



*Leaders
Conduct
Covenant*

May 2020

Why a Covenant?

Christian ministry and leadership is a high calling. It is a position based upon the Holy Spirit's gifting and local church's affirmation and calling to a position of delegated authority of the church to serve, encourage, teach and empower God's people.

This is a servant-leadership role. Jesus told his disciples that they were not to be like the rulers of their day who lorded over others, but rather they were to be servants of others.

Most Christian leaders do serve honourably. However, some have abused their positions of authority resulting in great harm. As a result, assumptions about the good character of people who make themselves available for leadership positions are no longer to be the sole basis for the carrying out of Christian leadership and ministry.

Members and Ministry Partners of Ettalong Baptist Church need to be confident that they will be cared for, nurtured and encouraged as they grow, and, at the same time, protected from spiritual, physical, mental or emotional harm. We want everyone who comes to our church, or in some manner interacts with our church community, to acknowledge it as a safe place "in an unsafe world".

The Church is committed to creating safe spaces where people can be confident that they will be cared for, nurtured and encouraged as they grow and at the same time, protected from spiritual, physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

This Leader's Conduct Covenant provides a clear set of behavioural and some procedural expectations, that we as a leadership agree on to define what is acceptable and what is unacceptable conduct for leaders at Ettalong Baptist Church.

Our Covenant:

We lead out of a relationship with God. We will maintain a healthy relationship with God by:

- joining regularly in the life and ministry of the Church.
- studying the Scriptures in private and in groups.
- praying regularly in private and in fellowship with and for the people and ministry of the Church.
- giving of our time and finances to the work of the Church, as an expression of our gratitude to God.

We serve others in the context of healthy relationships. We will engage in healthy friendships with those to whom we lead and minister by:

- loving and caring for our families; paying attention to the effect of leadership on them.
- treating others with respect; teach and exercise authority respectfully.
- upholding confidential information; do not disclose to anyone (including spouse), any confidential information without the consent of the person providing the information. (There is an exception where there is a legal obligation or a duty of care issue.)
- being a team player; cooperating with other church leaders, there will be areas that overlap and someone else may have the advice that you need.
- using words that build up; do not ridicule or embarrass people.
- disclose conflicts of interest and avoiding professionally counselling people with whom we have personal relationships; making alternative arrangements for pastoral ministry for close family members or any person if you begin to develop a romantic relationship with them.
- make false, misleading, or deceptive statements

As Christian Leaders we will:

- be accountable to our team, watch out for each other and protect each other's integrity.
- not take property belonging to others, including intellectual property (copyright) and knowingly making false, misleading or deceptive statements.
- not engage in bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, sexual abuse or spiritual abuse of any person, including your family.
- not act violently or intentionally provoke violence when engaged in civil disobedience.
- be responsible in our use of addictive substances and services (e.g. prescriptions/ alcohol).
- not use any prohibited substance.
- act with sexual purity. Sexuality is a gift from God. We will express our sexuality in healthy and God directed ways. Not engage in inappropriate intimate relationship or view prohibited material.
- act with financial integrity and not engage in tax evasion
- have in place systems for accountability and transparency in financial matters.
- not seek personal advantage or financial gain from your position, other than in wages, recognised allowances and deductions.
- disclose to the church leadership if we are or have been investigated for any criminal offences.
- keep up to date with our obligations with respect to vulnerable people, policy procedures and attend the training as required
- report concerns about misconduct and/or abuse according to the church's Safe Church Policy and relevant procedures.
- agree to participate in any process initiated under the procedure for resolving conflict, procedure for handling complaints against staff and volunteers and/or procedure for responding to child protection concerns and agree to be bound by the outcomes of any such process, which may include termination of my employment/engagement as a staff member or volunteer with the church

Our promises to our Leadership Team:

- **As a member of the Pastoral Team we will...**
- **As a member of the Elders we will...**
- **As a member of the Diaconate we will...**
- **As a member of the Church Council we will...**

commit to the following:

- uphold, support and abide by the Ettalong Church Policy procedures and guidelines and respond to reasonable directions from the person with responsibility for the ministry I am involved in
- there will be no passing on of private information (emails and addresses) from our meeting without permission. (*respect mandatory reporting procedure*).
- it is appropriate to discuss “technical” issues outside our team, after checking with the rest of the team, we need to take ownership of confidentiality and be prepared to confess any breaches to the rest of our team.

Be Consistent:

- we need to be consistent in what we do.
- we will agree to a start time and finish time for our group and we will each honour these.

Value Open Communication:

- email is not the best way to communicate effectively. Face to face discussion is always best.
- once a decision is made at a meeting an absent member of our group cannot ask for the decision to be changed, either by email or at the next meeting.
- email for procedural decisions is acceptable.
- to communicate well we will report our ministries as set out in our Leadership Procedures Document. The deadline for written reports for a meeting (such as the monthly Lead Pastors Report) will be 9.30pm on the Saturday before the meeting concerned.

Practice Solidarity:

- during a meeting of our Team we should always vocalise our views respectfully, candidly and honestly.
- when our Team makes a decision however, no matter what our personal views may be, there must be solidarity in the decision made

- we acknowledge that our church is a theocracy rather than a democracy (as is the Pastoral Team, the Eldership, the Diaconate and the Church Council).
- solidarity of our leadership is important. Openly opposing or speaking against a decision of the Leadership Team that you are a part of, is a statement of resignation from the leadership. For example when the Elders make a decision on an issue, all the Elders must not publicly oppose the decision that has been made. When the Deacons make a decision on an issue, all the Diaconate must not publicly oppose the decision that has been made. When a decision is made at a Church Council meeting all Pastors, Elders, Deacons and Group Leaders must not publicly oppose the decision that has been made.

Be Reliable:

- we will faithfully attend all meetings of our Team. On the occasion that this is impractical we will give our apologies.
- we will attend meetings of the Diaconate as we are rostered to do so. If this is impractical we need to swap with someone else on our team.

We will review this covenant when a new person joins our team and any changes to the laws and protections against vulnerable persons.

I have read and understand my responsibility to abide by this covenant:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Keep this signed document in a safe place as a reminder of your commitment.