

The Life Centre

How We Do Life Manual

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Section 1: Our Family: Past, Present, and Future

OUR FAMILY HISTORY

To understand who we are and where we are going, we must first understand where we came from. In June 2006, Bindu and Trish Sidhu brought six years of college and career ministry at South Abbotsford Church to a close and began to lay the foundation for a new church, under the auspices of the BC Mennonite Brethren Conference of Churches.

The early days of The Life Centre (TLC) involved asking God for people who shared the Sidhu's dream of an intentionally intercultural church in Abbotsford. Thirty adults, with their sixteen children, responded to the dream. The short phrase, "Loving God and Reflecting Community" captured the vision of those early days. A summer and fall of shared meals, probing conversations, and heartfelt worship times resulted in the group forming a consensus around its values, purpose, and vision. The Life Centre was born.

Intentionality marks TLC. We don't believe Abbotsford needs another church, just for the sake of having another church. But we do have the conviction that Abbotsford does need another intentionally intercultural church, where women and men from the many nations represented in our city can come together to discover and celebrate the shared life that is ours in Jesus Christ.

WHAT WE BELIEVE AT THE LIFE CENTRE (CANADIAN MB CONFESSION OF FAITH 1999)

1. God

We believe in the one true God, the source of all life, who reigns over all things as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and lovingly cares for all creation. God the Father planned the redemption of humanity and sent Jesus Christ the Son to be the Savior of the world. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God, bringing good news to the poor and triumphing over sin through his obedient life, death, and resurrection. God the Holy Spirit empowers believers with new life, indwells them, and unites them in one body.

2. Revelation of God

We believe God has made himself known to all people. Beginning with creation and culminating in Jesus Christ, God has revealed himself in the Old and New Testaments. All Scripture is inspired by God and is the authoritative guide for faith and practice. We interpret Scripture in the church community as guided by the Holy Spirit.

3. Creation and Humanity

We believe God created the heavens and the earth, and they were good. Humans, God's crowning act, were created in the image of God. Sin has alienated humanity from the Creator and creation, but God offers redemption and reconciliation through Jesus Christ.

4. Sin and Evil

We believe sin is individual and corporate opposition to God's good purposes and leads to physical and spiritual death.

5. Salvation

We believe God saves all people who put their faith in Jesus Christ. Through his obedient life, sacrificial death, and victorious resurrection, Christ delivers people from the tyranny of sin and death and redeems them for eternal life in the age to come. All creation eagerly awaits its liberation from bondage into the freedom of the glory of God's children.

6. Nature of the Church

We believe the church is the covenant community called by God through Jesus Christ to live a life of discipleship and witness as empowered by the Holy Spirit. The local church gathers regularly for worship, fellowship, and accountability and to discern, develop, and exercise gifts for ministry.

7. Mission of the Church

We believe the mission of the church is to make disciples of all nations by calling people to repent, be baptized, and love God and neighbor by sharing the good news and performing acts of love and compassion.

8. Christian Baptism

We believe baptism by water is a public sign that a person has repented of sin, received forgiveness, died with Christ, and been raised to new life through the power of the Holy Spirit. Baptism is also a public declaration of a believer's incorporation into the body of Christ as expressed in the local church.

9. Lord's Supper

We believe that in obedience to Christ, the church observes the Lord's Supper as a remembrance of his atoning death and to celebrate forgiveness, new life, and the fellowship and unity of all believers.

10. Discipleship

We believe Jesus calls people who have experienced the new birth to follow him in a costly life of service to God. The power of the Holy Spirit transforms believers from the unrighteous pattern of the present age into a life of joyful obedience with God's people.

11. Marriage, Singleness, and Family

We believe that singleness and marriage are honored by God and should be blessed by the church. God instituted marriage as a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman for the purpose of companionship, encouragement, sexual intimacy, and procreation. Children are gifts from God and should be nurtured by parents in the ways of God.

12. Society and State

We believe that God instituted the state to promote justice and to maintain law and order. Christians' primary allegiance is to Christ's kingdom. Believers are called to witness against injustice, exercise social responsibility, and obey all laws that do not conflict with the Word of God.

13. Love and Nonresistance

We believe that God in Christ reconciles people to himself and to one another, making peace through the cross. We seek to be agents of reconciliation, practice love of enemies, and express Christ's love by alleviating suffering, reducing strife, and promoting justice. Because violence and warfare are contrary to the gospel of Christ, we believe we are called to give alternative service in times of war.

14. The Sanctity of Human Life

We believe that God is Creator and giver of life and highly values each person. Procedures designed to take human life are wrong. We oppose all attitudes that devalue human life, especially the defenseless lives of the unborn, disabled, poor, aging, and dying.

15. Stewardship

We believe the universe and everything in it belong to God the Creator and that we have been entrusted by God to manage its resources. All God's gifts, including money, time, abilities, and influence, are to be received with thanksgiving, used responsibly, and shared generously.

16. The Lord's Day, Work, and Rest

We believe God's act of creation provides the model for work and rest. In work, we use our abilities to glorify God and serve others. In rest, we express thanks for God's provision and trust in God's sustaining grace. In worship, we gather to commemorate the resurrection through worship, instruction, fellowship, and service.

17. Christianity and Other Faiths

We believe God's atoning work in Jesus is the only means of reconciling people with God. God has not left any without a witness to the Creator's goodness and power. Christians treat people of other faiths with respect but urgently proclaim Christ as the only way of salvation.

18. Christ's Final Triumph

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will return triumphantly at the end of this age to destroy all evil powers, condemn all who have rejected Christ to eternal punishment, and unite believers with Christ to reign forever with God in glory.

http://www.mbconf.ca/home/products_and_services/resources/theology/confession_of_faith/digest_version/

WHO ARE WE NOW?

OUR MISSION

“Sharing the love of Jesus to make Christ-followers of all nations.”

OUR VISION

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, TLC aspires to be a multicultural, diverse church family where all people are welcomed and invited to be transformed into Christ followers by the good news of Jesus Christ. Our aim is that the gifts and abilities God has given us will bless our neighbourhood and celebrate the nations, as we further God's Kingdom in Abbotsford and beyond.

OUR VALUES

In all of our ministries and contexts as a church we value the following:

- We value seeking God’s Kingdom first in all we do
- We value knowing and following Jesus Christ through the Scriptures and prayer
- We value the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit
- We value seeing all people transformed by the good news of Jesus Christ
- We value cultural, generational, and socio-economic diversity, being a place of belonging for everyone
- We value authentic and vibrant worship
- We value sharing life together
- We value living out our faith in our community and world
- We value seeking justice and reconciliation in the way of Jesus
- We value walking alongside people who are marginalized

OUR BIBLICAL PURPOSE—GOD’S KINGDOM

Because of our desire to “Seek first God’s Kingdom” (Mt. 6:33), we want to be a Kingdom-focused church “for all nations” (Mt. 28:19; Rev. 7:9). We are part of the intentionally intercultural story God is writing in Abbotsford. The God’s Kingdom focus affects every area of TLC’s ministry.

1. We worship, pray, and preach

As a Kingdom-focused church, we want to:

- Worship the Triune God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) “in spirit and in truth”
- Pray always as we seek to listen and obey
- Preach and teach Jesus and God’s Shalom message of his “reconciling all things through Christ” by means of his life, death, and resurrection. We invite all people to identify with Jesus, become his disciples, and experience his redemption, his rescue, and his Kingdom life both now and in the age to come.

2. We serve, empower, nurture, and care

As a Kingdom-focused church, we want to be a community that:

- Seeks and supports spiritually mature leaders with varying gifts who lead through humble service to Jesus and his community
- Encourages every person in the community to recognize and utilize his or her Holy Spirit given gift for the purpose of God’s Kingdom mission (See Five-Fold Ministry Model)
- Nurtures every person (adult, youth, and child) toward Christian discipleship
- Cares for each other as we share life together

3. We invite the nations to become disciples of Jesus and part of his family

As a Kingdom-focused church, we want to reflect God’s radical intercultural vision for his family (Rev. 7:9) by:

- Intentionally welcoming people from every nation, economic, and cultural group in our city and inviting them to become disciples of Jesus Christ, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
- Intentionally reflecting the languages and celebratory worship styles of these nations
- Intentionally reflecting in our covenant community the diversity of our city under the Lordship of Jesus Christ

4. We support and stand with Jesus' Kingdom vision in our world

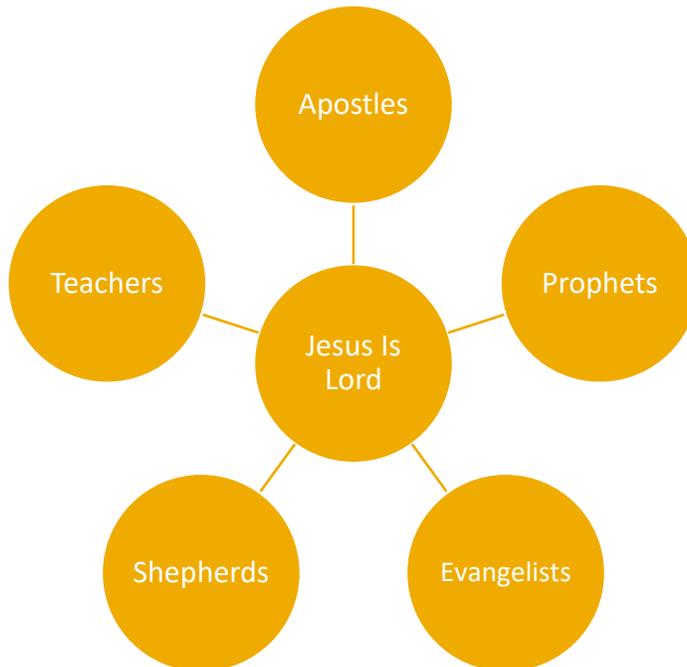
As a Kingdom-focused church, we want to:

- Stand with and encourage all efforts that point towards God's Shalom vision for our world (healthy relationships with God, other people, creation, and oneself)
- Stand in solidarity against all efforts that seek to destroy this vision (e.g., injustice, violence, sexual exploitation/abuse, destruction of God's creation, etc.)

OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHURCH AS A TEAM: FIVE-FOLD MINISTRY:

The concept of the five-fold ministry as discussed by Alan Hirsch in *The Permanent Revolution*, comes from Ephesians 4:11, "It was he who gave some to be (1) apostles, some to be (2) prophets, some to be (3) evangelists, and some to be (4) pastors and (5) teachers." It is out of this verse and teaching that we believe each member of TLC is made up of varying degrees of all five.

The Fivefold Ministry Essential Vocations



By encompassing all five ministry vocations, we are better able "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12-13). This fivefold ministry shapes how we as a family will approach and accomplish our strategic objectives together.

The five ministry vocations are as follows:

Apostles:

- Extend the gospel
- Future focused
- Generating new ideas
- Bridging barriers
- “Onward and upward”

Prophets:

- Know God’s will
- Rooted in God’s truth
- Calls for faithfulness to Scriptures
- Questions the status quo
- “Repent and believe”

Evangelists:

- Recruiters, persuaders and motivators for the Gospel
- Engage believers to fulfill God’s mission
- Engage with people to bring them to faith
- The Gospel as our core story
- “Join the party”

Shepherds:

- Nurture, sustain and protect
- Care givers bring wholeness to the community
- Developing others to create relational health and discipleship
- Value stability
- “Love one another”

Teachers:

- Trainers and educators – Understand and explain
- Analyzers and systematisers – Communicate God’s truth
- Rooted in God’s word and desire others to be faithful to it
- “Take time to know God”

It is out of knowing and understanding these ministry vocations that we can begin to build our future at TLC. Each individual may reflect varying degrees of each vocation, but by intentionally ensuring each of the vocations are reflected in individuals who serve at TLC, we can ensure a holistic approach to our ministry.

Section 2: Covenant Community at TLC

We believe that God has created the Church to be a Family or a Team and the best word to describe this is the word “covenant.” As a result, when we want to talk about belonging to this community, family, or team, we don’t usually use the words membership or partnership or contract. We choose covenant to describe our understanding of the conversion-baptism, belonging experience that happens when we join ourselves to God’s people in a local church. For a description of what this looked like in the Early Church from the book of Acts, see Appendix A: Theological Rationale for Church Covenants in the New Testament.

Covenant is the word used in the Bible to describe marriage (Mal. 2:14). In marriage, covenant speaks of permanence, sacrificial giving, loyalty, and a union between equals who are on a journey together. Covenant comes from the oldest biblical traditions and describes God’s relationship with his people. God took the initiative to make a covenant with Noah before the flood (Gen 6:18), with Abram several times while he travelled to the Promised Land (Gen 15:18; 17:2), and again with Abram before Isaac was born (Gen 17:21). In the New Testament, the early church understood that God made a new covenant with his people in the person of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 11:25; Heb 9:15; 13:20).

We believe “covenant community” is the best expression to refer to those who are in covenant with God as a result of Jesus’ work of salvation on their behalf by means of His life, death, and resurrection and the work of conversion/transformation in their lives. The Life Centre welcomes into covenant community those who have experienced this work of Christ in their lives and who have chosen to make The Life Centre their home.

The New Testament church also understood that this new covenant in Christ was not to be lived out individually but in community with other disciples of Jesus: “Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples” (John 13:35 TLB). TLC invites those in covenant with Christ to follow Christ in community demonstrating this “love for one another”. The word “community” reflects a high degree of intentionality, relationship focus, and mutual love/support. TLC has tried to reflect this in its original slogan: Loving God, Reflecting Community.

Being part of The Life Centre covenant community means

- You are a disciple of Jesus and desire to be faithful to His call on your life
- You either have been baptized upon your confession of faith or are willing to do that now
- You are in essential agreement with TLC’s Mission and Theological/Ethical Statements
- You are willing to join this family which we believe is to support, pray for, encourage, and hold each other accountable in service to Jesus and His Kingdom

SO HOW DOES ONE BECOME A PART OF THE TLC COVENANT COMMUNITY?

