

**FCC** | FLANAGAN  
COMMUNITY  
CHURCH

Policy Handbook

January 2023

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## INTRODUCTION

In Titus 1:5, Paul reminds Titus of his pastoral task in the church at Crete when he writes, “This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you.” In addition to preaching the Gospel, Titus was commissioned with the task of bringing about organization in the church as well as training and appointing the future leaders of the church. Good order in the local church has great potential to promote both unity and mission.

This handbook is a compilation of policies that are intended to bring and maintain order and clarity to the ministry practices of Flanagan Community Church (FCC) of Flanagan. The matters addressed in this handbook are best described as “house rules” because they are not guidelines pertaining to explicitly Biblical commands, but are matters wherein the local church has freedom to organize itself, under the guidance of the Lord, in a manner that best promotes unity and mission. Just as the house rules of a given household need to be modified with the changing circumstances and needs of a particular family, so too, this handbook will need to be modified with the changing needs and ministry practices at FCC.

When the Council of Elders determines that this handbook needs to be changed in any way in order to enhance the ministry of the church, a three step process (draft, publication, adoption) shall be followed.



**Draft:** A draft of a proposed modification to this handbook shall be composed by the council of Elders.



**Publication:** In accordance with the Church Constitution (I.B.), the elders must inform the congregation of proposed handbook amendments in writing and give the church an opportunity to provide feedback on two consecutive Sundays prior to the approval of any such amendment.



**Adoption:** The Council of Elders may then adopt a proposed draft by a 2/3 vote of the eldership. An adopted proposal shall take effect immediately upon its acceptance by the elders.

When interpreting, enacting, or modifying the policies in this handbook, the elders should be mindful that the intent of all church policy is to clarify procedures and expectations in a manner which assists the mission of the church and fosters unity. When policy is prohibitive to the health and mission of the church, the elders will do well to reexamine the purpose for which a given policy was made. While policies are helpful in maintaining order in the church and continuity in ministries, policies must never replace pastoral care and wisdom in case-by-case situations.

# ELDERS AND DEACONS

## A.1 ELDER NOMINATION PROCESS

### STEP 1: Identify Elder Nominees

1. Initiate Nominations for Elders
  - a. Nominations will be made by the congregation over a minimum 3-week time frame using the elder nomination form in this handbook (A.2).

### STEP 2: Inform Elder Nominees

1. Elders inform nominees of their nomination asking them to prayerfully consider their calling to serve as an elder.
2. Names of nominees are not announced to congregation until they have had opportunity to confidentially evaluate their calling to eldership.

### STEP 3: Evaluate Elder Nominees

1. Nominees will participate in self-evaluation, spouse evaluation (if applicable), and evaluation by the Council of Elders.

### STEP 4: Nominate Elder Candidates

1. The Council of the Elders formally nominates elder candidate for vote of approval. This announcement must be published to the congregation via various means (email, church bulletin, etc.).
  - a. The Council of Elders will set a date of affirmation vote no less than 30 but no more than 60 days from notification.
  - b. During 30-60 days, church members may express concerns based on the qualifications set forth in Scripture that would deem a candidate unfit for the office of elder to the Council of Elders. The concerns will then be addressed in a confidential manner.
2. Candidate expresses his calling to serve as an elder to the congregation in spoken, written or video testimony.

### STEP 5: Affirm Elders

1. In accordance with the church constitution (Section XI.A.3), any candidate receiving a 2/3 vote of approval in a constitutionally sanctioned members meeting, will be affirmed in the office of elder.
2. The newly affirmed elder will be commissioned in a worship service by prayer.

# ELDERS AND DEACONS

## A.2 ELDER NOMINATION FORM

The Council of Elders will accept nominations for future elders on     (date range)    .

All individuals who receive at least three nominations will be contacted by the chairman of the elders to continue the nomination process (See Church Policy Handbook A.1). After completing the nomination process, nominees will participate in self-evaluation as well as evaluation by the Council of Elders. Qualified candidates will be nominated by the Council of Elders to the membership for a vote (See Church Constitution IX.B). Because elders are to “aspire to the office,” (1 Tim. 3:1) self-nominations are permissible.

Before making a nomination for the office of elder, please do the following:

1. Pray for wisdom, discernment, and clarity as you consider whom to nominate for the office of elder. Pray also for the Lord to raise up elders who will “exercise oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly” being “examples to the flock” (1 Pt. 5:2-3)
2. Read 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 to be reminded of the Biblical qualifications for those who serve as elders. These two passages have been added to the back side of this form for your convenience.

