leadership—gifted individuals working in concert with one another, providing three different levels of strategic leadership: we are guided by the staff, guarded by the Elders, and gifted through the membership.

1. **Staff guided:** The staff directs the day-to-day affairs of the ministries of the church. They are given the responsibility to ensure the smooth and effective functioning of the church and its ministries. They do this by equipping people for ministry and providing guidance and direction to the ministries of the church.
2. **Elder guarded:** The Elders are members of the body who provide general watch care and oversight. They function primarily as discerners and shepherds and serve as the conscience and guardians of the church. They continually evaluate the teaching ministry of the church and review major ministry decisions and strategic initiatives in light of three things: our mission, our resources, and our doctrinal statement. They use their wisdom, maturity, discernment, and shepherding gifts to ensure the church remains on a true course biblically.
3. **Membership gifted:** The membership fills a vital role by using their gifts to do the work of the ministry. Members may serve in such leadership roles as Elders, Stewardship Team members, and ministry leaders. Church members may also vote on major initiatives facing the church, affirm the appointment of Elders, and extend a call for a Senior Pastor.

These three leadership goals are fleshed out through four primary leadership teams:

Board of Elders

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! Acts 20:28-31 (NIV)

The Elders are the *guardrails* and *gatekeepers* of the church—they keep the church on target, the membership pure, and the Senior Pastor accountable.

The Elders serve as the biblical, spiritual and moral guardrails of the church. They are given ultimate responsibility and authority to see that the church remains on a true course biblically, that its members are being appropriately shepherded, that the body is being fed thought insightful and accurate biblical teaching, and that the life of the church is being well managed with the assistance of other competent and godly leaders. The Elders are to guard the body against harmful influences, confronting those who are contradicting biblical truth or who are continuing in patterns of sinful behavior.

The Elders are also gatekeepers—they ensure that those who join the church give evidence that they are genuine believers and hold the church membership accountable to biblical and moral standards. In doing so, they are to keep closing potential entrances for Satan, so that the truth of Christ will remain credible to both the congregation and the community.

At Crossroads, the Elders have the responsibility to fulfill these specific functions:

- The Elders evaluate everything taking place in the church according to three criteria:
 - The church's mission
 - The church's resources
 - The church's doctrinal statement
- The Elders interview and approve every applicant for membership.
- The Elders oversee the process of church discipline.
- The Elders hold the Senior Pastor accountable.

The Board of Elders is composed of volunteers who possess godly character, spiritual maturity, and biblical wisdom. They serve a two-year term, which may be repeated once, after which they must take one year off.

Staff Leadership Team

In the local church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius the Cyrenian, Manaen, a close friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. Acts 13: 1-2 (HCSB)

Greet Priscilla and Aquila. They have been co-workers in my ministry for Christ Jesus. Romans 16: 3 (NLT)

In the New Testament, gifted individuals served as members of a leadership team, using their giftedness and calling to lead, guide and direct the day by day affairs of the church.

At Crossroads, The Staff Leadership Team directs the day-to-day affairs of the church. The purpose of this group is to determine programming, give vision to the various ministries of the church, and oversee the day to day operations of the church. They also are responsible to build and coordinate teams of volunteers so that ministry can happen.

The Staff Leadership Team will initially be composed of both ministry staff and volunteer leaders; ultimately, the Staff Leadership Team will be composed entirely of full time ministry staff.

Stewardship Team

So the Twelve called a meeting of all the believers. "We apostles should spend our time preaching and teaching the word of God, not administering a food program," they said. "Now look around among yourselves, brothers, and select seven men who are well respected and are full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. We will put them in charge of this business. Then we can spend our time in prayer and preaching and teaching the Word." Acts 6:2-4 (NLT)

The early church recognized the need for a team of people to oversee issues relating to finances and the stewardship of resources. This freed up the apostles to devote themselves to teaching and leading.

At Crossroads, we have built a similar group into the leadership structure. The Stewardship Team is composed of members of the church empowered by the Elders to oversee the legal and financial aspects of the ministry and matters pertaining to the building and facilities. They also oversee all the stewardship issues regarding personnel and staffing (salaries, benefits, etc).

There shall be no fewer than three but no more than five Stewardship Team members, who serve for one three-year term. Former members are eligible to serve again after being inactive for one year. Stewardship Team members may be nominated by existing Stewardship or Staff Leadership Team members, the Elders, or by the Senior Pastor and appointed by the Board of Elders.

Ministry Leadership Team

Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Romans 12:6-8 (NASB)

The Ministry Leadership Team is composed of volunteers who provide strategic leadership over specific ministries. The function of the Ministry Leadership Team is to provide a communication forum for ministry leaders, the Stewardship Team, the Board of Elders, and the Staff Leadership Team.

The way these four groups work together can best be stated as follows: the Staff Leadership Team directs the ministries of the church with overall leadership provided by the Senior Pastor; these ministries are led by volunteer Ministry Leaders and are supported by the polices and financial resource allocation determined by the Stewardship Team; and all the activities of the church are carried out under the watch care and supervision of the Elders.