



SESSION ONE:

BELIEFS



WELCOME TO MINISTRY PARTNERSHIP

We're excited that you're exploring Ministry Partnership at Bay Area!

Ministry Partnership is our way of living out biblical church membership. It's a meaningful commitment to walk as disciples together: to grow in faith, serve the church, care for one another, and join Jesus in His mission.

Ministry Partnership is about choosing to fully belong to and participate in the spiritual family of Bay Area. It's saying, **"This is my church. These are my people. This is where I will grow as a disciple and help others follow Jesus."**

In short: **Ministry Partnership is living as disciples together, for the glory of God and the good of one another.**

We believe following Jesus was never meant to be a solo journey. Throughout the New Testament, believers are called into a spiritual family where they worship together, encourage one another, bear one another's burdens, use their gifts to serve, and participate together in God's mission in the world (Acts 2;42-47). Ministry Partnership is a way of intentionally embracing that calling.

WHAT TO EXPECT

This guide is designed to help you understand both who we are as a church and what it means to become a Ministry Partner.

As you work through these pages, you'll learn about:

- Bay Area's mission, vision, values, and beliefs
- The commitments and expectations of Ministry Partnership
- How we pursue discipleship, community, serving, generosity, and mission together

Along the way, you'll have opportunities to reflect on your own spiritual journey and consider how God may be inviting you to engage more deeply in the life of our church family.

This handbook isn't meant to be something you simply read and check off a list. Instead, we hope it helps you understand what it means to belong here and prepares you for the conversations that are part of the Ministry Partnership process.



WHY MINISTRY PARTNERSHIP?

What does the Bible have to say about church membership? Take a few minutes to reflect on the passages below, then read the article that follows.

READ:

- 1 Corinthians 12:27
- Ephesians 2:19
- 1 Timothy 3:15
- 1 Peter 2:5
- John 10:16

How is the church described in these passages? What metaphors are given?

READ:

- Acts 20:28
- 2 Peter 2:1-2, 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 1 Peter 5:7-8
- Matthew 18:15-18, Galatians 6:1
- Ephesians 4:12-16

From these passages, what can we learn about the role of spiritual leadership over the church?



READ AND REFLECT:

After reading the passages above, you may have noticed that while the Bible does not use the term *church membership* in the way many churches do today, it consistently presents followers of Jesus as committed participants in a local church family.

The New Testament describes the church as a body, family, household, temple, and flock. These images point to belonging, mutual responsibility, and shared mission. Rather than practicing faith in isolation, believers were connected and committed to a specific community where they worshiped together, cared for one another, served according to their gifts, and participated in God's mission.

The New Testament also describes qualified spiritual leaders who are responsible for shepherding, teaching, protecting, and equipping God's people. For leaders to faithfully care for a flock, there must be a clear understanding of who is part of that flock.

At Bay Area, Ministry Partnership is our way of expressing that commitment. It is not about joining a club or earning status. It is a mutual commitment between a believer and a local church family.

Through Ministry Partnership, we publicly identify Bay Area as our church home and commit to pursuing Jesus alongside one another. We receive the encouragement, support, care, and accountability of a spiritual family while also embracing our responsibility to contribute through serving, generosity, community, worship, and mission.

Because Scripture consistently presents committed involvement in a local church as the normal pattern for followers of Jesus, we believe Ministry Partnership is an important step for anyone who calls Bay Area their church home.

At Bay Area, becoming a Ministry Partner means that you share our Beliefs as a church and affirm/assent to our Statements of Positions. It also means that you participate with us in our shared Behaviors/Practices. The next two sections will introduce you to and help you learn what those are.

REFLECT: What does it mean for Bay Area to be more than a place you attend but a church family to which you belong?



SESSION ONE: SHARED BELIEFS



SHARED BELIEFS OVERVIEW

Our desire is for each Ministry Partner to become more like Jesus and help others do the same. In order to do that well, we desire all ministry partners to understand and embrace who God has called Bay Area to be, from our mission, vision, values, to our foundational beliefs and statements of position, and lastly, to our discipleship philosophy.