### Nomination

Having observed this person’s life, his role in ministry at Flanagan Community Church, his shepherding of others and having considered the Scriptural qualifications for eldership described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, I nominate \_\_\_\_\_ for consideration for the office of elder at FCC. I believe that he qualifies for the following reasons (please brief explain below):

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Names are necessary to verify the nomination is from the Flanagan Community Church membership, however, the names of who nominates whom for the office of elder will be kept confidential. Please complete, sign, and return the nomination form to a member of the Council of Elders.

## A.3 DUTIES OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ELDERS

### General Description

The chairman of the Elders shall provide leadership, guidance and accountability for the Council of Elders. He shall chair all meetings of the Council of Elders or procure a substitute chairman in his absence.

- Ensure that all financial reporting is received and reviewed on a regular basis.
- Sign legal documents as officer of the church.

## A.4 DEACON NOMINATION PROCESS

A deacon serves the church as a ministry team leader who is responsible for leading a team to carry out various ministry objectives. A deacon is called to give diligent oversight to his or her area of ministry, which requires particular skills for ministry, a sense of God's calling to the work at hand, and an eagerness to invest considerable time and energy into the work.

Deacons will be nominated by the Council of Elders to the congregation for a vote at the Annual Meeting or other specially called Members Meeting (See Church Constitution XI.A).

1. **Identify:** The Council of Elders will regularly meet to discuss, among other agenda items, the various ministry activities and needs of the church. It is the elders' responsibility to enlist the Body of Christ in the work of ministry by identifying deacons to lead ministry teams. Members of the church family who are of "good repute and full of the Spirit and wisdom" (Acts 6:3) will be sought to lead ministry teams in accordance with their skills and calling. Often, deacons will be identified from among those already working on a ministry team. At other times, the Council of Elders may share the ministry need with the entire congregation in order to solicit individuals who may be interested in serving as a deacon. When multiple qualified individuals aspire to the same office of deacon, the Council of Elders may seek to interview various candidates prior to making a nomination for the office of deacon.
2. **Nominate:** Upon ascertaining one's calling and qualifications to lead a ministry team, the Council of Elders will nominate an individual to the church for the office of deacon.
3. **Vote:** At a Members Meeting, members will vote for those nominated to the office of deacon in accordance with **Article XI of the Church Constitution**.

## A.5 DEACON RESPONSIBILITIES

Each ministry team is led by a deacon, who is responsible for seeing that the work of the ministry team is carried out with excellence in a Christ-like spirit. Below are responsibilities and guidelines that apply to all deacons.

Deacons are responsible for:

- Working for a spirit of unity with his/her ministry team and within the church as a whole. Deacons are expected to model unity, grace, wisdom, forgiveness, and repentance while carrying out the work of ministry.
- Working with the elders and/or pastoral staff to establish ministry team objectives and plans.
- Working to accomplish objectives with excellence “as unto the Lord” (Col. 3:23).
- Seeing that their ministry team is staying within budget with consultation with the Financial Team
- Identifying those who have a desire and gifting to serve on the ministry team. Deacons should seek to maintain a ministry team of between 2-7 people. Near the end of each calendar year, deacons should work with the elders and church staff to recruit needed and willing team members. Members of ministry teams will be asked for a one-year commitment to serve, which is renewable for up to four total years, before a mandatory year off of serving on the same ministry team.
- Regularly communicating and reporting to the elders, which may be done via an appointed staff or other liaison to the elders. Communication should include upcoming plans, problems the team is encountering, assessment of ministry events, programs, or endeavors enacted by the team.
- Coordinating with other deacons and church staff to ensure that ministry events, resources, and programs are organized.
- Preparing meeting agendas and leading effective meeting

# MINISTRY TEAMS

## B.1 MINISTRY TEAM OBJECTIVES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

While much of the ministry in the church is carried out informally as believers minister to one to another and to the community, there are also a number of ministries in the church that require organization, oversight, and considerable planning. The ministry teams exist to plan, organize, and execute various ministries in the church aimed at living out the churches Core Values. Each ministry team is led by a deacon, and all who serve on ministry teams will be asked to make a one year commitment of service to the team and may serve up to four consecutive terms before taking a one year rest from the team.

### Financial Team

The Finance Team exists to serve the church by developing and implementing plans for informed and faithful stewardship of church finances.

#### **Responsibilities:**

1. To present a projected budget to the leaders for the coming year by September of the current year.
2. Keep elders updated on the financial condition of the church
3. Handle and pay bills
4. To keep the checkbook updated
5. To coordinate pastors salary with Ministry Works
6. Work with the Deacons and Church Treasure to ensure that expenditures are in accordance with the annual budget
7. Oversee the collection, counting, and deposit of offering
8. To ensure end of year giving Receipts
9. Church Treasurer is on the Finance Team

# MINISTRY TEAMS

## B.1 Ministry Teams continued

### Event Team

The Event Team exists to give oversight on special events for FCC. The Event Team will focus on both events for those inside and outside the church.