For those not already baptized as a believer

- 1) Express interest in joining the TLC Covenant Community to the TLC Lead Pastor and attend information meetings related to becoming part of the Covenant Community.
- 2) Read carefully and sign the Formal Application to Join the TLC Covenant Community document.
- 3) Present the signed document and be interviewed by two members of TLC's Spiritual Leadership Team relating to one's faith journey and understanding of what it means to become part of the Covenant Community.
- 4) The two Spiritual Leadership Team members will make a recommendation to the larger Team for you to be welcomed into the TLC Covenant Community (conditional upon your baptism)
- 5) Share briefly with the larger TLC faith family one's faith journey at one of its gatherings and be baptized by immersion upon the confession of one's faith in Jesus Christ.

For those already baptized as a believer:

- 1) Express interest in joining the TLC Covenant Community to one of the TLC Pastors and attend information meetings related to becoming part of the Covenant Community.
- 2) Read carefully and sign the Formal Application to Join the TLC Covenant Community document.
- 3) Present the signed document and be interviewed by two members of TLC's Spiritual Leadership Team relating to one's faith journey and understanding of what it means to become part of the Covenant Community.
- 4) If presently a member of another church, request a letter of transfer from it (if an MB church) or a letter of release (if another denomination).
- 5) The two Spiritual Leadership Team members will make a recommendation to the larger Team for you to be welcomed into the TLC Covenant Community (conditional upon a letter of transfer or release if applicable)

FORMAL APPLICATION TO JOIN THE TLC COVENANT COMMUNITY

1. Having been led by God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour, and having been baptized by my own free will and choice to publically identify with Christ and His church, I wish to join in the life and witness of The Life Centre (TLC) as reflected in its mission, vision, values, and theological/ethical commitments (<http://www.mennonitebrethren.ca/resource/the-mb-confession-of-faith-detailed-edition/>).
2. I want to grow in my relationship with God, as He is revealed in Scripture. I will take personal responsibility for reading the Bible and praying regularly. I will seek mutual support and accountability and if possible join a Life Group. I will also make it my priority to attend the weekly Sunday gatherings at TLC (Acts 2:41-47; Heb 10:19-25). I will contribute to the overall effectiveness of TLC through the use of my spiritual gift(s) and through my exemplary conduct (Eph 4:1-16; Rom 12:1-21; 1 Cor 12:1-31).
3. I recognize that I am responsible for my fellow sisters and brothers in Christ. I will be patient and eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in peace at TLC (Eph 4:2; Gal 6:1-6). I will joyfully and generously give a regular portion of my income to the support of the church and its ministries (1 Cor 16:2; 2 Cor 8:9).
4. I will seek to live a godly life, living with integrity before a watching world, denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts (Eph 5:1-18; Gal 5:16-26). Recognizing the lost condition of all people without Jesus Christ, it will be my goal to live so that people can come to know Him as Saviour and Lord (Acts 1:8; 2 Cor 5:10-21).
5. I will participate as I am able in decision-making as it pertains to approval of TLC constitution and bylaws, the hiring of pastors, and the approval of the annual budget. I will make it a priority to attend the meetings where such decisions are being made.
6. I believe that God has called me to be a part of TLC. These statements reflect my intentions and desire. If these statements no longer reflect who I am and my commitments, I will withdraw from the TLC Covenant Community. If it is not clear to me but to others that these statements don't reflect my intentions and behaviors, I also accept the restoration process outlined in "The Life Centre Covenant Community Restoration Process". If I stop attending TLC, I agree that TLC leadership can remove my name from the Covenant Community list.
7. If/when I leave this church I will request to be released from covenant community and will seek out a Mennonite Brethren or another Bible-believing church where Jesus' name is worshipped and His mission is valued. By signing this statement, I am indicating my agreement with these statements and am freely joining myself to The Life Centre.

NAME: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____

WITNESS: _____ **DATE:** _____

THE LIFE CENTRE COVENANT COMMUNITY RESTORATION PROCESS:

Each part is intended to help the reader understand what belonging in The Life Centre Covenant Community is all about. We invite you to belong.

Introduction

A central purpose of The Life Centre is to make God known in our community. This is done in part by the Church corporately and individually proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all sorts of ways. A big part of this proclamation, however, is done simply by how individuals live their lives as followers of Jesus: "Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us" (1 Pet 2:12 NIV). As a result, it really matters how TLC lives its life in front of the watching nations.

Besides this important purpose of evangelism, the TLC family should care about how each person lives simply out of love and a desire not to see others in the family fall and be hurt by behaviors that are contrary to God's will. Such behavior is labeled "sin" in the Bible and this always leads to death (Rom 6:23).

Christians are responsible to love, encourage, pray for, and hold each other accountable on the Christian journey so that God's name will be honored in the larger community and so that we help each other not experience this death that is a natural consequence of sin. Matthew 18:15-20 provides a model for how Christians should respond to another believer who is not following Jesus in a certain area of life. This text is the model for the process described here.

If anyone in the TLC Covenant Community is aware of another Covenant Community member having fallen away from Jesus in a certain area of life, they should prayerfully and lovingly seek the following road to restoration.

1. Private Meeting

They should begin by talking to the individual privately. This meeting has two purposes: a) to check whether there has been some larger misunderstanding or explanation for the behaviour in question, and if not b) to lovingly encourage the individual toward turning away from the behaviour and returning to following Jesus in that area of life.

Purpose:

- Impartial listening to gain understanding
- Conflict resolution, if necessary and possible
- From Galatians 6:1, Ephesians 4:1-6, Romans 15:1, and James 2:8-9, we learn that our approach must be gentle, patient, useful and impartial.

The preferred outcome of this meeting would be either a clarification that there was a misunderstanding about the behaviour in question or that the individual recognizes their erring behaviour and desires God's forgiveness in this area of life and a return to walking fully with Jesus.

If, however, neither one of these options is the outcome, then the one intervening should move to the second step in the process (Mt 18:16) where they seek the wisdom and support of one or two other believers.

2. Meeting with Two Members of TLC Spiritual Leadership Team

It is recommended that he or she approach the TLC Spiritual Leadership Team to participate in the next steps. Two members of this team will be appointed to prayerfully and thoughtfully address the situation. They will

meet with the intervening individual and will discern as much as possible about the situation. This will likely lead to a meeting with the individual who has been resisting correction and/or reconciliation. This meeting's goal will once again be to resolve the situation in a way that honours God and the witness of His name in our community—as well as shows love to the erring individual so they do not experience the “death” that is a consequence of all sin.

Resolution options:

- Forgiveness and restoration
- Correction where needed and/or restitution where required

The two members of the TLC Spiritual Leadership Team will document in writing the steps they took to resolve this issue, what were the results of their intervention, and what they recommend as the next steps (if any) that need to be taken. They will present this to the larger Team at its next meeting.

3. Meeting with the Whole TLC Spiritual Leadership Team

If the second step did not bring resolution to the issue and it is deemed necessary to move to the third step, the individual will be invited to a meeting of the whole TLC Spiritual Leadership Team which represents the larger church in the Matthew 18 model (see v.17). At this meeting, the individual will have the opportunity to once again explain their situation and their response to those who feel they are sinning in a particular area of their life. The Spiritual Leadership Team will prayerfully deliberate and once again attempt a resolution that honours God and shows love to the individual involved.

There are a number of possible outcomes to this meeting:

- The TLC Spiritual Leadership Team could conclude that the individual's behaviour was not contrary to those expected of a TLC Covenant Community member.
- The erring individual could demonstrate a desire for repentance and life change in this area.
- The erring individual could ask for a removal of their name from the TLC Covenant Community
- The TLC Spiritual Leadership Team could remove the individual from the TLC Covenant Community

If the individual is not interested or not willing to participate in a meeting, the process may still move forward even if this will likely limit the options available. It is expected that the situation would be resolved within a three-month period from its original report to the TLC Spiritual Leadership Team, that the procedures would be documented by that team, and that an appropriate level of confidentiality would be preserved in the process. Only in the case of outcomes c) and d) would there be mention of the issue made publically to the larger TLC family. It would be noted in some form that said individual is no longer a part of the TLC Covenant Community.

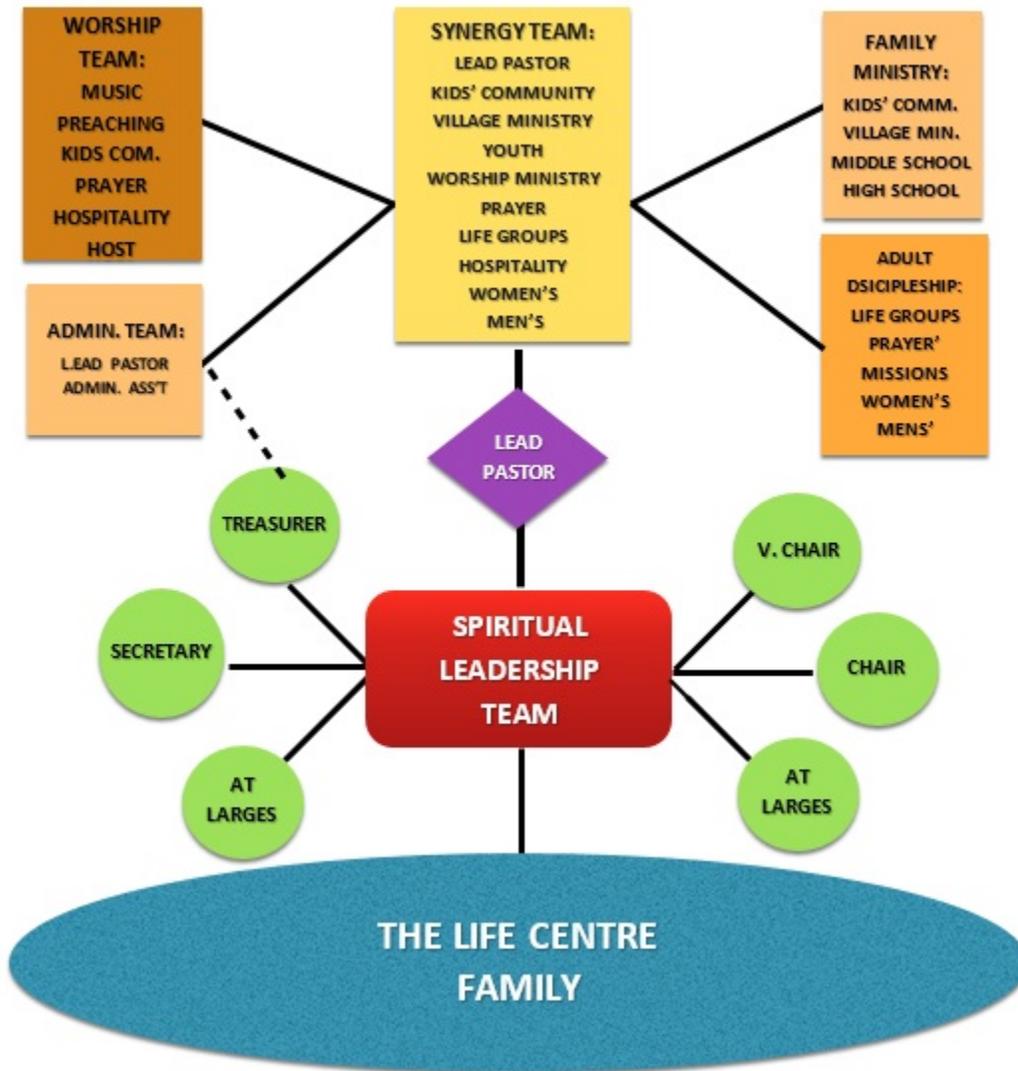
4. Follow-up Meeting

The representative of The Life Centre Spiritual Leadership Team shall contact the erring person again within six months, with a view to finding out whether he or she has come to a place of repentance and is seeking restoration and renewal.

All four steps should be carried out within a reasonable and preferably short period of time.

Section 3: TLC Church Government

OUR STRUCTURE



ROLE OF TLC COVENANT COMMUNITY

The Life Centre exists to participate in God's Kingdom mission for the world by making "Christ followers of all nations." The method is to be an inviting, loving, and worshipping community empowered by the Holy Spirit serving Jesus in Abbotsford and beyond.

- The Life Centre is to be a welcoming community to all but invites those who have made a decision to become disciples of Jesus, are baptized upon confession of their faith, and are committed to the larger mission, theological commitments, and understanding of Jesus' Kingdom ethics to become part of the TLC Covenant Community
- This TLC Covenant Community from a legal perspective contains constitutional authority for the Church during appropriately called meetings. This authority is delegated to the Spiritual Leadership Team (SLT) and through the SLT to the staff and volunteers of the Church.
- TLC operates in accordance with this How We Do Life Manual under the larger authority of the BC Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches and their constitution and policies.

The TLC Covenant Community has the following decision-making responsibilities,

- 1) To affirm the policies and constitution described in TLC's HWDL Manual.
- 2) To affirm the search process and the selection of full and part time pastoral staff.
- 3) To affirm any SLT motion regarding termination of pastoral staff.
- 4) To affirm new members of the TLC Spiritual Leadership Team for the duration of their term.
- 5) To affirm the Annual Financial Budget and any extraordinary financial matters (e.g., extra capital expenditures not in Annual Budget, TLC loans, real estate purchases, etc.).
- 6) To affirm new ministry ventures as deemed necessary by the Spiritual Leadership Team.

ROLE OF SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT)

Overview:

The TLC Spiritual Leadership Team is affirmed by the church for the oversight of congregational matters. The Spiritual Leadership Team represents the TLC Covenant Community in its governance decisions.

- The SLT shall be the servant leaders of the Church and shall have general governance responsibility for the life and ministry of the Church, ensuring that everything is done in accordance with the Word of God, this HWDL Manual, and the faith and practice of the BC and Canadian Mennonite Brethren Conferences.
- The SLT shall exercise such authority as is delegated to it by the constitution, the bylaws and the resolutions of the TLC Covenant Community
- The main focus of the SLT is on strategic planning to better implement TLC's mission.
- Measuring strategic results achieved by the ministry and administrative staff and monitoring their performance, satisfying regulatory accountability of the Church and fulfilling the SLT's responsibility to the Church shall complete the SLT's role in governance.