First, we embrace Bay Area's unique **mission, vision, and values**. This is why Bay Area exists, what we're called to do, and what we care about most. We desire ministry partners to be "all in" as we partner together to see these callings realized.

In addition, as we gather as a spiritual family we do so in affirmation of **shared beliefs** and assent to **statements of position**. When we do this, we are choosing to share the same solid foundation. What we believe is ultimately expressed in our actions; by aligning in this we ensure we believe correctly and act accordingly.

Lastly, we embrace Bay Area's **discipleship philosophy** which outlines how our mission and vision advances. The more we understand how Jesus disciplined and the more we embrace His methods, we can collectively become more effective in the work of making disciples from here to the nations. This is ultimately our call as a church and as ministry partners.

REFLECTION QUESTION

How does aligning around these elements help contribute to the health and unity of a church?

Next, let's read about our mission, vision and values.



OUR MISSION

Our mission answers the question, "Why do we exist?" As you read, consider how God may be inviting you to participate in His mission of making passionate, maturing followers of Jesus.

If we had just one word to describe Bay Area, it would be "Jesus". We are Jesus people. We love Jesus, follow Jesus, and seek to become like Jesus.

If we had two words, it would be "make disciples". We want to grow as disciples of Jesus who help make disciples of others.

If we had one sentence, it would be our mission statement: Making passionate, maturing followers of Jesus from here to the nations. Every word is important. Passionate. Not apathetic. Maturing. We are always growing. Followers. Everybody follows someone or something. We follow Jesus. From here. Right where we live. To the nations. All around the world.

If we had one verse, it would be Matthew 28:19; "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations". We believe that God calls every believer and every church to live out the mission of making disciples of all nations.

MAKING
PASSIONATE MATURING OF JESUS
FOLLOWERS FROM HERE TO THE
NATIONS. 



OUR VISION

Our vision describes the future we believe God is calling us toward as a church. As you read, reflect on how God might use you to advance the gospel in you, your neighbors, and the nations.

God gives every church a unique vision to accomplish His kingdom purposes in the world. **At Bay Area, our vision is to help change the world by advancing the gospel in you, your neighbors, and the nations.**

It's the vision of showing and sharing the Good News of Jesus, in every community, in every city, in every nation of the world. **YOU, OUR NEIGHBORS, AND THE NATIONS** are in desperate need of the gospel. The greatest injustice in the world is that there are millions of people going down a path toward death and destruction without any way of knowing. We believe that God wants to use each of us to help change the world one life at a time by advancing the gospel in you, your neighbors, and the nations so that the church of Jesus Christ multiplies.

Our vision is for YOU! We want nothing less than you becoming all God made you to be. He loves you and has a plan for you. His power can change you and heal your hurts and disappointments. At Bay Area, we give ourselves fully to helping you grow in your relationship with Jesus. Our gatherings, community groups, women's and men's ministries, children and students, Care Network, and serving opportunities are all designed with one goal in mind: for you to become more like Jesus.

Our vision is for your NEIGHBORS! Jesus showed up! He moved into the neighborhood. He made people feel seen, known and cared for. And as we are on a journey, together, to become more like Jesus, we want to love our neighbors like He does! We carry Good News in a world full of bad news. This Good News is that in Jesus' life, death and resurrection we are offered forgiveness, freedom and a new life. It is the message that an anxious, overworked and desperate generation deeply needs. We are light in the darkness. It is not about having the perfect words, persuasive arguments, or an extroverted personality. It is not a program or a performance; it's about people. It's a life-changing, life-saving relationship with Jesus. It's not just for experts. It's for everyday disciples like me and you. We don't need to be used car salespeople; we are just satisfied customers who have found something so good that it's too good to keep to ourselves. We are ordinary people sharing our extraordinary hope. And it's this model and message of Jesus that gives us a mission and a truly significant purpose worth living for. That is why we aim to become the kind of people who live on mission with Jesus to show and share the good news with our neighbors where we live, work, play, and learn.