#### Responsibilities:

1. Assist and plan events as requested by ministry teams
2. Suggest possible events to the Elders
3. Hospitality
  - Coordinate and maintain a system to serve those in the church who have need for assistance with meals (i.e. sickness, new mothers, funerals).
  - Work with the Local Outreach Team to use meals as a means of caring for those in the community who have need.
  - Coordinate annual church-wide meals such as Thanksgiving, Easter brunch, etc.

### Benevolence Team

“The Benevolence Team exists to administer grace through physical provision to those in need. The goal is the long-term success of the person being helped. The Benevolence Team will work with the Elders on how to best help those in need.

#### Responsibilities:

1. Meet with people that come to FCC asking for financial assistance
2. Walkthrough the *Helping without Hurting* Documents
3. Keep in contact with the person on a regular basis
  - Once a week to start, then less frequently.
4. Give recommendations to elders of whether or not to support/assist the person in need.
5. Oversee local benevolence fund.
  - Receive and follow-up on requests for assistance.
  - Seek to build relationships with those assisted in order that FCC might minister to both physical and spiritual needs.

# MINISTRY TEAMS

## *B.1 Ministry Teams continued*

### **Building Team**

The Building Team exists to help FCC steward well the church building.

**Responsibilities:**

1. Give oversight on projects
2. Give recommendations for best uses of building
3. Keep maintenance of the building property.

### **Kids Ministry Team**

The Kid's Ministry Team exists to serve the church by giving oversight and coordination to all ministry programs for children up to 4th grade.

**Responsibilities:**

1. To oversee and coordinate *FCC Kids*, which includes nursery and Pre-K through 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and Kids of the Kingdom.
2. To identify and train teachers and leaders for Kids Ministry.
3. Organize *FCC Kids* documents/leaders/Bible memory verses and prizes.
4. Give input on *FCC Kids* Curriculum
5. Make sure that everyone working with kids has a background check completed and have signed and read the (1) *FCC Child Protection Policy* and (2) *FCC Volunteer Handbook*.

# MINISTRY TEAMS

## *B.1 Ministry Teams continued*

### Outreach Team

The Outreach Team exists to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ by sharing the grace and truth of Christ in word and deed in both the local and global context. The Outreach Team will give oversight in training FCC to be able to proclaim the Gospel both locally and globally in the particular culture.

#### **Responsibilities**

1. Consider how to best reach people for Jesus Christ, both locally and globally.
2. Sponsor/partner with other ministry teams in hosting activities designed to draw people to church.
3. Seek participation of the congregation in outreach events or ministries by inviting regular attenders to serve in ministry.
4. Maintain regular contact with missionaries by reaching out to our missionaries through email, telephone, and video-conferencing, etc.
5. Coordinate all activities for cross-cultural short-term trips sponsored by FCC including: budget, team training, travel arrangements, and communication with host missionary or agency.

### Worship Team

The Worship Team exists to give oversight in the planning, training, and leading of the Sunday morning worship.

#### **Responsibilities:**

1. Help organize the Sunday morning worship (scheduling, practices, serving schedule, etc.)
2. Give leadership on song choices in coordination with Senior Pastor.
3. Technology
  - To maintain, update, and purchase technology equipment in order to enhance the ministry of the church.
  - To coordinate and train volunteers who are able to operate the technology.
  - To assist any of the ministries that have questions or needs with equipment

## C.1 FINANCIAL AUTHORITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

This policy defines the procedures for budgeting, spending and the responsibility for overseeing church monies.

### **Budget Preparation**

The Finance team will present a proposed budget to the Council of Elders in November. The Council of Elders will finalize the budget proposal and distribute to the congregation no later than two weeks before the Annual Meeting. The members will vote to approve the proposed budget at the Annual Meeting.

### **Budget Format/Accountability Established**

If an unbudgeted expense comes up, the expense will be brought to the Finance Team and give recommendation to the Elders.

### **Expense Approval**

Deacons are responsible for approving expenses for their team with exceptions made on certain line items. Anyone making purchases on behalf of a team should first obtain appropriate approval and then submit a receipt to the Church Treasurer for reimbursement. The treasurer may email the proper person for documentation of the prior approval.

### **When Budgets are Exceeded**

*Line item budget exceeded:* Church Treasurer will automatically notify deacon/appointee and Finance deacon if a spending request will exceed a line item budget. The Finance team can approve over-budget items up to \$500. If the overage exceeds \$500, the item must be approved by the Council of Elders.

