

# Philosophy of Ministry

A philosophy of ministry explains how we approach ministry at South Park Church. It encourages unity by explaining how biblical principles apply to our shared life.



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## Identity

### 1. What is the church?

The church is a community of people celebrating Jesus Christ in their shared life as...

- The family of God relating as brothers and sisters (Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 2:17).
- The body of Christ serving one another (1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11-16).
- Spirit-filled witnesses on mission in the world (John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2:42-47).

South Park Church is a local expression of God's global Church composed of many people groups and nations (Acts 2:1-41; Revelation 5:9; 7:9).

### 2. Why do we exist as a church?

We are a people reconciled to God and each other so that we may be his dwelling place on earth (Ephesians 2:21-22) reflecting the manifold wisdom of God (Ephesians 3:10) to his glory (Ephesians 3:21).

We participate in God's mission (John 20:21) on earth by obeying the command of Jesus Christ to make disciples (Matthew 28:16-20). We do that together by living out South Park Church's mission statement helping people:

- Walk with God
- Connect as Family
- Love people in Jesus' name.

### 3. How is South Park Church unique?

"South Park Church is an independent church, not affiliated with any denomination. By Biblical declaration and tradition of our church founders, Jesus Christ is Head of the Church." (SPC Constitution Preamble)

- We are a self-governing church whose leaders take responsibility for shaping our identity and determining our direction under the headship of Christ.
- We are not against denominations so we prefer the term interdenominational as opposed to nondenominational. This term communicates that:
  - We identify with the historic Church that predates our founding in 1941.
  - People in our congregation come from a variety of denominational backgrounds as well as no church background.
  - We value partnerships with like-minded churches and ministries from a variety of denominational backgrounds.
- We proclaim the good news of salvation brought to sinners by Jesus Christ.
- The Bible is our highest authority for what we believe and how we live.
- We recognize that discipleship is a journey from cradle to grave. Growing faith is nurtured when we learn from the wisdom and fresh perspectives of others.
- We are a priesthood of believers with many vibrant ministries led by members of the congregation.
- We are a sending church that prepares people for ministry and sends them out to fulfill their kingdom calling (Acts 13:1-4).

- We are a ministry center that serves people beyond our church family (i.e. Celebrate Recovery, Community Bible Study, MOPS, etc.) from many backgrounds and life experiences.

#### 4. What is the gospel?

The gospel is the good news of what God has done in Jesus Christ by the power of the Spirit to reconcile all things to himself (Colossians 1:15-20). The storyline of the Bible can be summarized as:

- **Creation:** God created all things for his glory and made human beings in his image to reflect his glory (Genesis 1-2).
- **Fall:** We rebelled against God's rule resulting in decay, death, and evil (Genesis 3; Romans 8:18-25).
- **Redemption:** God called and formed a people to bless all nations as they reflected his righteousness and justice. God sent his own Son to show us the way through his life, death, resurrection, and ascension. The Holy Spirit has been sent to give new life to all who respond to this good news with repentance and faith (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).
- **Restoration:** All things will be made new as heaven and earth are united under their rightful King (Revelation 21-22).

We find our true identity and purpose in Christ as we understand our story within God's grand story.

#### 5. How do we invite people into saving faith?

- The primary way we invite people into saving faith is through relationships that allow us to meet people where they are, address their questions, introduce them to Christ in a personal way, and lay a foundation for discipleship. Therefore we will equip disciples to be witnesses (Acts 1:8; Colossians 4:5-6).
- We will also invite people into saving faith through proclaiming the gospel repeatedly in our worship services and ministries (Romans 1:16).
- We gladly announce the good news that Jesus Christ is Lord. (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). This announcement invites responses of repentance from sin and faith in Christ (Mark 1:15; Romans 10:9-13; Ephesians 2:8-10).
- We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, but that faith is never alone. Genuine faith leads to a life of discipleship in Christ (Matthew 28:16-20; Romans 8:29; Philippians 2:12-13; James 2:14-26; 1 John 1-5).
- This new life is characterized by love for God and neighbor (Matthew 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-31; Luke 10:25-37).

#### 6. What does it mean to acknowledge Jesus as Lord?

- The good news is that the true King of the universe has been enthroned through the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus (Romans 10:9).
- To acknowledge Jesus as Lord is to gladly surrender to his reign in all areas of our lives: individual and communal, private and public, in the spheres of home,

work, church, and recreation (Genesis 1:26-31; 2:15; Matthew 6:33; Colossians 3:23-24).