1. Purpose

The main purpose of the TLC Spiritual Leadership Team is to move the congregation toward the fulfillment of its Kingdom mission of making "Christ followers of all nations."

2. Composition

- a) The TLC Spiritual Leadership Team will be composed of at least SIX and no more than EIGHT Covenant Community members who have been nominated, discerned, and affirmed by the TLC Covenant Community. Out of a desire to avoid any conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest, no two SLT members can be from the same immediate family (e.g., husband/wife, parent/child, sibling/sibling).
- b) The Lead Pastor will also be a non-voting member of the Spiritual Leadership Team.
- c) TLC Ministry Staff or others from the TLC community may occasionally be invited into SLT meetings for consultation and/or insight but are not members of the Spiritual Leadership Team.
- d) The Spiritual Leadership Team appoints its own chairperson, treasurer and secretary—none of whom can be the Lead Pastor.
- e) Spiritual Leadership Team members shall be affirmed for a three-year term. At the end of the three-year term, the Spiritual Leadership Team may put forward a member's name for a second term but this requires affirmation from the Covenant Community. At the end of that six-year period, the individual must take a minimum of a one-year break before they can be eligible for another term. (Any exception to this policy requires a specific vote affirmed by 75% of Covenant Community members present at an Annual or Special Meeting where nominations are being dealt with.)

3. Discernment and Affirmation Process

TLC Spiritual Leadership Team members will be chosen based upon biblical criteria for leaders (above reproach, faithful in covenants, temperate, moderate, etc. [cf. 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1]), Christian character, spiritual wisdom, and their ability to reflect diversity within the TLC Covenant Community. It is the goal of TLC to have a Spiritual Leadership Team that includes male and female leaders, individuals who represent a variety of the ethnic communities, and individuals who reflect different areas of expertise/perspective/ministry gifting.

The Spiritual Leadership Team will function as the nomination committee for the process of discerning new Team members. They will announce and invite nominations for the Spiritual Leadership Team for a minimum of three consecutive Sundays. Only TLC Covenant Community members can participate in the Spiritual Leadership Team. It is also expected that an individual nominated has been an active attendee and participant in The Life Centre for at least one year prior to their nomination to the Spiritual Leadership Team.

The SLT will confirm with nominees that they are willing to let their name stand for this responsibility and ensure that nominees are fully aware of what SLT membership involves by providing the relevant pages of the HWDL Manual and a personal meeting with the nominee if requested. At least TWO SLT members will then interview the candidates for the purpose of discerning their fit for a leadership role on the SLT. The interview process is designed to determine the candidate's motivations for participating on the SLT; their agreement with TLC's mission, vision, values, and Confession of Faith; their alignment with TLC's Covenant Community expectations; and their overall contribution to the diversity of gifts/perspectives desired on the SLT. The SLT will meet to make a final decision about which candidates to forward for final approval to the TLC Covenant Community preferably done at the TLC Annual Family Meeting.

If there are special reasons for affirming Team members at a different time of year, the SLT must announce publically and give at least 14 days' notice of a Covenant Community meeting for the purpose of affirming new members of the SLT. Nominees require at least 75% approval of the Covenant Community members present at the meeting in order to be affirmed for this role.

4. Responsibilities:

The TLC Spiritual Leadership Team by means of prayer and servant leadership carries out the following responsibilities:

1. To regularly review TLC's governance structures (TLC's mission, vision, and values; SLT's structure and processes; etc.) to ensure they are biblically faithful and effective in the pursuit of TLC's larger mission.
2. To oversee the inclusion of those desiring to become part of the TLC Covenant Community and the process of those who should no longer be part of this group (viz., those who leave, transfer, or who choose to reject the theological/ethical commitments that the Covenant represents).
3. To keep an up-to-date record of those who are part of the TLC Covenant Community.
4. To oversee the process of discerning new members for the SLT and recommending them for TLC Covenant Community approval.
5. To provide oversight in all financial matters to ensure these reflect the Annual Budget approved by the Covenant Community, Christian integrity, and the appropriate procedures for a registered Charity.
6. To oversee the search process, discernment, hiring, and evaluation of all TLC staff members. In the case of Pastoral staff, the SLT will recommend a candidate for Covenant Community approval.
7. To provide strategic leadership and priorities by delegating management authority and responsibilities where appropriate.
8. To ensure that the SLT functions with integrity and without conflict of interest in making decisions and seeks TLC Covenant Community approval for decisions that require that approval.

THE COMPOSITION OF THE SLT

SLT MEMBERS

Requirements: All SLT Members should:

- Be unequivocally committed to TLC's mission, vision, values, and theological/ethical expectations putting TLC first against any and all conflicts of interest.
- Be regular attendees at TLC worship services and positive contributors to TLC's mission.
- Have a clean criminal record check and not have anything in their history that would disqualify them from being a Director of a CRA charitable organization (e.g., leadership in another charitable organization where their charitable status was revoked).
- Be willing to commit five to ten hours a month to SLT responsibilities.
- Prepare for, attend, and contribute positively to the monthly leadership meetings as well as the Annual SLT Retreat.
- Attend the TLC Annual, Semi-Annual, and specially called Covenant Community meetings.
- Prepare for and participate in the discussions and the deliberations of the SLT.
- Foster a positive working relationship with other leadership team members, and the ministry leaders, showing respect to all other SLT members and TLC ministry staff regardless of one's level of disagreement.
- Keep leadership team discussions and all correspondence confidential.
- Ensure that the SLT Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary are fulfilling their responsibilities and that TLC is in compliance with laws overseeing charitable organizations.
- In consultation with the SLT Chairperson (or other SLT member), be willing to resign from the SLT role if any of the above are not possible.
- Agree to the SLT Leadership Covenant (See Appendix)

CHAIRPERSON

Qualification/Skills: Ideally, the SLT Chairperson should have several years of service on the Spiritual Leadership Team prior to becoming Chairperson. This individual should be gifted at working well relationally with the TLC Pastoral Staff as well the members of the Spiritual Leadership Team. The Chairperson should be familiar with proper procedures for conducting meetings since this will be a significant component of their responsibilities.

Term: The Chairperson can be appointed by the SLT for any period of time up to three years but not longer than the length of time before the end of their overall term on the SLT.

Requirements: Besides the SLT requirements above, the SLT Chairperson should:

- Prepare agenda and chair the monthly leadership meetings.
- Prepare agenda and assist in the planning of the Annual SLT Retreat.
- Follow up on action items coming out of meetings.
- Prepare agenda and chair the TLC Annual, Semi-Annual, and specially called Covenant Community meetings.
- Understand and, if necessary, query all financial and budget matters.
- Represent the SLT in reporting to the TLC Covenant Community.
- Act as Signing Authority for TLC with its financial institution.
- Facilitate buy-in from all stakeholders to encourage the best possible fulfillment of TLC's mission.

TREASURER

Qualification/Skills:

The SLT Treasurer should have several years of financial experience and have the ability to read, understand, and interpret financial statements.

Term: The Treasurer can be appointed by the SLT for any period of time up to three years but not longer than the length of time before the end of their overall term on the SLT.

Requirements: Besides the SLT requirements above, the Treasurer should:

- Oversee the TLC relationship with TLC ministry staff (employment agreements, monthly payroll, benefits, T4 slips, etc.).
- Oversee the creation of and implementation of the Annual Budget (procedures for payment requisitions, monitoring of spending, oversight of bookkeeper, etc.).
- Oversee TLC's Disbursements to ensure that they reflect the approved Budget and all expenses are paid in a timely manner.
- Oversee the collection and recordkeeping of all donation and other revenues in a way that demonstrates integrity and confidentiality.
- Reports monthly on TLC's financial status to the SLT and presents the Financial Report to the TLC Annual Meeting.
- Ensure that TLC is in compliance with all CRA requirements.
- Act as Signing Authority for TLC with its financial institution.
- Oversee all external TLC contracts and financial commitments (e.g., Bookkeeper, Facility Rental, MEI Society, Mission Agencies, Custodial Contracts, etc.).

SECRETARY

Qualification/Skills: Good verbal and written communication skills are essential for this portfolio.

Term: The Secretary can be appointed by the SLT for any period of time up to three years but not longer than the length of time before the end of their overall term on the SLT.

Requirements: In addition to the SLT requirements above, the Secretary should:

- Take accurate Minutes at SLT Meetings reflecting all decisions made and action items arising.
- Distribute Minutes and Agenda as needed to all SLT Members in a timely manner.
- Keep the SLT meeting calendar up to date.
- Assist in reporting SLT items and initiatives to the congregation on behalf of the SLT as needed.
- Take accurate Minutes at all TLC Covenant Community meetings (Annual, Semi-annual, and extra meetings).
- Maintain the proper organized record of all SLT and TLC meeting documents and ensure their preservation and confidentiality.

LEAD PASTOR ROLE

The Lead Pastor's Spirit-led role is to provide visionary, strategic and collaborative leadership to The Life Centre. The Lead Pastor works with the Spiritual Leadership Team (SLT) as they prayerfully discern vision and strategic objectives aligned to Christ's mission for The Life Centre. The Lead Pastor brings leadership to the Ministry Leadership Team as together they fulfill the church's strategic objectives.

Lead Pastor Responsibilities:

1. Oversees the preaching/teaching ministry, anchoring the preaching team as the predominant speaker.
2. Communicates effectively with the congregation, the SLT and Ministry Leadership Team to foster a strong sense of community.
3. Provides leadership, guidance and resources, working with Ministry Team, the SLT, and the congregation to fulfill the church's vision and mission.
4. Teaches and implements the five-fold ministry as organizing principles that structure our ministry initiatives.
5. Provides services to the congregation, e.g. marriages, funerals, as required.
6. Provides primary oversight of the various members of the Ministry Team (e.g., Kids Community Coordinator, Worship Coordinator, Village Ministries Coordinator, etc.) along with the Administrative Assistant.

Section 4: Decision Making at TLC

GENERAL GUIDELINES

This document will detail how TLC processes decisions and new initiatives.

There are three overarching levels in which decisions are made at TLC:

- 1) The Covenant Community (who hold final authority for all decision-making at TLC)
- 2) The Spiritual Leadership Team
- 3) The Ministry Leadership Team.

Quorum and Meeting Notice Requirements:

A quorum is the minimum number of people required to make a meeting valid. If a meeting lacks quorum, it can only provide informational items but cannot make or process any decisions of record.

TLC Covenant Community Meetings: A quorum of 35% of all TLC Covenant Community members is required for any official meeting. This includes special meetings, as well as annual and semi-annual family meetings.

It is expected that there will be at least SEVEN days prior notice given of any Covenant Community meeting communicated by means of public announcements for one Sunday gathering prior to the meeting, by email, and by means of the TLC website. It is expected that as part of this notice, there will be communication about any new recommendations to be brought forward at the meeting (e.g., changes to policy/vision, new ministry initiatives, hiring of pastoral staff, new capital expenditures).

Annual Family Meeting. The Life Centre will hold an Annual Family Meeting each year within 30 days of its Fiscal Year end to approve ministry and financial reports for the past year, affirm new SLT members, pass new motions, and approve the proposed Budget for the next Fiscal Year. It is expected that at least SEVEN days before the meeting, there will be communication to the congregation about any new recommendations to be brought forward at the meeting (e.g., changes to policy/vision, new ministry initiatives, hiring of pastoral staff, new capital expenditures, approval of Budget, etc.).

Spiritual Leadership Team Meetings: A quorum of 60% will be required for all Spiritual Leadership Team meetings and this must include at least FOUR members besides the Lead Pastor. It is expected that all SLT members will receive at least SEVEN days advance notice of meetings to ensure a reasonable opportunity for them to be present. In addition, an agenda will be provided for the meetings.

Minimal Levels of Support Required:

All recommendations put forward to the Covenant Community will require a minimum of 75% affirmation from the Covenant Community members present.

All recommendations put forward to the Spiritual Leadership Team will require a 70% affirmation of the SLT members present.

BUDGETING PROCESS

TLC's budget operates based on a fiscal year that runs from June 01 to May 31. The Spiritual Leadership team is responsible for developing and managing the Annual Budget. The process of how the Annual Budget is created and ultimately affirmed is described below.

The Spiritual Leadership Team is responsible for managing the finances entrusted by the congregation. They are authorized by the Covenant Community and accountable to them for the day-to-day operations. The SLT Treasurer is responsible to create a proposed budget but the SLT must approve any budget before it is presented to the TLC Community for final approval. The Proposed Budget should reflect the TLC's ministry vision and strategic priorities for the coming year.

Creation of the Proposed Budget

- 1) The Treasurer consults with ministry leaders to discern what financial resources are needed to achieve their strategic priorities for the coming year. There may be a need to revise these budget expectations once the entire proposed budget is collected.
- 2) The Chairperson, Treasurer and the Lead Pastor work together to develop the remaining items in the proposed Annual Budget—based upon the discerned direction that emerged from the SLT retreat.
- 3) The proposed Annual Budget is put forward to the entire Spiritual Leadership Team for review preferably at the April SLT Meeting.
- 4) At the May SLT Meeting, the Spiritual Leadership Team may simply approve the proposed budget or suggest some amendments prior to approval but this proposed budget will become the recommended budget for approval at the June TLC Annual Meeting.
- 5) The proposed Annual Budget for the upcoming fiscal year should be made available to all those in the Covenant Community for a minimum of SEVEN days prior to the TLC Annual Meeting.
- 6) The TLC Covenant Community will be asked at the Annual Meeting to give final approval to the proposed Annual Budget. If the budget is not given final approval by the Covenant Community, the Spiritual Leadership Team will be given the task of bringing forward a revised Annual Budget to be approved at a special meeting of the TLC Covenant Community within 30 days of the Annual Meeting.

FINANCIAL GUIDELINES

Summary:

These following guidelines will help ensure good financial care of all funds received by The Life Centre.

The Spiritual Leadership Team as represented in the Treasurer is responsible to oversee wise stewardship of finances. This includes responsibility for creating and monitoring appropriate procedures to collect, handle, and disburse finances in a way that ensures integrity and protects funds from misuse in any way.