### **Requests for Budget Review/New Ministry Needs**

Those who have authority to spend are welcome to propose ideas to the Council of Elders at any time to review the budget for ministry needs. The proposal must be presented prior to making any purchase. Often, if money is available and the request legitimately furthers ministry, the Council of Elders will happily approve the request.

### **Spending Within the Core Values of Flanagan Community Church**

Those who have authority to spend are also instructed in overall church values and priorities like missions giving, surplus giving, and simplicity for the sake of generosity.

The one authorized to make financial decisions must understand they are under the authority of the Council of Elders and recognize that there may be times when purchases should not be made.

## FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

### C.2 FINANCE TEAM EXPENSE APPROVAL PROCEDURE

In the event that an unexpected expense occurs or is proposed, the Finance Ministry Team shall bring a recommendation to the Elder Board recording the expense. The Elder Board, in consultation with the finance Ministry Team will determine the best course of action. The congregation shall be informed about the expenditure by the Elder Board.

### C.3 SURPLUS GIVING PLAN

The Surplus Giving Plan began is designed to help FCC be a generous church. The aim is to help gospel-centered ministries put the money to immediate use rather than accrue growing bank balances. When general fund giving exceeds FCC's annual budget, the surplus is given to ministries both local and global. The finance ministry team shall monitor the financial status of the church and bring a recommendation to the elder board for surplus giving. The Elder Board in consultation with the Financial Ministry Team shall determine the surplus giving and inform the congregation.

Twice a year the actual cash balance will be compared against this target cash reserve and the surplus will be given away as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> Half of Year – 50% of the surplus

End of Year – 100% of the surplus

The 4th quarter calculation will be changed to use the next year's budgeted expenses in the calculation as long as that budget is available. The result is that the Church will only maintain the Target Cash Reserve and nothing more at the end of the year.

# FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

## C.4 CONTRACTOR POLICY

The Finance team wants to assure good stewardship in using church funds to maintain facilities and in securing services while treating volunteers, members and friends of the church who are contractors and non-member contractors fairly. This Contractor Policy establishes guidelines the Finance team will follow.

Members and friends are encouraged to perform maintenance and other services as volunteers where possible. This promotes members to perform personal ministries according to their talents, increases participation in church life, and promotes community among members as well cost savings to the church.

The Finance team will follow these guidelines in arranging for services from members/friends of the church who are contractors or service providers:

1. Refrain from asking for services as a volunteer in their trade/professional areas. These members/friends are welcome to perform volunteer services but it is not our intent to expect services without paying compensation.
2. Use members/friends as first choice for contractor services when possible to meet church needs.
3. When two or more members/friends are in the same profession, Finance will share contractor work to promote fair treatment. Consideration will be given to securing the best service provider for the job.

Competitive bids for services will be used where it is in the best interest of the church. Bidding will include members/friends and other contractors.

### C.5 DESIGNATED GIVING POLICY

Financial donations (cash or checks) received from individuals and designated for a specific purpose or organization are not accepted unless FCC has first initiated, sponsored or solicited a request. FCC will retain full discretion over the use of the donations given to it. If an individual wants funds to go to a specific cause or organization other than FCC, it is recommended he/she make payments directly to that cause or organization.

FCC will also not accept donations designated for a specific purpose or ministry that has already been budgeted through the annual church budget process and supported by general fund giving, unless such a request is solicited by the Council of Elders or a ministry team. If an individual feels funds are needed for a particular cause or ministry above the already budgeted amount, he/she should discuss the funding need with a deacon or elder.

Donations made to a group within the church or any group using the church premises shall not be a tax-deductible donation to FCC if that group's activities, including the use of any bank accounts, is not under the ultimate authority of FCC and its leadership. Any amounts donated to that group will not be on the donor's annual contribution statement from FCC.

From time to time, the Finance Committee and the Council of Elders may determine a need for opening a separate fund(s) whose donations are to be designated and used for the specific purposes of the fund(s). It should be understood that once the ministry needs related to the fund purpose are met, or if it has been determined by the Council of Elders that the needs cannot be met for any reason, the remaining restricted contributions in the fund(s) will be used where needed most, as determined by the Council of Elders.

For non-cash donations, FCC reserves the right to refuse any donation. Before making such donation, individuals should discuss with a deacon or elder the need the donation is filling and obtain prior approval before making the donation. Once received, FCC maintains sole control over the item and has the authority to determine how the item is used, including its ultimate disposal.

These policies are in place for the following reasons.