Our vision is for the NATIONS! Hundreds of nations, thousands of ethnic groups, billions of people – all loved by God. God has a heart for every tribe, tongue and nation. At Bay Area, we



challenge each other to view our lives in light of God's grand redemptive plan for the nations. Our vision is to see God use us in 17 regions around the globe. Currently in 14 regions, we are in awe of what the Lord is doing. From planting churches in Poland, Lebanon, India and Kenya, to reaching thousands of youth in Ghana and the Dominican Republic, to feeding and educating the poor in Belize; to caring for those with HIV aids in Uganda, to equipping pastors and church leaders in South Sudan and Russia, to sending out hundreds of people on short term mission teams, God is using us as we pray, give and go. We are convinced that God blesses the church who has His heart for the nations.

You, Neighbors, Nations. Three words that capture our vision. You were born for such a time as this. God gave you the gift of life, determined when and where you would live, gave you gifts, opportunities and resources. Why? Because He wants you to become more like Jesus and help others do the same. No matter how famous or wealthy or great you might become in the eyes of others, there is nothing that you will ever be privileged to do that compares to being on mission to help change the world with Jesus.

REFLECT:

Up to this point in your time at Bay Area, how have you participated in our mission to *make passionate maturing followers of Jesus from here to the nations?*

Related to our vision, what types of things have you done to advance the gospel in you personally? How have you invested in your own spiritual growth?



What sorts of things have you done to help advance the gospel with your neighbors? With the nations?



OUR VALUES

Our values shape how we live out our mission and vision together. As you read, consider which values you already see reflected in your life and where God may be calling you to grow.

WORD SATURATED: The Bible is truth, and therefore has meaning for all of life. It is not just something to 'know,' but something that should penetrate every aspect of our lives and ultimately change us to become more like Jesus. This is why we read, talk about, meditate on, obey, apply and creatively express the Word of God, allowing it to rule over every area of our lives. Everything we are and everything we do is Word Saturated.

We demonstrate this by:

- A Chapter A Day daily Bible reading plan
- Biblical centered preaching at our weekend gatherings
- Teaching the Word in all of our group contexts (Community Groups, Women's/Men's Groups, Student Community Groups, Children's Large Groups)

Accompanying Scripture: Isaiah 1:8, Hebrews 5:12-14, Luke 10:38-42

GREAT FAITH: Great faith fuels our growth in Jesus. It all starts with our relationship with Him. The more we know Him, the more we are able to trust Him and exercise our faith. This is why we challenge each other to take big faith steps in order to grow spiritually. Having Great Faith in Jesus helps us take steps of faith with Him. For us, it's all about having a Great Faith.

We demonstrate this by:

- Encouraging everyone to take their next step of faith
- Many discipling others

Accompanying Scripture: Matthew 14:22-33, Daniel 6

BETTER TOGETHER: Every person matters to God and to us. We know our growth and fulfillment happens best in the context of community and relationship. That's why we strive to help every person feel welcome, get connected, and join in God's work here. Each person has a significant part to play and we don't want anyone to miss out. When we're together, big things happen. This is why we're Better Together.

We demonstrate this by:

- Worshiping together in our Gatherings



- Serving God and one another by using our gifts
- Building relationships with others in community

Genesis 1:26-27, 1 Peter 2:9-11, Colossians 3:12-15, Acts 2:42-47

GENERATIONS TO COME: The future of our faith (humanly speaking) rests in the hands of the next generation. We are just one generation away from extinction. That's why helping the next generation come to faith early in life and discipling them in the ways of Jesus is a really big deal to us. We're all about discipling the Generations to Come.

We demonstrate this by:

- Commitment to discipling children / students through partnering with parents and families
- Lively and engaging environments for children and students
- Passionate and faithful staff, leaders and volunteers

Accompanying Scripture: 2 Kings 2, Psalm 145:4-7, 12-13, Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Psalm 71:18, Psalm 78:5-9, 2 Timothy 2:1-2

RELENTLESS IN MISSION: The Great Commission - proclaiming the Gospel and making disciples - is real for us. Every person, everywhere, should have the opportunity to respond to the gospel. This is why mission is not just something that we do, but something that defines who we are. From here in our neighborhoods to the farthest reaches of the nations, it's everyone, being a sent one (missionary), everywhere, all the time. We are Relentless in Mission.