Collecting Revenues:

It is expected that appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that for all donated and collected revenues are deposited and used in ways consistent with TLC's charity status. All offerings given to The Life Centre will be opened and counted only when two appropriately assigned individuals are present for the task. They will count and record the total collected and both sign that the total is accurate. The total will then be reported to the Treasurer as well as the Bookkeeper for appropriate recording and to ensure that all funds have been deposited in the bank.

The Administrative Assistant under the supervision of the SLT Treasurer will ensure that all donations are appropriately recorded, donation envelopes/cheque photocopies kept, accurate donation receipts distributed as per CRA requirements, and all records stored in a safe and confidentially appropriate way for a minimum of 7 years.

Expenditures:

The following guidelines for reporting expenditures made on behalf of TLC are a way to keep TLC's financial situation in order and to provide efficiency and better planning. The SLT Treasurer will oversee that this policy is being adhered to and any exceptions to this policy must be approved by means of the Treasurer and the SLT Chairperson.

1. Submitting Items for Payment
 - a. Ministry leaders seeking reimbursement for budgeted ministry expenses must complete a **Ministry Expense Reimbursement Form** and submit it and the receipt(s) to the Administrative Assistant for reimbursement. It is essential that this form includes the exact budget line from which the funds are to be reimbursed and some detail concerning what was purchased (Ministry Purpose). There can be no expense reimbursements processed without the submission of original receipts/invoices.

In addition, the form should be signed by someone in a supervisory role (e.g., the Lead Pastor, the SLT Treasurer or the Administrative Assistant). No individual should authorize reimbursement for expenses they incurred themselves. All ministry requisition forms and the accompanying receipts are to be kept for a minimum of 7 years. All Reimbursement forms will be regularly reviewed by the Treasurer.
 - b. For ministry expenditures between \$250 and \$1000, prior approval in writing from the SLT Chairperson is required prior to the expenditure. For expenditures that exceed \$1000, it is expected that the request

for approval will include at least two estimates to demonstrate that these are reasonable and appropriate costs for the services/item involved.

2. The Treasurer will provide a monthly update to the Spiritual Leadership Team and to the Ministry Leadership Team as requested to assist both groups to appropriately monitor the Annual Budget.

Section 5: TLC's Ministries and Descriptions

SYNERGY TEAM

What if we think synergistically?

In order to reach the objectives of a smaller church we must think strategically and are then called to deliver tactically. The tendency is try to emulate and replicate all the ministries that are often assumed in larger churches with multiple staff and a larger pool of human resources. This lends itself to weariness, discouragement and burnout. However, if we think synergistically, we can be very effective as we work together rather than as individual silos.

SYNERGY TEAM MINISTRY DESCRIPTIONS:

Team Description:

Under the oversight of the Lead Pastor, the Synergy Team develops and expedites an annual tactical ministry based on the annual strategic objectives provided by the Spiritual Leadership Team.

- Tactical plans allow these ministries to implement the day-to-day ministries in carrying out its mission, values, core values and strategic objectives.

These leaders are mandated to exercise their particular spiritual gifts in the context of the five-fold ministry in Eph. 4: apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers.

This team meets together to:

- Pray
- Develop their leadership skills
- Align their tactical objectives with SLT's strategic objectives and
- Develop and coordinate tactical plans built on their tactical plans

Composition:

- The Synergy Team shall consist of the Lead Pastor and those who oversee a lead ministry (E.g., Missions, Worship Ministry, Kids Community, Village Ministries, Middle School Ministry, Prayer Ministry, Mens Ministry, Womens Ministry, Life Groups, Hospitality).
- The composition of the team allows for flexibility. New ministries can be added and if so deemed, previously active ministries can be dropped from the team when the ministry is no longer viable.
- All Synergy Team Leaders will be recruited by the Lead Pastor. These will then be presented to and affirmed by the Spiritual Leadership Team before they can officially take this role.
- All Synergy Team Leaders must be Covenant Community members in good standing.

Role of the Lead Pastor:

- The Lead Pastor is the leader of the Team. S/he shall give oversight to the work of the focus ministries under his/his responsibilities.
- The Lead Pastor shall give guidance, counsel and appropriate resources for the work of the particular ministries.
- Will call the Synergy Team meetings at least twice a year annually:
 - To dream and envision new plans as it engages itself with the Annual Strategic Objectives provided by the Spiritual Leadership Team.

- To measure the results of the work of the ministry against the objectives from the Annual Strategic Objectives.
- Will provide leadership skill development for ministry leaders.

Ministry Descriptions:

- Ministry descriptions are developed by the Lead Pastor, in conjunction with the respective leaders of the various ministries. The Lead Pastor reports these ministry descriptions to the SLT.

REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES OF MINISTRY LEADERS:

Reporting to the Lead Pastor:

- The Synergy Team leaders are expected to prepare a brief report to the Lead Pastor as requested that includes:
 - Ministry highlights
 - Any concerns that have surfaced in their particular area
 - Any new ministry initiatives for approval by the Lead Pastor.

Reporting to the Spiritual Leadership Team:

- The Lead Pastor provides ministry highlights and concerns to the Spiritual Leadership Team on a monthly basis.
- On an ongoing basis with the Lead Pastor, the Spiritual Leadership Team monitors and measures the progress of the Synergy Team’s tactical plans against TLC’s annual strategic objectives.

Reporting to the Covenant Community:

- Under the oversight of the Lead Pastor, the Synergy Team Leaders will provide a mid-year and year-end report to be distributed to the Covenant Community.
- Opportunities will be given to share ministry highlights in the church services.

Section 6: TLC's Policies

HR Policies

HIRING GUIDELINES FOR PASTORAL STAFF

Summary:

When hiring Pastoral Staff members, The Life Centre seeks to pursue procedures that are both fair and transparent for both the TLC Covenant Community and to others (e.g., potential applicants). The following represents the recommended process to achieve that result.

Process:

- 1) The Spiritual Leadership Team discerns that there is a need to initiate a search for someone to fill a TLC Pastoral Staff position. The SLT is expected to create or revise the Ministry Description/Responsibilities for the Pastoral Staff position in question. They are also expected to clarify all other elements (e.g., remuneration, benefits) that will become part of the Employment Agreement for the individual who is discerned for this role.
- 2) At an appropriately called meeting of the TLC Covenant Community, the Spiritual Leadership Team will make a recommendation to the Covenant Community for the initiation of a Pastoral search based upon the Ministry Description/Responsibilities provided.
- 3) Assuming approval of the initiation of a pastoral search, the Spiritual Leadership Team will create a Pastoral Search Team. This search team is composed of a minimum of three Covenant Community members (who are not members of the SLT or the Synergy Team), the Lead or Associate Pastor and two representatives from the Spiritual Leadership Team. It is expected that the SLT will select well-respected Covenant Community members to participate in the Pastoral search team who demonstrate spiritual maturity, commitment to TLC, and an understanding of the mission/vision of TLC. Quorum for any meetings of the Pastoral search team will require a minimum of FIVE members present and decisions will require at least 70% approval— although the goal will be unanimous approval for any recommendation.
- 4) The Pastoral Search Team will be expected to advertise the position for a minimum of one month. They will also be expected to seek referrals from individuals (e.g., MB denominational leaders, educational leaders, etc.) who have connections with potential candidates. The Pastoral search team is expected to work through this task with a high degree of confidentiality in order to respect the potential candidates and the fairness of the process. They will also be expected to communicate clearly and deal graciously with all applicants— regardless of how far they make it in the process.
- 5) The Search Team will process applications, short list and interview potential candidates, and finally make a recommendation of the candidate whom they feel best suits the ministry task needed. If they cannot decide definitively on only one candidate, they can recommend two applicants and the SLT will be tasked with selecting one of these two candidates. The Pastoral search team recommendation is made to the Spiritual Leadership Team.
- 6) The Spiritual Leadership Team will meet with the Pastoral Search Team to receive their recommendation and to gain a better understanding of the recommended candidate. The SLT may immediately give approval to the one candidate and put that name forward to the Covenant Community or they may feel the need to interview and process the recommendation further.
- 7) Once the candidate has been recommended, the applicant will be invited to a larger church gathering for the purpose of sharing their faith/ministry story and/or be given the opportunity to preach a sermon. The SLT may also initiate special events of a social nature (e.g., coffee times) to allow for more interaction with the candidate.

- 8) The TLC Covenant Community, at a specially held meeting within SEVEN days of the initial meeting of the candidate, will be invited to affirm the candidate for the pastoral position in question. If the SLT feels that more time is needed for processing of the candidate after the initial meeting with the TLC Covenant Community, they can delay the second meeting for up to 21 days. Regardless of the timing of the Covenant Community meeting for the purpose of affirming the candidate for the pastoral role, the normal quorum expectations (viz., a minimum of 35% of all TLC Covenant Community members must be present) and approval levels (viz., at least 75% approval) are required. The SLT Chairperson will report to both the TLC Covenant Community and the candidate the results of the meeting. If the Covenant Community has approved the candidate, there will be time allocated for a special welcome during a public TLC gathering.

HIRING GUIDELINES FOR CONTRACT STAFF:

Contract Staff are those who are in paid positions with TLC that have not been designated as Pastoral positions. All contracts are renewed annually based on the church's fiscal year (viz., June 1- May 31).

Process:

1. The Lead Pastor and/or the Synergy Team discerns a need for a new contract staff person to strengthen the church's ministry in some area. A second option is that a Contract Staff position has become vacant and the Lead Pastor and/or Synergy Team has determined that the vacancy needs to be filled based upon a continuation of the Contract Staff model.
2. The Lead Pastor will oversee the creation or revision of the Ministry Expectations for the position in question (drawing in the Treasurer as needed to finalize the Employment Agreement).
3. At an appropriately called meeting of the Spiritual Leadership Team, a representative of the Synergy Team (likely the Lead Pastor) will make a recommendation to the SLT for the initiation of a Contract Staff search based upon the Ministry Description/Responsibilities provided.
4. Assuming approval of the initiation of a Contract Staff search, the Lead Pastor together with at least one SLT member will become the Search Team for the position. Other ministry staff may be invited onto the team as needed. The Search Team must consist of at least 3 members.
5. They will be expected to advertise the position for a minimum of two weeks. The Search Team is expected to work through this task with a high degree of confidentiality in order to respect the potential candidates and the fairness of the process. They will also be expected to communicate clearly and deal graciously with all applicants—regardless of how far they make it in the process.
6. The Search Team will process applications, short list and interview potential candidates, check references, and finally make a decision regarding the candidate whom they feel best suits the ministry task needed. A minimum of 65% approval is required from the Search Team (although unanimous approval is preferred). They will report their recommendation to the SLT Chairperson who has the responsibility to approve the decision. In some cases, the SLT Chairperson may require approval from the larger SLT team.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Employee Terms

- All Pastoral Staff are considered to be on a probationary term for the first 6 months of their service at The Life Centre—during which time their employment can be terminated by The Life Centre if they are not deemed to be a good fit for the responsibilities of the position. Ministry Staff (Kids Community, Worship Coordinator) are on probation for 6 months.
- After that length of service, they will be considered to be regular employees and can only be terminated for cause, for budgetary reasons, or after two unsatisfactory reviews between which a reasonable opportunity was given for improvement of job performance.

Purpose of Performance Reviews

- Performance reviews are designed for all employees to discuss his/her current job tasks, encourage and recognize positive service and fulfillment of ministry goals, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting work-related goals.
- Performance reviews are assumed to be on-going informal assessments based primarily on monthly reports provided by the employee to the SLT.
- Together, all parties involved will discuss ways in which they can accomplish goals or learn new skills. The planning sessions are designed for all employees to make and agree on new goals, skills, and areas for improvement.

Employee Performance Reviews: Pastoral Staff

Unless the Spiritual Leadership Team deems it necessary to conduct a formal performance review earlier, it will conduct a formal performance review to be completed at least 30 days prior to the end of the probationary period.

- They may decide to promote the individual to regular status, continue for three more months on probationary status, or to recommend to the TLC Covenant Community that there be a parting of ways before the end of the probationary period.
- Assuming a successful initial performance review, a performance review will be conducted by the SLT after every subsequent two (maybe each year??) years or service.

It is expected that the SLT will designate a minimum of TWO of its members to conduct a performance review of a member of the Pastoral Staff. Their task will be to become familiar with the Ministry Expectations/Responsibilities for the individual in question, gather information about how well the individual has fulfilled these expectations, and then make a recommendation to the SLT based upon their findings.

Performance Reviews: Contract Staff

The Lead Pastor is responsible for conducting performance reviews with contract staff on an annual basis and will make a recommendation to the SLT regarding continued employment. It is expected that the Lead Pastor will include at least one other Covenant Community member to be part of the review team.

Hiring Guidelines for Situations of Potential Conflict of Interest

The Life Centre does not generally hire two or more related individuals in paid positions because of the potential for conflict of interest. If one of the Search teams becomes aware of an applicant who appears worthy of shortlisting/interviewing and the applicant is a spouse/family member of someone already in a paid position at TLC, the Search team chair will notify the Spiritual Leadership Team who will be given the opportunity to decide if this is or is not a case of real and/or perceived conflict of interest. The SLT decision must be made without the involvement of anyone in a familial relationship with the applicant in question. The SLT could decide that the

applicant is not eligible for the position by virtue of a real or perceived conflict of interest or they could decide that the two roles are of such a separate nature that this would not be the case. If the SLT allows the application to go forward, it is important that the applicant's spouse or family member is not involved in any way in the search or affirmation process.

TLC Employees Who Also Hold Outside Employment

TLC Employees may hold outside jobs in non-related businesses or professions as long as the employee meets the performance standards of their ministry description with The Life Centre. Unless an alternative work schedule has been approved by the Spiritual Leadership Team, employees will make every effort to prioritize the church's ministry schedule, regardless of any existing outside work assignments. The Life Centre's office space, equipment, and materials are not to be used for outside employment without prior approval of the SLT.