1. If FCC accepts designated funds, tax law requires that designated requests must be honored even in instances when the gift is unneeded and administratively burdensome to accept.
2. It is an administrative burden to keep track of various receipts designated to external organizations other than FCC.
3. These types of donations are not within the spirit of the tax-exempt purposes of FCC as the leadership of the church is not exercising control over these funds.
4. Gifts may be designated for a purpose or organization that is not a 501(c)3 organization or for an organization that the leadership of FCC would not otherwise support. Also, any funds collected and/or used by organizations that are not under the direct authority of FCC aren't being used for the ministry FCC, but are being used by the group for its own uses.
5. The designated purpose of a donation may not be in the long-term interests of the church.
6. The general fund giving and the annual budgeting process are the primary methods in which the mission and ministry of our local church is funded. If unrestricted designated gifting were allowed of already budgeted items, this process is circumvented.

### C.6 MEMORIAL GIFTS POLICY

Money received by the church in memorial to the passing of a member or friend of FCC will be used to benefit the church body. The Church Treasurer or appointed representative will acknowledge receipt and appreciation for the donation in a thank you receipt to the family members. The amount of contribution will be included.

Memorials are accepted by the church as a gift from the donors and will be used for the benefit the whole congregation.

Memorials other than money donations will be discouraged. Any requests by the deceased's family to donate physical items will be referred to the Finance team for consideration and a decision. The church will accept bequests by will and the Finance team, in conjunction with the Elders, will determine the appropriate action for those properties.

The policy is to not recognize memorials by plaques or other means of identification. Acknowledgment of memorials received in church bulletins and other print are acceptable but will not include the amount.

# FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

## C.7 RECORD RETENTION PLAN

All records listed will be stored in a locked cabinet. Computer files will have restricted access limited to the Church Treasurer or an appointed representative. Records older than the defined retention period will be shredded each year at the end of January. The following guidelines will be followed in retaining records.

Records	Description	Retention Period	Comments
Bills/Invoices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• checkbook records</li> <li>• bank statements</li> <li>• bills paid with supporting authorization</li> </ul>	7 years	
Payroll records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• W-2, W-4, W-9</li> <li>• monthly payroll tax deposits</li> <li>• quarterly reports</li> <li>• annual reports</li> </ul>	7 years	
Church Finance records	All reports included in Annual Report	Permanent	Keep electronic copy permanently
Giving records		7 years	
Confidential records	Pastoral or staff evaluations  Benevolence records overseen by the Outreach team  Similar records	7 years	

## FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

### C.8 CASH HANDLING POLICY

Cash received in the offering plate and in children's ministries on Sunday mornings is counted by two people appointed by the Finance team following the morning worship service. The Finance team will ensure that there is a periodic rotation of people responsible for counting.

The deposit slip is prepared by appointed Finance team representatives. The cash is then delivered to the banking facility by one of the Finance team representatives.

All cash handled must be counted by two people, recorded on the envelope holding the cash and then given to the Church Treasurer. The Church Treasurer will then recount and notify the appropriate person if the cash count was different. The Church Treasurer will deposit the cash.

## FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

### C.9 BENEVOLENCE FUND DOCUMENTATION

The Deacon of the Benevolence team, along with at least one other representative of the Benevolence team, will oversee benevolence giving for FCC. These people are contacted when a request for financial assistance is received. They are responsible for gathering the information and determining what assistance will be given.

When the decision is made, the Church Treasurer is notified via email by one representative with a second representative receiving a carbon copy of the email. The payee, amount, account information and instructions for delivery of the check are given. The email instructions and check stub are kept in a locked cabinet with other church financial records.

The Benevolence Deacon will notify the Council of Elders periodically with information regarding the benevolence decisions so that the Elders may pray specifically and provide shepherding oversight. Information regarding benevolence decisions will be limited to the Benevolence Deacon, pastoral staff, Church Treasurer, and the Council of Elders.

This policy provides for the church's shepherding oversight, control of confidential financial records and ensures adequate documentation for financial audits, as well as protects the integrity of the representatives overseeing benevolence on behalf of FCC.

Purging of old Outreach benevolence records will follow the Record Retention Policy

## C.10 BUILDING USE POLICY

FCC has been designed and built for and by its congregation as a house of Christian worship, fellowship and service. Under no circumstances may an activity be scheduled that would violate FCC's doctrinal beliefs, Statement of Faith, constitution, membership covenant, or policy handbook.

### Overall Guidelines

- The event must be legal
- The event must be biblical
- The event must be moral
- The event should bring glory to God
- The Elders need to think that it is a good idea.
- The group representative for non-church event/activities must sign a Waiver of Liability form

# FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

## C. 10 Building Use Policy continued

### C.10.1 WAIVER OF LIABILITY

Flanagan Community Church has been designed and built to serve not only its congregation but also the surrounding communities. Although the congregation welcomes and even encourages the facilities to be used by non-members, the congregation cannot accept liability risk beyond what is covered by existing insurance policies. To enable building usage beyond its members, this waiver of liability must be signed by the individual or group representative requesting to use the facilities.