- We believe in the whole gospel for the whole person by proclaiming the good news in both word and deed (Matthew 5:16; Luke 24:19).
- Obeying the Great Commission and the Great Commandment motivates us to address root issues that inhibit the well-being of our neighbors and the shalom of our communities (Jeremiah 29:7; Matthew 22:37-40; 28:19-20).
- We learn to live as citizens of the kingdom of God through an array of spiritual practices that are both individual and corporate, centering around the Word of God and prayer (Matthew 5-7; 1 Peter 1:3-4).
- We live in the confident expectation that King Jesus will return to make all things new. Those who are in Christ will share in his rule (1 Corinthians 6:1-3; Colossians 1:15-20; 2 Timothy 2:2; Revelation 5:10).

“There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry, Mine!” (Abraham Kuyper)

## **Discipleship**

### **7. What does it look like to disciple believers?**

- We root disciples in their identity in Christ resulting in the fruit of changed lives.
- We disciple people through relationships using the Bible as our primary text.
- We use spiritual practices that promote love for God and neighbor.
  - Through small groups, we build intentional relationships that live out the “one another” commands of the New Testament.
  - Through mentoring/discipleship relationships, we meet people where they are and help them become more of who God designed them to be.
- Discipleship is a journey from cradle to grave. We are intentional about:
  - Recognizing spiritual and life stage milestones.
  - Equipping people to thrive in the next stage of development.
  - Celebrating milestones with the larger church family.

### **8. How do we pass faith on to the next generation?**

- Faith formation is most influenced by our family units. Faith is more caught than taught. Therefore our ministries intentionally partner with our students’ parents and guardians to maximize influence between church and home (Deuteronomy 6:4-9).
- We design ministry to apply biblical truth in ways that suit developmental stages.
- We help children and teens live out their faith now by building them up and equipping them to reach their peers with the good news about Jesus. We invite them into God’s grander story and expect them to participate fully as worshippers and servants in our multi-generational church.

### **9. What does it mean to be a member of the body of Christ?**

The church is both an organism and an organization. The Holy Spirit is the source of both organic growth (Acts 4:4; 6:1, 7; 9:31; 16:5) and organized structure (Acts 6:2-4;

14:23; 16:4). As an organism, we honor every believer in Christ as a member of his body, the church. We welcome those seeking truth and invite them into our shared life.

When a disciple has entered the body through faith in Christ, scripture encourages them to:

- Be baptised (Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 12:13).
- Recognize the body and remember Christ through regular communion (Acts 2:42-46; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17).
- Participate weekly in worship services and small groups (Hebrews 10:23-25).
- Give generously of their time, talents, and treasure (Matthew 6:20-21, 33, Acts 2:42-46; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8).
- Submit to Christ as head of the church (Ephesians 1:22-23), and therefore, respect and follow those he calls to lead the church (Ephesians 4:11-16; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- Commit to growing in Christ by walking with God (individual and corporate spiritual practices), connecting as family (small groups), and loving people in Jesus' name (serving others within and beyond SPC).
- Practice biblical peacemaking to address conflict, in ways that glorify God and promote growth (Matthew 5:9; Ephesians 4:1-3; [Relational Commitments](#)).

#### **10. What does it mean to be a member of the organization of South Park Church?**

Members of the organization have completed a process that includes instruction, testimony, interview, and approval by Elders and affirmation at a congregational meeting. They recognize that the church does not exist for individuals, but rather the individual exists to partner with God in his mission through his church (John 20:21; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11-16).

The mission of the membership is to provide for the ministry of the church by (SPC Constitution III.A.):

- Agreeing with the church's statement of faith.
- Approving:
  - the constitution and any by-laws,
  - the calling of the Senior Pastor,
  - prospective new members, any leadership positions designated in the constitution or its by-laws as needing approval by the membership,
  - the annual church budget,
  - the purchase and sale of real estate, and
  - the obtaining of mortgages.
- Supporting the vision of the church by contributing spiritual, personal, and material resources in accordance with God's blessing and guidance.
- Honoring the commitments made as part of choosing to become a partner of South Park Church.
- Initiating contact with staff or elders to address concerns or conflicts before choosing to leave our fellowship so we can encourage healthy transitions.

## Preaching

### 11. What is the purpose of preaching? What should and should it not be used for?

While preaching is an essential component of forming disciples, it functions within a larger whole of shared life in Christ through corporate worship and discipleship.