Pastoral Sabbatical Leaves

Full time Pastoral Staff can apply for a Sabbatical Leave after SIX full and continuous years of ministry service at The Life Centre. Sabbatical leaves can only be for a maximum of THREE months in duration. During an approved Sabbatical leave, the Pastor will continue to be paid full salary and benefits.

A sabbatical leave is intended to provide an opportunity for the pastor to grow in biblical and/or ministry knowledge, to grow spiritually through focused prayer and spiritual disciplines, to achieve physical/emotional rest, and to strengthen contacts with others in ministry. The expectation is that the Sabbatical leave will enhance the Pastor's ability to be effective in ministry at The Life Centre upon their return.

A pastor applying for a Sabbatical leave must submit a written request to the Spiritual Leadership Team outlining the expected leave dates, the outline of activities to be pursued during the Sabbatical leave, and the expected results of the Sabbatical time away in terms of improved ministry effectiveness upon their return. This request must be submitted no less than SIX months prior to the requested sabbatical leave date to allow time for proper planning and re-assignment of duties. It is expected that the Pastor will not pursue any other paid employment during the time of the Sabbatical leave but will focus on the activities for which the Sabbatical leave was given.

After the completion of the Sabbatical leave, the Pastor will be expected to give a report of the Sabbatical time away and the personal and perceived church benefits. A pastor who returns from Sabbatical leave is expected to remain on staff with the church for at least TWELVE months following the completion of the leave. If a pastor is terminated prior to 12 months of service after the completion of the leave, The Life Centre will be released from all expectations customary of severance agreements beyond the legal requirements.

Vacation Allocations: Pastoral Staff

The Lead Pastor is given FOUR (4) weeks of vacation during the first year of service. This increases by one day per year for each of the next five subsequent years to a maximum of FIVE weeks. Pastoral Staff are paid at their regular rate during these weeks of vacation allocation. While overtime hours are not paid and thus some time off may be taken at other times, it is expected that the Lead Pastor will continue to fulfill Sunday meeting expectations outside of these Vacation allocations.

If the employee terminates her/his employment during the year and has not taken all the earned vacation, then this vacation time can be paid out in cash. Vacations are meant for rest and refreshment and the Lead Pastor is strongly encouraged to take the time to do that for their own benefit as well as the church's benefit.

Vacation Allocations: Contract Staff

Part time Contract Staff are given THREE (3) weeks of paid vacation each year.

Group Insurance and Extra Medical Coverage

The Life Centre offers the following Employee Benefit Program administered through the Canadian Conference office in Winnipeg for REGULAR employees working 22 hours per week or more (as determined by the carrier of the policies). The Life Centre pays 50% of the costs of this Group Insurance and extra Medical Coverage for Full-Time Employees.

Registered Pension Plan

The Life Centre participates in the Canadian MB Conference Employee benefits program to provide a pension plan for each employee working 22 hours per week or more. The program is designed that the employee pays 5% of gross salary (this includes the clergy housing portion) which becomes a payroll deduction. The church will match that amount as a contribution to the pension plan. These funds are invested with the Canadian MB Conference and the church's portion is vested. The employee portion of the Registered Pension Plan can be moved with the appropriate documents so that it stays within a registered pension format.

Holidays

The Life Centre observes the following paid holidays per year for all regular employees: New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, BC Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas Day, and Boxing Day. When these days fall on a Sunday, TLC pastors and ministry staff are required to fulfill their regular responsibilities but may take another day off in compensation for the day worked.

FACILITY USE POLICIES

The Life Centre's Facility Use Policies are recorded in the Appendix.

APPROVAL AND REVISION OF HWDL MANUAL

This HWDL Manual (without the Appendices) and revisions to the HWDL Manual needs to be voted on by the TLC Covenant Community at a duly called meeting and approval requires a minimum of 75% affirmation. Revisions to the Appendices do not require TLC Covenant Community approval but do require 75% approval in a vote of the SLT at an official meeting.

The policies and procedures outlined in the HWDL Manual are intended to be consistent with the BC Conference of MB Churches and CRA guidelines for Charities. If at any point, the procedures here are not consistent with these other bodies, these other procedures will be considered to be of higher authority than the HWDL Manual.

Section 7: Risk Management

THE RELATIONSHIP OF RISK AND MINISTRY

When we follow Jesus, our lifestyle and leadership involves risk, both personally and corporately. Taking risk, however, is only half of the story. Caring and thoughtful service to God is also manifested in avoiding certain risk and attempting to reduce others.

The best biblical example to support this exercise in risk management is that of the shepherd. Risk management requires both care and leadership. The shepherd cares for the flock. This caring involves both risk taking and risk management. Jesus warned that the thief comes to steal, kill and destroy (John 10:10). The good shepherd, alert to these dangers, guards the flock. Providing this care requires knowledge and understanding of what the risks are and of the steps necessary to protect the sheep and the shepherd.

In the biblical image of the good shepherd, risk management is not self-serving, but self-sacrificing. A healthy church involves engaging in certain risks that require self-sacrifice as well as reducing other risks that endanger those that are vulnerable. Ministry always contains both being a risk taker and a risk manager. Ministry is driven by faith, but also depends upon values, vision, decision making, circumstances and the knowledge and skills of many people. The results are not guaranteed. Risks are involved. Furthermore, the occurrence of a pure risk (any form of risk that has two possible outcomes: loss or no loss) can devastate a ministry and cause severe harm and suffering for many people.

Some theological perspectives, grounded in the experience of the church as a community of faith and mission, can lead to a feeling of false security or to a willingness to embrace any risk without making any attempt to differentiate between good risks and bad risks. Some common theological perspectives are:

- a. The church is a holy place; there is nothing safer than a church.
Problem: People are hurt physically and emotionally in church buildings and in church programs.
- b. Churches are communities of faith and trust. We trust those in service and ministry to others and to the Lord.
Problem: A few Church leaders do things that harm people.
- c. We must trust God to protect us. Risk management shows a lack of faith.
Problem: Faith and ministry risk are different than pure risks and we must embrace the former and try to minimize the latter.
- d. We are a brotherhood of people that help each other. Risk management will make us too independent instead of interdependent.
Problem: There are some risks that we each individually (or congregations) need to take responsibility for.

Often the church has the same perspective on assessing and responding to risk that the corporate world does. Risk can often be seen as remote and responding to the risk can produce more burdens than benefits. Some common attitudes could include the following:

- a. It can't happen here. We trust each other and the Lord, so those things only happen in churches where they have not been theologically on target and carelessly let in individuals that come for the purpose of doing harm or creating loss.
Problem: The church is not immune from loss passive acceptance. There may be an acknowledgement that risk may occur, but there is no urgency to do anything about it. The risk is viewed as remote and unimportant.
Problem: Accidents and losses and disputes can strike without warning.
- b. Fear of alienating workers: Some believe that risk management can create fear and scare away a potentially good volunteer.
Problem: When developed properly, risk management enhances confidence and attracts volunteers and new members because they feel safer and protected.
- c. Too cumbersome: Risk management requires too much time and energy. Smaller churches especially do not have the resources to do it.
Problem: Risk Management is manageable especially when weighed against the stress that losses, accidents and dispute create. An additional stress is that these losses can drain away valued resources from ministry.

At The Life Centre, we desire to ensure that all our attendees worship God in a safe environment. Community safety is everyone's concern and so these guidelines have been developed to equip our ministry leaders, volunteers, parents, guardians, regular attendees and guests with the knowledge and action steps to address natural disaster crises as well as abuse prevention and child/youth safety.

See Appendix for TLC's Risk Management Plan

Section 8: Appendices

APPENDIX A: THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE FOR CHURCH COVENANTS IN THE NT

There are at least five clues provided in the NT that the early church maintained some sort of visible, identifiable, functional and formal “covenant community.”

1. The Church was Responsible for the Behaviour of Those in it (1 Cor 5:1-13; Matt 18:15-20)

In 1 Corinthians 5, Paul tells the Church at Corinth to take disciplinary action against a Christian man who boasted of his incestuous relationship (presumably) with his step-mother. In Matthew 18:15-20, specific steps are given about how to deal with someone who has sinned and seems unrepentant. The final step is for the “church” to confront the individual. The idea that the church should discipline someone would suggest that the church had specific ideas about who *was* and who *was not* a part of the covenant community. The church could act as a group and then could treat unrepentant individuals as no longer part of their covenant community (but once again as an object of mission like the Gentiles or a tax collector). It appears that there was some form of keeping track of who was and was not in the church.

2. The Church Counted Those “added to” it (Acts 2:41,47; 5:14)

The second indicator of some kind of functional community comes in Acts 2:41,47 and 5:14. Three times Luke writes of believers being ‘added to’ the church (actually four, if 11.24 is counted). Somehow the new believers were counted in with the Christian community when they believed and were baptized. There would be no way of counting them in unless there was some sort of at least semi-formal membership.

3. The Church Cared for Those who were Part of it (1 Peter 5:2)

The third indicator of a functional covenant comes in metaphor form in 1 Peter 5.2. The apostle Peter, in his appeal to the visions in the scattered churches, says, “Be shepherds of the flock that is under your care.”

Now although the words “shepherd” and “flock” are metaphors, this illustration of careful animal husbandry seems to imply a shepherd's intimate knowledge of each animal in the flock. A shepherd knows the sheep; a shepherd knows how many sheep there are—in fact, if one is missing, the shepherd goes searching. If Peter could tell church leaders to shepherd the flock under their care, it implies that there was a way of knowing exactly who and how many this meant. Again some sort of membership is implied.

4. The Church Was to Utilize the Gifts of Those Connected to it (Rom 12; 1 Cor 12; Eph 4)

A fourth indicator of functional community grows out of three of the four primary gift passages. It would appear from these New Testament letters to local churches that a church was to have a grasp of the available gifts within the body, presumably so that these might be pressed into useful service. Foot, hand, ear, eye, they knew who to turn to for specific service. Visions, evangelists, leadership, teaching, giving—these were identifiable gifts given to identifiable people. Again if there were no way of knowing who was in each community, these texts make little sense.

5. The Church Was to Discern its Teachers from Among Those in it (Matt 7:15-20)

The book of Matthew finds the New Testament church struggling to sort out good theology from bad. False teachers—Jesus calls them false prophets, ferocious wolves—were lurking, and Matthew presented the church with an objective standard of truth against which the falsehood of the false prophet could be tested. Who can teach in the community of faith? What are the criteria? Matthew called for a close and critical scrutiny of a believer's character, conduct and influence. This discerning of teachers implies that these teachers were well known and discerned from those within the group of believers.

Conclusion: Not one of these five indicators specifically makes mentions of church membership, nor does any text prescribe any structural membership, yet each points to a system that permitted the early churches to be self-aware. There is no mention of covenant community lists, yet we find identifiable faith communities who are concerned with right teaching, maintaining purity, putting teeth into discipline and redemptive forgiveness, providing pastoral care, and putting identifiable spiritual gifts to work. While the words are never used, it appears evident that the early church communities had clear understandings of some sort of covenant community structure and thus this is an appropriate way of structuring church bodies today.

Our biblical understanding of Conversion, Baptism, and Participation in the Church

1. The Connection Between Conversion and Baptism

“Come, follow me” was Jesus’ invitation (Matt 4:18-22). Jesus came to bring sinners into the salvation community. Simon Peter, his brother Andrew, James, his brother John—they followed Jesus. But it soon became clear that this call to discipleship was neither easy nor comfortable. In fact, following Jesus proved to be costly. From Luke and John, we understand that many fell away (Lk 9:58,60,62; John 6 :60,66). Conversion in the NT usually involved leaving behind one’s biological family and one’s earlier religious community which meant that the only community left was the new church community who would welcome the new believer. But this full welcoming appeared to happen only after baptism.

The process seems then to have been repentance, a change of heart leading to an open break with past sins (Acts 20:21), an open confession and an open public identification with the salvation community. The way people were invited to express their public identification with Christ was baptism. Baptism meant that through repentance and faith the new believer was now “in Christ” as well as in Jesus’ new salvation community (Rom 6:3). Baptism signaled both conversion and identification. These six biblical texts define the conversion and baptism process:

- a. **Confess and believe:** “If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Rom 10:9).
- b. **Repent and be baptized:** “Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven’.... Those who accepted his message were baptized...” (Acts 2:38,41).
- c. **Buried with him through baptism and raised to new life:** “Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life” (Rom 6:3-4)

d. **Go, make disciples, baptize them, teach them:** “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father...teaching them...” (Matt 28:19).

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e. **Baptism, a pledge to God:** “...this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience towards God” (1 Pet 3:21).

f. **Children of God:** “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have been clothed with Christ” (Gal 3:26).

In reviewing all of the conversion accounts of Acts, in most conversion and baptism were bound together into a single experience (cf. 2:38,41,47; 10:47,48; 16:15,33; 18:8; 22:16). Note what didn't happen: Conversion was not followed by a period of waiting to verify that regeneration had in fact occurred and that the believer was actually deserving of baptism. Rather, conversion and baptism seem to have been a single experience, with baptism following hard on the heels of conversion, so that it is in fact appropriate to link them together with a hyphen to indicate that they are one and the same, as in conversion-baptism.

2. The Connection Between Baptism and Church Participation/Membership

Our word “church” comes from a Greek word (ekklesia) which means “called out.” In the first century, this meant being called out of the corrupt and evil Roman power culture. To belong to the church in the first century was to opt out of belonging to a nationalistic, often oppressive, and corrupt Roman empire. To be identified with the church was to say, “Jesus is Lord, not Caesar.” To be converted to Christ and to be baptized into his body was, therefore, an incredibly powerful countercultural statement.