By signing this document, Flanagan Community Church and its membership will be held harmless in the case of accident or injury during the specific event requested. In addition, signing this document indicates accident or injury insurance coverage is in force for the group and/or individual. Under no circumstances shall FCC be responsible or liable for any loss, damage or costs to the person or persons utilizing the church facilities.

Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity / Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Planned Date(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Group Representative: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If participant is under 18 yrs of age, Parent / Guardian signature required.

Parent / Guardian name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Church Representative: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Questions: Call (815) 848-5789

## D.1 OUTREACH POLICY

### **Purpose of Outreach**

The purpose of Outreach is to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ to all nations in order to bring people into fellowship by faith with God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

### **Core Convictions That Drive Our Commitment to Missions**

The purpose of outreach is to display the glory of God to the world. We do this by reminding ourselves that Jesus' last words in the Gospel of Matthew are directions to the disciples "to make disciples of all nations." We make disciples both in our local and global context. We are to proclaim Jesus in both word and deed. It entails sacrifice on our part.

### **Purposes of the Missions Policy**

- To give the Missions team a clear sense of direction.
- To avoid making important decisions on an emotional or haphazard basis.
- To help the church be good stewards of each mission dollar.
- To inform new Missions team members of the goals, strategies, and responsibilities of the Missions team.

### **Doctrinal Requirements**

All supported missionaries, ministries, or agencies must have a doctrinal statement that is true to the Word of God, in agreement with FCC's Statement of Faith, and the Mission Policy Core Convictions.

### **Expectations for Supported Missionaries**

#### *Communication*

All missionaries will communicate with FCC through the Missions team.

#### *Correspondence*

All missionaries are asked to correspond with the Missions team at least three times each year to keep the team apprised of their activities and prayer needs.

#### *Personal Witness*

The Missions team expects all missionaries to work in the power of the Spirit of God, to be men and women of conviction, to show evidence of commitment and dedication to following God's will and meet the standards of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

# MISSIONS

## *D.1 Missions Policy continued*

### **FCC Philosophy of Support**

FCC's philosophy of supporting missionaries, ministries, or agencies is that we would rather support a "few with more" rather than "many with little."

### **FCC Local Outreach Events**

The Outreach Team will work in coordination with the Event Team (and other ministry teams) to reach others with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

### **Short Term Mission Trips/Service**

Short-term is defined as those serving on the field for six months or less.

#### *Trips Sponsored by FCC*

The Missions Team will be responsible for overseeing the planning for short term trips sponsored by FCC. Responsibilities will include:

- Communicating plans to the Council of Elders and the congregation.
- Coordinating the planning efforts with the host organization/missionaries.
- Preparing the trip budget and overseeing fund-raising efforts.
- Preparing and reviewing the applications of those who wish to be part of the team.
- Training and preparing the team.
- Debriefing of the team upon return.

#### *Individuals Taking Short-Term Trips*

The Missions Team will be responsible for meeting with applicants interested in short-term service. The applicant must:

- Display a sincere interest in missions.
- Provide evidence of parental or guardian support if a minor.
- Show desire and ability to lead others to Christ.
- Show evidence of faithfulness in ministry, cooperative spirit, submission to authority, and fruit of the Spirit.
- Complete a FCC short-term mission trip application for review by the Mission team.

*D.1 Missions Policy continued on next page*

## *D.1 Missions Policy continued*

### **Financial Policies**

#### *Financial Accountability*

There must be evidence of financial accountability from the agencies and organizations the Missions team partners with. Agencies and organizations who meet the standards of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA) or other accountability groups are preferred. All organizations must be a recognized 501(c)3 non-profit organization by the Internal Revenue Service.

When concerns arise, the team will request status and/or financial reports from the sending agency of the missionaries supported.

### **Procedure for Selecting New Candidates to Support**

The Missions team will request a personal application from candidates who request support. The application will include background information, personal goals and testimony. All candidates must meet all convictions, guidelines, and requirements stated within the Missions Policy.

#### *Requirements for Considering Support*

All candidates must:

- Show evidence of past commitment and dedication to following God's will;
- Adhere to FCC's Statement of Faith and agree with the Core Convictions;
- Be accepted by a sending agency approved by the church;
- Show evidence of pre-field training and preparation (may include training in language, theology, Bible Study, team dynamics, cross-cultural experiences, and family preparations).

### **Missionary Support**

Support will begin at the discretion of the Missions Team.

Support will terminate when:

- Budget changes require changes in missionary support;
- The missionary resigns or retires;
- The agency terminates the missionary;
- The missionary fails to abide by the rules and requests of our church;
- The missionary's doctrinal position differs significantly from that of the church;
- The missionary consistently demonstrates inadequate accountability;
- The missionary's duties and functions have changed significantly from the original application.