The purpose of preaching is to facilitate an encounter with the living God revealed in Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Bible. Preaching recognizes all Scripture as inspired by God, sufficient and authoritative. It also recognizes that God chose to reveal himself in the flow of a story in particular times, places, people, languages, and customs. The task of the preacher is to build a bridge between the world of the Bible and the world of the listener.

- If preaching focuses only on the world of the Bible, it is nothing more than *information*.
- If preaching focuses only on the world of the listener, it can lead to *misapplication*.
- By building a bridge between the world of the Bible and the world of the listener, preaching can facilitate *transformation*.

When God's inspired Word is preached in the power of the Spirit, we expect that:

- Sinners will repent and believe that Christ crucified and resurrected is the power of God and wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5; 15:1-58), the eyes of hearts will be opened (Luke 24:13-49), and people will find life in Jesus' name (John 20:30-31; Luke 24).
- God's people will be instructed, rebuked, corrected, trained, and equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17; cf. Hebrews 4:12).
- God's church will grow to maturity in Christ with each member doing their part (Ephesians 4:11-16; cf. Colossians 1:28-29).

Most preaching will take place in the context of sermon series, which will be both

- Expository - working through books and portions of the bible consecutively allowing the context to govern the content, and
- Topical - starting with a question and asking what the Bible as a whole says in response.

Preaching should not be used as a platform to advance the preacher's reputation, to vent personal or organizational frustration, or to promote causes not grounded in the Bible (see also questions 14, 15, 16 below).

Evaluation of preaching: "Does the gospel I preach and teach have a natural tendency to cause people who hear it to become full-time students of Jesus? Would those who believe it become his apprentices as a natural 'next step'? What can we reasonably expect would result from people actually believing the substance of my message?" (Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy* 58).

## **12. What is the purpose of corporate worship?**

- We are what we love, and worship trains our heart to love God supremely with our whole lives (Romans 12:1-2).
- We intentionally plan the flow of our weekly worship liturgy, which includes:
  - Praising God for who He is and what He's done.
  - Confessing our sin - both what we have done and left undone.
  - Offering assurance of forgiveness and renewal in Christ.
  - Interceding with God to work among us and in the world.
  - Listening to God's message through the preaching of His Word.
  - Sending people out, on mission, with a blessing.
- We celebrate our shared life in Christ through:
  - Baptisms - where we remember our rescue from death to life immersed in the name of Father, Son, and Spirit.
  - Communion - where we are nourished by the mystery of Christ. Even during seasons of change and conflict, the church maintains its core identity by sharing Lord's Supper and proclaiming that Christ has died, Christ is risen, and Christ will come again.
  - Testimonies.
- The very act of corporate worship helps us learn how to submit to one another and build up one another in Christ so that we experience unity in Christ (Ephesians 5:18-21; Colossians 3:15-17).
- What happens before and after a service is as valuable as what happens during a service, as people encourage and minister to one another (Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:11; James 5:13-16).

## **Culture**

### **13. What is the church's relationship with culture?**

Culture can be defined as the unthinking patterns of behavior adopted by groups as the norm. Every identifiable group of people forms a culture. God's truth affirms some aspects of culture and challenges others.

- We do not ignore, run from, or get lost in culture. We engage culture with hope in Christ (Romans 12:1-2; 1 Peter 3:15-16).
- Grounded in scripture, alert to the image of God and in common grace, we follow the pattern of faithful disciples to discern how to navigate culture.
- The Bible repeatedly engages culture with hope in Christ by addressing issues of the day. Topics include prejudice (Luke 10:29-37), political expectations (Acts 1:6), sexual ethics (1 Corinthians 5:1), equity and dignity among the rich and poor (1 Corinthians 11:27-34; James 2:1-7), care for the fatherless, widows, and strangers (Deuteronomy 10:18, James 1:27) and so much more. There are direct parallels to issues we face today.
- When addressing topics, we will be both truthful about what's broken and grace-filled about what is possible in Christ and his coming kingdom.

- An excellent example of engaging culture with hope in Christ is Paul's ministry in the marketplace of Athens. After observing their worship, he builds common ground through general revelation, quoting local poets, and then proclaiming Christ (Acts 17:16-34).

#### **14. How will we engage culture with hope in Christ?**

Engaging culture with hope in Christ begins with a biblical vision that was embodied by Christ and culminates in a new heaven and new earth.