We demonstrate this by:

- Desire to reach the nations through global partnerships and missions trips
- Commitment to declaring and demonstrating the gospel locally
- Being on mission together in our Community Groups
- Reaching the region by starting new campuses and planting new churches

Accompanying Scripture: Matthew 28:19-20, John 20:21, 2 Timothy 2:1-4

EXTRAVAGANT GENEROSITY: We have a saying around here: God owns it and we steward it. If that is true, then our role is to be a steward or manager of what we've been given, which frees us to be generous and give freely. As we follow Jesus who gave it all for us, so we can give to others. And as we give, so our church multiplies. As a result we are stretched, filled with joy, and grow spiritually. Therefore, as a church we are about Extravagant Generosity.

We demonstrate this by:

- Embracing the "give, save, live" principle



- Mobilizing individuals to use their gifts for the benefit of others
- The amount of resources BACC commits to the community and the nations

Accompanying Scripture: 2 Corinthians 8:9

REFLECT:

Of our values, which one(s) do you most naturally share and value with us? Which one(s) might you need to grow in?

How do you believe God has uniquely positioned you, with your gifts, experiences, relationships, and resources, to contribute to Bay Area's mission?

Is there anything in Bay Area's mission, vision, or values that you would like clarified or discussed further?

Next, let's read about our church's beliefs and statements of position.



OUR BELIEFS + STATEMENTS OF POSITION

BELIEFS

What we believe shapes how we live, worship, serve, and make disciples. As a church family, we are united around a shared foundation of biblical truth that guides our mission, vision, values, and ministry. The following beliefs summarize the core doctrines that define who we are as a church and provide the theological foundation for all we do. We ask that all ministry partners **AFFIRM** each of the following beliefs.

THE BIBLE

We believe that the original manuscripts of the Old and New Testament comprise the full, word-for-word, truthful, inerrant word of God which is the supreme and final authority in doctrine and practice.

Isaiah 40:8; Hebrews 4:12

THE TRINITY

We believe in one God eternally existing in three equal persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who have the same nature and attributes, but who are distinct in office and activity.

Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 48:16; Jeremiah 10:10; Matthew 28:19; John 10:30; II Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:8

THE FATHER

We believe that as eternal Father, He is the Father of all men in the non-salvation, Creator sense, the Father of the nation of Israel, the father of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the disciplinarian of His children.

Exodus 4:22; Psalms 2:7-9; John 5:37; Acts 17:29; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 1:3-6; Hebrews 12:9; I Peter 1:3



THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit regenerates, indwells, baptizes, seals, and bestows spiritual gifts upon all believers at the time of their conversion. Experientially, He fills, teaches, leads, assures, and prays for believers.

John 14:26; John 16:6-15; Acts 1:5; Acts 2:1-4; Acts 11:1-18; Romans 8:14-16, 26-27; I Corinthians 6:19; 12:7-11,13; Ephesians 1:13-14; Ephesians 5:18; II Thessalonians 2:1-10; Titus 3:5

THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

We believe Jesus Christ is God incarnate, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, completely God and completely man. We believe in His pre-existence, His sinless life, His substitutionary atonement, His bodily resurrection from the grave, His ascension into heaven, and His bodily return from heaven.

Luke 1:35; John 1:1,14,18; Romans 3:24-26; Ephesians 4:11-16; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 7:23-25; I Peter 2:3-5; I John 2:1-2

HUMANITY AND SIN

We believe that humans are created in the image of God as male and female, biological sex and gender being one and the same. All humans are intrinsically equal in dignity and value. We were created for communion with God and others. Heterosexual marriage, the only appropriate context for sexual intimacy, serves as the foundation for the family. We believe that, in Adam, all of humanity rebelled against God, introducing sin and brokenness into the world, and incurring both physical and spiritual death (separation from God). Thus, all humans are now sinners by nature and by choice; and in need of salvation from the God who loves them.