*D.1 Missions Policy continued on next page*

# MISSIONS

## *D.1 Missions Policy continued*

### **Funding for Short-Term and Project Missions**

Requests for support from individuals will be reviewed on an individual basis at the discretion of the Missions team.

When FCC plans a short-term mission trip for the congregation, expenses for the trip may be covered by the Missions budget, fundraising event, or solicitation of funds from the congregation as determined by the Missions team in consultation with the Council of Elders.

### **Handling of Designated Giving**

Designated giving by individuals through the church to specific missionaries or missions is not allowed. Instead individuals are encouraged to send support directly to the missionary or the missionary's organization. See Designated Giving Policy. (Section C.5).

# WEDDINGS

## E.1 WEDDINGS AT FLANAGAN COMMUNITY CHURCH

The goal at FCC is to help couples understand God's design for marriage and to help each party involved prepare to be faithful for better or worse in lifelong fidelity. To this end, FCC asks all couples to agree to the following expectations, which are intended to help couples build a lasting, beautiful marriage.

- Both parties must demonstrate a genuinely submissive spirit to the pastoral guidance they receive.
- Couples should expect to participate in premarital counseling (typically four sessions). Some of the sessions will require that the couple do reading and homework in preparation for the session. Couples must put forth a good-faith effort to maximize the premarital counseling sessions.
- The couple will be expected to understand and embrace a biblical covenant of marriage (a commitment for life, vowed before God).
- Given the clear statement of Scripture (2 Corinthians 6:14), FCC cannot marry a believer to one who is not yet a believer.
- Local churches help nurture Christian marriage. Therefore, couples must give evidence of a commitment to actively participate in a local church family.
- Couples are required to seek sexual purity in their relationship. Those who are living together will be expected to establish separate residences and pursue sexual purity for the duration of the engagement.
- Each couple is expected to be truthful throughout the premarital process. Further, if either party has previously been divorced, the circumstances of the divorce should be disclosed.

The aim of the premarital process is to not only prepare for a very special God-glorifying wedding ceremony, but also prepare the couple for a lifetime of healthy marriage.

## E.2 LIVING TOGETHER PRIOR TO MARRIAGE

Couples desiring to get married at FCC will be expected to agree to a covenant of purity throughout the engagement. Because God gave sex as a gift to be enjoyed between one man and one woman in the context of a marriage covenant, couples will be expected to seek absolute purity until they are married. (Ephesians 5:3).

Additionally, couples who are living together will be asked to establish separate residences until they are married. While establishing separate residences does not guarantee purity and, conversely, living together does not necessarily mean that a couple is sexually active, the Council of Elders believes this to be the wisest course of action for the following reasons:

- The church has the duty and privilege of teaching God’s design for marriage, sexual purity, and covenantal love to the local body of believers in Flanagan as well as the community at-large. Allowing cohabiting couples to get married in the church sends a mixed message to the local community, and our church members, because it is contrary to our teaching.
- Establishing separate residences sends a tangible message to friends and family that a couple is serious about seeking to enter their marriage in purity. While some may ridicule a couple’s decision to live separately until they are married or find it unnecessary, the Council of Elders believes that this testimony of purity is honoring to the Lord.
- The Council of Elders believes that living together heightens the temptation to break the purity covenant and establishing separate residences is one way of intentionally “making no provision for the flesh.”
- In relation to sexual purity, the Scriptures say, “‘Everything is permissible,’ but not everything is beneficial.” While it may be theoretically permissible to live together, the Council of Elders believes—based on the aforementioned reasons—that it is not beneficial.
- The way that the church can best serve marriages is by upholding God’s standards for our lives in the Bible because His Word is “a lamp unto our feet and light unto our path” (Ps. 119:105). His commands are not intended to steal joy, but to maximize it. When individuals turn from past sins in repentance, and seek to walk in His ways, it leads to abundant life.

The Council of Elders wants to assist couples considering marriage and desiring to commit to purity and establishing separate residences. The church will assist in finding a new place to stay, helping with rent, possibly living with a member of FCC, or finding volunteers to help with the move to separate residences. The church considers it a privilege to invest in Christian marriage!

# WEDDINGS

## E.3 WEDDING POLICIES

The church will schedule all wedding dates. This will alleviate any conflicts or misunderstandings with different groups or activities in the church. The wedding date and rehearsal must be added to the master church calendar.

No weddings or rehearsals will be scheduled during a time that interferes with ongoing church events.