In general, we will:

- Create a culture of discipleship in our homes and church that allows us to proactively address a wide range of issues.
- Discern the narratives that give shape to cultural values and provide answers to questions like: What is truth? What is the good life? Who is my neighbor? What is our vision for the future?
- Remember that we are saved by grace resulting in humble confidence to admit where our discipleship has fallen short.
- Become more aware of ways culture affects us all, by re-examining our assumptions through study, reflection, and cross-cultural relationships.
- Learn from our ministry partners in the areas of their expertise (i.e. sanctity of life - Caris and Pro-Grace; immigration - World Relief; families in crisis - Safe Families; holistic ministry to the poor - IREF).
- Engage topics with the gentleness and respect that shows we revere Christ as Lord (Colossians 4:5-6; 1 Peter 3:15-16).
- Learn from and honor brothers and sisters in Christ who differ from us in experience and viewpoint (Philippians 2:1-11; Romans 12:15-16; James 2:1-13).
- Resist polarizing forces and pursue a "third way" modeled by Jesus.
- Recognizing that Jesus, the prophets, and the Apostles often addressed issues that made people uncomfortable, we will not idolize comfort and will take a stand when necessary (Matthew 23:1-39; Galatians 2:11-21).
- Recognize we have often not lived up to our calling to "to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8).

"We squirm at the description of our faults by prophets and apostles. We have not prepared to abandon our old ways. We prefer to hear what we already know than to think out something we have not heard before. Forgive our lack of vision and love, for we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen." (Confession found in the Great Banquet communion liturgy)

As Individuals:

- Keep Jesus central in the conversation.
- Use questions from individuals as springboards to learn more about God, ourselves, and our neighbors (1 Peter 3:15-16). We will:
  - Define the issue theologically.
  - Identify relevant biblical passages and principles.

- Gain wisdom from experts.
- Consider ways we can love God, trust God, and love our neighbor.
- If there are implications for our shared life, be clear.
- Be willing to live in the tension of the unknown.
- Listen and love well, knowing that people grow in the context of loving relationships where there is grace + truth + time.

As a Church:

- Consult resources from scholars, knowing God has gifted the wider body of Christ with gifted teachers and writers.
- When addressing issues likely to cause significant disagreement, begin discussing them in environments that allow for dialog. If addressed in a worship service, provide opportunities for Q&A.
- When Christians take opposing views on topics, consider how to present those views faithfully and charitably, while identifying personal or corporate convictions.
- Recommend ways for people to respond that include learning, prayer, generosity, friendship, and action.

#### **15. When will we address a new cultural topic as Elders and Pastors?**

Issues of concern that provide opportunities to shepherd God's people arise regularly. Therefore it is an ongoing responsibility of Pastors and Elders to apply the Bible to cultural topics and current events in ways consistent with South Park Church's statement of faith, philosophy of ministry, and position papers.

1. We will hire pastors who are qualified to address issues with biblical wisdom, giving them the trust and discretion to do so.
2. Pastors will take responsibility to consult with Elders on issues expected to be controversial.
3. Elders will communicate with fellow Elders and Pastors when concerned about how we are addressing (or not addressing) issues.
4. When we face a cultural topic with direct bearing on how we regularly conduct ministry, a position paper may be needed.
  - Any Pastor or Elder may propose taking a position on a new topic.
  - A position paper will be written or revised when at least 75 percent of the combined Elders and Pastors agree.

When we decide to make a statement on a current event, we will consider the following:

- Discipleship: Why is this important for followers of Jesus?
- Goal: Lament, Rebuke, Correction, Instruction, Call to Prayer, Call to Action?
- Timeliness: How soon do we need to address it? Immediately, by the next Sunday, other?
- Author: On behalf of whom are we communicating: Pastor, Pastors/Elders, Staff, Leadership?
- Audience: Who is our target: leadership, members, congregation, community?

- Delivery Method: Will it be verbal or written? If verbal, will it be addressed in the Corporate Confession, Pastoral Prayer, an afterword to the sermon, the focus of the sermon, or a special event?
- Resources: Will it include links to helpful resources?
- Response: How will we respond to disagreement? If we choose not to respond, will our silence be mis-construed as indifference, complicity, or confusion?