Genesis 1:1, 27; Genesis 2:17; Genesis 2:24; Genesis 3:1-19; Isaiah 14:12-14; Matthew 19:3-9; Luke 20:36; John 1:1-3; 8:44; 12:31; Romans 1:24-27; Romans 5:12-21; Ephesians 2:1-3; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 1:13-14; Hebrews 2:5-8,14; I Peter 2:4; Revelation 20:10

SALVATION

We believe in salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ's substitutionary payment for our sins, not based on human merit, works, or religious ceremony. We believe that anyone who has placed their faith in Christ is eternally secure, has everlasting life, will not come into condemnation, and shall never perish. We believe that assurance comes to the believer from



three primary sources: trusting the Word of God's promises, the witness of the Holy Spirit, and a persevering walk with the Lord.

Daniel 12:1-2; Matthew 25:31-46; John 1:12; John 3:16,36; John 5:24; John 10:28-29; John 11:25-26; Romans 8:28-39; II Corinthians 5:17-21; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:4-7; I John 4:11-13; Revelation 20:12-15

THE CHURCH

We believe in the church, both universally and locally, as the spiritual body of which Christ is the Head, and in the practices of water baptism of believers and the Lord's Supper as the ordinances of the local church.

Matthew 16:18; Acts 1:5; Acts 11:15; I Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:22-23; Ephesians 4:11-16; Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 1:18

THE GREAT COMMISSION

We believe that those whom God has saved are sent into the world by Christ as He was by the Father. Those so sent are ambassadors, commissioned to go make disciples and make Christ known to the whole world. We also believe that everyone should have an opportunity to carefully examine the facts about Christ and have a chance to make an intelligent decision about Him.

Matthew 28:18-20; John 18:8; John 17:18; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:14-15; II Corinthians 5:18-20; Colossians 4:2-6; II Timothy 2:14-26

ETERNITY

We believe in the physical resurrection of the human body (at the second coming of Christ); in the eternal conscious existence of all individuals in either heaven or hell; and in the rewards of the saved and the punishment of the lost for eternity.

Luke 16:19-31; I Corinthians 3:11-15; 15:1-58; II Corinthians 5:8-10



REFLECT:

How do these beliefs affect or impact your personal growth and relationship with Jesus?

Are there any areas that you believe differently than we do? If so, please explain.

Are there any beliefs that you would like to grow in, deepening your understanding or convictions with? How might we help you with that?



STATEMENTS OF POSITION

While Christians can agree on the core doctrines of the faith, there are some theological and practical issues that require greater clarity for the life and ministry of a local church. The Leadership of Bay Area Community Church has developed Statements of Position (SOPs) to communicate our convictions on these matters. The summaries below provide a concise overview of our positions, while the full papers offer additional biblical support, context, and explanation for those who wish to explore these topics more deeply.

As Ministry Partners, we are not expected to agree on every secondary issue with equal conviction, but we are asked to understand, respect, and support the positions that guide our church's teaching and ministry. With this in mind, we ask that all ministry partners **AFFIRM** or give **ASSENT** to the following statements of position. By **assent**, we mean that even if you hold a different view on a secondary issue, you understand and respect Bay Area's position, but agree not to undermine it, and can faithfully participate in the life and mission of the church.

Biblical Marriage

We believe that marriage is designed by God as a life-long, monogamous covenant to be entered into only by a man and a woman. Each person is either a “Man” or “Woman” based on unchangeable biological traits, and this binary sex-difference is part of God’s good design for humanity. This design creates complementary relationships between two people that reveal God’s various purposes for the marriage relationship, including sexuality and procreation. Since procreation is not the sole purpose of marriage, those without children or unable to have children are not “less married,” but the marriage is the biblical foundation and format for the building of the family.

Also, we believe that marriage is a picture with a purpose – it symbolizes Christ’s relationship with the church. Both husband and wife must submit themselves to the Lord as they live out their role in the marriage. As husbands function as servant leaders, and wives partner with and submit to their husbands, they publicly display the beauty of God’s love for His people.

We affirm that sex is designed by God as a gift to be expressed only within marriage (as defined biblically). All sexual activity that occurs outside of a heterosexual, monogamous marriage or any lustful thought or desire is sinful and dishonoring to God. While we believe that God hates divorce, He makes allowances for it only on the grounds of sexual immorality or desertion, after all efforts of reconciliation have failed. We believe that remarriage is biblically allowable only if someone’s divorce was the result of one of these exceptions. However, if an individual was divorced prior to conversion, they may remarry “in the Lord”.