Conversion and baptism result in an immediate new relationship with God through Christ. In the NT, it usually involved ostracism from one’s family and former community and thus brought the believer into Christ's body, the church. One is not baptized merely into Christ but into Christ's body and consequently one gets a whole new family. There are a whole series of “one another” texts that help us to understand what it means to be in Christ’s body, and in the process, they help us to define what functional membership looks like:

- Each member belongs to all the others, Romans 12:5
- Believers are to be devoted to one another, Romans 12:10
- Honor one another, Romans 12:10
- Enjoy a spirit of unity among yourselves, Romans 15:5
- Accept one another, Romans 15:7
- Instruct one another, Romans 15:14
- Greet one another, Romans 16:3-6,16
- Serve one another, Galatians 5:13
- Carry one another's burdens, Galatians 6:2
- Bear with one another, Ephesians 4:2
- Submit to one another, Ephesians 5:21
- Encourage one another & build each other up, 1 Thessalonians 5:11
- Habitual worship to encourage one another, Hebrews 10:25

This “one another” activity only happens as Christians live in interacting community. Presumably only in the context of seven-days-a-week community can the inter-relatedness of Christians be nurtured.

That is an uphill road these days. Values, priorities, culture, societal norms—all seem to mitigate against community. Yet the Bible’s “one another” imperative stands. In fact, it seems safe to say that keeping covenant with the local “one another” community of faith is one of the most tangible ways believers demonstrate the covenant they have with God.

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The Universality Church and the Local Body of Christ, Church as used in the NT has two primary meanings:

1. **Universal church** describes that great company of believers everywhere who have been born of the Spirit of God. In this first sense, we could call church a generic term (e.g., Col 1:18—Christ is head of his body, the church; 1 Cor 3:9ff—God's building and temple; 12:28—gifts in the church; 1 Pet 2:9—chosen people, royal priesthood, holy nation, people belonging to God; Eph 1:22—Jesus is head over the body which is his church; 3:10—God intends to make his wisdom known to rulers and authorities through the church; Phil 3:6—Paul persecuting the church). In this first sense, conversion-baptism introduces the believer into this great body of Christ—the everywhere-church.

2. More often, however, church is used to describe a **particular local church**, such as the church at Thessalonica or Corinth or Laodicea (e.g., 1 Thess 1:1—to the church of the Thessalonians; 1 Cor 1:2—to the church of God in Corinth; Col 4:16—see that this letter is also read in the church of the Laodiceans).

So, not only does conversion-baptism introduce the believer to the universal church, they also introduce the believer into the local body of Christ. And it is at the local body level that all the “one another” stuff happens.

For example, if we live in Abbotsford, chances are good we cannot connect with Christians in Taiwan or Zimbabwe because of distance. We love them, feel a bond with them, are definitely part of the same faith, but we don't connect with them beyond the spiritual. Instead, if we are from Abbotsford, we connect with the Christians in Abbotsford, and even more specifically, we do all the one-another activities with the church that calls itself The Life Centre.

Belonging to The Life Centre Covenant Community is about loving God through Christ and living in community with God’s people, intentionally living out the covenant that God has established with us through Christ. By being baptized as a public demonstration of repentance from personal sin and as a sign of personal desire to live a life of discipleship following Christ, believers are invited to join themselves to The Life Centre.

APPENDIX B: SLT LEADERSHIP COVENANT

Spiritual Leadership Team members are to be TLC Covenant Community members in good standing throughout their tenure on the SLT. They agree to the following:

Responsibilities of SLT Membership

Maintaining Qualifications:

- Maintaining agreement with The Life Centre’s Mission, Vision, Values, and Confession of Faith.
- Maintaining agreement with and a lifestyle consistent with The Life Centre’s Covenant Community Expectations and TLC Life Style Expectations for Leaders.
- Fostering a vibrant Christian faith and being a regular attendee at The Life Centre gatherings.
- Holding and maintaining a clear criminal record check.
- Avoiding any situation which would make one an Ineligible Member to direct a CRA approved charitable organization (e.g., involvement in another charitable organization whose charitable status has been revoked).

Responsibilities of SLT Members

- To actively participate in SLT tasks as described in the *How We Do Life Manual* (HWDL).
- To be a prepared, active participant, and regular attendee at SLT (and TLC) meetings.
- To observe confidentiality concerning all SLT matters.
- To avoid any conflict of interest in one’s leadership role by disclosing any possible conflict of interest and abstaining from influence and/or voting on any matters where a possible conflict of interest could exist.
- To always act in the best interest of The Life Centre and its mission and vision and put these interests before one’s own interest.

By my signature affixed below, I acknowledge my compliance with the spirit and intent of the SLT Leadership Covenant.

Signature

Date

Print Name

APPENDIX D: TLC LIFE STYLE EXPECTATIONS FOR LEADERS

The Life Centre Leaders commit to

- (a) having and maintaining a vibrant and healthy spiritual life that demonstrates a history of, and an ongoing commitment to, cultivating a personal relationship with God;
- (b) maintaining healthy and wholesome relationships with spouse and children (if applicable), and all others with whom one interacts;
- (c) living by God's plan for a healthy human sexuality that places sexual relationships exclusively within the context of a covenantal marriage between a man and a woman;
- (d) abstaining from communication that is destructive to inter-personal relationships, including gossip, slander, vulgar/obscene language, prejudice and abusive or demeaning language;
- (e) abstaining from stealing, misusing or destroying property belonging to others;
- (f) avoiding lying, cheating, financial impropriety, or other forms of dishonesty including plagiarism;
- (g) avoiding drunkenness, addictive behaviours, the use or possession of illegal drugs, and the misuse or abuse of substances including prescribed drugs;
- (h) avoiding the use of materials that are degrading, dehumanizing, exploitive, hateful, or gratuitously violent, including, but not limited to pornography;
- (i) treating all persons with respect and dignity, and upholding their God-given worth from conception to death, including the avoidance of harassment, harmful discrimination and any form of verbal or physical intimidation;
- (j) acting as responsible citizens both locally and globally who respect authorities, submit to the laws of this country when not inconsistent with biblical teaching, and who contribute to the welfare of creation and society;
- (k) demonstrating a love for Jesus by courageously sharing the gospel in word and deed;
- (l) in all other ways, maintaining an active and healthy Christian life, consistent with the Christian teachings of BCMB, as an example to all with whom one meets and interacts.

(Source: BC MB Conference Credentialing Document)

APPENDIX E: TLC'S BLESS THE NEIGHBOURHOOD FUND

A key section of TLC's Vision involves blessing our local neighbourhood:

Our aim is that the gifts and abilities God has given us will bless our neighbourhood and celebrate the nations, as we further God's Kingdom in Abbotsford and beyond.

In addition, TLC has a number of Values that speak directly into this:

- **We value living out our faith in our community and world**
- **We value seeking justice and reconciliation in the way of Jesus**
- **We value walking alongside people who are marginalized**

As part of what this means, TLC will set aside a portion of its budget each year to "Bless the Neighbourhood."

- Part of this Fund will be used to support and partner with groups who are making a positive contribution in the local neighbourhood.
- Part of this Fund will be used to support TLC initiatives that specifically serve the local community.
- Part of this Fund will be reserved to provide individual support to individuals in the TLC community and in the local neighbourhood who are experiencing urgent needs for which financial assistance would be of help.

Oversight: The SLT will function to oversee the utilization of this fund to ensure its compliance with the purpose of the fund and with best practises.

General Guidelines:

Fund Distribution Maximums. In order to provide support to as many groups and individuals as possible, an external group can receive up to \$500 in one fiscal year. An internal group can receive up to \$1000 in one fiscal year and an individual can receive up to \$300.

Eligible Recipients: Individuals served by the Bless the Neighbourhood Fund do not need to be attendees or participants at The Life Centre.

Procedures: TLC will try always to avoid giving cash to an individual in need but rather provide gift cards, gas cards, etc. An individual TLC Staff person can distribute support up to \$30 value to one individual without the approval of another TLC Staff person. They need, however, to provide a written record of the incident including the name of the person helped, the date, the presenting need, and the nature of TLC's assistance and any follow-up done. These records will be stored in the TLC office.

Any support to an individual larger than \$30 requires the additional approval of a second TLC Staff member or an SLT member. Again a written record as per the guidelines provided above will be required.

The SLT (likely through one of its members or through a Staff member) will oversee that this particular fund is being allocated according to the agreed upon procedures and objectives. Support given to internal or external groups will require the approval of the SLT.

APPENDIX F: THE LIFE CENTRE AND MEI

MEI AND THE LIFE CENTRE

The Life Centre's Relationship To the MEI Board:

- TLC has chosen MEI as a ministry partner whose mission and vision resonate with TLC's own.
- TLC is a member of a group of supporting churches who oversee the operation of MEI.
- TLC is expected to provide at least ONE but not more than TWO (2) Covenant Community members for participation on the MEI Board of Directors for two-year terms. (See Appendix B: Role of MEI Board Members)
- The Spiritual Leadership Team is responsible to recruit and affirm these individuals for the MEI Board of Directors.
- As a ministry partner, TLC is expected to financially support MEI each year at the level equal to 2% of its annual revenues as reported by CRA Form 3010.
- Children of TLC's covenant members who attend MEI receive the Supporting Church Discount.
- In addition, up to two children of TLC Covenant Community members who are in a financial situation where enrolment at MEI would be very difficult or impossible, can receive free tuition through the MEI Supporting Church Bursary Program (see Appendix).
- TLC's representatives to MEI are expected to abide by MEI's roles and requirements as Board Members (See below "Roles of a Good Board Member").

The MEI Board Member(s) Relationship to the SLT:

- TLC's representatives to the MEI Board will follow the directions and intentions of SLT's desires for the Church Family.
- The SLT has responsibility to indicate The Life Centre's desires for MEI, and will communicate regularly with its MEI representatives. This shall occur at least once a year in the its Annual Family Meeting reports.
- The Board Members shall communicate to the Church the proceedings of the MEI Board as necessary, and minimally to report to the SLT at least once a year through its Annual Family Meeting reports.
- The MEI representatives may not exceed its authority given by the SLT or to conduct any MEI business that exceeds limits set on by the SLT.

Roles of a Good Board Member: One Voice

The role of the MEI Board of Trustees is best understood when each Board member realizes that the Board must speak with "one voice." This means that you as an MEI Board member have the authority to speak in your governance capacity only when attending an official Board meeting. As an individual, you bring much to the table. Your experiences, your leadership ability, and your expertise in a given area are valuable assets, but your contribution must be considered as part of the whole. When the Board speaks, it must speak with "one voice" rather than with the multiple voices of the individual members. This does not mean that there cannot be differing opinions and individual preferences. Debate and discussion are vital to the life of the school. Your input is important, but the Board must come to consensus on every issue. Here, "consensus" means that everyone feels comfortable calling for the vote because each member feels that he or she has had a fair chance to voice his or her position. Consensus is the "one voice" that establishes policy to guide the institute and is the "one voice" that is communicated by administration to the parents and staff. Again, this does NOT mean that there must be one hundred percent agreement on every issue. However, it does mean that each Board member must yield to the majority vote. For most Board decisions, members are likely to reach a hundred percent unity. However, at times there will be difficult issues that put good people on opposite sides, issues on which it is

impossible to come to total agreement. Occasionally, a final decision may be postponed in order to allow everyone time to pray and seek God's guidance on the issue. Even if individual Board members struggle to accept the final decision, if the outcome must be communicated to others, that communication must be with "one voice."

Three Hats

MEI Board members wear three hats. Each is worn at different times.

1. **Board Member** - MEI Board members wear this hat only when attending a Board meeting with a quorum present or when serving on a Board committee doing Board level work. The MEI Board President manages the Board when the members are wearing this hat.
2. **Implementer** - The implementer hat is worn when, for a special purpose, the MEI Board delegates authority to a Board committee or an individual Board member to carry out a specific assignment on behalf of the Board. This committee, or person, is accountable to the Board and must not act beyond the specific assignment or time limit.
3. **Parent/Volunteer** - A Board member wears the parent/volunteer hat when interacting informally as a parent with the staff, when attending functions and activities of the school, or when serving, along with other MEI parents, staff, or students, as a volunteer. The parent hat and Board hat may not be worn simultaneously. MEI Board members are required to make impartial decisions, representing the best interests of the school as a whole and not particular individuals or a segment of the constituency. The parent/volunteer hat is also worn when the school administration, with the consent of the MEI Board president, asks a Board member to serve as an advisor to the administration, i.e., to bring their business expertise and experience to the running of the school. Individual Board members have no authority outside of the Boardroom.

Contribution to the School:

MEI Board members contribute positively to the running of the school when they:

- Reflect the morals, values, and traditions of MEI
- Speak with wisdom and sound judgment
- Provide accountability and good stewardship
- Add credibility to the school
- Give visibility to the work of the school
- Have contacts who can be helpful in achieving MEI's mission
- Bring experience to policy setting
- Give encouragement to MEI's administration, staff, and volunteers
- Model personal giving and stewardship
- Apply special expertise to specific needs of the school
- Provide an informed source of new ideas
- Give continuity over time
- Commit to Board meetings and volunteer work
- Bring balance to decision making
- Ensure the integrity of MEI's operations
- Connect MEI with new networks
- Bring various perspectives to the issues
- Pray often for MEI's students and staff

Confidentiality & Conflict of Interest

The MEI Board expects ethical and businesslike conduct of its members. Board members must represent complete loyalty to the interests of the entire organization, superseding any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy or interest groups and membership on other boards or staff groups.

- MEI Board members must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility. There must be no self-dealing, any conduct of private business, or personal services between any Board member and the organization except as procedurally controlled to assure openness, competitive opportunity, and equal access to “inside” information.
- Any real or perceived conflict of interest must be declared by the Board member in writing to the Board chair and/or the executive committee.
- As per board policy #1300 MEI Board members should not make judgments of administration or staff performance except as performance is assessed according to explicit Board policies and agreed-upon performance objectives.
- Board members must exercise good judgment and care at all times to avoid unauthorized or improper disclosures of confidential information. Conversations in public places, such as restaurants, elevators and airplanes should be limited to matters that do not pertain to information of a sensitive or confidential nature.
- In addition Board members should refrain from discussing confidential issues with family, friends, MEI staff, and media.
- When individual Board members are asked about confidential matters, the question should be referred to the Board President or Vice-President.