## **16. What is our civic responsibility?**

- Government is the exercise of authority to rule for the common good (Genesis 1:27-28).
  - The United States of America is a constitutional republic, meaning that officials are elected to represent the people. So elected officials are accountable to the people.
  - All three branches of government - Executive, Legislative, and Judicial - share power derived from the constitution. That constitution grants people rights to protest if they consider a law or policy needs changed or show support for laws that are threatened.
  - Good citizens contribute to the process by making their voices heard through voting and a variety of creative ways.
- While encouraging Christ followers to fulfill their civic responsibility, South Park Church as an organization does not align with a particular party or platform.

Our civic responsibility requires discernment based on the teaching of Scripture and the circumstances we face:

- We are to pray for those in authority (1 Timothy 2:1-8).
- We are to submit to governing authorities (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-14).
- When Scripture is in conflict with the powers that be, we will obey God (Exodus 1; Acts 4:19-20; 5:27-29).
- We are to be a faithful presence in the world working for the common good (Jeremiah 29:4-7; the lives of Joseph, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, and others).
- We are to affirm the good and critique unrighteousness and injustice (consider Elijah, Nathan, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, Jesus and others who spoke truth to power both within Israel and to neighboring nations; Revelation 18:1-24).
- Governments the world over should benefit from the exemplary lives of Christians as we love our neighbors and serve our communities.

We are committed to modeling civil discourse for the common good by:

- Truly loving people who vote differently than we do.
- Speaking truth in love.
- Seeing the best that the opposing view has to offer and admitting the weaknesses of our own position.
- Praying blessing on those with whom we disagree.

“The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority” (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.).

## Leadership

### 17. What is the role of staff?

“The mission of the church staff shall be to guide the ministry of the church by: 1. facilitating the work of the Church consistent with South Park Church’s statement of faith, mission statement, philosophy of ministry, and Biblical teaching, 2. implementing the prioritized initiatives, goals, and strategies set by the Leadership Team, by: a. participating with other church staff in maximizing each other’s gifts and resources, and b. developing the gifts and resources of volunteers. (SPC Constitution: VII.A.)

- Pastors serve as shepherds who lead, feed, and protect the flock under the authority of Christ, the Chief Shepherd (Ephesians 4:11-16; Acts 6; 1 Peter 5:1-4)
- Directors are staff who partner with pastors to equip God’s people, oversee ministries, and make disciples.
- Coordinators are staff who serve the church with specific skills in ways that would be hard for a church of our size to do as volunteers (i.e. bookkeeping, communications, operations, etc.).

### 18. What is the role of Elders?

“The mission of the Elders is to guard the spiritual integrity of the church by: 1. overseeing all affairs of the church, and 2. being the final authority within the church.” (SPC Constitution IV.A.)

- Elders and Pastors are a collegial team that together are:
  - Spiritual overseers (Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:1-2; 5:17-20; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Peter 5:1-2)
  - Shepherds (Acts 20:29; Titus 1:9; 1 Peter 5:1-4)
  - Teachers (1 Timothy 5:17; 2 Timothy 2:15; Titus 1:9)
  - Equippers (Ephesians 4:11-16)
  - Models (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:3).
- Elder teams ideally represent the variety of leadership gifts listed in Ephesians 4:11 and function in mutually submissive ways:
  - Apostles innovating and taking risks to enter new territories.
  - Prophets advocating for the poor, the marginalized, and justice.
  - Evangelists reaching out to those who have not yet trusted Christ.
  - Shepherds caring deeply for people in need.
  - Teachers igniting the study, love, and application of Scripture.
- Ideally, the Elders will represent the diverse demographics of the congregation.

## 19. What is the role of the other leadership groups?

“The mission of the **Leadership Team** is to set and guide the vision of the church by: 1. developing prioritized initiatives, goals, and strategies for each ministry year’s vision focus, and 2. ensuring that this vision is implemented.” (SPC Constitution V.A.)

“The mission of the **Trustees** shall be to support the church’s ministry by: 1. overseeing the legal and financial affairs of the church, 2. providing for the maintenance, use and security of all church facilities, and 3. providing for oversight of facility renovation and new construction.” (VI.A.)

“The mission of the **Nominators** shall be to: 1. qualify, through a prayerful and harmonious process, candidates for the positions of Elders, Trustees, Nominators and Financial Secretary, and 2. present these candidates to the membership for their approval.” (VIII.A.)

“The **Personnel Team** shall: a. be responsible to maintain and recommend revisions for the Employee Handbook, b. ensure the Employee Handbook guidelines are followed, and c. conduct annual reviews of the Senior Pastor and pastoral staff (in collaboration with the Senior Pastor).” (VII.B.2.b.)