References: Malachi 2:16; Matthew 5:28-32, 19:4-6; 1 Corinthians 7:12-15; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:1-10

[Click here to read the full statement of position.](#)

Water Baptism

We believe that baptism is a practice that Jesus commanded as an act of obedience for all those (and only those) who have placed their faith in Him. It is an external expression of an internal change, and it does not provide salvation nor is it necessary for salvation. Because this is an explicit command of Jesus for all believers, we require a person to have been baptized as a believer in order to become a Ministry Partner at BACC. Also, because the English word “baptism” comes from a Greek word that means “to immerse”, we practice immersion in water as the mode of baptism, whenever it is physically possible.

There are two exceptions to our standard practice of requiring Ministry Partners to have been baptized as believers by immersion.

1. The first exception is for potential Ministry Partners who were baptized as infants. They may become Ministry Partners provided that they reject the notion that their water baptism conferred merit with God or saving grace in the act itself. They also must hold and be able to articulate a conviction that their infant baptism was sufficient to fulfill the command of Jesus that His followers be baptized.
2. The second exception is for those who were baptized after salvation, but the mode of baptism was something other than immersion (sprinkling or pouring, etc). We will accept their baptism for the purposes of Ministry Partnership, despite our preference for immersion.

References: Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 6:1-10; Acts 2:38

[Click here to read the full statement of position.](#)

The Role of Men and Women in Church Leadership

We affirm that all humans, male and female, are inherently equal in dignity and value. However, equality in value does not necessitate sameness in roles, and we believe that men and women are designed for complementary, non-identical roles in the family and local church leadership.

We believe that the Scriptures call only men to the roles of Elder and pastor, but all other leadership roles at Bay Area, including the office of deacon, are open to qualified men and



women as long as it is done under the authority of the elders. When we fulfill our God-given roles according to His good design, we glorify God and reflect the equality, unity and diversity of the Trinity.

References: Genesis 1:27; Galatians 3:28-29; 1 Timothy 2:11-12.

[Click here to read the full statement of position.](#)

Abortion

We believe that, from the moment of conception until death, each human being is a person created in the image of God and is inherently valuable, sacred and worthy of protection. Thus, the intentional killing of any innocent human is sin. Therefore, since an elective abortion ends an innocent human life, it is wrong.

However, no sin is outside the reach of God's grace, and we believe in extending mercy and compassion to those who have chosen abortion, and that Jesus is the hope of healing, forgiveness and salvation.

References: Genesis 1:26-27; Psalm 139:13; Jeremiah 1:5

[Click here to read the full statement of position.](#)

INTRODUCTION TO THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Before discussing some of the more controversial spiritual gifts in greater detail, it is helpful to have a "big picture" grasp of Spiritual Gifts in general. Spiritual gifts are equally valuable abilities that God gives to all believers for building up the body of Christ. Each believer receives at least one spiritual gift at the moment of salvation, and each gift, regardless of its public or private nature, must be exercised in love for God and others.

When it comes to the "sign" gifts of tongues, prophecy and healing, BACC holds to the belief that these gifts are still active in the Church today. God is all-powerful, and able to express His power in and through His Church however and whenever He would like! However, we do believe that the New Testament gives limitations to the expression of these particular gifts, and thus we adhere to those restrictions and guidelines, as discussed below.



The Gift of Tongues

We believe that the gift of tongues is a supernatural ability to speak in a human language unknown to the speaker, with the primary purpose of authenticating God's power to non-believers, who hear in their own language. Like all spiritual gifts, this gift is not possessed by all believers.

When speaking in tongues is done in a ministry context, it must be interpreted by a person with the interpretation gift, and function to edify other believers. Without a qualified interpreter, tongues speaking should not occur.

The "baptism of the Holy Spirit" is inseparable from conversion and occurs simultaneously with the conversion-ministries of the Spirit such as the indwelling and sealing. It is not a "second blessing" to be pursued after conversion. The "filling of the Spirit" refers to the moment-by-moment process of yielding oneself to the Spirit's control.