The responsibilities of these positions are as follows:

Board Member:

- Become familiar with Board activities, procedures and policies.
- Participate in various Board-commissioned functions such as appeals, evaluations or the hiring of administration or teaching staff.
- Attend Board Meetings and Board Committee meetings and attend occasional Board/staff social events and educational seminars.
- Articulate MEI’s Mission Statement and Core Values and contribute to a plan by which that mission is achieved. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - A long range strategic plan (3-5 years reviewed and adjusted annually).
 - An annual work plan. Both of these plans should articulate measurable goals and objectives. Once approved, these plans should be delegated to the Superintendent for implementation.
- Provide ongoing information about the school to member churches including important events and developments throughout the year.
- Respond appropriately to constituency concerns and inform church members about suitable procedures for processing these concerns (See Policy 1310).
- Read reports and study materials provided in order to come to Board Meetings prepared to review and discuss the same.
- Participate productively in the discussion and decision making process.
- Adhere to the MEI Conflict of Interest Policy 1300. Monitor and evaluate:
 - The performance of the Board in relation to its stated responsibilities.
 - The performance of the Superintendent in relation to stated expectations. This responsibility will normally be discharged through the Executive Committee who will prepare an evaluation and report back to the Board.

- Be accountable to:
 - The Superintendent by providing resources, leadership and vision to achieve the goals set out by the Board.
 - The member churches for achieving the goals and objectives as outlined in the current strategic plan.
 - The Board in its fulfillment of its objectives.

APPENDIX G: MEI SUPPORTING CHURCH BURSARY

Supporting Church Bursary Program Guidelines

MEI is partnering with supporting churches to provide opportunities for spiritual growth and development for young people who would not otherwise be able to receive a Christian education at MEI. This is an opportunity for the churches to identify students to attend MEI under this Bursary Program who have a heart for Christian education. It is hoped that these students will become active leaders in our churches, and will become 'salt' and 'light' in the professions of their choosing.

Which students should be selected?

- Any student who has a heart to deepen their faith by attending a Christian school, and is serious about allowing their light to shine for Jesus
- Any student who would otherwise be financially unable to attend MEI
- Any student who would be in Grades 6-12 in the coming year

How many bursaries can churches select?

- Up to 2 for each church, subject to space at the intended grade level

What does it cover?

- MEI Tuition fees only
- Each recipient is required to pay the \$100 for new student and \$50 for returning student registration fee
- Extra course fees for selected courses such as woodworking or home-economics would be paid by the recipient

What does the bursary not cover?

- Registration fees
- Student fees
- Class trips
- Busing
- Grad fees

Are there limitations?

- Eligible students and their families must be attending a Supporting Church, and it is preferred that parents are church members.
- Enrolment space is available in Grades 6-12, with a limited number in each grade.
- Students with unique learning needs or special needs may not be accepted due to Learning Assistance and Special Needs enrollment caps
- Parents must be residents of BC, Canadian citizens or landed immigrants
- Students are expected to comply with MEI attendance, academic and behavioral expectations to be retained in the bursary program
- All other MEI Admission requirements

What is the process for applying?

- Students should be selected and recommended by a pastor, possibly the youth pastor, considering the criteria above (advertisement in the church bulletin is not recommended)
- The pastor should contact Lorraine Wind at lwind@meischools.com in the Administration & Finance

Office to ask if space is available at the desired grade level.

- The Supporting Church Bursary Nomination Form should be completed by the pastor, the student, and the student's parent.
- These forms should be brought to Lorraine Wind with the registration fee of \$100/\$50, and the registration will be completed.

Is there a deadline?

- Applications should be made as soon as possible as the available spaces decrease with time.
- Once students are enrolled, MEI guarantees the bursary for those students through to graduation
- The Church affirms on-going enrolment in this program annually
- By January 15th of each year, MEI will contact the Church to determine that the students still meet the criteria of this Bursary.

APPENDIX H: FACILITY USE RESTRICTIONS AND APPLICATION

The Life Centre is leasing the former Clearbrook Mennonite Church from Mennonite Church British Columbia (MCBC). TLC does not have the right to rent out the building for purposes other than its own ministries. As a result, events such as weddings or funerals will only be conducted at TLC if there is a direct TLC family connection to the people involved. The Spiritual Leadership Team may require MCBC approval for any event proposed to be held at TLC so applicants should not assume that use of the building will automatically be granted.

Facilities Use Policies:

- Requests made for use of any or parts of the TLC facility shall be directed to the Administrative Assistant one month before the event.
- The Administrative Assistant will consult with The Spiritual Leadership Team Chairperson to determine the appropriateness of the request.
- The first use of the facilities of the Life Centre shall be for the regular ministries, programs and activities of the Life Centre.
- For-profit activities will not be considered for use of the facility.
- All activities of all users of the facility of the Life Centre shall not conflict with the purposes and beliefs of The Life Centre and the Confession of Faith of the MB Church.
- The use of the church for a funeral of someone directly connected with TLC, subject to availability, is free of charge.
- The use of the church facility for a wedding will be permitted on a mutually acceptable date when the wedding involves a bride or groom who is a regular attender of The Life Centre or whose parent(s) is a regular attender. The wedding must also adhere to the definition of marriage in the Statement of Faith of the MB Church as being between a man and a woman.
- All officiating ministers or marriage commissioners must be approved by the Lead Pastor to be theologically in agreement with the Statement of Faith of the MB Church. All marriages performed in TLC church will provide evidence of participating in pre-marital counseling as approved by the Lead Pastor.
- Costs for setup and cleanup will be charged according to custodial fees set by the church. Users are also responsible to obtain liability insurance for the event identifying MCBC, BCMB, and TLC as “additional insured.”
- All other activities for TLC attenders such as birthday parties, anniversaries, family celebrations, or wedding receptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis and these will be charged fees based on recovery of costs.
- Government activities, restricted to blood donor clinics and polling station will be permitted if they do not conflict with a church event (subject to approval by MCBC).
- MB denomination activities or meetings will be considered to be church activities and will not be charged a rental fee.

Restrictions to Building Use based on MCBC Lease Agreement

- Serving alcohol and the consumption of alcohol is prohibited on the premises inside and outside of the building.
- There is no designated smoking area and smoking will not be permitted on the premises.
- The use of confetti, rice or bubbles is prohibited in or around the building.

- Extreme sports activities must be disclosed before any use agreement is signed. Then the appropriate insurance coverage must be obtained and submitted.
- The kitchen facilities may only be used providing that a supervisor has a Food Safe certificate. If your group does not have a certified person, then it is up to the use group to contact a TLC person with this certification. It is expected that they will be reimbursed for their time (recommended \$20/hour).
- A designated security supervisor must be present at all times or satisfactory arrangements for security made with The Life Centre prior to the event. If no supervisor is available, TLC might be able to provide one at the recommended rate of \$20/hr.
- All electronic equipment owned by The Life Centre must be operated by one of the Church's qualified technicians if one is available. Again, reimbursement for their services should be at the recommended rate of \$20/hour.
- No equipment or property may be removed from the church without the church office and the kitchen supervisor's permission and approval.
- Each user group is responsible for the behavior of their own guests and participants. Any damage done to the church or church property by guests and participants will be the responsibility of the user group.
- All user groups will arrange for their own food and beverages (no alcohol).

Facility and Equipment Use:

- Kitchen must be supervised by a person with a Food Safe certificate.
- All damage or broken items must be reported to the church office.
- The standard of cleanliness is to be returned as good or better than the condition the user found.
- All garbage generated by the user group must be removed from the church property immediately after the event.
- All linens (tablecloths, dish towels, hand towels) are to be laundered and returned by the end of the next business day.
- The security deposit (\$100) will not be returned until all linens are returned, cleaned and pressed as needed.
- No food and beverages may be served in areas not arranged for ahead of time.
- All tables and chairs must be cleaned up and put away after the event unless arranged otherwise with the Life Centre.
- Church owned sports equipment may be used only if arranged and approved and then returned to their appropriate storage places.
- Moving of any accessories (plants, shrubs, cross et.) must be declared and approved prior to the event.
- Candles are permitted only if they are paradise candles with metal holders or have protection from wax spray under them.

Application for Facility Use: The Life Centre

Proposed Event: _____ Date & Times: _____

Person Responsible: NAME _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Facilities Requested (check all that apply):

- Worship Centre (200 people maximum)
- Kid's Community Centre (150 people maximum)
- Kitchen
- Playground
- Nursery Room

Number of People involved: _____

Logistical Requirements:

____ Number of Tables ____ Number of chairs ____ Kitchen Utensils

Sound Equipment Yes or NO? Sound Technician Needed? Yes or No? Hours Needed? _____

Other Requirements?

I have read and agree to the Facility Use Agreement and The User Policies of the Life Centre above:

User Name (print): _____ Signature: _____

TLC Signature: _____ Date Signed: _____

• Liability Insurance: _____ (showing MCBC, BCMB, and TLC as "additional insured")

• Security Deposit: **\$100.00**

(The security deposit will be returned when church keys have been returned to the Administrative Assistant.)

APPENDIX I: KIDS COMMUNITY ABUSE PREVENTION GUIDELINES

1. At all times, each class will require two volunteers to be present (leader/helper) for classroom management and teacher accountability.
2. Nursery volunteers will not be expected or required to change diapers of infants or toddlers. Parents who drop children off will be encouraged to change their child's diaper beforehand.
3. Nursery volunteers are to be aware of food allergies and discourage the sharing of snacks between children.
4. Nursery volunteers are to keep a record of all infants and toddlers through a numbering system. They are also to ensure that the parent who signs in the child is also the parent who signs out the child.
5. Volunteers are advised that discipline of children is strictly "HANDS OFF". The misbehaving child will be given a "time out" in an area of the classroom within sight of the teacher and an explanation of their inappropriate behaviour. After two warnings, the teacher is to inform Kids Community Coordinator who will inform the parent.
6. Volunteers are to discourage physical touching, especially with children of the opposite sex, to avoid inferences of inappropriate behaviour.
7. For bathroom visits, the volunteer is to accompany the child to the bathroom, do a security check and then stand outside.
8. Volunteers are to inform the Kid's Community Coordinator of all incidences of misbehaviour or issues with classroom management.
9. All information about children are to be treated with strict confidentiality and only to be shared with the Kids Community Leader.
10. Volunteers are encouraged to build relationships with parents in order to establish trust and lines of communication.

RECOGNIZING SIGNS OF POSSIBLE ABUSE

Abuse is one person or group of persons using coercive or manipulative actions to control others. Abuse is about misuse of power. The goal of abusive behaviour is to gain or exercise control over those perceived as weaker.

Abuse is more common when there are pre-existing power differences which can be exploited, such as in the following relationships: male/female, parent/child, teacher/student, pastor/parishioner, older relative/younger relative, caregiver/elderly person.

Types of abuses include physical, emotional, sexual harassment and spiritual. For examples of these abuses, please refer to Abuse: Response and Prevention, published by Mennonite Central Committee (www.mcc.org/abuse). At The Life Centre, we observe non-tolerance of any kind or level of abuse, especially with minors. Any incidence is to be reported immediately to the Kids Community Coordinator and/or to one of the TLC Pastors.

Those who work in settings with children should become familiar with the possible indicators of abuse typically portrayed by victims. Obviously, however, one must proceed with caution in this area, because the same signals which are consistent with abuse can often be consistent with a great many other life-

related problems. Rarely is one indicator conclusive proof that a child has been harmed. In most instances, children will present with a cluster of behavioural and physical indicators. When considered in conjunction with other possible indicators of abuse, however, the staff member may suspect abuse and need to make a report. (Resource: Ministry of Attorney General, Ministry of Social Services and Province of BC, June 1994, "Help Stop Child Abuse: A Handbook for Employers and Volunteer Coordinators.")

Indicators of Physical Abuse (behavioural):

- Cannot recall how observed injuries occurred, or offers inconsistent explanation
- Child noticeably cowers when approached by an adult; pulling away when touched unexpectedly
- Withdrawal from others
- Constant anxiety
- Fear of adults
- Rejection of friends
- Refusal to go home
- Excessive eagerness to please
- Runaway attempts
- Inappropriate dress (to cover injuries)
- Eating or sleep disturbances

Indicators of Physical Abuse (physical):

- Unexplained welts or bruises and marks not on the usual place like the knees, shins or elbows
- Presence of several injuries that are in various stages of healing
- Different coloured bruises, indicating they're at different stages of healing
- Presence of various injuries over a period of time
- Facial injuries in infants and pre-school children e.g. cuts, bruises, sores, etc.
- Injuries inconsistent with the child's age and developmental phase
- Unexplained burns or rope burns on arms, legs, neck or body

Indicators of Sexual Abuse (behavioural):

- Sexually explicit play, drawings or knowledge
- Drawings or descriptions which are sexually explicit and not age appropriate
- Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge
- Promiscuity
- Prostitution
- Sexual aggression with others; sexualized expression of love
- Self-mutilating
- Obsessively clean

Indicators of Sexual Abuse (physical):

- Unusual or excessive itching in the genital or anal area or reported venereal disease
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear may be observed if the child requires bathroom assistance
- Pregnancy

- Injuries to the genital or anal areas, e.g. bruising, swelling or infection
- Experiences pain when urinating

SIGNS OF POSSIBLE ABUSE IN YOUR MINISTRY

In those rare instances where you will actually witness them, the following are observable actions by those who could be engaged in sexual abuse:

- An adult treating a particular child with extreme favouritism.
- The “accidental”: touching of a child’s private parts or the rubbing of one’s body against the child.
- The suggestions that an adult should see and/or touch a child’s body to monitor development.
- The unnecessary application of lotion on a child’s body.
- The “accidental” intrusion of an adult into the bathroom or bedroom when a child is undressed or a failure to respect the child’s right to privacy.
- An adult’s suggestions to a child that he or she is involved in sexual activities with other boys or girls.
- An adult’s attempt to teach a child about sex education by displaying pornography, showing off his or her body, touching the child’s body or commenting on the pubescent development of a young girl.
- An adult’s use of sexually suggestive language while referring to the child’s body.
- An adult’s description of her/his sexual exploits to a child.
- An adult’s warning a child not to tell anyone about the things that happened or were discussed between the adult and the child.
- An adult’s “accidental” removal or opening of some or all of his/her clothing in the presence of a child.