## 20. How do we invest in our leaders?

We celebrate the **Priesthood of all Believers**, recognizing that God calls all believers in Christ to be ministers. Significant roles of ministry leadership will be entrusted to members of the congregation.

- Our leaders will be recruited from among those who are advancing through our shared discipleships process (Mission Statement in practice, DNA of a Disciple, Milestones).
- We invest in our leaders, equipping them to become all God called them to be.
- We support our leaders by coordinating across ministry areas to provide every leader with a coach and help them find an apprentice (2 Timothy 2:2).

## 21. What level of theological diversity do we expect in various roles?

“In essentials unity. In nonessentials liberty. In all things charity.” (Rupert Meldenius c. 1627).

As we function in our role, we will be aware of and support the following:

	“Relational Commitments”	Apostles’ Creed	Statement of Faith	Position Papers	Philosophy of Ministry
Regular Attendee	Awareness	Awareness	Awareness		
Volunteer	Support	Support	Awareness		
Member, Guest Speaker	Support	Support	Support	Awareness	
Administrative Staff, Ministry Leaders	Support	Support	Support	Awareness	Awareness
Elected Leader, Ministry Staff	Support	Support	Support	Support	Support

## Ministries

### 22. What kinds of new ministries/initiatives will we support? What kinds will we not?

Ministries and initiatives that we support will

- Clearly facilitate at least one primary dimension of our mission statement.
- Be Christ-centered.
- Engage in prayer intentionally.
- Be accountable to the Leadership Team, welcoming oversight and accountability.
- Welcome evaluation and redirection or elimination, if no longer serving the mission and vision as outlined by the Leadership Team.
- Reinforce an ongoing and church-wide commitment to small groups.

Not all vital ministries need to be official ministries of South Park Church. God will call many people to use their gifts and talents to engage in personal ministries or to partner with other church and para-church ministries. Also, we will refer people to other churches for some ministries (Grief Share, Divorce Care, etc.), even as other churches refer people to us (MOPS, Iron Men, etc.).

### 23. What is the role of programming/events in the church?

- Programming and events are not an end in themselves. They should have a clearly defined purpose that connects to a specific ministry and the mission statement.
- Every program or event should clearly state:
  - Purpose

- Goals
- Ministry Sponsor/Oversight

#### **24. What does it look like to deal with conflict?**

Our church is committed to building a “culture of peace” through proactive investment in relationships that reflect God’s peace and the power of the gospel of Christ in our lives. As we stand in the light of the cross, we understand conflict is to be expected, and that healthy conflict can ultimately be beneficial. But we realize that bitterness, unforgiveness and broken relationships are not appropriate for the people whom God has reconciled to himself through the sacrifice of his only Son (John 13:34-35; Eph. 4:29-32; Col. 3:12-14).

When there is a conflict, we look to the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit for guidance on responding in a way that honors God, promotes justice, reconciles relationships, and preserves our witness for Christ. As God gives us his wisdom and grace, we are committed to actively teaching and encouraging one another to live out the principles of peacemaking and reconciliation outlined in [“Relational Commitments.”](#)

### **Outreach**

#### **25. What does it look like to care for the community (every neighborhood where attendees of SPC live)?**

- Every believer is commissioned to let the light of Christ shine through them among their neighbors (Matthew 5:14-16, 22:39; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27). We do this through prayer, hospitality, gracious words, and acts of kindness (Colossians 4:2-6).
- Every believer is commissioned to represent Jesus in their vocation and areas of passion (Colossians 3:23-24; 4:2-6).
- We will discern opportunities for our church to focus our efforts to make a collective impact over time for the shalom of our community.

#### **26. What does it look like to care for our city and Chicagoland?**

- We will pray and work for the shalom of our city by building relationships with Outreach Partners across our city (Jeremiah 29:7; Micah 6:8; Isaiah 58).
- We will participate in transdenominational and multiethnic partnerships to promote church planting, church revitalization, and shared mission. We will serve together to demonstrate visible unity in the body of Christ so that the world will come to know Jesus as Savior and Lord (John 13:34-35; 17:20-23).

#### **27. What does it look like to care for the nations?**

- We will continue to call, commission, and send Outreach Partners to the nations.
- We will continue to support Outreach Partners from among the nations, eager to learn how God is at work among them and applying lessons we learn from them.