References: Acts 2; 1 Corinthians 12-14; Ephesians 4:4-6, 30, 5:18; Romans 8:9

[Click here to read the full statement of position.](#)

The New Testament Gift of Prophecy

We define New Testament prophecy as verbally sharing something that God's Spirit spontaneously reveals so that the words spoken edify, exhort, or console others.

New Testament prophecy is not the same as what was revealed to the Old Testament prophets, Apostles or other New Testament authors, and so it should not be seen as automatically authoritative. This is because someone prophesying might receive a word from the Spirit but deliver it with their own mixed words or motives. Thus, for those who are recipients of someone's prophetic word, they should weigh it against Scripture, pray over that which is shared, and seek the counsel of other godly believers before accepting or rejecting what is said.

The gift of prophecy does not confer authority or position upon a person, and there is no office of prophet in the church. The motivation for the use of this gift must be love, and its purpose is to edify, exhort, and console.

References: Luke 2:26; Philippians 3:15; Ephesians 1:17, 1 Corinthians 14:29, 37-38; 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21



[Click here to read the full statement of position.](#)

The New Testament Gift of Healing

We define gifts of healings as God's sovereign intervention to miraculously heal the body (physically, emotionally, mentally) for His glory and kingdom purposes. We believe that each instance of healing is a separate gift from the Holy Spirit, rather than being a single gift given to a particular individual to exercise in an on-going way (like serving or teaching).

A believer through whom gifts of healings are manifested is a conduit of God's grace and power. Being used as a means of miraculous healing does not confer authority Bay Area Community Church SOP Summaries 5 or position upon a person, and there is no office of healer in the church. The one gifted should make sure he or she is submitted to Jesus, Spirit-filled, humbly accountable, and prayerful.

We reject the belief that health and prosperity are fully available to all believers in this lifetime, and that one's faith is the key that unlocks divine healing and wealth. We believe that healing happens not because we believe or want it to happen but because God wills it to happen.

The exercise of gifts of healings, like all other gifts, must be motivated by love and is under the authority of God, His Word, and the church leadership. The purpose must be to edify, exhort, and console.

References: 1 Corinthians 12:12-26; 1 Peter 4:10-11

[Click here to read the full statement of position.](#)

Spiritual Warfare

The Bible teaches that every believer is involved continually in the perpetual war that rages between the powers of darkness and the kingdom of light. The main enemies of the believer are their own sinful nature (the flesh), the world's value system and, finally, the devil himself. As our great enemy, the devil is actively trying to confuse, tempt, destroy and deceive us from experiencing the abundant and victorious life God intends.

One of the most common errors is to either over-emphasize or under-emphasize the role of spiritual warfare in the problems we experience. It is our desire to strike a balance between these errors.



The devil (Satan) is a created spiritual being (angel) who, under the sovereign control of God, rebelled against God and now leads his fellow fallen angels (demons) in their activities designed to wreak unceasing havoc in the world and thwart the advancement of God's kingdom. Thus, the devil is neither omnipotent nor omnipresent.

Believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and cannot be demon-possessed. However, they can be influenced by demons to yield to sinful behavior. Therefore, we must watchfully walk in the Light. Watchfulness includes being aware of our thoughts and emotions, avoiding the deeds of the flesh and staying away from occult practices.

Believers battle the devil by focusing on the victory won by Christ, being prepared for the battle, putting on the full armor of God and praying at all times in the Spirit.

However, the battle must be fought collectively, not individually. When we see our brothers and sisters struggling with the influence of the flesh, the world's system and the forces of evil, we encourage them to "be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might." When more help is needed, the assistance of the pastors, elders, or other mature believers should be enlisted.

References: Romans 8:9-11; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; 1 John 1:5-9; Galatians 5:19-21; Deuteronomy 18:9-12; Ephesians 6; 1 Peter 5:1-11.

[Click here to read the full statement of position.](#)



REFLECT:

After reading these beliefs and statements of position, what gives you confidence in affirming and supporting them?

Are there any positions that you differ with or that challenges you? If so, which one(s) and what challenges you about our positions?

GOVERNANCE

In your last section before class, please [watch this overview](#) of Bay Area's leadership structure and governance from elder Rich Heath.