RESOURCES

- Doing the Right Thing: A Best Practices Manual, British Columbia Conference of MB Churches, 2005
- Fire Safety For Kids (www.firesafetyforkids.org)
- Fire Prevention Canada: Fire Extinguishers Face Sheet (www.fiprecan.ca)
- Fire Safety At Your Worship Centre Brochure, 2009 (www.churchmutual.com)
- Earthquakes: What to do?, Public Safety Canada, 2008 (www.GetPrepared.ca)
- School Earthquake Safety Guidebook, Ministry of Education, June 1989, reprinted December 2000 (<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca>)
- Abuse: Response and Prevention, “Our churches and homes shouldn’t be places that hurt”, Mennonite Central Committee, 2008

APPENDIX J: FIRE AND EARTHQUAKE SAFETY

FIRE SAFETY RULES FOR CHILDREN

1. Don't play with matches and lighters. If you see matches or a lighter where you can reach them, don't touch them. Go tell a grown up right away.
2. Smoke detectors can save lives. Ask your teacher/parents to show you where each one is located.
3. Learn to recognize the piercing sound of smoke detectors. Make sure everyone in your class or group is familiar with its piercing sound. This sound means danger, and they must escape quickly.
4. In case of fire: DON'T HIDE, GO OUTSIDE! Fires are scary, but you should NEVER hide in closets or bathrooms when there is a fire.
5. To escape during a fire, FALL and CRAWL. It is easier to breath in a fire if you stay low while getting out. Use the back of your hand to test if a door is hot before you open it. If it is hot, try to use another way out.
6. If your clothes are on fire; STOP, DROP and ROLL until the fire is out. Shout for help, but don't run. Running makes fire burn faster.
7. Have an escape plan and practice it with your teacher/parents. Find two ways out of every room in case one way is blocked by fire or smoke. Practice escaping by both routes.
8. Meet in the upper parking lot of Rick Hansen Secondary. NEVER go back into a burning building for any reason. If someone is missing, tell the firefighters. They have the clothing and equipment to safely rescue people.

FIRE SAFETY RULES FOR ADULTS / PARENTS

1. Have a meeting place identified with your child.
2. Do home fire Drills.
3. Have emergency numbers posted.
4. Do regular smoke detector checks.
5. Keep it simple. Children learn when the rules are straight forward and easy to remember. If you have pre-schoolers, you may want to introduce just one or two of the rules at a time.
6. Use teachable moments. Reinforce your discussions about fire safety whenever the topic arises -- for example, when there is a fire in the news or in a book, or when you see a fire, ask your children what they would do if they were in that situation.
7. Do it. Don't just say it! Children learn by doing and by following your example. Make a game of practicing a fast escape from each room in your house, especially at night when most deadly fires occur.
8. Know two ways out. Use a stopwatch and wait until everyone has gathered at your family's designated meeting place before you stop the timer. Work together to set a family record.
9. Repeat yourself. Children need to hear and do things over and over before they remember them. Practice your family's escape plan 4 times every year.
10. Don't scare small children with too much responsibility. In a dangerous situation, it's normal for 3-6 year olds to forget things they've learned. Make a game of practicing fire safety do they become very comfortable with all of the rules. Remind them to never hide. Go outside.

IF A FIRE SHOULD OCCUR

1. Immediately sound the fire alarm from the nearest manual pull station.
2. Have someone call the fire department (9-1-1) - state your name, location of the fire and any other information about the fire, such as if it is spreading rapidly, whether people are trapped or if there is something flammable.
3. Do not allow people to use the elevator. Urge people to be calm but not to waste time leaving the building.
 - **PLAN A: Exit through double doors in gym and head towards football field.**
 - **PLAN B: Exit through main doors to lower parking lot.**
4. If it is a small fire, contained to the area where it started, use the nearest fire extinguisher, making sure it's the proper type. With your back toward a safe escape route, aim the extinguisher at the base of the fire and sweep from side to side. Discharge the entire contents of the extinguisher (some extinguishers may require slightly different action — be familiar with operating instructions).
5. If you have the slightest doubt whether or not you should attempt to fight the fire — get out! Let the fire department handle it — they're professionals. Never attempt to fight any fire if:
 - You are uncertain about how to use a fire extinguisher
 - The fire is spreading beyond the immediate area where it started
 - The fire could block your escape route
 - You are alone
6. If you've chosen not to fight the fire, conduct a head count once safely outside. See how many people are accounted for. **DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING.** Inform the fire department of any missing people and let them conduct rescue operations.
7. Have the fire department call an ambulance for anyone injured.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Read the instructions on your extinguisher for proper use.

Create a picture in your mind that will reflect the instructions on the extinguisher: if there's a fire, get everyone outside and ask a member of your family to call the fire department from a neighbour's house. Only then should you permit yourself to fight a small fire. If the fire becomes large, get out. Close doors behind you to slow the spread of the fire.

The ABCD's of Portable Fire Extinguishers

A fire extinguisher is a storage container for an agent like water or chemicals. It is designed to put out a small fire, not a large one. Extinguishers are labelled ABC or D. Ensure you use the right extinguisher for the appropriate type of fire.

A) Ordinary Combustibles – Fires started with paper, wood, drapes and upholstery require a Class A type extinguisher.

B) Flammable and Combustible Liquids – Fires originating from fuel oil, gasoline, paint, grease in a frying pan, solvents and other flammable liquids require a Class B type extinguisher.

C) Electrical Equipment – Fires started with wiring, overheated fuse boxes, conductors, and other electrical sources require a Class C type extinguisher.

D) Metals – Certain metals such as magnesium and sodium require a special dry powder Class D type extinguisher.

A multi-purpose dry chemical labelled ABC puts out most types of fires: wood, paper, cloth, flammable liquids and electrical fires. If you intend to buy more than one, you may want to purchase a BC for the kitchen, an A for the living room and an ABC for the basement and garage.

Learn How to PASS

1. Pull the pin. Some units require the releasing of a lock latch, pressing a puncture lever, inversion or other motion.
2. Aim the extinguisher nozzle (horn) at the base of the fire.
3. Squeeze or press the handle.
4. Sweep from side-to-side at the base of the fire and discharge the contents of the extinguisher.

Foam and water extinguishers require slightly different use. Read the instructions.

FIRE EVACUATION PLAN (KIDS COMMUNITY)

During:

- Teachers talk calmly to reassure students
- Review evacuation procedures
- Instruct students to evacuate
- Lead class to the designated assembly area
- Be prepared to choose alternative escape route in case of fire or exit blockage
- Take class list and first aid kit

After:

- Administer first aid, if necessary
- Do not re-enter the building
- Write I.D. information on foreheads of primary and injured children, if tags not available
- Reassure students
- Remind students that parents may be delayed in calling for them
- Encourage students to talk about their fears and anxieties

EARTHQUAKES – WHAT TO DO?

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING AN EARTHQUAKE

Small or moderate earthquakes

- These can last only a few seconds and represent no emergency risk.
- Ceiling lights may move and some minor rattling of objects may occur.
- You may feel a slight quiver under your feet if you are outside.
- If you are close to its source, you may hear a loud bang followed by shaking.

Large earthquakes

- These can last up to several minutes and constitute a natural disaster if its epicentre is near a densely populated area or its magnitude sufficiently large for the region.
- The ground or floor will move, perhaps violently.
- Whether far away or close to the source, you will probably feel shaking followed by a rolling motion, much like being at sea.
- If you are far away from the source, you might see swaying buildings or hear a roaring sound.
- You may feel dizzy and be unable to walk during the earthquake.
- If you live in a high rise or a multi-storey building, you may experience more sway and less shaking than in a smaller, single-storey building. Lower floors will shake rapidly, much like residential homes. On upper floors, movement will be slower but the building will move farther from side to side.
- Furnishings and unsecured objects could fall over or slide across the floor.
- Unsecured light fixtures and ceiling panels may fall.
- Windows may break.
- Fire alarms and sprinkler systems may be activated.
- Lights and power may go off.

DURING AN EARTHQUAKE

Wherever you are when an earthquake starts, take cover immediately. Move a few steps to a nearby safe place if need be. Stay there until the shaking stops.

If you are indoors: “DROP, COVER, HOLD”

- Stay inside.
- Drop under heavy furniture such as a table, desk, bed or any solid furniture.
- Cover your head and torso to prevent being hit by falling objects.
- Hold onto the object that you are under so that you remain covered.
- If you can't get under something strong, or if you are in a hallway, flatten yourself or crouch against an interior wall.
- If you are at school, get under a desk or table and hold on. Face away from windows.
- If you are in a wheelchair, lock the wheels and protect the back of your head and neck.

If you are outdoors:

- Stay outside.
- Go to an open area away from buildings.
- If you are in a crowded public place, take cover where you won't be trampled.

AVOID the following in an earthquake:

- Doorways. Doors may slam shut and cause injuries.
- Windows, bookcases, tall furniture and light fixtures. You could be hurt by shattered glass or heavy objects.
- Elevators. If you are in an elevator during an earthquake, hit the button for every floor and get out as soon as you can.
- Downed power lines – stay at least 10 metres away to avoid injury.

AFTER AN EARTHQUAKE

Stay calm. Help others if you are able.

- Be prepared for aftershocks.
- Listen to the radio or television for information from authorities. Follow their instructions.
- Place telephone receivers back in their cradles; only make calls if requiring emergency services.
- Put on sturdy shoes and protective clothing to help prevent injury from debris, especially broken glass.
- Check your home for structural damage and other hazards. If you suspect your home is unsafe, do not re-enter.
- If you have to leave your home, take your emergency kit and other essential items with you. Post a message in clear view, indicating where you can be found. Do not waste food or water as supplies may be interrupted.
- Do not light matches or turn on light switches until you are sure there are no gas leaks or flammable liquids spilled. Use a flashlight to check utilities and do not shut them off unless damaged. Leaking gas will smell.
- If tap water is still available immediately after the earthquake, fill a bathtub and other containers in case the supply gets cut off. If there is no running water, remember that you may have water available in a hot water tank (make sure water is not hot before touching it) and toilet reservoir (not the bowl).
- Do not flush toilets if you suspect sewer lines are broken.
- Carefully clean up any spilled hazardous materials. Wear proper hand and eye protection.
- Check on your neighbours after looking after members of your own household. Organize rescue measures if people are trapped or call for emergency assistance if you cannot safely help them.
- If you have pets, try to find and comfort them. If you have to evacuate, take them to a pre-identified pet-friendly shelter.
- Place a HELP sign in your window if you need assistance.

In summary:

Before any earthquake occurs, make sure that the people familiar with the church know how to turn off electricity, gas and water to the building.

- Bolt bookcases to the wall and place heavy large objects on lower shelves

During the earthquake, the advice is to stay calm and not to panic.

- Take cover under a heavy desk, table or bed and hang on. Do not use elevators. Stay away from windows. The official advice is that you are safer inside a building than outside.

After the earthquake, there may be small fires to put out.

- Be prepared to give first aid. Attract attention to where you are. Use the whistle if you have it. Check electricity, gas and water mains for damage. Turn them off if damaged if you did not have a chance to before the quake became violent.

Before:

- Learn what to expect and what to do during an earthquake
- Identify hazards in the classroom, school, home
- Participate in earthquake drills
- Know the name and address of your guardian, if designated by your parent(s).

During:

- Follow teacher's instructions
- TAKE COVER under a desk or table
- ASSUME "CRASH" POSITION
- COUNT to 60
- If out of the classroom, take cover in a doorway in the "CRASH" position; count to 60; join the nearest class when shaking stops.

After:

- Follow evacuation instructions from teacher or designated monitor
- Wear shoes
- Put on identification tag
- Comfort and reassure other students
- DO NOT use an elevator
- DO NOT re-enter school without permission
- DO NOT go home without permission; be aware that your parent/guardian may be delayed in coming for you
- Talk about what has happened.

EARTHQUAKES – INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEACHERS (KIDS COMMUNITY)**Before:**

- Hold classroom discussions
- Practice drills
- Hold hazard hunts, correct hazards where possible
- Appoint two classroom helpers in case you are injured
- Prepare class lists and identification tags with name, address, phone number, age and medic alert information

During:

- Issue the TAKE COVER order at first sign of tremor
- Assume "CRASH" position for 60 seconds
- Talk calmly to reassure students
- Review evacuation procedures

After:

- Instruct students to evacuate
- Lead class to the designated assembly area

- Be prepared to choose alternative escape route in case of fire or exit blockage
- Take class list and first aid kit
- Administer first aid, if necessary
- Do not re-enter the building
- Write I.D. information on foreheads of primary and injured children, if tags not available
- Reassure students
- Remind students that parents may be delayed in calling for them
- Encourage students to talk about their fears and anxieties

EARTHQUAKES – INSTRUCTIONS FOR PASTORS/MINISTRY LEADERS

Before:

- Set up a chain of command, and define roles and responsibilities (first aid, roll call, search and rescue, etc.)
- Establish earthquake and evacuation drills for church community
- Be aware of your area's lines of communication, disaster planning, emergency channels, etc.
- Obtain battery-operated CB radio and learn local emergency radio frequencies
- Designate an outdoor evacuation assembly area
- Ensure knowledge of first aid

During:

- Take cover and assume "CRASH" position.

After:

- Stay calm: your attitude will act as a role model for everyone
- Ensure that all power, fuel, and water mains have been shut off
- Account for all members and visitors
- in a major quake, await instructions from emergency officials over battery-operated or car radio
- Oversee conservation and distribution of uncontaminated water, as well as preparation of emergency facilities
- Allow dismissal of children only when it is safe to travel and a designated adult comes for him/her; keep accurate records of children released

EARTHQUAKES – INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Before:

- Be aware of church's earthquake guidelines and procedures
- Provide Kids Community Coordinator with the name of an alternative guardian.

During:

- Take cover under table, bed, or in doorway away from windows in "CRASH" position.

After:

- Do not phone the church -- they may be trying to reach you or emergency response services
- When safe to travel, go to the church to collect your child -- your child will NOT be released otherwise
- If you are unable to reach the church, contact the designated guardian to collect your child.