### Requirements

Couples desiring to be married at FCC must complete pre-marital counseling with a pastor or someone agreed to by FCC pastoral staff. Christian marriage should not be entered into lightly or unadvisedly, and sound pre-marital counseling will be a good investment for the couple. All weddings conducted at FCC must be approved by the Council of Elders. An individual pastor may decline to officiate a wedding in obedience to his conscience.

If the couple would like a non-FCC pastor to participate in the ceremony, the decision on such participation will be made by the Council of Elders.

### Decorating Requirements

When decorating, the following items should be observed:

1. All candles used must be dripless.
2. Anything secured to the chairs, must not scratch, damage or leave an adhesive.
3. Any item removed from its normal position in the sanctuary, must be replaced after the wedding. The sanctuary and all items in it must be left in the same condition/position as it was prior to the wedding.
4. All music and audio-visual sound equipment will be moved by a representative from FCC

### Clean-Up

No confetti or rice is to be thrown inside or outside of the building. Birdseed, flower petals or bubbles outside the building are recommended. Flower petals for the aisle cloth may be used in the processional.

The couple should designate someone to be responsible for all items and clothing brought into the church. All areas used for the wedding must be restored to their original state

### Guidelines

The guidelines stated in the Building Policy (Section C.10) apply to weddings, rehearsal dinners, and receptions taking place on the premises of FCC.

### Deposit

A \$100 deposit is given to the church to use the building and to ensure it is cleaned up. The couple will receive deposit back if building is cleaned and returned to normal.

# MEMBERSHIP

## F.I Flanagan Community Church Membership Covenant

### COMMITMENT OF FLANAGAN COMMUNITY CHURCH TO ITS MEMBERS

- We covenant that your elders and deacons will meet the criteria assigned to them in the Scriptures (1 Tim. 3:1–13; 5:17–22; Titus 1:5–9; 1 Peter 5:1–4).
- We covenant to seek God’s will for our church community to the best of our ability as we study the Scriptures and follow the Spirit (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1–5).
- We covenant to care for you and to seek your growth as a disciple of Christ, by equipping you for service (Eph. 4:11–13), by setting an example (Phil. 3:17; 1 Tim. 4:12) and praying for you regularly, particularly when you are sick (James 5:14).
- We covenant to be on guard against false teachers (Acts 20:28–31).
- We covenant to exercise church discipline, speaking truth in love, when necessary (Matt. 18:15–20; 1 Cor. 5; Gal. 6:1; Eph.).

### MY COMMITMENT TO FLANAGAN COMMUNITY CHURCH AS A MEMBER

- Having, as we trust, been brought by divine grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give up ourselves to him, and having been baptized upon our profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, we do now, trusting in His gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully commit to this covenant with God and each other.
- I have read and understood the FCC doctrinal statement and will not be divisive to its teaching. (Eph. 4:1–3; Heb. 13:7, 17).
- I will submit to the authority of Scripture on all issues (Ps. 119; 2 Tim. 3:16–17).
- I will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (John 17:20-23).
- I will walk together in familial love, exercising an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully encourage one another as occasion may require (Heb. 10:24).
- I will rejoice with those that have occasion for rejoicing and tenderly and sympathetically weep with those who are sorrowful (Romans 12:15)
- I will maintain a close relationship with the Lord Jesus through regular Bible reading, prayer, fellowship, and practice of spiritual disciplines. My relationship will be evident through my participation in weekly worship services, communion, service, and a life that glorifies Jesus (Acts 2:42–47; Heb. 10:23–25; 2 Peter 1:3).
- I will steward the resources God has given me, including my time, talents, and finances (Prov. 3:9–10; Rom. 12:1–2; Gal. 5:22–26; Eph. 4:1–16; 5:15–18).

I, \_\_\_\_\_, covenant with the Body of Christ at Flanagan Community Church  
(Print Name)

to be faithful to the expectations set forth above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## OTHER

### F.2 Sabbatical

Pastoral Staff are to take a planned 2 month sabbatical after each five year period of ministry at FCC. The pastor and elders shall plan for this sabbatical for the benefit of the pastor and the church. Planning shall commence no less than 6 months prior to the sabbatical and shall include guidelines and accountability for the pastor as well as planning for meeting the ministry needs of the church. This sabbatical is a time of rest and drawing near to God for the pastor. It is a time for the church to pray for their pastor and consider how best to encourage and minister to their pastor.

### F.3 Pastoral Vacation

The lead Pastor will receive 15 days (the equivalent of 3 work weeks) of vacation time to be used at their discretion. This will include 3 Sundays. In addition to vacation, the Pastor is allowed 3 times per year where they have no responsibilities on Sunday. This will allow the Pastor to use the time that would normally be used for sermon preparation for other purposes.

End of Policy Handbook